

Masks of Fiction

The Function of the Nietzschean Mask in the Works of Hermann Hesse

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Abstract

This project examines the crucially informative role that masks and notions of masking have historically played in shaping western conceptions of identity. Specifically, it explores how this historical pattern is particularly transformative in the works of one of the early twentieth century's most important writers, Hermann Hesse. Major elements of this development are illustrated by highlighting significant parallels between Hesse and the Irish poet W.B. Yeats, whose literary engagement with masks and identity are starkly similar to Hesse's. Hesse's works are commonly read as narratives of a 'search for the Self'. However, very little scholarly attention is given to exploring what this concept of 'Self' actually means in Hesse's works. By placing acute critical attention on the roles of masks in Hesse's novels, this project reveals how Hesse's literary portrayals of identity develop significantly from his first to his final novel (*Peter Camenzind* in 1904 and *Das Glasperlenspiel* in 1943). Importantly, the project illustrates how Hesse's early literary depictions of masks and identity come from a deeply entrenched medieval conception of a 'fixed' Self, but, as his career progresses and his portrayals of the 'Self' develop, the rhetorical instrument of Friedrich Nietzsche's 'Mask' begins to inform Hesse's literary representations of identity. This project illustrates how Hesse altogether transforms his portrayals of the 'Self' through this rhetorical device. In doing so, it reveals the pertinent role of masks in Hesse's works and amplifies Hesse's voice in a long historical dialogue regarding masks and identity.

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Introduction

This project identifies and explores a significant conceptual and philosophical development that has been overlooked in the works of one of Germany's most well-known and influential authors, Hermann Hesse (1877-1962). It demonstrates how shifting perceptions of masks and their relation to conceptions of personal identity from ancient Greece up through the early twentieth century play an instructive and transformative role in Hesse's literary representations of 'the Self'. (The meaning of this concept of 'Self' is explained in detail in Chapter 2.) Through close literary analysis, I will show that Hesse's early portrayals of the Self and masks (found in his novels *Peter Camenzind* [1904] and *Gertrud* [1910]) are products of a deeply rooted medieval conception that personal identity is defined by a fixed and stable internal essence, which the protagonists of these early novels attempt to uncover; however, in his later novels (namely, *Der Steppenwolf* [1927] and *Das Glasperlenspiel* [1943]) his representations break from this traditional conception. I will demonstrate that, in these two novels, Hesse inverts his portrayals of the Self by altering the characteristics of the masks that appear in his work: he depicts the identities of these novels' protagonists as unstable and perpetually redefined. Throughout this analysis, we will see that Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophical concept of *die Maske* ('the Mask') is instrumental in Hesse's shift of representation. Nietzsche's *Maske* is essentially a rhetorical instrument that Nietzsche employs in his writings to signify the fluid and illusive nature of 'truth', and Hesse, as we will see, transposes this conception onto his representations of the Self. (It is important to note that, throughout this project, I differentiate between the mask [as a physical mask object] and the Mask [the Nietzschean theoretical model]. This differentiation will grow clearer once the nature of the Nietzschean Mask is explained in Chapter 2.)

Given the deeply theoretical character of Nietzsche's Mask, it is necessary to extricate Hesse's literary application of the concept with patience. The first step in doing so will be to untangle Hesse's developing conceptions of the Self and masks against an illustrative backdrop that will allow us to more easily identify the turning points in Hesse's literary representations. I will accomplish this through a comparison between Hesse and the Irish poet William Butler (W.B.) Yeats. Yeats's literary engagement with masks and the Self follows a pattern of development very similar to Hesse's. However, Yeats's mask

symbolism is far more overt than Hesse's. As a result, it is easier in Yeats's work to locate the links between his different phases of mask representation and their relations to his developing conceptions of the Self. Therefore, Chapter 3 of this project approaches Hesse and Yeats through a comparative lens, highlighting parallels between both writers' literary depictions of masks. By first explicating Yeats's development, I afford my project a useful diagram that guides us through the process of untangling Hesse's theoretical employment of the Nietzschean Mask. As this project unfolds, it will grow clear that, from Hesse's first to his final novel, masks and notions of 'masking' are vital components of his evolving portrayals of the Self.

The Work in Progress

This project began as an exploration of how Hesse's authorial persona has been constructed. Taking as a model a previous project in which I examined how the Beat Generation of the 1950s and early '60s commonly constructed narratives around their personal lives—cultivating their own legends and drawing fine lines between fact and fiction—I initially approached the project at hand with a similar goal. Hesse is commonly viewed as a writer whose works function as canvases of self-representation, and, quite often, critics of his works rely on facts from his biographical life to serve as keys to various critical interpretations. (The abundance of essays and books by critics that take this approach is outlined in Chapter 1.) In light of this common approach, I aimed to change the scenery and investigate the extent to which Hesse's public persona has been shaped by various analyses of his fiction, rather than focusing on how his fiction has been designed by his life. Additionally, I intended to discover the end to which Hesse deliberately painted his own persona on these self-representational canvases. However, as my investigation expanded, I identified a hindrance within this kind of Hesse scholarship that significantly altered the course of my project. Critical approaches to Hesse that view his life and fiction as inextricably linked have grown so prevalent that they have generated a sense that Hesse cannot be analysed using alternative methodologies. My project, too, was affected by this hindrance.

When reading Hesse, though, one can see that elements of his fiction that have no evident biographical correlation are ubiquitous. For instance, the characteristics of various recurring themes, motifs, imagery, and metaphors, etc. develop and change significantly. In

particular, metaphors of masks in relation to the Self, which recur in all of Hesse's novels, drastically alter by the time of his final novel *Das Glasperlenspiel* (1943). Upon noticing this recurrence, I realised that the necessary context for an analysis of this metaphor was the fiction in which it is contained. In order to fully comprehend Hesse's mask motif, I needed to isolate his fiction from any biographical contexts and investigate the mask in relation to other facets of the fictional narratives in which it consistently appears. My project has thus evolved into a strict literary analysis separated from the biographical background that informs so many other projects. This project could have never come to fruition if I relied too closely on Hesse's biography as an interpretive frame because, although all of Hesse's novels depict a close relationship between masks and identity, there is very little evidence outside the context of these novels that Hesse spoke of masks as pertinent to his ongoing theorising of the Self. Therefore, as this project unfolds, and as I present the evidence for my argument, the benefits of examining Hesse's work apart from his life will grow obvious. We will see how the development that I will have shown is only discernible through the methodology that I have chosen.

What is the 'Self'?

Due to perpetual shifts in discourses regarding the meaning of 'the Self' in western societies, this notion is tenuous and difficult to define. It is therefore best explained through an outline of varying definitions of it that arise through philosophical, psychological, sociological, and literary discussions (featured in Chapter 2). However, considering its import in this project, it is useful to establish at least some rough parameters of its meaning before outlining the structure of this dissertation. By 'the Self', I essentially refer to one's personal understanding of one's own identity: it is a means of self-definition. For instance, in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, Augustine established a Christian conception of the Self that suggested one's identity arose from an internal 'core' of characteristics established by the Christian god. Then in the eighteenth century, with a rise in scientific reasoning, philosophers such as David Hume rejected this notion and instilled a new theory that suggested the Self is defined through perpetual internal processing of one's external surroundings; that is, he defines the Self as an evolving state of mind. As we can see, both notions are starkly different, yet both are responses to the same questions of identity: who/why/what/how am I? This concern prevails into the modern day, and its countless

answers remain a focal point for many thinkers and writers. It is consistently a pertinent focus for Hesse, and as this project unfolds, it will grow evident that the answers that arise in Hesse's works change significantly throughout his career.

It is a given among most critics of Hesse that his novels consistently focus on 'finding the Self'. For example, Walter Sorell's *Hermann Hesse: The Man Who Sought and Found Himself* (1974) chronicles Hesse's life by aligning each of his writings with a different phase in his self-development, and he claims that each work is a symbolic portrait of Hesse's search for a sense of Self. Furthermore, Martin Swales's *The German Bildungsroman: From Wieland to Hesse* (1978) uses Hesse's corpus as a model of the German *Bildungsroman* (i.e. the 'coming of age' novel, in which protagonists embark on journeys to find his/herself). And few critics—myself included—dispute the consensus that Hesse's novels are all primarily *Bildungsromane*. I do, however, dispute a common contention that the definition of Self to which Hesse's novels adhere (particularly, *Demian* [1919], *Siddhartha* [1922], and *Der Steppenwolf* [1927]) is consistently shaped by Hesse's pursuit of the 'individuation process' [*Individuationsprozess*] as defined by Carl Gustav Jung.

Although I explain Jung's definition of the Self in Chapter 2, it is necessary to elucidate some details about the individuation process here in order to establish why I avoid the popular application of the Jungian model to Hesse's works in my project. In the psychology of Jung, the Self [*Selbst*] is shaped by what Jung calls an individuation process, a process through which our conscious and unconscious minds reach harmony.¹ Jung argues that one's unconscious mind is an extension of a collective psyche shared by all humanity. When an individual is able to synchronise his/her own conscious awareness of this psyche to the collective, then he/she can experience a sense of individuality (i.e. a sense of 'Self'). Jung adds, however, that there is an element of illusion within this: the Self, in his view, is a *persona* articulated by unconscious drives over which one has no definitive control.² In Chapter 2, I further explain how Jung defines this *persona* as a 'mask' that is shaped by the internal psyche. What is important to note at this point, though, is that Jung

¹ *Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Ich und dem Unbewussten: (Die Persona als Ausschnitt der Kollektivpsyche)* (1928). In: "Gesammelte Werke," Band 7. Patmos-Walter Verlag, Düsseldorf: 1966-1998. 131-262.

² *Ibid.*

differentiates between an internal and an external Self and that, in his view, a sense of ‘complete’ Self is reached by harmonising the two through the process of individuation.

Many of Hesse’s critics, such as Günter Baumann,³ Emanuel Maier,⁴ Ralph Freedman,⁵ and Joseph Mileck,⁶ to name only a few, commonly interpret the self-development depicted in novels like *Demian* and *Der Steppenwolf* as illustrations of the Jungian individuation process. As my project will demonstrate, though, the notion of an *internal* Self inherent within the individuation process is actually the very conceptualisation of the Self that Hesse critiques and removes from his portrayals as they develop throughout his career (specifically in *Der Steppenwolf* and *Das Glasperlenspiel*). While elements of the individuation process are certainly evident in some of Hesse’s novels, I will reveal how a deeper understanding of the mask metaphor in Hesse’s works helps us to see that his depictions of the Self evolve in a way that is eventually critical of this process. I contend that Jungian psychology is over-applied to Hesse’s works and is sometimes misappropriated onto the symbols within his novels. These misappropriations are often products of the same hindrance mentioned above: critics overanalyse Hesse’s personal exposure to Jungian psychology and thus tend to overlook the actual functions of the themes, symbols, and motifs in his novels within their fictional context. As a result, Jungian theories are sometimes applied where they do not belong. My own project therefore avoids Jungian analyses. Through my explications of *Der Steppenwolf* and *Das Glasperlenspiel* (in Chapters 4 and 5, respectively), we will see that Hesse redesigns his representations of the Self outside the parameters of the Jungian model, and it will grow evident that the model to which he adheres is largely structured by the Nietzschean concept of the ‘Mask’.

Project Outline

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first two chapters contextualise the development that is the focus of this project through a literature review of the existing scholarship on Hesse (Chapter 1) as well as an overview of the historical shifts in perspectives on the Self and masks (Chapter 2). The final three each reveal a different stage

³ Baumann, Günter. *Hermann Hesses Erzählungen im Lichte der Psychologie C.G. Jungs*. Rheinfelden: 1989.

⁴ Maier, Emanuel. “The Psychology of C.G. Jung in the Works of Hermann Hesse.” Diss. New York University, 1953. Electronic. <http://www.gss.ucsb.edu/projects/hesse/papers/maier.pdf>

⁵ Freedman, Ralph. *Hermann Hesse: Pilgrim of Crisis*. Jonathan Cape. London: 1978.

⁶ Mileck, Joseph. *Hermann Hesse: Life and Art*. University of California Press. Berkeley: 1978.

in a chronological development of Hesse's literary representations of masks and identity. While the first two chapters provide critical overviews, in the last three, I rely solely on literary analyses to conduct my argument. The primary methodological approach to this project is thus close textual analysis. I examine the chosen texts by explicating the ways in which various themes, motifs, metaphors, narrative techniques, and philosophical paradigms all intercommunicate and develop from Hesse's earliest novel *Peter Camenzind* in 1904 to his final novel *Das Glasperlenspiel* in 1943. The same methodology is used to reveal Yeats's parallel development beside Hesse's (Chapter 3). Below is a more detailed outline of each chapter.

Chapter 1 outlines a popular and well-established trend in Hesse scholarship, whereby scholars interpret Hesse's novels by contextualising it within his biographical life. The first biography on Hesse was released in 1927 (*Hermann Hesse: sein Leben und sein Werk*), written by the well-known artist and friend of Hesse's, Hugo Ball. As its title suggests, Ball's biography narrates Hesse's story by highlighting links between his life and his fiction, specifically emphasising traits and experiences that Hesse shares with his protagonists. In this first chapter, I will demonstrate how Ball's biographical model formulated such a favoured critical approach to Hesse that not only his subsequent biographers (such as Joseph Mileck and Heimo Schwilk, to name only a couple) follow this model in their own biographies, but also many of his critics (such as E.R. Curtius or Adrian Hsia) support their interpretations of Hesse's works with biographical evidence. Such critics often draw commonalities between Hesse and his protagonists; they also look to Hesse's journals and letter correspondences to determine his literary 'aims'; or they attempt to derive 'meaning' from his works by framing the symbolism they notice in the novels with various phases of Hesse's life. I will exhibit an array of criticism that approaches Hesse from this angle and show how this critical method is so solidly established that some scholars, such as Lewis Tusken, even argue that there is no other feasible method of interpreting Hesse's work. This chapter points out the limitations of this critical foundation along with the hindering effects of views such as Tusken's. I will therefore situate my own project outside this paradigm and present a case for the benefits of doing so.

Chapter 2 contextualises the concept of 'mask' by illustrating a historical development by which the meanings of the mask and 'masking' have progressively altered

in tandem with conceptions of identity (i.e. the Self) in the western world. It first demonstrates how the mask in ancient Greece and Rome was perceived as a tool of transformation rather than as one of concealment; then through shifting perceptions of the Self in the Middle Ages, the mask adopted sinister connotations as it became associated with dishonesty: it was viewed as an object that disguised what was deemed ‘true’ identity. Through these developing perceptions, we will see how the notion of masking has consistently been instrumental in shaping western conceptions of the Self. Additionally, we will see how the roots of medieval self-conceptions are so sturdy that many modern constructions of identity closely resemble their historical roots. Chapter 2 will conclude with a thorough explanation of Nietzsche’s concept of the *Maske* (which is referred to as the Mask throughout this project). The Mask is Nietzsche’s chosen metaphor to represent his theoretical position that ‘meaning’ and ‘truth’ are fluid, as opposed to medieval philosophical and theological positions that uphold ‘truth’ as stable and fixed. We will see how Nietzsche enacts his Mask through a unique style of writing that expresses the fluidity of his own meaning. The development revealed in this chapter—from ancient Greece up through the Nietzschean Mask—provides the necessary context for the subsequent literary analysis.

Chapter 3 begins the analytical portion of this thesis by comparing the ways that Hesse and W.B. Yeats progressively reconceptualise masks and identity. I will show how both writers’ representations of these concepts follow a similar pattern of development from their initial portrayals of the Self as fixed (rooted in medieval conceptions) to depicting it as indefinite and fluid, which I argue is a literary employment of the Nietzschean Mask. Positioning Hesse’s work beside Yeats’s yields two benefits. First, given the complexities of the Nietzschean Mask, it is difficult to demonstrate how it functions in literature. Therefore, by first illustrating the ways in which Yeats develops his literary representations of masks into the theoretical Mask, I am better able to then explicate the details of Hesse’s similar development. Second, by highlighting resemblances between the two writers, we can then locate their mutual theoretical development within an overarching western pattern. Each writer’s engagement with masks and identity occurs within different cultural and linguistic settings, and neither writer was particularly familiar with the other’s work. Thus, by illustrating how a German and Irish writer each

reconceptualise masks and the Self in a comparable way, I can illuminate a pattern that opens doors for new investigations into other modern writers' engagement with the same ideas. However, I only show the similarities between Hesse and Yeats up to a certain point. I conclude the chapter after illustrating how Yeats incorporates into his play *The Player Queen* (1919) physical masks that symbolise the Nietzschean Mask. My analysis of Yeats concludes at this point because, after writing this play, Yeats continued to develop his theoretical model of the Self in ways that stray beyond the concerns of my project. I therefore reserve chapters 4 and 5 for demonstrating how the Nietzschean Mask remained an instructive model for Hesse throughout his later career.

Once the characteristics of the Mask have been established and some samples of its literary function are demonstrated, Chapter 4 will provide a very new analysis of Hesse's novel *Der Steppenwolf*. It will demonstrate how Hesse interweaves three layers of narrative into the novel in order to design what I call a Mask of Fiction: a textual incarnation of the Nietzschean Mask. We will see how Hesse's literary representation of the Self in this novel is presented through this Mask of Fiction: it embodies Hesse's redesigned literary portrayals of the Self as fluid and unstable, and, importantly, it correlates this development with Nietzsche's contention that 'truth' is not fixed. This chapter will thus reveal how *Der Steppenwolf* represents the very opposite of the Jungian individuation process. It is the first novel in which Hesse abandons romanticised western notions of a definitive and fixed sense of Self and begins to reconstruct his portrayals with elements of the Nietzschean Mask. The chapter will conclude by demonstrating how the 'masking ball' episode towards the end of novel emphasises the effect of the novel's Mask of Fiction. The novel's protagonist Harry Haller is the only guest who attends this ball unmasked, and very little critical attention has been given to this fact. However, I will illustrate how an understanding of how the Nietzschean Mask functions in the novel can illuminate the crucial symbolism of this imagery.

Chapter 5, the final chapter of this thesis, is the longest of the chapters because it requires a sequence of careful analyses in order to demonstrate Hesse's most complex employment of the theoretical Mask in his final novel and magnum opus *Das Glasperlenspiel* (1943). This chapter will unlace the intricate characteristics of the novel's narrative Mask and reveal the ways that these characteristics interact to present Hesse's

culminated representation of the Self. Composed over the course of twelve years, the novel is occupied by a variety of thematic concerns; but, like all of Hesse's novels, it is a *Bildungsroman* that centres on a protagonist's journey toward self-understanding. There is some debate over the novel's status as a *Bildungsroman*, however. I will outline the parameters of this debate and present an argument that the novel is, in fact, a 'masked' *Bildungsroman*. I will demonstrate how Hesse transfers the masking technique seen in *Der Steppenwolf* into his final novel in a way that purports one message while actually conveying another. The narrative voice in the novel is a historian who claims to chronicle a segment of history in the utopian society of 'Castalia' [*Kastalien*]; but, I will highlight instances where the narrator inserts irony that undercuts this claim, indicating that the novel is actually a demonstration of the protagonist Josef Knecht's developing understanding of the Self through the lens of the Nietzschean Mask. Throughout this chapter, I will reveal not only how the novel is constructed as a theoretical Mask, but I will also provide evidence that the mask objects that appear in the novel function as symbols of this very conception of the Self. By the end of this chapter, it will be apparent that acute awareness of the narrative Mask through which the story is told can enable the reader to discern a clear depiction of the Self that is starkly different from the romanticised 'fixed' Self portrayed in Hesse's earliest novels.

* * *

By the conclusion of this thesis, the reader will be able to distinguish significant differences between the literary representations of the 'Self' in Hesse's early career and those of his late career. We will see how Hesse scholars rarely debate the meaning of the conception of 'Self' in Hesse's novels. They either commonly treat it as Jungian (discussed above), or they vaguely apply the term with little analysis, as if it is a universally understood concept. Consequently, no one has yet attempted to articulate the *unique* shape Hesse actually gives to this concept. As I will show, though, the searches for the Self that may appear as mere formulaic institutions in the *Bildungsroman* format are, in Hesse's novels, vehicles of constant theoretical negotiation. This project will thus define the notion of 'Self' that is consistently understood to be the central focus of Hesse's works, and it will reveal how the overlooked theme of 'masking' in Hesse's works is the key needed to unlock Hesse's conceptions of the Self. As this project unfolds, we will also see why it is

crucial to move away from vogue readings of Hesse's novels as self-representative. By focusing specifically on the theme of masking in Hesse's works, this project will amplify his literary voice as part of a western discourse that has negotiated identity for centuries. I will outline this historical discussion and reveal where Hesse's literature fits within this dialogue. Once this is shown, it will be evident that Hesse's distinct role in this ongoing debate is only discernible when we isolate Hesse's fiction from his biography.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

1.1 Chapter Introduction

Established focuses within a scholarly field can clear paths that guide scholars towards new discoveries. However, when a methodology becomes conventional, it can also be potentially obstructive. A particular trend can institute such a solid foundation that it can limit the scope of newer approaches, and I argue that this is the case with scholarship on Hesse. Relationships between Hesse's fiction and his biography have been a focal point of detailed studies from very early on in the field. And from the 1960s onward, they have become such an established way of interpreting Hesse's writings that very few critics have approached Hesse from different angles since. Works that develop out of this trend (such as Mark Boulby's *Hermann Hesse: His Mind and Art* [1967], Joseph Mileck's *Hermann Hesse: Life and Art* [1978], Ralph Freedman's *Hermann Hesse: Pilgrim of Crisis* [1978] and, more recently, Heimo Schwilk's *Hermann Hesse: Das Leben des Glasperlenspielers* [2012]) generally interpret Hesse's fiction through a biographical lens, identifying correlations between Hesse's life and his fictional narratives. These kinds of interpretations are often supported by Hesse's journals, essays, and letters. The popularity of this approach generates an appearance that the field is saturated and that no new methodology is possible.

The rare deviation from the traditional biographical approach, in my view, results from influential scholars' assertions that there is no viable way to interpret Hesse beyond this one. For example, Adrian Hsia (who has written extensively on the role of eastern philosophy and religion in Hesse's works) and Lewis Tusken (whose biography of Hesse follows the model popularised by Mileck and Boulby) both explicitly state that their interpretations of Hesse's novels are indisputable because they have Hesse's commentary on his novels as their guideline of definitive interpretation.⁷ (I discuss Hsia and Tusken in more detail below.) Other scholars who follow the same reasoning as Hsia and Tusken

⁷ Hsia, Adrian. *Hermann Hesse und China. Darstellung, Materialien und Interpretationen*. Suhrkamp. Frankfurt am Main: 1974.

-Tusken, Lewis W. *Understanding Hermann Hesse: The Man, His Myth, His Metaphor*. Ed. James Hardin. University of South Carolina. Columbia: 1998.

(such as another of Hesse's biographers Eugene Stelzig⁸ and Hesse's own publisher Siegfried Unseld⁹) substantiate their own biographical focuses with the fact that Hesse once labelled his novels as *Seelenbiographien* ('biographies of the soul').¹⁰ (This term, along with Stelzig's and Unseld's positions, are also detailed further below). It is important to note that some scholars do indeed depart from this tradition. Jefford Vahlbusch, for instance, presents a convincing case for the benefits of such a departure.¹¹ As this chapter will reveal, though, deviations such as Vahlbusch's are few and far between. I contend that this is largely due to the prevailing influence of the common biographical approach.

The purpose of this literature review is to outline the foundations of the biographical scholarship on Hesse, to illustrate the breadth of its influence, and finally, to demonstrate the advantages of a departure from this approach. In doing so, I am also able to locate my own project outside the parameters of this tradition and show the benefit of my subsequent analysis. Although a portion of my project relies on a comparison between Hesse and W. B. Yeats, I reserve the review of the secondary literature on Yeats for the chapter in which this comparison is located. The field of scholarship on Yeats is not only immense, but it is also exceptionally diverse. The nature of this project does not require as extensive an overview of Yeats as it does on Hesse. Therefore, I underline only the most essential scholarship on Yeats in the appropriate chapter and provide a very necessary and more detailed overview of Hesse scholarship in this one.

1.2 The Biographical Approach

Numerous biographies on Hesse explore interrelationships between his fictional works and his nonfictional life. The biographers of works structured around this exploration have—in some cases, advertently, and in others, inadvertently—generated a persuasive sense that Hesse's works can only be studied and understood within a biographical context. The dominance of this view is evident not only through the biographers' practically standardised approach, as this section shows, but it is also apparent in much of the less

⁸ Stelzig, Eugene. *Hermann Hesse's Fictions of the Self: Autobiography and the Confessional Imagination*. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New Jersey: 1988.

⁹ Unseld, Siegfried. *Hermann Hesse's Influence: Ethics or Esthetics?* "Hermann Hesse: Politische und Wirkungsgeschichtliche Aspekte." Ed. Sigrid Bauschinger. A. Francke AG Verlag. Bern: 1986. (Paper presented at 14th Amherster Kolloquium zur Deutsch Literatur.)

¹⁰ (In: *Gesammelte Werke* 11: 81)

¹¹ Vahlbusch, Jefford. *Towards a New Reading of Unterm Rad*. "A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." Ed. Ingo Cornils. Camden House. New York: 2009. 17-56.

extensive secondary literature, which often relies on these major biographies as primary sources of textual interpretation. For example, in Henry Hatfield's essay 'Accepting the Universe: Hermann Hesse's *Steppenwolf*',¹² Hatfield borrows Ralph Freedman's description of Hesse's novels as 'lyrical novels' into which Hesse weaves his own biography, and he argues that *Der Steppenwolf* (1927) is one such novel that conveys Hesse's psychological turmoil at the time of the novel's composition. Freedman, Mileck, and Boulby all also interpret this novel similarly. When one reviews these major biographies, one chief reason stands out that explains why the scholarship has been hedged into this small corner: veneration for *Hesse*. Hesse the guru is studied far more than Hesse the writer. Hesse's critics often romanticise the events of his life, and, as a result, his persona is the object of their attention far more than the craft of his writing. The cultivation of this persona and the formulation of the tendency to romanticise Hesse's life could be a project within itself. Such a project might examine the ways in which Hesse's publishers, fans, critics, and even Hesse himself have sketched such an admired image of Hesse that an interest in his celebrity overwhelms interest in the details of his fiction.

This common veneration for Hesse's public persona explains why his critics frequently commit the intentional fallacy.¹³ Wimsatt and Beardsley coined this term in 1954 as a reaction to contemporary critical theorists who attempted to uncover the 'meaning' of a text by determining its author's intentions. Wimsatt and Beardsley cautioned against these kinds of readings, claiming that they are inherently problematic: first, because one cannot definitely determine an author's intentions and, second, because an author is not necessarily successful with his/her literary intentions (nor are an author's objectives the only components of his/her works worth consideration). As we will see below, many Hesse scholars turn to Hesse as an authority for their own interpretations,

¹² Hatfield, Henry. *Accepting the Universe: Hermann Hesse's Steppenwolf*. "Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Hermann Hesse." Ed. Harold Bloom. Chelsea House Publishers. Philadelphia: 2003. 111-122.

¹³ This term comes from Wimsatt and Beardsley (1954). The two claim that 'the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a literary art, and it seems [...] that this is a principle which goes deep into some differences in the history of critical attitudes. [...] One must ask how a critic expects to get an answer to the question about intention. How is he to find out what the poet tried to do? If the poet succeeded in doing it, then the poem itself shows what he was trying to do. And if the poet did not succeed, then the poem is not adequate evidence, and the critic must go outside the poem—for evidence of an intention that did not become effective in the poem'. ["The Intentional Fallacy." *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry*. Ed. W.K. Wimsatt. University of Kentucky Press. Lexington: 1954. (p. 3-4).]

often justifying these interpretations with notes from Hesse's journals or letters. While some of these readings may be beneficial for biographical studies, in excess, they can be obstructive when one attempts to explicate the thematic, philosophical, or technical elements of Hesse's fiction.

The first biography on Hesse was written by his friend, the poet and Dada artist, Hugo Ball (*Hesse: sein Leben und sein Werk* [*Hesse: His Life and His Work*] [1927]). The biography was released for Hesse's fiftieth birthday, thirty-five years before his death. As its title suggests, it chronicles Hesse's life in relation to his work. The book emphasises Hesse's spiritual development alongside his literary career and draws parallels between the thematic elements of Hesse's books and his own life. While Ball's biography is not meant to be a critical analysis, many of the later critical biographies of Hesse nonetheless borrow Ball's model by drawing connections between Hesse's own spiritual and psychological development and his work, and many subsequent biographies even have strikingly similar titles to Ball's. Gotthilf Hafner's *Hermann Hesse: Werk und Leben* (1954), for example, dissects Hesse's novels and highlights instances where Hafner perceives parallels between Hesse's life and the characters, narratives, and sceneries of his novels.

The most influential and commonly cited works using Ball's model were published in English in the nineteen sixties and seventies, and the wider accessibility of their publication in English largely explains their lasting influence. However, these major works have all also been translated into German, expanding the range of their influence even further. These works include Mark Boulby's *Hermann Hesse: His Mind and Art* (1967), Joseph Mileck's *Hermann Hesse: Life and Art* (1978), and Ralph Freedman's *Hermann Hesse: A Pilgrim of Crisis* (1978), which all contextualise Hesse's literature within his life. For example, Boulby interprets the composition of Hesse's novel *Demian* (1919) as a symbolic portrait of Hesse's resurfacing from a difficult personal struggle.¹⁴ Freedman similarly homes in on Hesse's mental anguish, and he validates the relevance of this focus in his reading of *Der Steppenwolf* (1927). He states, 'A writer's personal crisis is significant to his readers to the degree that it finds its distillation in his book or in the further refinement of the tools of his trade'.¹⁵ Furthermore, Mileck contends that Hesse's

¹⁴ Boulby, Mark. *Hermann Hesse: His Mind and Art*. Cornell University Press. New York: 1967. (p. 81)

¹⁵ Freedman, Ralph. *Hermann Hesse: Pilgrim of Crisis*. Jonathan Cape. London: 1978. (p. 294)

Märchen ('fairy tales') are exploratory canvases on which Hesse symbolises how tightly he interweaves his fiction and his own life: '[The *Märchen*] were rooted in Hesse's life, and immediately they are the stories of Han Fook¹⁶ and of a particular flutist, but essentially they are archetypal depictions mirroring the artist's inclinations, needs and aspirations, the demands of art, and the relationship between life and art'.¹⁷ These three brief examples are only a few of many instances where the three critics place emphasis on Hesse's biography in their literary interpretations. One can turn to any chapter of these three works and find an abundance of similar examples. There is no need to expound on the point any further, however: as we will see below, the extent of these biographies' influence is still evident today, as critics continue to explicate Hesse's fiction with similar tactics.

For an overview of Hesse criticism up until the mid-twentieth century, we can turn to Mileck's *Hesse and His Critics* (1958). Mileck is the first to provide an organised evaluation of the growing secondary literature on Hesse at the time. Not surprisingly, in his bibliographical overview, Mileck contends that 'a review of Hesse's prose and poetry reveals three distinct periods. Each represents a different stage in the course of the author's struggle with himself and with life as a whole'.¹⁸ This statement essentially summarises the primary focus of the secondary literature that Mileck compiles, and his analysis emphasises how interpretations of Hesse's work up until the publication of his critical overview centre on the ways in which Hesse's fiction closely resembles his own life. The focus of Mileck's compilation thus indicates that the model for his own later biography, as well as Boulby's and Freedman's, was certainly nothing new at the time, and it shows how strong the roots of this prevailing critical approach are.

A new major critical study of Hesse surfaces roughly every decade and evaluates his corpus from an angle similar to preceding studies. For example, a decade after Mileck's and Freedman's influential studies, Eugene Stelzig published *Hermann Hesse's Fictions of the Self: Autobiography and the Confessional Imagination* (1988). In his book, Stelzig differentiates between autobiography and what he coins as 'confessional writing', arguing

¹⁶ Han Fook is the protagonist of Hesse's first *Märchen*, *Der Weg zur Kunst (The Way to Art)* (1913). Found in *Sämtliche Werke*. Band 9. p. 42-48. (Herausgegeben von Volker Michels. 20 Bänden. Suhrkamp Verlag. Frankfurt Am Main: 2001.) All references to Hesse (in German) will be from this source unless otherwise stated. Citations will appear like the following: SW 9, 42-48.

¹⁷ Mileck, Joseph. *Hermann Hesse: Life and Art*. University of California Press. Berkeley: 1978. (p. 111)

¹⁸ Mileck, Joseph. *Hesse and His Critics*. The University of North Carolina. Chapel Hill: 1958. (p. 14)

that Hesse writes the latter. Stelzig supports this analysis by pointing out that Hesse called his own work *Seelenbiographien* ('biographies of the soul' or 'soul-biographies'). He cites a 1928 essay entitled *Eine Arbeitsnacht* (*A Work Night*), which Hesse wrote during the composition of his novel *Narziß und Goldmund* (1930):

Nearly all the works of prose fiction that I have written are *soul-biographies*; all of them are concerned not with stories, [plot] complications and suspense, but are fundamentally monologues in which a single person, precisely this mythic figure is considered in its relation to the world and to itself [my italics].¹⁹

Beinahe alle Prosadichtungen, die ich geschrieben habe, sind *Seelenbiographien*, in allen handelt es sich nicht um Geschichten, Verwicklungen und Spannungen, sondern sie sind im Grunde Monologe, in denen eine einzige Person, eben jene mythische Figur, in ihren Beziehungen zur Welt und zum eigenen Ich betrachtet wird [my italics].²⁰

Stelzig provides this citation and argues that Hesse's use of the term *Seelenbiographien* indicates the 'confessional'—and not the autobiographical—nature of his texts. The distinction that Stelzig draws between 'confessional' and autobiographical writing is particularly important because it exemplifies the hindering effects of the trend I have identified. It is thus instructive to look at this distinction more closely. For Stelzig, autobiography must directly 'align' with the life of the writer. He argues, 'the text and the *vita* have an inherent similarity, or are at least homologous. Here autobiography demands biography. The former cannot be wholly sundered from the latter, for the text of a life depends to some degree on an extratextual sanction: the author's'.²¹ As this shows, Stelzig's primary criterion for an autobiography is the direct alignment of a text with corroborating facts from an author's life. Unlike autobiography, Stelzig argues, 'confessional' writing is a 'creative interpretation' of an author's life, recorded throughout his/her experiences. He adds, though, that one needs 'ancillary biographical information' in order to interpret these kinds of works.²² Stelzig's distinction illustrates two primary limitations of continuing to contextualise Hesse's works within his romanticised biography.

¹⁹ Translation from: Stelzig, Eugene. *Hermann Hesse's Fictions of the Self: Autobiography and the Confessional Imagination*. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New Jersey: 1988. (p. 36)

²⁰ (SW 12, 123-24)

²¹ Stelzig, Eugene. *Hermann Hesse's Fictions of the Self: Autobiography and the Confessional Imagination*. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New Jersey: 1988. (p. 8-9)

²² *Ibid.*

First, by suggesting that one needs a factual biographical framework within which to analyse Hesse's fiction, Stelzig limits the number of angles from which one can read Hesse and lowers credibility of analyses that do not operate within this framework. Second, and most importantly, although Stelzig's interpretation of Hesse as a 'confessional'—rather than an autobiographical—writer changes the map of the research field slightly, it nonetheless does so through the very same critical techniques employed by many critics before Stelzig. That is, he supports his argument with biographical information about Hesse's life and cites Hesse as his most trustworthy source. By turning to the author's own letters, journals, and essays to corroborate his argument, Stelzig implies that his book carries an indisputable brand of authority. As mentioned above, though, this is a product of the intentional fallacy, and it is risky business to rely solely on an author's intentions in order to interpret his/her work.

While Stelzig attempts to change the conversation, some scholars, on the other hand, unashamedly boast that their own critical approaches mimic previous scholarship. For instance, precisely a decade after Stelzig changes tack only slightly, Lewis Tusken argues that the biographical lens through which he views Hesse's oeuvre is the most viable one because it comes as part of a tradition. In an introduction to his book *Understanding Hermann Hesse: the Man, His Myth, His Metaphor* (1998), Tusken states:

the biographical approach to understanding Hesse is especially helpful, not only because it details the circumstances under which his works were written but also because it helps to determine his *Erzählhaltung*—his stance toward his subject matter—and, thus, to reveal his message in relation to his own ability to "live it" at a given time. All critics agree that Hesse's novels are part and parcel of his own inner conflict.²³

This passage shows how Tusken privileges popular interpretations of Hesse and thus rests his own book comfortably on the shoulders of giants. Tusken's assertion that 'all critics agree' strongly indicates this, and, crucially, it also shows why the continuance of the biographical approach hinders the field. By boasting that his own critical angle is indisputable, Tusken perpetuates the biographical trend in a way that suggests no other critical method is possible. Tusken frequently reminds his readers of this throughout his book. For instance, in his analysis of Hesse's novella *Siddhartha* (1922), he claims that

²³ Tusken, Lewis. *Understanding Hermann Hesse: the Man, His Myth, His Metaphor*. Ed. James Hardin. University of South Carolina. Columbia: 1998. (p. 2-3)

‘there is no better proof than Hesse’s own depression and despair to bring home his *Siddhartha* message’.²⁴ This statement is one of many where Tusken argues that the state of Hesse’s mental health at different times serves as a blueprint for his work; and in the following section, we will see that psychological turmoil is a well-established point of interest for much of the shorter secondary literature that arises from this same biographical scholarship.

Before considering some of this secondary literature, two more recent biographies require a brief mention because, although they are not explicitly critical, they narrate Hesse’s life through means similar to ones we have seen. Gunnar Decker’s *Hesse: Der Wanderer und sein Schatten (Hesse: the Wanderer and his Shadows)* (2012) and Heimo Schwilk’s *Hermann Hesse: Das Leben des Glasperlenspielers (Hermann Hesse: The Life of the Glass Bead Game Player)* (2012) both tell Hesse’s story in a way that, again, emphasises an inextricable link between Hesse’s life and the content of his work. Neither author purports his biography to be a critical analysis of Hesse’s works, as critics such as Tusken and Stelzig do. Nonetheless, given the longevity of these kinds of approaches, Decker’s and Schwilk’s works are certainly products of a longstanding tradition. Criticism may not be their first order of business, but the link they demonstrate is undoubtedly affected by a cascading trend. In light of how recently both books were released, it is thus markedly evident that the interrelationship of Hesse’s life and work is still topical among his biographers.

1.3 New Bricks, Old Foundation: the Biographical Effect

Many less extensive studies, such as essays in journals or edited volumes, are also characteristic of the trend identified in the previous section. There is an abundance of shorter secondary literature that essentially rehashes and restates the same longstanding arguments. Not unlike Tusken, critics who do this often legitimate their own critical voices with more authoritative voices, such as Mileck or Boulby. For instance, in an introduction to his compilation of essays on Hesse, Harold Bloom calls Hesse’s corpus a ‘transposed life history’.²⁵ Bloom’s description is hardly original, though, as he lifts the phrase verbatim from E.R. Curtius, whom Bloom features in his compilation. Curtius claims that ‘thematic

²⁴ Ibid., 108.

²⁵ Bloom, Harold. *Bloom’s Modern Critical Views: Hermann Hesse* (‘Introduction’). Ed. Harold Bloom. Chelsea House Publishers. Philadelphia: 2003. vii-viii. (p. vii)

and technical' analyses are the only 'adequate method[s] for interpreting an author'.²⁶ But in Hesse's case, he argues, this is very difficult to do because Hesse's novels are 'autobiographical ectoplasms, transposed life histories'.²⁷ With Bloom's homing in on this interpretation, it is not surprising that his collection of essays also features Mileck, Boulby, Freedman, and Stelzig (twice), among others, such as Martin Swales and Theodore Ziolkowski. We will see throughout other chapters in this dissertation that Swales and Ziolkowski are not always as deeply nested within the biographical tradition that I have identified, and many of their interpretations are even pertinent to my own argument. However, I mention them at this point only to show that, while Bloom's compilation offers *some* readings that do not tally with the popular trend, it is much more heavily weighted with essays and excerpts that do.

1.3.1 The Psychological Angle

Much of the secondary literature on Hesse spotlights Hesse's well-known personal struggles, his often discussed tendency for depression, and his undertaking psychoanalysis in crucial stages of his life prior to writing some of his most important works, such as *Demian* (1919), *Siddhartha* (1922), and *Der Steppenwolf* (1927). Studies of this nature often construe various episodes from Hesse's work as symbolic portrayals of his own tumultuous psyche. For example, in a 2009 essay by Stefan Höppner with the same title as Hesse's novella *Klein und Wagner* (*Klein and Wagner*) (1919), Höppner suggests that 'the most obvious features of Hesse's novella *Klein und Wagner* are the striking autobiographical parallels'.²⁸ Höppner specifically highlights Hesse's psychoanalytic sessions as a major component of the novella's composition, and he supports his observation with letter correspondences between Hesse and his psychoanalyst Josef Bernhard Lang.²⁹ Höppner states, 'correspondence between Hesse and Josef Lang has demonstrated just how much of Hesse's *thinly veiled* autobiography went into the text [my

²⁶ Curtius, E. R. *Hermann Hesse*. "Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Hermann Hesse." Ed. Harold Bloom. Chelsea House Publishers. Philadelphia: 2003. 3-20. (p. 10)

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

²⁸ Höppner, Stefan. *Klein und Wagner*. "A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." Ed. Ingo Cornils. Camden House. New York: 2009. 117-137. (p. 121)

²⁹ Josef Bernhard Lang was Hesse's psychoanalyst between June 1916 and November 1917. For more information about Hesse's psychoanalysis, see: Michels, Volker. *Hermann Hesse and Psychoanalysis*. "A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." Ed. Ingo Cornils. New York: 2009. 323-344. Also see: *Der dunkle und wilde Seite der Seele: Briefwechsel mit seinem Psychoanalytiker Josef Bernhard Lang, 1916-1944*. Ed. Thomas Feitknecht. Suhrkamp. Frankfurt am Main: 2006.

italics]’.³⁰ Höppner cites a letter to Lang as his evidence. In this letter, dated 26 January 1920, Hesse claims, ‘I have not been Hesse, but I was Sinclair, Klingsor, Klein, etc., and I will still be much more [my translation]’. [*Ich bin ja nicht Hesse, sondern war Sinclair, war Klingsor, war Klein etc und werde noch manches sein.*]³¹ Höppner emphasises this phrase and uses it as a guide for his own interpretation of the novella as an exercise in self-therapy; thus, in his essay, Höppner primarily draws parallels between the protagonist Klein’s mental anguish and Hesse’s own personal struggles, as Hesse discussed them with Lang. Precisely the same ‘thin veil’ metaphor is used by Theodore Jackson to argue that Hesse’s *Der Steppenwolf* is an account of Hesse’s own psychological struggles. In his PhD thesis, Jackson suggests that *Der Steppenwolf* is a ‘thinly-veiled account of Hesse’s own coming to terms with life in the early twentieth century [my italics]’.³² The duplicated description shows the prevalence of this critical approach. Furthermore, the two critics’ specific word choice illustrates their mutually predominant interest in Hesse’s self-symbolism over the technical (and fictional) components of his literature.

Another example comes from the scholar Frederick A. Lubich. Lubich puts a psychoanalytic lens on Hesse’s novel *Narziss und Goldmund* (*Narziss and Goldmund*) (1930) by teasing out what he perceives as symbolic of Hesse’s personal hurdles in the novel. Lubich states that in ‘order to further explore Goldmund’s complex bond with his mother and her symbolic world, we need to look at Hesse’s own psychological struggle’.³³ As we can see, Lubich does not suggest that a biographical frame *could* supplement a reading of the text; rather, he states that such a frame is needed for an interpretation. Similarly, Andreas Solbach aligns the composition of Hesse’s *Demian* (1919) with a specific event in his life. He says that the novel ‘reflects the crisis in the author’s life that began in 1912 with the serious illness of his son Martin and the family’s move from Gaienhofen to Bern’.³⁴ Solbach elaborates by arguing that the novel serves four major purposes for Hesse: first, to advance his artistic style in a post-war era; second, to maintain

³⁰ Höppner, Stefan. *Klein und Wagner*. “A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse.” 117-137. (p. 121)

³¹ In: *Der dunkle und wilde Seite der Seele* (p. 159)

³² Jackson, Theodore. “Hermann Hesse as Ambivalent Modernist.” (2010). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. <http://openscholarship.wustl.edu>. Retrieved on 6 April, 2014. (p. 136)

³³ Lubich, Frederick A. *Narziss und Goldmund*. “A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse.” 187-214. (p. 189)

³⁴ Solbach, Andreas. *The Aesthetics of Ritual: Pollution, Magic, and Sentimentality in Hesse’s Demian (1919)*. “A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse.” 81-115. (p. 81)

his pre-war ideological stance; third, to continue appeasing a middle-class audience; fourth, and most importantly for Solbach, is that *Demian* serves as a means for Hesse ‘to overcome his personal crisis and release new energies’.³⁵ Much like Curtius and Höppner, Solbach reads Hesse’s novel as a personal journal; and like Stelzig, Solbach recognises the novel as Hesse’s fictional assessment of his own life: that is, he views it as a ‘confessional’ text.

Similarly, Osman Durrani attempts to deconstruct Hesse’s psyche through an exposition of his novel *Rosshalde* (1914). In his essay ‘Rosshalde: A Portrait of a Husband and Father’ (2009), Durrani traces Hesse’s own marital struggles alongside those of the novel’s protagonist Veraguth. Throughout his analysis, Durrani also notes instances of other biographical parallels between Hesse’s life and his novel, such as the estate Veraguth lives on or what Durrani characterises as the ‘alter-ego’ nature of Veraguth’s friend Burkhardt.³⁶ Additionally, he cites Hesse’s actual journey eastward as the breeding ground for Veraguth’s flight to the East towards the end of the novel.³⁷ Durrani commends previous interpretations of the novel that approach it from the same angle. He states, ‘There are good reasons for regarding Hesse’s fourth novel as autobiographical, *as most of his critics do* [my italics]’.³⁸ As this claim shows, Durrani presents his examination with the same legitimising mark of scholarly consensus as Tusken does. That is, Durrani plants his interpretation on firm ground but produces very little new fruit. The substantial amount of biographical components that Durrani notices seems to verify Curtius’s contention that one cannot approach Hesse’s novels by simply focusing on their ‘technical and thematic’ elements. While I disagree with Curtius, the familiar territory in which Durrani’s essay sits certainly strengthens opinions like Curtius’s.

Unsurprisingly, Hesse’s publisher Siegfried Unseld has helped to bolster views like Curtius’s. In a paper he presented at the Fourteenth Amherster Kolloquium zur Deutschen Literatur (1986), Unseld translates *Seelenbiographien* into English as ‘psychological biographies’ and defines them as Hesse’s ‘attempts to express psychological experiences in

³⁵ Ibid., 82.

³⁶ According to Durrani, Hesse’s ‘alter-ego’ characters always stand as a counterpart and best friend to his novels’ protagonists. Through these characters, the protagonist always learns something of himself that can apparently only grow clear to the protagonist through his alter ego’s assistance. Durrani claims that these characters are therefore a facet of Hesse’s own ego. [Durrani, Osman. *Rosshalde: A Portrait of a Husband and Father*. “A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse.” 57-80.] (p. 57-71)

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 57.

the garment of visible events'.³⁹ Unseld then rhetorically asks that, in light of this knowledge, 'could it be that [the *Seelenbiographien*] are portrayals of his problems and uncertainties [sic], his reality, his truth, with an absence of art and esthetics?'⁴⁰ Unseld's translation of *Seelenbiographien* is clearly not literal, and his choice of the word 'psychological' is worth scrutiny because it entirely alters the meaning of the term. It eliminates the spiritual element evoked by the original German and narrows the content of Hesse's novels to a strictly psychological realm. Unseld's perception of Hesse's entire corpus thus not only fits snugly into the trend of scholarship we have seen, but, importantly, it also reinforces popular scholarly opinions that the biographical approach to Hesse is the most reasonable one. For a few more articles and essays that focus on reflections of Hesse's psyche in his works, see: Seymour L. Flaxman's 'Der Steppenwolf: Hesse's Portrait of the Intellectual' (1954), Volker Michels's 'Hermann Hesse and Psychoanalysis' (2009), Bernhard Spies's 'Hermann Hesses Lyrik: Psychologisierung als Modernisierung' ('Hermann Hesse's Poetry: Psychologising as Modernising') (2004), and finally, in David Horrocks's afterword to his 2012 translation of *Der Steppenwolf*,⁴¹ Horrocks contextualises the novel with Hesse's personal crisis at the time of composing it, which is precisely the same approach to the novel taken by many others before him (e.g. Mileck, Boulby, Freedman, and Hatfield).

It should be clear at this point that psychoanalysing *Hesse* (the author himself) through his fiction is common practice. There are, of course, literary critics who take other approaches. However, when the critical *focus* is on themes or motifs beyond the psychological, the critical *approach* is often to still amplify the links between these themes/motifs and Hesse's life. It is worth considering one example of a critical work that does this in order to demonstrate how far reaching these sturdy biographical roots in Hesse scholarship are. Adrian Hsia provides a perfect example because he has written extensively on Hesse's incorporation of eastern spirituality and philosophy into his literature and

³⁹ Unseld, Siegfried. *Hermann Hesse's Influence: Ethics or Esthetics?* "Hermann Hesse: Politische und Wirkungsgeschichtliche Aspekte." Ed. Sigrid Bauschinger. A. Francke AG Verlag. Bern: 1986. (Paper presented at 14th Amherster Kolloquium zur Deutschen Literatur.)

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ *Der Steppenwolf*. Translated by David Horrocks. Penguin UK. London: 2012.

produced a major work on these themes.⁴² But, although Hsia turns away from the psychological, he nonetheless maintains the biographical. Not surprisingly, a text that receives Hsia's repeated attention is Hesse's *Siddhartha* (1922), a novel that chronicles the spiritual journey of a young Indian boy during the time of the Buddha. In a 2009 essay on the book, Hsia underlines and updates some of his arguments from his major study *Hermann Hesse und China: Darstellung, Materialien und Interpretationen* (*Hermann Hesse and China: Representation, Materials and Interpretation*) (1974). Hsia's essay analyses the themes of *Siddhartha* through Hesse's own words about the novel's composition. Hsia contends that the novel is a symbolic confession for Hesse. He states, 'the novel is the confession of a man of Christian origin who left the Church early in his life in order to learn to understand other religions, especially the Indian and Chinese forms of belief'.⁴³ Hsia's description of the novel as a 'confession' is a label we have encountered already. Furthermore, Hsia supports his interpretation by employing another strategy we have seen: he justifies his analysis with what he calls the 'authoritative stamp of the author' and reminds us that interpreting Hesse through his own non-fictional notations about his life is a method 'subscribed to by most critics today'.⁴⁴ Hsia thus asserts that, over forty years after the ink had dried on many of the major critical biographies on Hesse, *most* critics still agree that this is the best approach.

This kind of self-assurance is precisely why Hesse scholarship has stagnated. Critics reiterate old arguments and validate their doing so by positioning these arguments atop established scholarship that does the very same. The perpetual insistence that the longevity of this approach renders it the most valid one closes doors and bars new knowledge. So far, this literature review has presented the expansive shoots of a deeply rooted practice of contextualising Hesse's work within his life. Now that we have seen the breadth of this trend, it is necessary to touch on some critics who encourage an alternative approach because my own project also analyses Hesse from a non-traditional angle.

⁴² See: Hsia, Adrian. *Hermann Hesse und China: Darstellung, Materialien und Interpretationen*. Suhrkamp. Frankfurt am Main: 1974.

⁴³ Hsia, Adrian. *Siddhartha*. "A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." 149-170. (p. 149)

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

1.4 Towards a New Method

In Reso Karalashwili's *Hermann Hesses Romanwelt (Hermann Hesse's Novel World)* (1986), Karalashwili critiques what he considers are misinterpretations of Hesse's own labelling his novels as *Seelenbiographien*:

A characteristic feature of the soul-biography's [*seelenbiographischen*] form is its distinctly confessional nature. When we speak of the nature of a 'biography of the soul', though, we must not forget that the confession is not only a formal, but also a textual characteristic of epic structure; and we should remember that its actual meaning does not lie in its authentic report of experienced events, but rather on its presentation of the self-transformation that takes place in the narrator [my translation].

Ein weiteres Wesensmerkmal der seelenbiographischen Form ist ihre deutlich ausgeprägte Bekenntnishaftigkeit. Wenn wir aber von dem Bekenntnischarakter der Seelenbiographie sprechen, dürfen wir uns nicht entgehen lassen, daß das Bekenntnis nicht nur eine formale, sondern auch eine inhaltliche Eigenschaft der epischen Struktur ist und daß dessen eigentlicher Sinn nicht so sehr in einem aufrichtigen Bericht der erlebten Begebenheiten besteht, sondern im Fixieren und Begreifen der Selbstveränderung, die sich im Erzähler vollzieht.⁴⁵

As this shows, Karalashwili does not identify the *Seelenbiographien* as direct reflections of Hesse's life. For Karalashwili, Hesse's classification of his novels rather refers to how they are fictional accounts of fictional characters' lives. That is, they are biographies of a soul and not necessarily biographies of Hesse's. With this slight shift in perspective of the *Seelenbiographien*, an even more significant shift can be made in the focal point of critical studies on Hesse. By not focusing on direct correlations between Hesse's and his protagonists' self-development, new studies can make headway in different thematic and technical aspects of Hesse's literature. It is, of course, not lost on me that Karalashwili reaches his assessment of Hesse's novels through a method we have seen numerous times—turning to Hesse as the authority on how to interpret his work. Nonetheless, Karalashwili interprets Hesse's meaning differently, and for scholars who rely heavily on Hesse's 'authoritative stamp', Karalashwili turns the tables and opens new doors for them. However, as we have seen, few have entered.

Ingo Cornils adds to Karalashwili's argument. In the introduction to his *A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse* (2009), Cornils asserts that Hesse's 'texts are

⁴⁵ Karalashwili, Reso. *Hermann Hesses Romanwelt*. Böhlau Verlag, Vienna: 1986. (p. 10)

not externalized carbon copies of his own psyche. Rather, Hesse explored his innermost thoughts and feelings as a starting point for constructing characters that serve as case studies both for the narrator and for the reader, who might or might not sense an affinity with them'.⁴⁶ Similar to Karalaszewski, Cornils splits from most commonly accepted interpretations of the *Seelenbiographien* and turns his attention onto the reader by reminding us that Hesse's novels convey narratives to which his readers may also relate. In emphasising the reader and the reading process, Cornils points to an often forgotten fact in literary studies (and certainly a largely forgotten one in Hesse scholarship): that *personal* interpretations are not only viable but are beneficial. With this in mind, we can divorce Hesse's novels from the presumed 'objective' biographical facts that have guided so many critics, and we can refocus our critical lens onto the deeper theoretical facets that grow evident when we remind ourselves that Hesse's novels are fictional.

I refer to one more critic who holds a similar view to mine—Jefford Vahlbusch—because Vahlbusch applies the kind of critical approach that I argue is necessary, and his reasoning for this approach is similar to my reasoning for my own project. In his essay 'Toward a New Reading of Hesse's *Unterm Rad*' (2009), Vahlbusch critiques a 2008 published collection⁴⁷ of Hesse's notes, essays, and poetry that is purported to 'explain' Hesse's *Unterm Rad* (*Beneath the Wheel*) (1906) through concrete evidence of Hesse's biographical similarities to his novel's protagonist, Hermann Heilner. Vahlbusch writes:

Fascinating biographical documents [...] may indeed help us to understand Hesse, but they do not help us with the novel or its genesis. [...] Hesse may have been entertaining thoughts of suicide [...] or imitating Heinrich Heilner's disarmingly simple verse, or both. If the poem⁴⁸ attests to feelings that led to Hesse's flight the next day,⁴⁹ then it is of great biographical significance. But the poem is not useful as an explanation of or commentary on Hermann Heilner's fictional flight from Maulbronn.⁵⁰

I wholly agree with Vahlbusch. If one wishes to study Hesse the man, the celebrity, or the writer, or even the relationship between all three, then the biographical context of his

⁴⁶ Cornils, Ingo. "A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." 1-16. (p. 8)

⁴⁷ *Unterm Rad: Entstehungsgeschichte in Selbstzeugnissen des Autors*. Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main: 2008.

⁴⁸ He refers to a poem composed by Hesse on 6 March 1892, published in the collection mentioned above.

⁴⁹ On 7 March 1892, Hesse, much like Hermann Heilner in *Unterm Rad*, fled from seminary.

⁵⁰ Vahlbusch, Jefford. *Towards a New Reading of Unterm Rad*. "A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." 17-56. (p. 21)

fiction can prove useful. Indeed, many worthwhile studies have developed out of this trend (e.g. Mileck's *Life and Art*). However, as I have shown, many critics who contend that Hesse's work cannot be isolated from its biographical context continue to lay new bricks on an old wall, stunting other equally useful yet *new* studies from being conducted. In Vahlbusch's essay, he argues that the common biographical trend produces many textually unsupportable readings, which, in his view, misappropriates Hesse's life onto his text. For this reason, Vahlbusch contends that Hesse's fiction needs to be isolated from his biography in order to properly dissect its components.

My own project does precisely this. It provides a thorough theoretical investigation of Hesse's novels that is not solely guided by biographical context. It demonstrates a development in Hesse's *fictional* representations of masks and his employment of the philosophical concept *the Mask* (explained in the following chapter). By studying this major thematic development separately from Hesse's biography, this project is able to demonstrate the benefit of isolating Hesse's fiction from his life. The theme of masking that occurs in Hesse's fiction is intricate and complex, and its depths cannot therefore be explored by superficially noting commonalities between the masking theme and Hesse's personal experiences. While Hesse's exposure to the Nietzschean Mask—which I argue informs his later literary representations of the Self—is well documented and worth consideration, exploring his incorporation of this concept into his work requires close attention to the inner workings of his fiction. This will all grow clearer as this project unfolds and the many facets of the masking theme grow evident through my literary analysis.

Chapter 2: From Mask to Self: a Brief History

2.1 Chapter Introduction

Before closely examining the theme of the mask in Hesse's works, it is instructive to first provide a historical context that explains the relationship between masks and identity in western societies. From culture to culture, masks carry different meanings. In most modern western cultures, they are often associated with identity, but this has not always been the case. Throughout western European history, masks have developed from physical objects that represented character types in the ancient Greek theatre into objects that represented a deceptive concealment of identity in the Middle Ages; and, from the Early Modern period onward, they have often been a metaphorical concept through which philosophers, artists, poets, and novelists negotiate an understanding of the Self. This chapter highlights the cultural shifts that instigated these altering perceptions of the mask from ancient Greece to the modern day. In particular, it shows the ongoing important role that the mask plays in western thought—such as philosophy, literature, sociology, and, finally, psychoanalysis—as a vehicle of identity exploration. The chapter then concludes with a detailed explanation of Friedrich Nietzsche's use of the term *Maske* as a metaphor for the strictly external nature of both 'truth' and the Self. The demonstration of this historical development will provide the necessary context for the following chapter's illustration of Hesse's and Yeats's mutual questioning of the Self's internal or external nature as well as their employment of masks as a suitable motif for exploring this question. The meanings of these notions of internality and externality will grow clearer as both this chapter and the subsequent chapter unfold. Both Hesse's and Yeats's literary depictions of the Self in relation to masks rests within a long historical development of western conceptions of identity. Therefore, by demonstrating these developing conceptions, this chapter not only helps to explain the two writers' mutual interest in conceptions of the Self, but it also contextualises the parallels between their literary employments of masks as tools for engaging with these notions.

2.2 From Theatrical Expression to Sinister Disguise

The earliest form of the mask in the western world was the ancient Greek *prosopon*. The *prosopon* was not merely a mask object, though; it was a much more encompassing

concept. The prominent mask scholar A. David Napier describes it as ‘a manifestation, a figure; [...] masks were conceived as belonging to a much broader class of phenomena than the mere object (mask) *prosopon* is usually taken to mean. The word *prosopon* could mean the mask, the dramatic part, the person, and the face’.⁵¹ The *prosopon*, as Napier points out, was thus not perceived as an instrument of disguise. Every actor in the ancient Greek theatre donned one, which completely effaced his face and either projected cultural representations with which the audience could identify, or it took on other mythological significations and meanings. In either case, concealment meant transformation and not disguise.

The *prosopon* was not only a theatrical device, though. Ancient artistic depictions of Greek mythological stories often portray their characters donning masks. In fact, the only knowledge we have of the masks from the fifth-century playwrights (such as Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides) is exclusively learned from vase paintings, as pointed out by historian Ian Jenkins.⁵² The prevalence of such artistic depictions of masks in ancient Greece suggests that the *prosopon*’s cultural significance certainly extended beyond the theatre. It was an object with varied representative value, and its meaning was neither deceiving nor misleading. The Greeks’ reverence for the mask indicates that what it conveyed was not construed as deceptive; rather, it was construed as a device that redefined meaning. Jenkins offers an analogy to explain this: in ancient Greece, ‘a helmet is to the warrior what the mask is to the actor: the helmet effaces personality to present a stereotypical warrior’s identity’.⁵³ In other words, the mask (*prosopon*) was a transformational object that did not conceal meaning: it reformulated and projected new meaning. The mask functioned similarly in ancient Rome. In the Roman theatre, the *prosopon* developed into the *persona*, which adopted similar roles to that of the *prosopon*. The ancient *persona* defined a category of the person displayed on stage.⁵⁴ It transformed the actor into a prescribed character type, and, like the *prosopon*, it was not perceived to have disguising properties. Thus, in the ancient western world, the mask was perceived

⁵¹ Napier, A. David. *Masks, Transformation, and Paradox*. Foreword by Rodney Needham. University of California Press. Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1986. (p. 8)

⁵² Jenkins, Ian. *Face Value: The Mask in Greece and Rome*. “Masks: The Art of Expression.” Ed. John Mack. The British Museum Press. London: 1994. 150-67. (p. 157)

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 159.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 151.

very differently from how it is today. What it concealed was of no concern; what it *meant* was of the greatest concern.

Throughout the Middle Ages, masks took on a much different meaning. In addition to their transformative properties, they also became associated with disguise. According to ethnographer John Mack, they still carry this meaning. Mack claims that the emphasis of the ‘term [*mask*] in English is on the act of concealment. [...] The reference is to the altered appearance of the masker rather than to the status of the portrayal.’⁵⁵ If Mack’s observation is correct, then it should not be limited to the English language alone because western conceptions of masks and masking developed together through the spread of Christianity. Through cultural shifts toward Christianity, the *persona* became associated with paganism, and the mask object was stamped with sinister connotations. This monotheistic rejection of the pagan transformation process therefore marked the *persona* as an object that concealed what was then perceived as ‘true’ expression or the ‘true’ Self.

This label is the mask’s first historical connection to conceptions of identity. According to Napier, we can credit the roots of this perception to Augustine. Napier claims that Augustine ‘viewed theater and its personae as antithetical to true identity’ and thus arrived ‘at a Christian notion of the person’.⁵⁶ As Christian doctrine shaped western cultures throughout the Middle Ages, the rejection of the mask prevailed. Napier states:

For Christians, an all-knowing god cannot be moved by mimesis; transformation through visual performance and supernatural omniscience must remain antithetical. For the Middle Ages, the body itself became a *persona*—a mask its wearer only escaped at death. [...] as humans are equal in essence, we cannot, as Christians, rely on human appearance; but since the Church and the Sacraments are holy *per se*, their outward objective character becomes crucial. Hence, by tampering with human appearances, as in instances of masking, we either (1) invite idolatry, (2) act disingenuously, or (3) risk identification with the devil, for whom *apparent* [my italics] changes are real ones.⁵⁷

As Napier shows, Medieval Christian theology defined the Self as an internal essence. Physical masks—through their pagan transformation process—thus not only obstructed identity but, importantly, they altered what was perceived as ‘true’ identity. Napier states that the perceived danger of masking was not in the mask’s abstract personifications, but

⁵⁵ Mack, John. *Introduction: About Face*. “Masks: The Art of Expression.” Ed. John Mack. The British Museum Press. London: 1994. 9-31. (p. 12)

⁵⁶ Napier. *Masks, Transformation, and Paradox*. (p. 8)

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 12-15.

rather in its understood ability to alter a ‘concrete person’.⁵⁸ Furthermore, the notion of the internal Self deepened through the Christian separation of body and soul: the external body was merely a physical shell that encased the ‘true’ Self. Napier points out that this external shell became known as a *persona*. By adopting this specific term, the early Christian world redefined external appearances as dishonest and established internality as ‘truth’. Napier’s research reveals a direct connection between masks and identity and shows how the mask developed into an object of disguise. In the following chapter, we will see how both Hesse and Yeats embraced this internal conception of Self in their early careers but later turned toward external portrayals of the Self. (The ‘external Self’ will grow clearer through my explanation of the Nietzschean Mask below.) In any case, Hesse’s and Yeats’s initial literary portrayals of internality demonstrate the longevity of these early Christian interpretations of identity in many western cultures.

It is worth noting that Hesse’s novels are steeped even deeper within the western fixation on internality than Yeats’s because the literary model for all of his novels—the German *Bildungsroman*—develops from the medieval perception of the Self. In German literary scholar Todd Kontje’s *The German Bildungsroman: History of a National Genre* (1993), Kontje explains the historical development of the German concept of *Bildung*. He explains how *Bildung* originally referred to both the external *appearance* of an individual and the *process of shaping* that individual.⁵⁹ In its earliest uses, this referred to God’s transformation of a person. However, as the Enlightenment fine-tuned the western intellect and brought in a new sense of individuality, the concept of *Bildung* developed into one that describes an individual’s shaping of his/her own ‘innate potential’ through interactions with their environment.⁶⁰ While this shift in meaning distances *Bildung* from its religious foundation, it nonetheless retains its definition of the Self as internal. According to Kontje,

⁵⁸ Ibid., 15. (Napier also points out the irony of this perspective: on the one hand, it deepens Christian views on the person and the ‘Self’; on the other hand, it keeps pagan belief systems alive. By recognising the transformational potential of the mask object, medieval cultures maintained their belief in the mythologies that shaped this belief, albeit in an altered form. Napier argues that this helps to explain the pagan roots of many western holidays and traditions.)

⁵⁹ Kontje, Todd. *The German Bildungsroman*. Ed. James Hardin and Gunther Holst. Camden House. Columbia: 1993.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 1-7.

Bildung became so important in German culture that ‘obtaining *Bildung*’ was (and still is) an aspiring feat; hence, the development and popularity of the *Bildungsroman*.⁶¹

2.2.1 Early Modern to Modern Conceptions of the Self and the Mask

As stated, during the Enlightenment, the internal unity of the Self that dominated medieval self-conceptions came into question. Influential philosophers, such as David Hume, John Locke, and Immanuel Kant challenged the illusiveness of this concept and began to ask how unity can be maintained in an observably transient world. In *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739), for example, Hume argues that the Self is a bundle of successive sensations:

Pain and pleasure, grief and joy, passions and sensations succeed each other, and never all exist at the same time. It cannot, therefore, be from any of these impressions, or from any other, that the idea of self is deriv'd; and consequently there is no such idea.⁶²

In this passage, Hume challenges the medieval notion of the Self as a fixed internality. He argues that awareness of the Self comes through successive external experiences; the conscious mind by which we conceive of the Self is therefore as inconsistent as the experiences that shape it. Hume’s perception of the successive, transient Self became an ongoing perception from the Early Modern period onward, and the Romantic poets, in particular, devoted much of their work to exploring this idea further. William Wordsworth’s poetry, for instance, sketches a transient Self more clearly than any other English Romanticist. Wordsworth portrays the human mind as an extension of the nature it perceives. Wordsworth’s autobiographical work *The Prelude* articulates his view best.⁶³ In Book II of the poem, Wordsworth describes a relation of an infant’s mind to the universe and illustrates the self-awareness that arises from this relationship:

No outcast he, bewildered and depressed:
 Along his infant veins are interfused
 The gravitation and the filial bond
 Of nature that connect him with the world. [...]

⁶¹ According to most literary scholars, including Kontje, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (*Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship*) (1795) is the first *Bildungsroman*.

⁶² Hume, David. “A Treatise of Human Nature.” Book I; Part IV; Section VI. *Of Personal Identity*. (1739) In: “The Philosophical Works of David Hume.” Adam Black and William Tate. Edinburgh: 1826. (p. 320)

⁶³ The first version of this extensive poem dates from 1798, but its final version, published in fourteen books, was released shortly after Wordsworth’s death in 1850.

From nature largely he receives, nor so
 Is satisfied but largely gives again,
 For feeling has to him imparted strength,
 And powerful in all sentiments of grief,
 Of exultation, fear and joy, his mind,
 Even as an agent of the one great mind,
 Creates, creator and receiver both,
 Working but in alliance with the works
 Which it beholds.⁶⁴

This passage depicts a connection between the infant and the external world. The infant is internally aware of this world and of his external existence within it. He is both the ‘creator and receiver’: he perceives the external world and, through internally processing his connection with it, he creates a sense of Self. Wordsworth’s Self is thus an internal creation that develops through external experiences. In his perception, one affirms the Self through a continuing process of perceiving its place in the external world. Identity, for Wordsworth, cannot be isolated from these experiences. Therefore, much like in Hume’s view, Wordsworth’s Self is a *process*. It is not fixed, but it maintains the illusion of unity through successive connections with the external world: every new perception reaffirms the Self. We can see that Wordsworth demonstrates a division between internality and externality, but he recognises an inherent relationship between the two. His work thus fits within a pattern of western thought concerned with an internal/external divide.

This divide was still a literary concern by the mid-nineteenth century. Edgar Allan Poe, for instance, satirised conceptions of internal identity by depicting a mask with strictly representational value in his short story *The Masque of the Red Death* (1842). The story takes place amidst a countrywide scare of the ‘Red Death’, which is a fatal disease that kills its victims through profuse bleeding from the pores. Against this grim setting, the central character Prince Prospero hosts a masquerade ball. Towards midnight at the ball, a guest arrives masked as the Red Death:

The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. [...] His vesture was dabbled in blood—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Wordsworth, William. *The Prelude*. Book II. (1798-1799). In: *The Thirteen-Book Prelude by Williams Wordsworth*. Ed. Mark L. Reed. Cornell University Press. Ithaca and London: 1991. (p. 130)

⁶⁵ Poe, Edgar Allan. *The Masque of the Red Death*. (1842). Ed. David Galloway. Penguin Books. London: 2003. 205-211. (p. 210)

The guest's costume causes such offense that Prospero demands his/her unmasking. As no other guest obliges, Prospero approaches the guest himself, with a dagger in his hand and an intention to kill; but as he moves closer to the masked guest, Prospero falls dead. The crowd then seizes the guest and unmasks him, but they find 'the grave-cerements and corpse-like mask which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form'.⁶⁶ Upon this discovery, the other guests also die.

In this story, Poe draws a distinction between two perceptions of the mask. The absence behind the mask of Red Death indicates that the mask itself embodies identity. Thus, like the ancient Greek mask, its external representation constitutes its meaning. On the other hand, Prospero and his guests' fixation on the identity behind the mask echoes medieval perceptions of the mask's sinister concealing properties. As previously mentioned, medieval fears of the mask were not only rooted in the supposed dangers of identity concealment but also in the supposed dangers of identity alteration. In Poe's story, we see both fears portrayed hundreds of years after the Middle Ages. The guests' fear of the mask is thus a residual fear of transformation, which additionally exemplifies the longevity of western reverence for internality. Poe satirises this reverence through the guests' gruesome death: their failure to ascertain the masked figure's external identity results in their demise. As a master of horror fiction, Poe is acutely aware of humanity's fears; and in *The Masque of the Red Death*, he addresses the West's continued fixation on internal identity through a literary portrayal of a purely external mask.

Writers in the early twentieth century continued to explore the complexities of identity through images of masks. For example, in Rainer Maria Rilke's only novel *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge* (*The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*) (1910), Rilke investigates the internal/external division of identity by questioning the authenticity of masks in social relations. The novel's plot is told through the notebooks of a Danish nobleman, Malte, whose recollections of his childhood in Denmark intermingle with his daily experiences and observations about modern society in the streets of Paris. Throughout his notebooks, Malte questions the authenticity of the Self as a social entity, and he often equates social roles with masks. He first observes the obscurity of identity as a child, when

⁶⁶ Ibid.

he discovers various costumes and masks in an old wardrobe at his father's house. He tries on multiple costumes and, when he views himself in the mirror, he learns the

very real power that a particular costume can exert [...] These disguises never went so far as to make me feel a stranger to myself, though; on the contrary, the more my transformations varied, the more convinced I was of my own self.⁶⁷

[Ich lernte damals kennen], der unmittelbar von einer bestimmten Tracht ausgehen kann. [...] Diese Verstellungen gingen indessen nie so weit, daß ich mich mir selber entfremdet fühlte; im Gegenteil, je vielfältiger ich mich abwandelte, desto überzeugter wurde ich von mir selbst.⁶⁸

This sensation intensifies when Malte tries on several masks:

It was in them that I saw, for the first time, truly free and infinitely variable possibilities: to be a slave girl and sold off, or to be Joan of Arc, or an old king, or a sorcerer; [...] I had never set eyes on masks before, but I understood why there had to be masks right away.

In ihnen erst sah ich wirklich freie und unendlich bewegliche Möglichkeiten: eine Sklavin zu sein, die verkauft wird, oder Jeanne d'Arc zu sein oder ein alter König oder ein Zauberer; [...] Ich hatte nie Masken gesehen vorher, aber ich sah sofort ein, daß es Masken geben müsse.⁶⁹

The transformations that Malte experiences through these passages are characteristic of the ancient Greek and Roman masks previously discussed. Through masking, he experiences distance from his previous sense of Self; and through the characters and character types into which these masks transform him, he questions his self-perception because he perceives authenticity in the masked images reflected by the mirror. However, the elation he experiences in these reflections soon subsides when Malte perceives the image in the mirror to dominate his personality entirely. He claims that the image was 'now the stronger, and I was the mirror. [...] I simply ceased to exist' [*jetzt war er der Stärkere, und ich war der Spiegel {...} ich fiel einfach aus*].⁷⁰ While Malte initially appreciates the altered self-perception that these masks instigate, he grows desperate and experiences a 'futile longing' [*vergebliche Sehnsucht*] for himself when his sense of internal identity is removed.⁷¹ As a

⁶⁷ All English translations from: Rilke, Maria Rainer. *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*. (1910). Translated by Michael Hulse. Penguin Classics. New York: 2009. Kindle file. (p. 67).

⁶⁸ Rilke, Rainer Maria. *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge*. (1910). Insel Verlag. Frankfurt am Main: 2000. (p. 100)

⁶⁹ Ibid. (English: 67 - 68; German: 101)

⁷⁰ Ibid. (69; 103 - 104)

⁷¹ Ibid., (70; 104)

result of this childhood memory, Malte questions where authenticity lies within an internal/external division of the Self.

Rilke's novel eventually extends the transformation process to the social setting, and he adopts the mask as a metaphor for questioning the authenticity of the Self in the social sphere. Toward the end of the novel, Malte visits the Theatre at Orange, where he witnesses a modern play on an ancient stage. While watching the play, he realises that a strict contrast between ancient theatre and modern theatre has generated a contrast between ancient and modern conceptions of identity. He illustrates this by describing the stage in front of him as the 'mighty antique mask, disguising everything, behind which the whole world was puckering into a face' [*die starke, alles verstellende antikische Maske, hinter der die Welt zum Gesicht zusammenschloß*].⁷² Here Malte ascertains the unity of the ancient stage and ancient society; he recognises the fluid connection between the transformations on stage and the roles within society. However, in addition to this realisation, Malte also grows aware of his disdain for modern theatre and its attempts to imitate a society whose roles are ill-defined and vaguely understood. He states that modern plays are comprised of the 'selfsame underdone reality that litters our streets and houses, except that more of it accumulates than can normally be managed in a single evening' [*Es ist dieselbe ungare Wirklichkeit, die auf den Straßen liegt und in den Häusern, nur daß mehr davon dort zusammenkommt, als sonst in einen Abend geht*].⁷³ Malte describes modern social masks as less authentic than the explicitly transformational masks of the ancient world. The gap between the modern theatrical stage and the identity it portrays is larger because identity on the modern *social* stage is difficult to maintain. The intricate history of self-conception and the prevailing western embrace of its internality complicate modern understandings of the Self; and when Rilke introduces the component of the social mask, it complicates matters even further. Rilke's novel thus questions whether the social mask defines the Self or if it can be removed off the social stage. However, it offers no satisfactory answer; nonetheless, by meditating specifically upon the internal/external division of the non-social Self (if such a thing exists) and the externality of the social mask, the novel, once again, reverberates ongoing debates since the Early Modern period. Literary critic Robert Langbaum even

⁷² Ibid., (149; 213)

⁷³ Ibid.

argues that Rilke is a precursor to the later significant works of sociologist Erving Goffman, who examines the social subject as an actor on a social stage.⁷⁴ Rilke's literary representations of the mask are therefore a significant contribution to modern discussions of identity and self-conception because they provide a useful metaphor for understanding our societal roles.

Like Rilke, the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa also perceived an intricate relationship between the external social mask and the internal Self. Pessoa, who is known for writing under at least seventy-two different pseudonymous personae, wrote of the mask as an external shield through which the internal Self could be expressed.⁷⁵ In a posthumously released essay, for which Pessoa's translator Richard Zenith has chosen the title *Masquerades* (2009), Pessoa writes:

Masquerades disclose the reality of souls. As long as no one sees who we are, we can tell the most intimate details of our life. I sometimes muse over this sketch of a story—about a man afflicted by one of those personal tragedies born of extreme shyness . . . who one day, while wearing a mask I don't know where, told another mask all the most personal, most secret, most unthinkable things that could be told about his tragic and serene life. [...] And his crowning glory would be if the whole of that sorrowful life he'd told were, from start to finish, absolutely false'.⁷⁶

In this passage, Pessoa asserts that the metaphorical social mask—whose authenticity Rilke questions—is an unavoidable disguise. He thus suggests that one could conceal this mask with another mask, ironically removing this disguise. Through the second mask, one could then express the 'truth' behind his/her inevitable social mask. However, Pessoa does not allow a clean and conclusive definition of Self: he closes his short essay by suggesting that one can also fabricate the intimate confessions made from behind the second mask. Given Pessoa's inclination to write under pseudonyms, the final line in the above quote implies that self-expression is infinitely intertwined with fiction, an idea we will later see Hesse develop in *Der Steppenwolf* (1927). Pessoa illustrates the haziness of the internal/external division by illuminating a complex conceal/reveal function of the mask—this applies to all

⁷⁴ Langbaum, Robert. *The Mysteries of Identity: A Theme in Modern Literature*. Oxford University Press. New York: 1977. (p. 18)

See: Goffman, Irving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Doubleday. Garden City, New York: 1959.

⁷⁵ Coincidentally, Pessoa's surname also means *persona* in Portuguese. In modern usage, it is generally taken to mean *person*.

⁷⁶ Pessoa, Fernando. *Masquerades*. Translated by Richard Zenith. "Harper's Magazine." December 2009. (Posthumously published). <http://harpers.org/archive/2009/12/masquerades/4/>. Accessed on 27 August 2014.

forms of masks, including the social mask. As the passage clearly shows, though, Pessoa's tone is far from cynical about this obscurity of the Self. He instead finds satisfaction in the complexities of identity. Below, we will see that Nietzsche, too, finds comfort in the obscurity of the Self.

The mask is not always used as a literary device that magnifies the obscurities of the internal/external division of Self. In some cases, it is understood as distinctly separate from an internal Self. For instance, German-American philosopher and social critic Hannah Arendt employs the metaphor in a socio-political context in order to distinguish her social role as a public/political figure from her private identity. In the prologue to her book *Responsibility and Judgment* (1975), Arendt reminds us of the etymological root of the word *person* and its initial reference to both the mask and the role of the Roman citizen in society. In light of this etymological history, she states:

I found this Latin understanding of what a person is helpful for my considerations because it invites further metaphorical usage, metaphors being the daily bread of all conceptual thought. The Roman mask corresponds with great precision to our own way of appearing in a society where we are not citizens, that is, not equalized by the public space established and reserved for political speech and political acts, but where we are accepted as individuals in our own right and yet by no means as human beings as such. We always appear in a world which is a stage and are recognized according to the roles which our professions assign us [...]. It is through this role, sounding through it, as it were, that something else manifests itself, something entirely idiosyncratic and undefinable and still unmistakably identifiable [...].⁷⁷

Arendt specifically adopts the Roman conception of the mask because its dual meaning allows her to simultaneously link *and* differentiate between the role she plays on the social stage and the person she believes is behind the social mask. For Arendt, a mask is essential to our identity on the social stage. By acknowledging her own removal of this mask when she enters private settings, she recognises the relationship between an internal and external Self. Her views on the social mask are less ambivalent than Rilke's, though. According to Arendt, an element of the internal Self manifestly 'sounds through' the social mask and shapes the social role accordingly. The dynamic that Arendt perceives between the script that the mask dictates and the agency of the wearer of the mask is no less complex than

⁷⁷ Arendt, Hannah. *Responsibility and Judgment*. Ed. and with an introduction by Jerome Kohn. 'Prologue' (Copenhagen April 18, 1975). 12-13. Schocken Books. New York: 2002. (p. 13)

Rilke's portrayals. But, unlike Rilke, Arendt sees a clearer division between the internal and external presentation. For Arendt, the Self is portrayed *through* the mask but is not necessarily defined *by* the mask. In other words, Arendt differentiates between social and private roles: one presents a mask to others but he/she has a certain amount of agency over the appearance of this mask.

Similar to Arendt, psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung also found the Roman mask, specifically, an applicable metaphor in his psychoanalytical studies of modern identity. And, like many of the thinkers cited above, Jung applies the metaphor as a means of illustrating an internal/external division of the Self. For Jung, the mask is a vehicle through which a collective unconscious determines our personality.⁷⁸ The collective unconscious is a notion of Jung's by which he explains the universality of various mythologies and archetypal images, such as 'the wise old man', from culture to culture.⁷⁹ Jung contends that the reason so many cultures share certain symbolic images is because humanity is shaped by a collective psyche, which we unconsciously channel through our dreams and then project through our conscious actions. The mask, for Jung, is thus a role we unconsciously play. In his essay, *Die Persona als Ausschnitt der Kollektivpsyche* (*The Person as a Segment of the Collective Psyche*) (1928), he states:

Only by reason of the fact that the *persona* is a more or less accidental or arbitrary segment of collective psyche can we make the mistake of accepting it *in toto* as something 'individual'. But as its name shows, it is only a mask for the collective psyche, a mask that *feigns individuality*, and tries to make others and oneself believe that one is individual, whereas one is simply playing a part in which the collective psyche speaks [my italics].⁸⁰

Nur vermöge des Umstandes, daß die *Persona* ein mehr oder weniger zufälliger oder willkürlicher Ausschnitt aus der Kollektivpsyche ist, können wir dem Irrtum verfallen, sie auch *in toto* für etwas "Individuelles" zu halten; sie ist aber, wie ihr Name sagt, nur eine Maske der Kollektivpsyche, eine Maske, *die Individualität vortäuscht*, die Andere und Einen selber glauben macht, man sei individuell, während es doch nur eine gespielte Rolle ist, in der die Kollektivpsyche spricht.⁸¹

⁷⁸ *Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Ich und dem Unbewussten: (Die Persona als Ausschnitt der Kollektivpsyche)* (1928). In: "Gesammelte Werke," Band 7. Patmos-Walter Verlag, Düsseldorf: 1966-1998. 131-262.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ English translation from: Jung, Carl Gustav. *The Persona as a Segment of the Collective Psyche*. "The Collected Works of C.G. Jung." Vol. 7. Ed. Gerhard Adler, Michael Fordham, and Herbert Read. Translated by R.F.C. Hull. Princeton University Press. New Jersey: 1970. (p. 154)

⁸¹ *Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Ich und dem Unbewussten: (Die Persona als Ausschnitt der Kollektivpsyche)* (1928). (p. 172-173)

As the passage shows, for Jung, the Self is an internal manifestation, and our external presentation of Self is dictated by collective internal drives over which we have no control: our individuality is thus an illusion. In Jung's view, then, the mask is the 'individual': a physical component of the collective unconscious through which the collective unconscious is articulated. Every 'person' is merely a mask: a separate articulation of the collective psyche. Jung's conception of the Self is therefore not entirely different from that which developed throughout the Middle Ages. As Napier points out, during the Middle Ages, the *persona* (i.e. *person*) was the body: a vessel within which one's identity was manifested by the Christian god. In Jung's view, the body is a *persona* through which a collective unconscious manifests one's identity. In both cases, one's external appearance is a kind of mask, and one's identity is defined as internal.

It should be clear at this point that the mask has consistently been linked to western conceptions of identity throughout western history. As the following chapters unfold, we will see how Hesse's and Yeats's works are components of this same pattern. Like in many of the above examples, Hesse and Yeats both employ the mask metaphor as a means of interpreting an internal/external division of the Self. However, both writers eventually develop their portrayals into an image that represents an entirely *external* presentation of the Self. The characteristics of the externality they both depict are characteristics of Nietzsche's conception of the Mask. (Again, when writing about the Nietzschean Mask, specifically, I capitalise the word Mask because it is a unique concept with unique properties and thus requires differentiation from the mask object.) In order to discern these properties in the works of Hesse and Yeats, it is necessary to explain Nietzsche's Mask in some detail. The following section therefore defines the Nietzschean Mask and explains Nietzsche's conception of the Self in light of this definition of the Mask.

2.3 The Nietzschean Mask: an 'Impression' of the Self

Nietzsche adopts the term Mask (*Maske*) as a symbol for his belief in the externality of all things. It is a complex metaphor, though, and in order to fully grasp its meaning, one must first ascertain Nietzsche's perspectives on the notions of internality, externality, 'truth', and the Kantian noumenon or *Ding an sich* (the 'thing-in-itself') because Nietzsche's Mask is a reaction to his perspectives on these four concepts. Therefore, once

his views on these are established, we can understand the nature of his Mask metaphor and the aptness of his enacting it in his philosophy. The text in which Nietzsche most clearly defines his views on these four notions is the essay *Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne* (*On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense*) (1873).

In this essay, Nietzsche declares that ‘truth’ is an illusion. He bases this on the premise that language—the most fundamental tool of the human intellect—is inherently *external*. Words, for Nietzsche, can only represent meaning, but the objects or concepts they represent are never concrete and fixed. He writes:

What is a word? The portrayal of nerve stimuli in sounds [...] What would allow us, if the truth about the origin of language, the viewpoint of the certainty of terms, were alone decisive, what would allow us to say, “The stone is hard,” as if “hard” were known to us otherwise than as a subjective stimulation! [...] [The creator of language] designates only the relations of things to men, and to express these relations he uses the boldest metaphors. First, he translates a nerve stimulus into an image! That is the first metaphor. Then, the image must be reshaped into a sound! That is the second metaphor. And each time there is a complete overleaping of spheres—from one sphere to the center of a totally different new one.⁸²

Was ist ein Wort? Die Abbildung eines Nervenreizes in Lauten. [...] Wie dürften wir, wenn die Wahrheit bei der Genesis der Sprache, der Gesichtspunkt der Gewißheit bei den Bezeichnungen allein entscheidend gewesen wäre, wie dürften wir doch sagen: der Stein ist hart: als ob uns "hart" noch sonst bekannt wäre, und nicht nur als eine ganz subjektive Reizung! [...] [Der Sprachbildner] bezeichnet nur die Relationen der Dinge zu den Menschen und nimmt zu deren Ausdrücke die kühnsten Metaphern zu Hilfe. Ein Nervenreiz, zuerst übertragen in ein Bild! Erste Metapher. Das Bild wieder nachgeformt in einem Laut! Zweite Metapher. Und jedesmal vollständiges Überspringen der Sphäre, mitten hinein in eine ganz andre und neue.⁸³

In this passage, Nietzsche proposes that language is far too limited to definitively represent the infinite possibilities of meaning. The relations of words to what they supposedly represent are arbitrary: it is impossible for the rigidity of a word’s meaning to represent momentary distinctions of an object or concept. We thus universalise unique varieties into one definitive word and deceive ourselves into thinking we have knowledge of objects or concepts. For example, we pretend that a single word (e.g. ‘man’) and its definition (e.g.

⁸² All English translations are from: Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. ‘On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense’. *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language*. Trans. by Sander L. Gilman, Carole Blair, and David J. Parent. Oxford University Press: Oxford. 1989. (p. 248-249)

⁸³ Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne*. (1873). Ed. Kai Sina. Reclam Verlag. Stuttgart: 2015. (Kapitel 1, par. 6)

rational animal) contains a fixed meaning when, in fact, ‘man’ cannot represent all men, nor can it represent the one ‘man’ to which it refers at a given moment. In other words, a momentary subjective perception can never be represented by a fixed word that pre-exists this perception.

For Nietzsche, humans are masters at this art of deception, and he believes that the concept of ‘truth’ arises from this art: ‘[...] the legislation of language enacts the first laws of truth’ [*die Gesetzgebung der Sprache gibt auch die erste Gesetzen der Wahrheit*].⁸⁴ Thus the word ‘truth’ is as equally subjective as any other word. But by ‘truth’, Nietzsche does not only refer to the arbitrary relationship between the word and the concept; he also contends that the concept itself—that is, the ‘truth’ within anything—cannot exist. He further shapes and explains this idea by equating internality and ‘truth’ with Immanuel Kant’s *Ding an sich* (the ‘thing-in-itself’). As Kant explains in *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Critique of Pure Reason*) (1781), the *Ding an sich*, or noumenon [*Noumenon*] is the pure essence of an object, which exists beyond our sensory perception. He contrasts it with a ‘phenomenon’ [*Phänomen*], which *can* be perceived with the senses. The phenomenon is the appearance of an object, and the object that the phenomenon represents is the *Ding an sich*. For instance, the word ‘man’, in Kant’s view, can momentarily refer to a specific man because we can conceive of the *class* of ‘man’ (e.g. rational animal) beyond our physical perception. Thus, for Kant, the *Ding an sich* can exist, but as it is out of our sensory reach, we cannot know it: that is, it is conceivable but not knowable.⁸⁵ But because of this conceivability, Kant therefore argues that every external conception (words, ideas, concepts, or even physical objects, etc.) contains an internal ‘truth’ that defines it. This ‘truth’ is the *Ding an sich*. According to Nietzsche, though, the strictly metaphorical nature of language puts the *Ding an sich* completely out of reach. He views Kant’s phenomenon as an external representation of further phenomena and not as a momentary representation of a conceivable ‘truth’. He states:

the “thing-in-itself” (which would be pure disinterested truth) is also absolutely incomprehensible to the creator of language and not worth seeking.

⁸⁴ Ibid., (247; Kapitel 1, par. 4)

⁸⁵ Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. (1781). Revised Second Edition. Translated by Norman Kemp Smith. Palgrave Macmillan: 2007. (p. 73-74)

Das "Ding an sich" (das würde eben die reine folgenlose Wahrheit sein) ist auch dem Sprachbildner ganz unfaßlich und ganz und gar nicht erstrebenswert.⁸⁶

As this quote indicates, Nietzsche does not perceive externality in contrast to internality. In his view, there are only the external representations that language legislates. The *Ding an sich* is illusory, incomprehensible, and inconceivable. In order to convey this perception through language, Nietzsche appropriates a new term to replace the *Ding an sich*: the 'mysterious X' [*das rätselhafte X*].⁸⁷ The 'mysterious X' is a purely hypothetical object that would exist beyond the process of language if it existed; it does not refer to other words but instead to the ultimate reality of its referent. However, this is impossible for Nietzsche because nothing in the human intellect exists as such. 'Truth' is therefore a bundle of externalities:

[a] mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, anthropomorphisms, in short a sum of human relations which were poetically and rhetorically heightened, transferred, and adorned, and after long use seem solid, canonical, and binding to a nation. Truths are illusions about which it has been forgotten that they *are* illusions, worn-out metaphors without sensory impact, coins which have lost their image and now can be used only as metal, and no longer as coins.

[einem] bewegliches Heer von Metaphern, Metonymien, Anthropomorphismen, kurz eine Summe von menschlichen Relationen, die, poetisch und rhetorisch gesteigert, übertragen, geschmückt wurden, und die nach langem Gebrauch einem Volke fest, kanonisch und verbindlich dünken: die Wahrheiten sind Illusionen, von denen man vergessen hat, daß sie welche sind, Metaphern, die abgenutzt und sinnlich kraftlos geworden sind, Münzen, die ihr Bild verloren haben und nun als Metall, nicht mehr als Münzen, in Betracht kommen.⁸⁸

If 'truth' is a web of external representations, as the passage suggests, then the human intellect is enshrouded in these externalities. We can now see the nature of Nietzsche's Masks: they are the external layers through which we understand the world and ourselves and through which we deceive ourselves into believing are internal 'truths' (i.e. the *Ding an sich*). Nietzsche thus concludes *Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne* by positing that the modern man of reason wears a Mask concocted of illusions:

[he] does not wear a quivering and mobile human face but, as it were, a *mask* with dignified harmony of features, he does not scream and does not even raise his voice.

⁸⁶ Nietzsche: (248; Kapitel, par. 6)

⁸⁷ Ibid., (249; Kapitel 1, par. 6)

⁸⁸ Ibid., (250; Kapitel 1, par. 9)

When a real storm cloud pours down upon him, he wraps himself in his overcoat and walks away under the rain with slow strides [my italics].

[er] trägt kein zuckendes und bewegliches Menschengesicht, sondern gleichsam eine *Maske* mit würdigem Gleichmaße der Züge, er schreit nicht und verändert nicht einmal seine Stimme, wenn eine rechte Wetterwolke sich über ihn ausgießt, so hüllt er sich in seinen Mantel und geht langsamen Schrittes unter ihr davon [my italics].⁸⁹

This passage defines Nietzsche's understanding of modern identity. He describes the nineteenth-century modern Self as a Mask. For Nietzsche, the Self is not disillusioned because the modern man has lost his sense of identity, but rather that his sense of identity is defined by illusions that he is unable to discern *as* illusions. In other words, the modern man's sense of Self is legislated by an illusive sense of 'truth'. Nietzsche's Mask is not only a metaphor for a conglomeration of illusions, however. Each singular illusion that constructs this patchwork Mask is itself also a Mask, and the pattern is infinite: when one Mask is removed, another is revealed. The metaphor is thus flexible: it functions as both a singular externality as well as a larger external Self.

Nietzsche's views on the absence of internality and the encompassing presence of externality are not prophecies of doom, nor does his Mask indicate meaninglessness. He instead views knowledge and awareness of the infinitude of Masks as a liberating realisation because, through awareness of the Mask, we can rewrite the legislation of knowledge, question our social scripts, and most importantly, develop a stronger understanding of the Self. Much of Nietzsche's later work implements his Mask as a writing tool and exemplifies how we can free language of its limitations and utilise the very thing that legislates reality to challenge it. Before analysing how Hesse and Yeats both develop a Nietzschean understanding of the Self and implement the Mask in similar ways, we must first consider an example of Nietzsche's own implementation of it. The work in which he most clearly expresses his glorification of the Mask and promotes its pursuit is *Jenseits von Gut und Böse (Beyond Good and Evil)* (1886). The book is written as a series of numbered sections that are often aphoristic and paradoxical. The conciseness of aphorisms allows Nietzsche to avoid long rationalizations and instead rely on brief contradictions to encourage further thought. Multitudinous meanings arise from this technique, which paves new avenues of thought, expands knowledge of a given discussion,

⁸⁹ Ibid., (256-257; Kapitel 2, par. 4)

and avoids a traditional attempt to uncover ‘truth’. This technique is one of the most common ways that Nietzsche institutes the Mask. Through this technique, he generates what I shall call an ‘impression’ of knowledge. An ‘impression’ does not rationalise and prescribe knowledge in a formal way, but it instead generates a variety of interpretations that do not centre on an assumption that one ‘truth’ holds the aphorism together. In *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, Nietzsche generates a series of ‘impressions’ that challenge monotheistic notions of good and evil and illuminate a general path toward a world that accepts the natural behaviours of humanity more than the world of sinners that Christianity has legislated. Importantly, Nietzsche presents the Mask as the most useful instrument for clearing this path. In section 40, he states:

Everything that is profound loves the mask; the profoundest things have a hatred even of figure and likeness. Should not the *contrary* only be the right disguise for the shame of a God to go about in? A question worth asking: it would be strange if some mystic has not already ventured on the same kind of thing. [...] They are the worst things of which one is most ashamed: there is not only deceit behind a mask—there is so much goodness in craft. I could imagine that a man with something costly and fragile to conceal, would roll through life clumsily and rotundly like an old, green, heavily-hooped wine-cask: the refinement of his shame requiring it be so. A man who has depths in his shame meets his destiny and his delicate decisions upon paths which few ever reach, and with regard to the existence of which his nearest and most intimate friends may be ignorant; his mortal danger conceals itself from their eyes, and equally so his regained security. Such a hidden nature [...] desires and insists that a mask of himself shall occupy his place in the hearts and heads of his friends; [...] Every profound spirit needs a mask; nay, more, around every profound spirit there continually grows a mask, owing to the constantly false, that is to say, *superficial* interpretation of every word he utters, every step he takes, every sign of life he manifests [emphasis in original].⁹⁰

Alles, was tief ist, liebt die Maske; die allertiefsten Dinge haben sogar einen Hass auf Bild und Gleichniss. Sollte nicht erst der *Gegensatz* die rechte Verkleidung sein, in der die Scham eines Gottes einhergienge? Eine fragwürdige Frage: es wäre wunderlich, wenn nicht irgend ein Mystiker schon dergleichen bei sich gewagt hatte. [...] Es sind nicht die schlimmsten Dinge, deren man sich am schlimmsten schämt: es ist nicht nur Arglist hinter einer Maske,—es gibt so viel Güte in der List. Einem Menschen, der Tiefe in der Scham hat, begegnen auch seine Schicksale und zarten Entscheidungen auf Wegen, zu denen Wenige je gelangen, und um deren Vorhandensein seine Nächsten und Vertrautesten nicht wissen dürfen: seine Lebensgefahr verbirgt sich ihren Augen und ebenso seine wieder eroberte Lebenssicherheit. Ein solcher Verborgener [...] braucht und unerschöpflich ist in der

⁹⁰ All English translations from: *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. (1886). Trans. Helen Zimmern. Russel and Russel, Inc. New York: 1964. (p. 55-56)

Ausflucht vor Mittheilung, will es und fördert es, dass eine Maske von ihm an seiner Statt in den Herzen und Köpfen seiner Freunde herum wandelt. [...] Jeder tiefe Geist braucht eine Maske: mehr noch, um jeden tiefen Geist wächst fortwährend eine Maske, Dank der beständig falschen, nämlich *flachen* Auslegung jedes Wortes, jedes Schrittes, jedes Lebens-Zeichens, das er giebt.— [emphasis in original]⁹¹

This section is Nietzsche's most vivid expression of the significance of his Masks and his clearest indication that his own words are masked. It consists of many aphorisms, which are linked together in a manner that indicates why the Mask itself is the most appropriate metaphor for Nietzsche's purposes. While *Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne* conveys Nietzsche's perception that everything is inherently masked, the section above 'impresses' his deliberate manipulation of these Masks: every 'concealed man' [*solcher Verborgener*] should ensure that only a Mask exists in his place. In order to enact his Masks for their philosophical potential, though, he must make their presence known. Nietzsche thus wears a Mask and simultaneously indicates its presence by implying that superficial readers will merely skim the surface of his words and overlook the 'impressions' that they generate. In other words, some readers will be fooled by the Mask he wears. However, Nietzsche's intention is not to conceal himself but rather to *reveal* the deliberate externality of his words and activate their masking functions. If Nietzsche's Masks are meant to expose the illusive nature of 'truth' and invoke new interpretations, then his readers must recognise the Mask(s) that he wears.

We can thus see why the Mask is an appropriate metaphor for Nietzsche. Like the ancient Greek Mask, Nietzsche can enact a transformation process. He can conceal himself while simultaneously exposing the Masks with which he conceals through elaborate and decorative wordplay. If his readers discern the Masks that he flaunts, they can then perceive the 'impressions' these Masks generate; thus, rather than superficially accepting his words as doctrine, readers can instead contemplate the various subjects of Nietzsche's concerns from numerous critical angles. As previously stated, Nietzsche found paradoxes extremely useful. Thus, in the Mask, he found an *infinitely functional paradox*. Its endless conceal/reveal function allowed Nietzsche to manipulate the limitations of the human

⁹¹ Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Jenseits von Gut und Böse: Vorspiel einer Philosophie der Zukunft*. (1886). In: "Nietzsche Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe." Walter de Gruyter & Co. Berlin: 1968. 9 - 255. (p. 53)

intellect in ways that exposes these limitations and liberates the intellect from the rigid legislation that dictates it.

As I shall demonstrate, this is this same paradoxical function that Hesse and Yeats use to expose the externality of the Self they both come to recognise. With the characteristics of the Mask, both writers manipulate language in similar ways as Nietzsche, and throughout their careers, their depictions of the Mask become increasingly external and take on Nietzschean traits. Their employments of the Nietzschean Mask will grow clearer in the following chapter.

2.4 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has provided a focused and concise history of masks and their ongoing associations with identity throughout western development. From the ancient Greek stage, where masks functioned as purely external objects of representation, to Rilke's modern stage, where their representative value is as equally tenuous as the identity of the actors they conceal, we have seen a consistent theme and concern of western societies: an internal/external division in conceptions of the Self. The embrace of an internal Self, which arose from Christian conceptions of identity, has prevailed into the modern era, as we have seen portrayed in both Rilke's and Poe's narratives. The longevity of this ideal indicates the comfort that the western world finds in the tradition of this perception. We will see evidence of this same idea in the early works of both Hesse and Yeats, whose depictions of the Self grow increasingly external as their works develop.

By demonstrating these certain key historical shifts in conceptions of the Self and masks, this chapter has helped outline the paradigm within which Hesse's and Yeats's literary occupations with these same notions are situated. Furthermore, it has defined the terms of the discussion needed to examine the two writers' developments. It is now necessary to move toward a close literary analysis of Hesse and Yeats in order to illustrate how their portrayals of masks (i.e. mask objects) as disguises develop into fully external Nietzschean Masks.

Chapter 3: From Self to Mask: A Parallel Development Between Hesse and Yeats

3.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter reveals a parallel development between Hesse and Yeats in their application of the mask metaphor (i.e. mask objects) in their literature as a device for negotiating identity. Below, we will see how the two writers' depictions of masks progress through three stages of development. As shown in the previous chapter, the Middle Ages' designation of the Self as internal has prevailed in many ways throughout the modern western world. This chapter therefore first provides evidence of this residual conception in the early works of both Hesse and Yeats and then demonstrates how these early works initially present masks as sinister concealments of an internal Self. Second, it illustrates how both writers progressively deviate from this negative portrayal by depicting that the internal Self is vulnerable and in need of protection: in this stage of development, masks become protective covers for this internal Self. Finally, as their works progress and their thought on identity develops, both writers' depictions of the Self grow increasingly external. As I demonstrate this third stage of development, it will become clear that their masks eventually take on characteristics of the Nietzschean Mask, which altogether replaces their initial representations of the internal Self.

The purpose of analysing Yeats alongside Hesse is to better illustrate the development of Hesse's depictions of the Self as a Mask. The complexities of this development are often deeply theoretical, as we have already seen in the case of Nietzsche's Masks. Yeats thus provides an illustrative backdrop against which I can better highlight Hesse's development. Yeats is the most appropriate writer for this endeavour because, while he differs from Hesse stylistically, his specific uses of masks in theorising the Self are starkly similar to Hesse's. Since this pattern between Hesse and Yeats has thus far gone unnoticed, my analysis has an additional benefit: as contemporaries⁹² from

⁹² Both writers became published writers in the 1890s and continued writing throughout the first half of the 20th Century. Yeats died in 1939, and Hesse died in 1962. However, Hesse's last major novel, *Das Glasperlenspiel*, published in 1943, was his last major publication.

different cultural and linguistic backgrounds with very little knowledge of one another,⁹³ Hesse's and Yeats's similar theoretical positions on identity and masks allows me not only to reveal the overarching 'western-ness' of their concerns, but it also allows me to illustrate the significance of Hesse's place within this western discourse. Scholarship on Yeats's masks is well established (although, no one has yet satisfactorily explained the connection between his conceptions of the Self and the Nietzschean Mask), but, as demonstrated in the literature review of this dissertation, no scholarship is committed to exploring Hesse's employment of the mask metaphor. Therefore, this comparative approach will not only illuminate a mutual pattern between the two writers, but it will also bring forth a new approach to understanding Hesse's literary representations of identity. I argue that masks and *the Mask* are missing links in discussions of Hesse's portrayals of the Self.⁹⁴

It is important to note that, for the purposes of my analysis, Yeats only provides a helpful model up to a certain point in his career. While Hesse continues to employ the Mask throughout his final novel, *Das Glasperlenspiel* (1943), one can only follow Yeats's own employment up until his play *The Player Queen* (1922) because he eventually modifies the Mask of the Self to fit his own occultist 'doctrine of the mask', which he defines in his book *A Vision* (1937).⁹⁵ While the 'mask' he designs in the text derives from the Nietzschean Mask, it grows too esoteric and strays from the Nietzschean characteristics

⁹³ We know Hesse was at least familiar with Yeats. In a review titled *Klage um einen alten Baum* in 1927 Hesse wrote: 'Wenn ich vom Malen oder vom Schreiben, vom Nachdenken oder vom Lesen müde bin, ist der Balkon und der Blick in die zu mir heraufblickenden Wipfel meine Erholung. Hier las ich neulich, mit Bedauern, daß das herrliche Buch schon ein Ende nahm, *Die chymische Rose* von [William Butler] Yeats [. . .] diese zauberhaften Erzählungen aus der gälischen Welt, so voll von alter halbheidnischer Mythik, so geheimnisvoll und dunkelglühend.' ('When I am tired from painting, writing, thinking, or reading, the balcony and the view of the tree tops looking up from below are my recreation. Here I recently read 'The Secret Rose' by W.B. Yeats. I felt much regret that the wonderful book ever had to come to an end, these magical stories from the Gaelic world, so full of old pagan mythology, so secret and darkly glowing' [my translation].) (SW 19; 58).

⁹⁴To date, only one study has focused on Hesse and Yeats in a comparative light. In her 1974 Master's dissertation, 'The Myth of Unity in Hesse and Yeats' (Drake University, Indiana), Rebecca Spurlock discusses the ways in which both Hesse and Yeats reinterpret myth and engage with it in their literature from a modern perspective. She specifically focuses on Hesse's *Siddhartha* and Yeats's five plays that retell the Irish legend of Cuchulain: *On Baile's Strand* (1903); *The Green Helmet* (1910); *At the Hawk's Well* (1916); *The Only Jealousy of Emer* (1919); *The Death of Cuchulain* (1939). Spurlock's thesis compares Hesse's application of Indian mythology and Yeats's application of Celtic mythology. The study, however, recognises no affinities between the two men's application of masks in their interpretations of modern identity.

⁹⁵ There were two editions of *A Vision* published in Yeats's life, one in 1925, and the other in 1937. For a thorough explanation of how he develops the notion of the mask into a doctrine, see the 1937 version. In it, he explains how the mask is a tool that allows one access to what he calls the 'antithetical Self', which 'completes' one's personality when donned. Yeats proposes that the Self is only complete when it merges with a mask.

with which this project is concerned. Yeats's 'doctrine of the mask' roughly suggests that under certain phases of the moon, a mask is a tool through which we can bring our Self and our 'anti-Self' into harmony. While I contend that Yeats's developing use of masks to represent the Self as external is distinctively Nietzschean, the theory he lays out in *A Vision* is no longer directly characteristic of Nietzsche's conception of the Mask. I therefore conclude this chapter with my analysis of Yeats's literary employment of Nietzsche's Mask in *The Player Queen* (1922) and then allot the following two chapters of this dissertation to Hesse because, unlike Yeats, Hesse continues to more directly incorporate elements of the Nietzschean Mask into his work.

While the crux of my argument pivots on literary analysis, some prerequisite context is necessary in order to emphasise that I am not just *applying* a theory; I am *revealing* a theoretical development. Therefore, we must first look at the evidence of each writer's engagement with Nietzschean thought in order to emphasise their direct links to Nietzsche. We can then begin our literary analysis of each writer's incorporation of the Mask. Following this evidence, I reveal Hesse's and Yeats's development by painting the backdrop with Yeats's three poems *The Two Trees* (1893), *Never Give All the Heart* (1904), and *The Mask* (1910), as well as his enigmatic play *The Player Queen* (1922) because these four texts are deeply concerned with conceptions of the Self. The texts I then place against this backdrop to better illustrate Hesse's development are his novels *Peter Camenzind* (1904) and *Gertrud* (1910) because these two early novels both incorporate the mask object in their literary negotiations of the Self.

3.2 The Nietzschean Influence

While it is impossible to make a case for the direct influence of one writer over another, evidence of exposure (and personal claims on a writer's part to influence) can certainly enlighten and help explain the similarities one can observe between two writers. The evidence of both Hesse's and Yeats's engagement with Nietzsche's writings and ideas

is so substantial that a significant amount of scholarship is devoted to each respective writer's connections to Nietzsche.⁹⁶

While the abundance of secondary literature on the subject certainly suggests the strong Nietzschean influence on both writers, the strongest evidence that this influence is directly Nietzschean comes from Hesse and Yeats themselves. In the literature review of this dissertation, I state that I do not intend to rely on biographical information for my literary analysis. However, in order to avoid an appearance that the theoretical development I demonstrate is merely coincidental, it is informative to provide evidence of Hesse's and Yeats's definitive exposure to Nietzsche's theory of the Mask. Following this evidence, the subsequent development I demonstrate relies solely on close readings.

Hesse makes it very clear throughout the entirety of his writing career that Nietzsche was one of his most noteworthy influences. Hesse's letters, journals, book reviews, articles, and essays frequently praise Nietzsche, which suggests Hesse's admiration for the philosopher along with the influence of his thought. A few examples will

⁹⁶ For some works devoted to the Hesse-Nietzsche link see: **1.** Dagmar Kiesel's *Das Gespaltene Selbst: Die Identitätsproblematik in Hermann Hesse's Steppenwolf und bei Friedrich Nietzsche* (2010). Kiesel argues that the theme of the fractured Self in *Der Steppenwolf* reflects certain Nietzschean ideas about modern identity. **2.** László V Szabó's *Der Einfluss Friedrich Nietzsches auf Hermann Hesse: Formen des Nihilismus und seiner Überwindung bei Nietzsche und Hesse* (2007). Szabó argues that, in *Der Steppenwolf*, the simultaneous crisis of an inner 'soul' and an outer 'society' is a nihilistic problem, an idea which Hesse picked up from Nietzsche and Jung. **3.** Kathryn Punsley's 'The Influence of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer on Hermann Hesse' (2012) additionally illustrates the ways in which Hesse's corpus alternates in its uses of both active and passive nihilism, two philosophical problems with which both Nietzsche and Schopenhauer wrestled. **4.** Herbert Reichert's *Nietzsche's Impact on German Literature* (1975). In the book, Reichert allots Hesse a chapter and points out many literary references Hesse makes to Nietzsche and then explains how these references provide context for many of Hesse's recurring themes and motifs.

For some works devoted to the Yeats-Nietzsche link see: **1.** Michael Valdez Moses's *The Rebirth of Tragedy: Yeats, Nietzsche, the Irish National Theatre, and the Anti-Modern Cult of Cuchulain* (2004). In this essay, Moses writes of how Yeats's attempt 'to effect a rebirth of pre-modern, ritualized, and aristocratic tragedy within the apparently uncongenial confines of contemporary Irish politics' (562) is an essential Nietzschean concept—that is, that a rebirth of classical tragedy will revitalise the culturally inept bourgeois society of the modern world. Moses argues that Yeats thus employs these ideas in his own theatre practices. **2.** Erich Heller's 'Yeats and Nietzsche: Reflections on Aestheticism and a Poet's Marginal Notes' (1988). In this chapter of his book *The Importance of Nietzsche*, Heller demonstrates the evidence of Nietzsche's aesthetic philosophy within Yeats's own use of aesthetics as an escape from apocalyptic visions of modern reality. **3.** Patrick Bridgewater's 'English Writers and Nietzsche' (1978)—found in *Nietzsche: Imagery and Thought*—illustrates parallels that Bridgewater observes between Yeats's 'antithetical self' and Nietzsche's *Übermensch*. **4.** John R. Harrison's 'What Rough Beast?' *Yeats, Nietzsche, and Historical Rhetoric in 'The Second Coming'* (1998) discusses the ways in which Yeats's poem *The Second Coming* (1920) enacts Nietzsche's stance on paradox. I have explained Nietzsche's views on paradoxes in the previous chapter. **5.** Otto Bohlman: *Yeats and Nietzsche: An Exploration of Major Nietzschean Echoes in the Writings of W.B. Yeats* (1982). I discuss Bohlmann in further detail in the main text of this thesis. **6.** Frances Nesbitt Oppel's *Mask and Tragedy: Yeats and Nietzsche, 1902-10*. University Press of Virginia. Charlottesville: 1987. Nesbitt is also discussed in more detail further below.

make this evident. For instance, in a short piece entitled *Mein Zimmer (My Room)*, written in 1898, when Hesse was only twenty years old, Hesse describes a portrait of Nietzsche that he owns. Writing with a headache and out of boredom [*Mit Kopfweh und Langeweile geschrieben*], Hesse simply describes the contents of his room in Basel, where he lived at the time. One of these contents is a portrait of Nietzsche:

Left of the sofa, between the corner and window is Georgi's old town, and under, in octave format, are portraits of Hauptmann, Nietzsche, and Chopin [my translation].

Links vom Sofa zwischen Ecke und Fenster Georgi's "Alte Stadt", darunter in Oktavformat Portraits vom Hauptmann, Nietzsche, Chopin.⁹⁷

Hesse later recalls this portrait in the autobiographical writing *Beim Einzug in ein neues Haus [Moving into a New House]* (1931). After moving into a new house in Montagnola, he nostalgically writes of his time in Basel:

I still remember how I sighed as I paid the somewhat more expensive price for a photograph of the young Gerhart Hauptmann, whose "Hannele" I had read at that time, and for two pictures of Nietzsche [my translation].

Ich erinnere mich noch wohl, wie ich seufzend die etwas teureren Preise für eine Photographie des jungen Gerhart Hauptmann bezahlte, dessen "Hannele" ich damals gelesen hatte, und für zwei Bilder von Nietzsche (SW 12, 137).⁹⁸

Again, in an autobiographical essay written in 1937, Hesse muses over his time spent in Basel, where he claims he read Nietzsche so avidly that from this period onward Nietzsche had a direct influence on him. He writes:

Basel was for me now, above all, the city of Nietzsche, Jacob Burkhardt, and Böcklin. But here everything was soaked in the spirit, from the influence and role model of a man. His name was Jacob Burkhardt and he had already been dead for a few years. I was already his reader at that time, but I was still too deeply enchanted by Nietzsche to be open to any new, direct influence [my translation].

Basel war für mich jetzt vor allem die Stadt Nietzsches, Jacob Burkhardts, und Böcklins. [...] Hier aber war alles getränkt vom Geist, vom Einfluß und Vorbild eines Mannes. [...] Er hieß Jacob Burkhardt und war erst vor wenigen Jahren gestorben. Ich war auch damals schon sein Leser, [...] aber ich war noch allzutief von Nietzsche bezaubert, um seinem direkten Einfluß ganz offenzustehen.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ (SW 1, 155)

⁹⁸ (SW 12, 137)

⁹⁹ (SW 12, 81-82)

Although the essay states that Burkhardt eventually became Hesse's primary inspiration, Hesse nonetheless acknowledges the lasting influence of Nietzsche. This stable influence is evident throughout Hesse's works. In a subsequent chapter, my literary analysis of *Das Glasperlenspiel* (1943) will reveal that Hesse's final novel implements the thought of both Burkhardt and Nietzsche, demonstrating Hesse's continued engagement with Nietzsche's thought alongside Burkhardt's throughout the entirety of his career. After the publication of *Das Glasperlenspiel*, Hesse acknowledges Nietzsche's lasting influence in a short piece that he wrote for the Nobel Committee after receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1946. In this brief letter, entitled *Lebenslauf*, Hesse briefly summarises what he considers the most significant information about his life in relation to his work. Amongst other things, he tells the committee:

The western thinkers who have had the strongest effect on me are Plato, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche [...] [my translation].

Die abendländischen Denker, die auf mich am stärksten gewirkt haben, waren Plato, Spinoza, Schopenhauer und Nietzsche [...].¹⁰⁰

As the above passages show, Hesse's claimed primary influence on his writing alternates throughout his lifetime, but this letter to the Nobel Committee acknowledges the enduring effects of Nietzschean thought on his work. Evidence of this can be found throughout the corpus of Hesse's novels, all of which not only incorporate Nietzschean thought but often even directly reference the Nietzschean concepts that Hesse employs. An obvious example is Hesse's implementation of Nietzsche's Apollonian-Dionysian synthesis in his novel *Narziss und Goldmund* (1930). Nietzsche explains this synthesis in his book *Die Geburt der Tragödie (The Birth of Tragedy)* (1872). For Nietzsche, the greatest Greek tragedies synthesised the artistic impulses of the gods Dionysus (the god of wine, ritual madness, and fertility) and Apollo (the god of music, truth, and prophecy). Nietzsche argues that no art has accomplished this synthesis since the tragedies of Sophocles. Hesse's novel, however, attempts this precise synthesis through his characters Narziss and Goldmund. The novel juxtaposes Goldmund—a young man whose wayward life of passion and sensuality reflects elements of the Dionysian—with Narziss—a monk whose life of stability and reason reflect key elements of the Apollonian. The novel's presentation of both characters' lifestyles

¹⁰⁰ (SW 12, 70)

symbolises the synthesis that Nietzsche describes in *Die Geburt der Tragödie*. (See footnote 96 for more interpretations of Nietzschean thought in Hesse's works.)

Not only does Hesse incorporate Nietzschean thought into the structure of his novels, but his novels also allude to Nietzsche in numerous places through his characters' passing references. For example, his very first novel (*Peter Camenzind* [1904]), which I analyse in detail below, references Nietzsche through the character of Richard, who teases the protagonist Peter for not knowing who Nietzsche is.¹⁰¹ Similar remarks occur in almost all of Hesse's novels, including his final novel *Das Glasperlenspiel*. In addition to these examples, I assert that the most prevalent Nietzschean concept in Hesse's work, though, is the Mask, which no scholarship has yet addressed. The literary analyses offered below will make evident the role of the Mask in Hesse's works. They will demonstrate the ways in which Hesse's novels function *as* Masks by enacting wordplay similar to Nietzsche's, as well as how they present the Self as a Mask through this enactment.

Much like Hesse, Yeats's letters and, in particular, his pencilled notes about Nietzsche indicate his active engagement with Nietzsche's thought. The translation of Nietzsche's works in which Yeats jotted most of his notes is Thomas Common's translated compilation *Nietzsche as Critic, Philosopher, Poet and Prophet: Choice Selections from His Works* (1901). According to Otto Bohlmann—through whose book on Yeats and Nietzsche¹⁰² I access these notes—most of Yeats's annotations are found in excerpts from *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* and *Zur Genealogie der Moral (On the Genealogy of Morals)* (1887). In 1902, Yeats expressed the strong impact that this volume had on him in a letter to his friend and fellow dramatist Lady Gregory: 'I have not read anything with so much excitement since I got to love Morris's stories which have the same curious astringent joy. [...] [Y]ou have a rival in Nietzsche, that strong enchanter. I have read him so much that I have made my eyes bad again'.¹⁰³ Although Yeats does not explicitly state that his reading

¹⁰¹ All English translations of the novel come from: *Peter Camenzind*. Trans. by Michael Roloff. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Inc. New York: 1969. Reprinted by Picador: 2003. (p. 54). [(SW 2, 40)]

¹⁰² Bohlmann, Otto. *Yeats and Nietzsche: An Exploration of Major Nietzschean Influences in the Writings of W.B. Yeats*. Barnes and Nobel Books. Totowa, New Jersey: 1982. Unfortunately, Yeats's pencilled notes are currently inaccessible. They were last archived at Northwestern University in Chicago. However, they are no longer available for public access. For this study, I therefore access them second-hand through Bohlmann. While I do not ascribe to all of Bohlmann's claims—due to disagreements with his interpretations of certain Nietzschean ideas—he does, however, incorporate many of Yeats's notes in his study and claims to leave them worded exactly as Yeats wrote them.

¹⁰³ Yeats, W.B. *Letters of W.B. Yeats*. Ed. Allan Wade. Rupert Hart-Davis. London: 1954. (p. 379)

of Nietzsche has shaped his own thought, the evidence of his extensive exposure and admiration is clear. The large amount of scholarship that interprets Yeats's work through a Nietzschean lens indicates Nietzsche's lasting influence on Yeats throughout his career and further suggests his continued enthusiasm for Nietzsche's thought. For instance, Yeats scholar John R. Harrison interprets Yeats's famous apocalyptic allegory *The Second Coming* (1920) as a stylistic exercise in a Nietzschean vein (refer to footnote 96). Harrison argues that the poem's imagery is a compression of multiple contradictions that generate an effect similar to what I have previously called an 'impression'. The poem, in Harrison's view, thus functions much like a Nietzschean aphorism.

Besides Bohlmann's book, one of the most thorough investigations of the Yeats-Nietzsche link is Frances Nesbitt Opper's *Mask and Tragedy: Yeats and Nietzsche 1902-10* (1987). Opper underlines many textual parallels between the two writers and provides cogent evidence that Yeats's reading of Nietzsche shaped much of his own thought, in particular, the development of his doctrine of the mask. However, it is crucial to note that, while Opper's evidence is mostly convincing, she ironically does not identify characteristics of the *Nietzschean Mask* in Yeats's work; rather, she explores the development of Yeats's eventual doctrine of the mask (as defined in *A Vision*) as built upon a lifelong engagement with many other elements of Nietzschean thought, such as the Apollonian-Dionysian synthesis. (See footnote 96 for citation.) This is very different from the analysis I provide below. I specifically highlight the characteristics of the Nietzschean Mask in Yeats's developing literary portrayals of the Self and stress a number of notable instances where he represents this notion of Self with the mask object. In other words, I demonstrate how Yeats uses masks to represent the Mask. While Opper may be right in observing that Yeats's doctrine is Nietzschean, I argue that it is not characteristic of the Nietzschean Mask, as his early portrayals of the mask object are. This will become evident through the textual analysis below.

The most important of Yeats's annotations for this study is, of course, his first recorded written mention of a mask, which becomes a prominent image and metaphor throughout the entirety of Yeats's writing career. Yeats made this note, according to Bohlmann, in the section of *Zur Genealogie der Moral* where Nietzsche discusses master-slave morality. This note is below:

Night {Socrates – Christ} one god night – denial of self in the soul turned towards spirit, seeking knowledge.

Day {Homer} many gods day – affirmation of self, the soul turned from spirit to be its mask and instrument when it seeks life.¹⁰⁴

I do not intend to attempt an interpretation of this note. It is difficult to do so in its ostensibly irrelevant context, but, importantly, I think grave misinterpretations of Nietzsche's Mask (being interpreted *through* Yeats) have resulted from such an attempt. For instance, Bohlmann construes Yeats's doctrine of the mask as an expansion on what he calls 'Nietzsche's idea' of the paradoxical Self: that is, the Self/anti-Self dichotomy that symbolically merges through masks, as Yeats explains it in *A Vision*. As we have seen in the previous chapter, however, this is not the nature of the Nietzschean Mask. Bohlmann thus interprets Nietzsche through Yeats, and not the other way around.¹⁰⁵ I nonetheless want to emphasise that the above annotation is the very first evidence of Yeats's mention of a mask as a central aesthetic and conceptual instrument, and, furthermore, this note is specifically in relation to Nietzsche.¹⁰⁶ Thus, in order to avoid flippantly misconstruing Nietzsche, my argument that Yeats's early employment of the mask metaphor is Nietzschean (prior to *A Vision*) rests solely on textual analysis, which highlights the specific characteristics in Yeats's work of Nietzsche's Mask as we have already defined it. The following section will provide this analysis.

3.3 Analysis

We have already seen the mask's (in the more general sense of the term) close association with an internal/external division of the Self throughout western history. Hesse's and Yeats's negotiations of the Self and their applications of masks are situated within this tradition. Both writers' early depictions of the Self are indicative of the deeply rooted western embrace of the internal Self, but as their works progress, their portrayals gradually change and grow more external in their nature. Throughout this development, each writer's depictions of masks progress through three stages: first, their early depictions present masks as sinister disguises of an internal Self, much like the medieval conception;

¹⁰⁴ Bohlmann, Otto. *Yeats and Nietzsche: An Exploration of Major Nietzschean Influences in the Writings of W.B. Yeats*. Barnes and Nobel Books. Totowa, New Jersey: 1982. (p. 130)

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 125

¹⁰⁶ Not only do Bohlmann (p. 125) and Oppel (p. 95) claim that this is Yeats's first mention of the mask, but also Yeats's biographer Richard Ellmann agrees (*The Identity of Yeats*. Faber and Faber. London: 1964. [p. 93]).

second, their masks develop into protective disguises of a vulnerable internal Self (in this phase, their depictions of the Self retain its internal character, but their masks lose their sinister connotations); and finally, their representations of masks develop into fully external embodiments of the Self. It is important to note that Yeats's eventual depiction of the conceptual Mask develops through three different metaphorical forms: an 'image', a 'play' (or act), and, finally, the mask object. (I place these notions in quotation marks in order to mark them as distinct concepts separate from more general notions of images or plays.) As we will see, the 'image' and the 'play' adopt concealing functions, much like the mask. I therefore demonstrate below how each of these two forms is an evolutionary step toward the conceptual Nietzschean Mask, which Yeats eventually portrays with mask objects.

I structure this section by first demonstrating Yeats's first two stages of this development through his poems *The Two Trees* (1893) and *Never Give All the Heart* (1904). By analysing these two poems first, I am able to highlight a pattern against which I can then illuminate these two stages in Hesse's development through his first novel *Peter Camenzind* (1904) and the rarely studied novel *Gertrud* (1910). I finally illustrate the evolution of Yeats's mask into the Nietzschean Mask with his poem *The Mask* (1910) and his play *The Player Queen* (1922), the latter of which includes a shortened version of the 1910 poem. When performed on stage, many of the characters in *The Player Queen* are masked. As we will see, Yeats's incorporation of the poem into his play informs our interpretation of the physical masks in the play. The chapter will conclude after my analysis of the play because, from this stage forward, Yeats's masks become esoterically linked to his own doctrine. Hesse, however, continues to intricately lace the characteristics of the Nietzschean Mask into his novels throughout his writing career. The following chapters will therefore be devoted to unlacing these characteristics in Hesse's work.

3.3.1 *The Two Trees and Never Give All the Heart*

Originally included in an 1893 collection of poetry titled *The Rose*, Yeats's poem *The Two Trees* depicts the internal/external division of the Self by juxtaposing a description of a tree with another description of the tree's reflection in a pane of glass. A more detailed explication follows the poem:

Beloved, gaze in thine own heart,
The holy tree is growing there;
From joy the holy branches start,

And all the trembling flowers they bear.
 The changing colours of its fruit
 Have dowered the stars with merry light;
 The surety of its hidden root
 Has planted quiet in the night;
 The shaking of its leafy head
 Has given the waves their melody,
 And made my lips and music wed,
 Murmuring a wizard song for thee.
 There the Loves a circle go,
 The flaming circle of our days,
 Gyring, spiring to and fro
 In those great ignorant leafy ways;
 Remembering all that shaken hair
 And how the wingéd sandals dart,
 Thine eyes grow full of tender care:
 Beloved, gaze in thine own heart.

Gaze no more in the bitter glass
 The demons, with their subtle guile,
 Lift up before us when they pass,
 Or only gaze a little while;
 For there a fatal image grows
 That the stormy night receives,
 Roots half hidden under snows,
 Broken boughs and blackened leaves.
 For all things turn to barrenness
 In the dim glass the demons hold,
 The glass of outer weariness,
 Made when God slept in times of old.
 There, through the broken branches, go
 The ravens of unresting thought;
 Flying, crying, to and fro,
 Cruel claw and hungry throat,
 Or else they stand and sniff the wind,
 And shake their ragged wings; alas!
 Thy tender eyes grow all unkind:
 Gaze no more in the bitter glass.¹⁰⁷

As we can see, the poem is divided into two stanzas. The first describes the beauty of a 'holy tree', which grows within a heart, and the second stanza describes the disfigurement of the same tree's reflection. These two contrasted descriptions signify the honesty of internality and the dishonesty of externality. The speaker's advice to the 'Beloved' to 'gaze

¹⁰⁷ *The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats*. Macmillan London Limited. London: 1981. (p. 55)

in' the heart indicates the speaker's reverence for the internality of the Self. The descriptions of the 'holy' tree within the heart deepen this sentiment. Furthermore, the opulence of these descriptions mark the tree with elements of honesty or 'truth'; and the tree's location within the heart suggests that the 'true' Self exists internally. Likewise, the juxtaposed descriptions of the tree's sinister reflection illustrate the speaker's equal perception that the reflection of the tree is a dishonest reproduction. It is an external image of the tree, which distorts the tree's features and deceptively represents it. The poem thus likens the tree's reflection to the medieval mask. The reflected image alters the 'real' tree and conceals its identity. (The metaphor of the heart as a representation of the internal Self recurs throughout Yeats's early poetry, as the subsequent analysis of *Never Give All the Heart* will show. Furthermore, we will also see below that Hesse employs the same metaphor in his early depictions of the internal Self.)

A closer examination of this juxtaposed imagery and language will make the poem's described internal/external division clearer. In many instances, the poem's imagery is contrasted line for line. For example, the poem's opening line enthusiastically encourages the Beloved to 'gaze in thine own heart' but vehemently warns him/her to 'gaze no more in the bitter glass' in the first line of stanza two. This shift in tone is consistent throughout the poem: the tree's 'holy' branches, on which colourful fruit and flowers grow, are reflected in the glass as broken and blackened; the 'Loves' in the first stanza playfully dart about in good humour, whereas the ravens of their reflection move with suggestive and ominous intentions; furthermore, the tenderness of 'thine eyes' in the first stanza becomes 'unkind' in the second. The most profound of the poem's contrasts, though, is the juxtaposed imagery of the tree's roots, as the description of the roots deepens the levels of internality that the speaker constructs and further widens the distance between the tree and its image. As we have seen, the first level of internality is the heart, and the tree's placement within the heart generates a second level; finally, with the roots, we can see a third, even deeper level, hidden beneath the ground. Importantly, the speaker expresses 'surety' in the roots' depth. Although the roots are hidden, the poem's positive depictions of the tree that extends from the roots indicate the speaker's confidence that sincerity and 'truth' are found by looking deeper. In contrast, however, the reflected image of the roots in the second stanza adds an extra layer of externality: snow. This snow conceals the extension of the roots to

the tree and eliminates the surety expressed in the first stanza. The contrasted descriptions of the tree, which extends from the concealing snow, further emphasise this fact.

The poem's speaker clearly conveys that an image is a dishonest representation. Therefore, the poem warns that the distance between an image (i.e. the reflection) and what it represents (i.e. the tree) skews the resulting representation and renders it untrustworthy. The portrayals of the Self in this poem certainly derive from the long tradition of western perceptions that identity is internal. Much like masks in medieval times, Yeats's *image* of the tree does not authentically represent the Self. The reflection depicted in this poem is the conceptual 'image' mentioned above. It is Yeats's first incarnation of the internal Self. The poem's speaker encourages the Beloved to avert the 'image' and look internally for self-knowledge because, as the tree's reflection suggests, the farther one gets from the heart, the more deceiving self-perception becomes. We can therefore see that Yeats's poem is indicative of medieval self-conceptions: it depicts internality as 'truth' and externality as deceptive.

Yeats's tone towards the internal/external division shifts slightly in *Never Give All the Heart*. While *The Two Trees* warns against the dangers of externality, *Never Give All the Heart* suggests that externality is necessary. However, the poem maintains Yeats's representations of the Self as internal. It presents this internal Self as vulnerable and therefore indicates that it requires external protection. Published ten years after *The Two Trees*, *Never Give All the Heart*'s continued occupation with this divide certainly suggests the ongoing significance of the theme for Yeats. A thorough analysis follows the poem:

Never give all the heart, for love
 Will hardly seem worth thinking of
 To passionate women if it seem
 Certain, and they never dream
 That it fades out from kiss to kiss;
 For everything that's lovely is
 But a brief, dreamy, kind delight,
 O never give the heart outright
 For they, for all smooth lips can say,
 Have given their hearts up to the play.
 And who could play it well enough
 If deaf and dumb and blind with love?
 He that made this knows all the cost,

For he gave all his heart and lost.¹⁰⁸

There are two key developments in this poem's engagement with the internal/external division that need highlighting. First, the poem maintains Yeats's use of the heart metaphor for internality, but its depiction of externality shifts from the 'image' to the 'play'. This is evidenced by the poem's depiction of the 'play's' ability to replace the heart as a means of self-representation. In other words, the poem shows that the 'play' can conceal the heart. While *The Two Trees* is concerned with self-knowledge, this changed metaphor for externality places Yeats's conception of the Self on a social stage. He now uses a metaphor that emphasises an unavoidable *act* of outward self-representation. Second, in light of this metaphorical shift, the poem does not entirely reverse the roles of internality and externality; it instead depicts a necessary relationship between the two. These two shifts in perspective are key steps in Yeats's developing understanding of identity, and they both therefore require closer examination.

Yeats's specific replacement of the 'image' with the 'play' equates the role played by the social subject with the role of a player (i.e. actor) on a theatrical stage. Thus, not unlike Rilke's 'Malte Laurids Brigge', Yeats's speaker perceives a complex relationship between the western embrace of an internal Self and external presentations of that Self in society—that is, he/she suggests that one's social appearances are not necessarily authentic projections of the Self. This notion of the 'play' continues to be an important metaphor throughout much of Yeats's work, which will become clear through a later analysis of *The Player Queen*. Importantly, though, its depictions in this poem are very similar to depictions of the 'image' of the tree in *The Two Trees*: it *misrepresents* the heart. However, while the 'play' is presented as equally deceptive as the 'image', it is not portrayed as sinister, as evidenced by the poem's title and first line: *never* give all the heart. In order to avoid the dangers of 'giving all the heart', then, the poem recommends offering the 'play' instead. The 'play' thus protects the heart.

While Yeats's poem maintains the heart as a metaphor for the Self's internality, it also shows his developed view on externality as a necessary component of communication. This poem does not arbitrarily shift perspectives, though; it offers an explanation for Yeats's changed tone: heartbreak. The poem states that the man who 'gave all his heart and

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 87.

lost' knows the dangers of transparent self-representation. That is to say, the poem suggests that the internal Self is vulnerable when it is honestly presented, and it therefore requires the 'play's' protection. (We will see in the following section that heartbreak also functions as a catalyst in Hesse's shifting depictions of sincere self-representation.) *Never Give All the Heart* therefore does not distinctly divide the internal Self from its external representation; it instead recognises an inherent interplay between the two. This interplay problematizes the notions of authenticity and sincerity, which *The Two Trees* strictly defined through internality. While the first poem rejects the 'image' in favour of the heart, the second embraces both the 'play' and the heart. It is worth mentioning that Yeats's continued employment of the heart metaphor is, once again, indicative of the deeply rooted western embrace of internal identity. The use of the metaphor suggests a *desire* for a continued embrace of internal sincerity alongside *doubt* in the necessity of it. By posing this problem but not solving it, the poem illustrates its speaker's ambivalence toward the value of sincerity. This ambivalence is a significant hint toward Yeats's later representation of the conceptual Mask through the mask object because, before Yeats represents the Self as wholly external, we will see that he altogether discards the value of sincerity. This will grow clear in my analyses of *The Mask* and *The Player Queen*. However, now that we have elucidated Yeats's first two stages in his development toward depicting the Self through the Mask, it is necessary to highlight the similar pattern of Hesse's own development.

3.3.2 Peter Camenzind and Gertrud

Hesse's depictions of the internal/external division evolve between his novels *Peter Camenzind* (1904) and *Gertrud* (1910) through a very similar pattern as Yeats's two poems. In *Peter Camenzind*, the novel's protagonist Peter perceives the Self as internal, and much like the speaker in *The Two Trees*, he values sincere projections of this internality and rejects external concealments of it. In *Gertrud*, the protagonist Kuhn is more ambivalent than Peter toward this divide. Like the speaker in *Never Give All the Heart*, Kuhn acknowledges the internality of the Self, but he questions the necessity of revealing it to others. Also like Yeats's speaker, heartbreak instigates Kuhn's ambivalence. Although the novels' depictions of the Self evolve similarly to Yeats's, there is one crucial difference: both of Hesse's novels sometimes negotiate the internal/external divide by implementing metaphors of the mask object. Thus, while Yeats initially depicts externality through the

‘image’ and the ‘play’, the mask is an important metaphor in relation to identity from Hesse’s very first novel. As we will see, its meaning radically changes throughout Hesse’s career. In *Peter Camenzind* and *Gertrud*, it is characteristic of the medieval conception that masks are distortions of identity. By his final novel, *Das Glasperlenspiel*, however, we will see that Hesse’s writing techniques, along with his depictions of mask objects, are wholly characteristic of the Nietzschean Mask.

3.3.2.1 *Peter Camenzind*

I begin my analysis with *Peter Camenzind* because it parallels Yeats’s *The Two Trees* in terms of its portrayals of the internal/external divide. A brief summary of the novel will be helpful for our purposes. Like all of Hesse’s novels, *Peter Camenzind* is a *Bildungsroman* (refer to previous chapter for definition). The *Bildungsroman* is an appropriate format for Hesse, as all of his novels explore self-development. But, importantly, they depict internal development through external experiences. *Peter Camenzind* is narrated in the first person by Peter Camenzind, who chronicles his life from his childhood in the Swiss mountains to his adulthood in the city. Peter’s mother dies when he is very young, and with no siblings, he lives alone with his father. When their relationship eventually turns sour, Peter leaves their small village for an education in a big city. Characteristic of the *Bildungsroman*, the novel treats Peter’s informal education as equally valuable as his formal education. Peter matures and learns through new experiences and friendships. The two friends whose influences over Peter are strongest are Erminia, a painter with whom he falls in love, and Richard, a slightly immature yet intellectually precocious pianist and philosopher. Through dialogues with both of these characters, the novel formulates Peter’s perception of the Self as internal and his reverence for the sincerity of outwardly conveying it to others.

With Richard’s unwarranted assistance, Peter becomes employed full-time as a writer. The novel explains Peter’s opinion that writing should aim to objectively prescribe information rather than subjectively represent it. We will see below how Peter’s own narration employs this technique, which reflects his rejection of externality and his perception that ‘truth’ is internal. (It is clear that this idea is contrary to the Nietzschean Mask. However, the subsequent chapters will illustrate how Hesse inverts this very technique in *Der Steppenwolf* and *Das Glasperlenspiel* to exploit the inherent subjectivity

of language. And, like Nietzsche, his writing technique in these later novels promotes the necessity of communicating through lies, metaphors, and of course, the Mask.) Peter's writing technique is therefore a result of residual medieval conceptions of internal identity.

Eventually, Peter's friend Richard dies. Devastated by his death, Peter aimlessly travels through Italy and France. During his wanderings, he meets and falls in love with Elizabeth, whose unreciprocated love is a catalyst for the novel's only instance where Peter doubts the value that he places on sincerity, a theme which Hesse develops further in *Gertrud*. After wandering for some time, Peter meets a cripple named Boppi. Peter's fondness for Boppi grows strong through what he perceives is Boppi's transparency. He believes that Boppi fully exposes the depth of his Self to Peter, and Peter values this transparency so much that he moves into a flat with Boppi and cares for him. However, Boppi's health declines and he dies, after which Peter returns to his home village. The novel concludes here with no indication that Peter necessarily achieves the full self-development with which his narrative is primarily concerned.

As a *Bildungsroman*, the novel illustrates Peter's personal development through moments of epiphanies. A more detailed analysis of the shifting roles of epiphanies and their relation to the internal/external divide in Hesse's novels comes in a subsequent chapter. For now, though, it is worth mentioning that moments of epiphanies in *Peter Camenzind* often display Peter's growing perception of the Self's internality. Very early in Peter's life, one such moment occurs through his observation of an intellectual and artistic community to which Richard introduces him. Peter discovers that the interests of this community are externally focused, and he retrospectively narrates that this discovery began to formulate the value that he would later place on internal development:

I discovered that in most cases the intellectual fervor was directed at analyzing the conditions and the structure of society and the state, at the sciences, the arts, and at teaching methods. Yet only a small minority seemed aware of the need to develop their own selves and to clarify their personal relationship to time and eternity. And in my case, the awareness of this need was not very great at the time.¹⁰⁹

Bei den meisten fand ich alle Energie des Gedankens und der Leidenschaft auf Zustände und Einrichtungen der Gesellschaft, des Staates, der Wissenschaften, der Künste, der Lehrmethoden gerichtet, die wenigsten aber schienen mir das Bedürfnis

¹⁰⁹All English translations are from: *Peter Camenzind*. Trans. by Michael Roloff. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Inc. New York: 1969. Reprinted by Picador. London: 2003. (p. 56).

zu kennen, ohne äußeren Zweck an sich selber zu bauen und ihr persönliches Verhältnis zu Zeit und Ewigkeit zu klären. Auch in mir selber lag dieser Trieb noch zumeist im Halbschlummer.¹¹⁰

Although the passage acknowledges Peter's partial ignorance of his own perceived need to look inward for self-knowledge, the acute insight that enables him to discern the same ignorance within this community nonetheless indicates a developing perception of this need. The passage thus signifies that Peter is on the threshold of a philosophy of the Self that will shape his life. He perceives the discussions of the intellectuals and artists as banalities that buffer authentic and sincere communication. For Peter, their conversations distract from self-knowledge, and his awareness of this fact is a seed that germinates throughout the novel. Furthermore, his view that these conversations are superficial additionally reflects his perception that 'true' communication occurs through self-expression. We will see below that, throughout the novel, this becomes one of Peter's most valued virtues.

The novel never explicitly identifies when Peter crosses the threshold that finalises his conception of the Self. However, one way that it clearly illustrates his rejection of externality is through enactments of his claimed credo of writing. The moment that Peter becomes a writer is the most viable instance in the novel when his perception of the Self is solidified. Appropriate to the *Bildungsroman*, too, the novel likens Peter's transformation into a writer with an epiphany by describing the moment as instantaneous. '[...] something occurred which transformed my life and set my future course for many years. Suddenly, when I awoke one morning, I was a writer. [...] kam ein anderes kleines Ereignis, das mein ganzes Leben geändert und für Jahre meine Zukunft bestimmt hat. Eines Morgens, da ich erwachte, war ich Schriftsteller geworden.]'¹¹¹ This moment marks Peter's fully developed perception that 'truth' is internal because, immediately following this claim, Peter explains that his writing always aims for objective precision. That is, he indicates that writing should never be subjective and leave multiple avenues of interpretation open. He states:

At Richard's urging I had occasionally written brief sketches and portraits of types in our circle and also a few essays on literary and historical subjects—all of them *as accurate as possible*, but purely stylistic exercises [my italics].

¹¹⁰ (SW 2, 41)

¹¹¹ (62; SW 2, 45)

Auf das Drängen Richards hatte ich, rein als Stilübungen, gelegentlich Typen aus unsrem Kreis, kleine Erlebnisse, Gespräche und anderes skizzenhaft und *möglichst treu dargestellt*, auch einige Essays über Literarisches und Historisches geschrieben [my italics].¹¹²

As the passage shows, Peter's method of writing is to employ language without superficial buffers. This view is on the same plane as his perception of the artists' and intellectuals' conversations. In both cases, he emphasises that communication should be sincere; and sincerity, for Peter, is closely related to internality. The novel itself exemplifies Peter's claim. For example, at the start of the novel, he describes the people of his village by comparing them to trees:

Each [tree] had to bear its own burden and cling desperately [to the mountains], thereby acquiring its own shape and wounds. There were Scotch pines with branches extending only on one side, and some whose red trunks crawled snakelike around protruding rocks so that trees and rocks pressed and clung together in a tight embrace, preserving each other. These trees gazed at me like warriors and inspired respect and awe in my heart

Our men and women resembled these trees. They were hard, stern, and close-lipped—the best of them the most so. Thus I learned to look on men as trees and rocks, and to honor and love them as I did the quiet pines.

Jeder [Baum] hatte seine Last zu tragen und sich festzuklammern, und davon trug jeder seine eigene Gestalt und besondere Wunden. Es gab Föhren, denen der Sturm nur auf einer einzigen Seite Äste zu haben erlaubte, und solche, deren rote Stämme sich wie Schlangen um überhängende Felsen gebogen hatte, so daß Baum und Fels ein das andere an sich drückte und erhielt. Sie sahen mich wie kriegerische Männer an und erweckten Scheu und Ehrfurcht in meinem Herzen.

Unsere Männer und Frauen aber glichen ihnen, waren hart, streng gefaltet und wenig redend, die besten am wenigsten. Daher lernte ich, die Menschen gleich Bäumen oder Felsen anzuschauen, mir Gedanken über sie zu machen und sie nicht weniger zu ehren und nicht mehr zu lieben als die stillen Föhren.¹¹³

As we can see, Peter personifies the trees and then subsequently explains the purpose of this personification. By supplementing his metaphorical language with a prescriptive explanation, he prevents (or attempts to prevent) misinterpretations of his metaphor. That is, he provides an interpretive guide to the imagery he describes. This technique indicates Peter's belief that he can circumvent the externality of language. Unlike Nietzsche, Peter

¹¹² (62; SW 2, 45)

¹¹³ (3; SW 2, 8)

does not view language as inherently external. However, we have already seen Nietzsche's contention that *all* language is metaphorical by nature. Therefore, although Peter's narrative demonstrates his sharp awareness of an internal/external divide, it also indicates that he fears externality and makes an effort to avoid it, much like the speaker in Yeats's *The Two Trees*. The content of Peter's words is comparable to Yeats's tree, and the language Peter uses to represent this content is analogous to the tree's reflection. That is, the essence of Peter's words, such as his perception of his village, is *behind* the language he uses—it is the internal element of his language. However, Peter's claimed attempt to represent this essence accurately indicates that, like the Yeats's speaker, Peter aims to avoid misrepresentation. As symbolic language, in particular, is even more external from the content it presents, Peter thus enacts a technique of prescriptively explaining his symbolic language in order to reject its inherent externality and prevent alternative inferences of it. In other words, his technique indicates his attempt to avoid dishonest reflections, such as the tree's reflection in Yeats's poem.

The sincerity that Peter pursues through writing, combined with his opinion of the artists and intellectuals, together demonstrate his rejection of externality. As the novel progresses, this same rejection shapes his perception of the Self. For instance, soon after Peter's instantaneous transformation into a writer, he and Erminia take a rowboat out into a small lake one evening. While in the boat, Peter asks Erminia to tell him something intimate about her life, 'preferably a love story' [*Am liebsten eine Liebesgeschichte*].¹¹⁴ Her response, however, is unexpected and disappoints Peter:

That's another one of your romantic notions, [...] to have a woman tell you stories at night in the middle of a lake. Unfortunately, I can't do it. You poets are accustomed to finding words for everything beautiful and you don't even grant that people have *hearts* if they are less talkative about their feelings than you [my italics].

Das ist wieder eine von Ihren romantischen Ideen, [...] sich hier in der Nacht auf dem schwarzen Wasser von einer Frau Geschichten erzählen zu lassen. Ich kann das aber leider nicht. Ihr Dichter seid gewöhnt, für alles Hübsche Worte zu haben und denen, die weniger von ihren Empfindungen reden, gleich gar kein *Herz* zuzutrauen [my italics].¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ (74; SW 2, 53)

¹¹⁵ (74; SW 2, 53-54)

This insightful yet critical response elucidates Peter's conception of the Self and shows that this conception derives from the same attitude toward internality that we have already seen him express. Like his writing—which attempts to separate his internal content from its external vehicle of language—Peter's conception of the Self is also a division of internality and externality. As Erminia points out, Peter's request implies that Erminia's inner thoughts and emotions shape and define her. And her commentary further elucidates Peter's expectation that people communicate these thoughts and emotions transparently. Crucially, the passage employs the same metaphor that Yeats uses to represent these internalities: the heart [*Herz*]. Erminia's criticism of Peter thus illuminates his perception of the Self as internal, and his request highlights a parallel between his writing and his social interactions: it is not a mere request for a story; it is a request that Erminia reveals the 'heart' that Peter believes defines her.

Erminia's evaluation of Peter's conception of the Self is important because it indicates a critical distance between the *novel* and Peter's perspective. That is, the novel does not necessarily promote Peter's self-conception; it only illustrates it. As Peter's narrative unfolds, he is presented with numerous oppositions to this concept. Regardless of these challenges, though, he perpetually reinforces it. Through these reinforcements, the narrative shows how deeply manifested the western embrace of internal identity is. Peter frequently returns to the comfort of his culturally ingrained principles by continuously reasserting his self-conception in the face of contradictions. For example, soon after Erminia denies his request, Peter extends his same expectation of sincerity to his male friends. He states, 'Even today I know of nothing more delicious than an honest and forthright friendship between two men'. [*Ich weiß auch heute in der Welt nichts Köstlicheres als eine ehrliche und tüchtige Freundschaft zwischen Männern*].¹¹⁶ We will see below through Peter's reverence for Boppi that, in spite of the numerous challenges that prompt Peter to reconsider his notion of the Self, his embrace of internal identity is unwavering throughout the novel. However, it is necessary to first look at a couple of more instances in Peter's narrative where he re-establishes his initial stance on identity, even after his perception of the Self is challenged.

¹¹⁶ (86; SW 2, 60)

In the most significant of these instances, Peter compares his own artificial self-presentation to a mask. Upon seeing Elizabeth for the first time in years, Peter reluctantly congratulates her on her engagement to be married:

I congratulated her, and made the acquaintance of her fiancé when he came to take her home. I congratulated him too. Throughout the evening I wore a smile of benign good will, as irksome to me as a mask.

Ich gratulierte ihr, ich machte die Bekanntschaft ihres Verlobten, der sie abzuholen kam, und ich gratulierte auch ihm. Den ganzen Abend lag ein wohlwollendes Gönnerlächeln auf meinem Gesicht, mir selber lästig, wie eine Maske.¹¹⁷

This passage contains Hesse's first literary depiction of a mask. Importantly, its connotations are negative. By likening his smile to a mask, Peter illuminates the concealing characteristics of his smile and expresses his disgust with his own deceit. His smile *hides* the actual effect that the couple's engagement has on him, and he resents this social performance. However, Peter does not acknowledge the practicality of his actions. Although he instinctively slips into this role, its seeming necessity does not alter Peter's perception of sincerity. His disgust with his social mask instead reinforces his perception of the internal Self as well as his admiration for transparency. Therefore, Peter's unhesitant engagement in this social protocol challenges his notion of sincerity, but he nonetheless defaults to his previous perception. His disdain for the smile with which he masks his face makes this clear.

Peter's rejection of externality in the above passage is, once again, a lasting effect of medieval conceptions of identity. In much the same way that the reflection of Yeats's tree is a sinister distortion of the tree, the mask that Peter wears distorts his identity and falsely represents him. According to this passage, Peter does not recognise an interplay between his perceived internal Self and the external social mask, like Rilke's Malte or Pessoa. Peter instead discerns his external presentation as separate from what he perceives as his 'true' Self. Since he acknowledges this external display as distinctly separate from his perceived Self, he thus views it as dishonest.

Throughout the novel, Peter never recognises interaction between the two spectrums of the internal/external divide, but, toward the end of his narrative, he *claims* to have inverted his values and to favour externality due to its defensive properties. Numerous

¹¹⁷ (126; SW 2, 86)

failed attempts at intimate connections with people, such as the episode in the rowboat with Erminia, lead Peter to question his initial value. He states:

I realized with astonishment that man is distinguished from the rest of nature, primarily by a slippery, protective envelope of illusions and lies. [...] It is the result of each person's having to make believe that he is a unique individual, whereas no one really knows his innermost nature. Somewhat bewildered, I noticed the same trait in myself and I now gave up the attempt to get to the *core* of people. In most cases the protective cover was of crucial importance anyway. I found it everywhere, even among children, who, whether consciously or unconsciously, always play a role completely and instinctively instead of displaying who they are [my italics].

Mit Erstaunen nahm ich wahr, daß der Mensch von der übrigen Natur sich vor allem durch eine schlüpfrige Gallert von Lüge unterscheidet, die ihn umgibt und schützt. [...] Das Ergebnis des Umstandes, daß jeder eine Person, eine klare Figur vorzustellen genötigt wird, während doch keiner sein eigenstes Wesen kennt. Mit sonderbaren Gefühlen stellte ich an mir selber dasselbe fest und gab es nun auf, den Personen auf den *Kern* dringen zu wollen. Bei den meisten war die Gallert viel wichtiger. Ich fand sie überall auch schon an den Kindern, welche stets, bewußt oder unbewußt, lieber eine Rolle mimen, als sich ganz unverhüllt und instinktiv kundgeben [my italics].¹¹⁸

This passage is significant for two major reasons. First and foremost: although Peter scrutinises the perception of the Self that his narrative consistently presents, he still does not acknowledge a relationship between internality and externality. He continues to view them as directly juxtaposed. Although he still recognises the Self as internal, in this passage, he claims to at least shift his reverence to the external 'protection'. We will see below, however, that he just as quickly reverts back to his initial view when he meets Boppi. Second, Peter's description of what distinguishes man from the rest of nature echoes Nietzsche's description of the modern man of reason (see previous chapter). Nietzsche's man of reason wears a Mask concocted of his own lies and illusions. Peter holds a similar view. What distinguishes Peter's view from Nietzsche's, though, is that Peter believes that these lies and illusions are concealments of internality; Nietzsche, on the other hand, contends that this concoction of Masks is all there is. Thus, by Nietzsche's view, Peter is also one such modern man of reason. While Peter discerns the externalities that enshroud people, his resolute belief in the internal 'core' of people is, in a Nietzschean sense, a product of his own 'slippery, protective envelope of illusions and lies' [*eine schlüpfrige*

¹¹⁸ (148; SW 2, 99-100)

Gallert von Lüge unterscheidet, die ihn umgibt und schützt] (again, refer to previous chapter). This protective envelope results from a lasting construction of western identity. Thus, although Peter claims to embrace a type of mask, at this point in Hesse's representational development, it is not yet *the Mask*.

Peter's persistent belief in internal identity bars the shift in value that he claims to make because, although he alleges to alter his perception, his narrative never enacts his claim. This becomes evident when Peter observes Boppi's ostensible transparency. After Peter and Boppi move in together, Peter states:

This was the beginning of a good and happy period in my life, and I have drawn sustenance from it ever since. I was granted the privilege of gazing *clearly* and *deeply* into a magnificent soul left unscathed by illness, loneliness, poverty, and maltreatment [my italics].

Es begann eine gute, erfreuliche Zeit für mich, an der ich zeitlebens, reichlich zu zehren haben werde. Es ward mir gegönnt, *klar* und *tief* in eine prachtvolle Menschenseele zu schauen, über welche Krankheit, Einsamkeit, Armut und Mißhandlung nur wie leichte lose Wolken hinweggeflogen waren [my italics].¹¹⁹

As the passage shows, Boppi's appearance of sincerity rekindles Peter's initial opinion that one should fully disclose his/her internal Self. His friendship with Boppi reaffirms his faith in the 'truth' of internality and overrides the shifted perspective that he claims in the previous passage. Furthermore, the retrospective assessment that Peter's narrative provides of his time with Boppi suggests that memories of this time perpetuate his reaffirmation throughout the rest of his life. The steady pattern of Peter's reverence for internality that this passage reveals should thus make it clear that Peter is a representation of a man deeply entrenched in a western ideology of an internal Self. Peter's life experiences consistently challenge this notion, but the pattern I have unfolded throughout this analysis reveals how Peter's conception of the Self is so ingrained that his every experience validates it, even those that throw it into question. Importantly, like the speaker in *The Two Trees*, Peter sees a strict division between the internal Self and external representations of it. While Yeats's speaker adamantly warns against the sinister 'image', Peter rejects the social 'play' and, crucially, equates it with the most 'irksome' of externalities: masks.

¹¹⁹ (169; SW 2, 113)

3.3.2.2 Gertrud

In *Gertrud*, Hesse's depictions of the internal/external divide develop in a fashion very similar to the portrayals in Yeats's *Never Give All the Heart*. Like Yeats's lyric voice, Hesse's narrator Kuhn experiences heartbreak, which instigates his formulating perspective that self-concealment is a practical social necessity. We have seen how Peter claims to hold this position but never illustrates it; however, through an analysis of *Gertrud*, we will see a clear evolution of Kuhn's conception of externality from one of rejection into one precisely like the claim that Peter never exemplifies. Importantly, we will see that Kuhn specifically employs masks as a metaphor for both conceptions. The characteristics of the novel's masks change significantly, which reveals not only a development in Hesse's depictions of the Self but, importantly, a development in the role masks play throughout these developing depictions.

A brief summary of the novel is necessary in order to contextualise the pattern that this analysis will reveal. Like *Peter Camenzind*, *Gertrud* is a *Bildungsroman*. Kuhn, the novel's narrator and protagonist, tells the story of his life from his childhood as a budding musician to his adult life as a composer with some notoriety. As a young man, he is involved in a sledding accident that cripples him. This handicap is a source of much depression but is ultimately a limitation that prompts him to sharpen his skills as a musician. Like Peter, much of Kuhn's development occurs through his assessments of various friendships and loves. The most crucial of these friendships is with Heinrich Muoth, a reputable opera singer whom Kuhn meets during his final year of music school. Kuhn is heavily ambivalent about Muoth, and throughout the novel, his opinion of him shifts between admiration and disdain. These frequent shifts will be an important focus of the analysis below because, as I will show, they are concrete illustrations of Kuhn's ambivalence towards the internal/external divide.

Through Muoth, Kuhn's musical career progresses, and, as he meets other musicians and makes friends, such as fellow violinists Kranzl and Teiser, the narrative reveals more shifts in Kuhn's perceptions of sincerity and artificiality. The second most instrumental friendship in Kuhn's evolving perceptions of the Self is with Gertrud Imthor, whom Kuhn meets when he performs at one of her father's parties. Kuhn develops romantic feelings for Gertrud, but after casting both her and Muoth in his opera, Gertrud

falls for Muoth and the two eventually marry. Their marriage sends Kuhn down a spiral of depression, during which he composes his magnum opus. However, Gertrud and Muoth's marriage grows tumultuous over time and the two eventually separate. As a result, Muoth commits suicide. The narrative then concludes with a musical metaphor, as Kuhn reflects upon how his memories as an older man blend into a melody more harmonious than his experiences at the time they were lived.

As emphasised in this summary, the parallels that we see between *Never Give All the Heart* and *Gertrud* are most discernible through Kuhn's various relationships. However, the novel also radiates Kuhn's perspective on the internal/external divide through an overarching theme of music. This analysis is therefore structured by first demonstrating how Kuhn shares Peter Camenzind's reverence for internality and how this reverence gradually fades through Kuhn's increasingly ambivalent feelings towards the other characters' self-presentations. Second, it illustrates how this ambivalence shapes Kuhn's eventual recognition of an inevitable interplay between people's internal Selves and their external concealments. This recognition reveals that, unlike Peter, Kuhn releases his grip on sincere self-presentations and comes to view the external Self as a kind of necessary 'play' similar to the one represented in Yeats's poem. Crucially, under this second point, I will also highlight how the novel amplifies this breakthrough by equating the 'play' with a mask. Finally, it is important to note that, although Kuhn eventually acknowledges externality as an unavoidable component of social interaction, the novel never portrays the Self as fully characteristic of the conceptual Mask. However, the novel's portrayals of music provide an explanation for this. Thus, following the outline of Kuhn's gradual development, I conclude this section by pointing out a few instances where music enlightens our reading of Kuhn's development.

At the very outset of the novel, Kuhn, as the first-person narrator, brings his reverence for internality into focus. He introduces his narrative by explaining this quixotic value:

Even if, as it is decreed by the gods, fate has inexorably trod over my external existence as it does with everyone, my inner life has been of my own making. I deserve its sweetness and bitterness and accept full responsibility for it.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ All English translations of the novel are from: *Gertrude*. Trans. by Hilda Rosner. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Inc. New York 1955. Reprinted as ebook by Picador in 2012. (p.3)

Ist das äußere Schicksal über mich hingegangen wie über alle, unabwendbar und von Göttern verhängt, so ist mein inneres Geschick doch mein eigenes Werk gewesen, dessen Süße oder Bitterkeit mir zukommt und für das ich die Verantwortung allein auf mich zu nehmen denke.¹²¹

As it appears at the beginning of the novel, this passage establishes the novel's primary focus on self-development. Kuhn's claim is an existential one; he claims full agency in the shaping of his own inner fate. That is, he denies the external world any persuasive power over his Self. This denial echoes the same medieval conceptions of identity we have already seen through numerous examples. It shows that Kuhn shares Peter's reverence for a Self that he perceives as internal and that he starkly distinguishes this Self from the external world. Importantly, this distinction also reveals how Kuhn perceives the Self through a Kantian lens: he essentially equates it with the *Ding an sich*. In the same way that Kant's *Ding an sich* supposedly defines the 'true' reality of an object or concept, Kuhn's existential claim indicates his view that external representations of his Self are merely outer exhibitions of a Self that is ultimately defined internally. It is important to bear this passage in mind throughout this analysis because Kuhn retains this perception throughout the entire novel. Thus the ambivalence I demonstrate below is not necessarily Kuhn's ambivalence toward his definition of the Self but rather toward *sincerity*.¹²² That is, Kuhn consistently perceives that one's 'play' is shaped by an internal Self and not the other way around. Like the speaker in *Never Give All the Heart*, Kuhn's reverence for the 'heart' sustains, but, as we will see, he also eventually recognises its need for a protective 'play'.

The mask's first appearance in the novel reinforces Kuhn's stated reverence for internality. As stated before, masks are represented both negatively and positively in *Gertrud*. In both instances, it is a metaphor for dishonesty, but Kuhn's opinion of this

¹²¹ (SW 2, 283)

¹²² According to Andreas Solbach, the notion of *sinceritas* (sincerity) is a rhetorical narrative device that Hesse employs throughout all of his novels. He states that 'ruminations on the necessary conditions for telling a convincing story are recurrent in Hesse's works, and he returns time and again to the rhetorical device of *sinceritas*, sincerity' (*The Aesthetics of Ritual: Pollution, Magic, and Sentimentality in Hesse's Demian*. "A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." 81-115. [p. 83]). For a deeper exploration of the historical structures that have shaped the concept of sincerity into a literary device with rhetorical properties, see: Kayser, Wolfgang. *Die Wahrheit der Dichter: Wandlung eines Begriffs in der deutschen Literatur* (1959); Trilling, Lionel. *Sincerity and Authenticity* (1964); Perkins, David. *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Sincerity* (1964); and Guilhamet, Leon. *The Sincere Ideal: Studies on Sincerity in Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (1974).

characteristic drastically changes by the end of the novel. Much like the only appearance of a mask symbol in *Peter Camenzind*, the first appearance of a mask represents an undesired buffer between Kuhn and what he perceives as ‘truth’. Not long after Kuhn recovers from his sledding accident, he strolls through a valley one night and experiences a moment of clarity that reminds him of a similar sensation he once experienced as a child. He states:

And with this memory, that wonderful clarity returned, the almost glasslike brightness and transparency of feelings where everything appeared without a mask, where things were no longer labelled sorrow or happiness, but everything signified strength and sound and creative release.

Und mit dieser Erinnerung kam jene herrliche Klarheit wieder, die fast gläserne Helligkeit und Durchsichtigkeit der Gefühle, deren jedes ohne Maske dastand und deren keines mehr Schmerz oder Glück hieß, sondern nur Kraft und Klang und Strom bedeutete.¹²³

This first mask represents what Kuhn recognises as a metaphorical hindrance to ‘truth’. He describes this epiphany as a glimpse *behind* a ‘mask’ of appearances, and he indicates that clarity occurs through removal of the mask. By labelling appearances as dishonest and then likening this dishonesty to a mask, Kuhn brands the mask with negative connotations. He thus employs this mask metaphor to symbolise his distrust of externality. Kuhn suggests that, prior to this momentary experience, he was unaware of the mask’s deception and accepted the nature of its appearance without question. But with its removal, he now purportedly discerns how his previous worldview was purely defined by a deceptive externality. Such a description is clearly residual of medieval fears of masks.

Furthermore, Kuhn’s mask metaphor extends his reverence for internality to other spheres. It shows that his perception of the internal/external divide is not only his model for the Self, but it is a skeletal framework for his entire philosophy of the world. The above epiphany thus shows that Kuhn views his entire world through the same Kantian lens mentioned before. The novel primarily engages with this divide, though, through Kuhn’s conceptions of the Self. Kuhn’s feelings toward masks change, in fact, when he acknowledges their necessity in the social sphere. We will see this further below when Kuhn admires a ‘play’ that he perceives Gertrud to present and then equates the notion of the ‘play’ with the mask.

¹²³ (34; SW 2, 304)

Although the mask metaphor changes shape towards the end of the novel, it is best to trace the thematic development of the internal/external divide before examining the final mask because the final depiction of a mask can seem arbitrary without understanding this development. Kuhn first shifts his tone towards the removal of externality when he meets Muoth:

My feelings toward Heinrich Muoth were not clear. [...] I was too young and my experience of people too limited to understand and accept the fact that he almost revealed himself naked to people and, in doing so, hardly seemed to know any shame.

Mein Gefühl gegen Heinrich Muoth war nicht klar. [...] Ich war zu jung und hatte zu wenig Menschliches erlebt, um das zu verstehen und zu billigen, wie er sich gleichsam nackt hingab und kaum die Scham des Schmerzes zu kennen schien.¹²⁴

As we can see, Kuhn does not easily transfer his reverence for internality to social interactions.¹²⁵ Muoth is candid and often belligerent, and these traits intimidate Kuhn. He therefore questions whether they are necessary or even appropriate for one's socialisation. His private assessment of Muoth even implies that an external 'play' might be a necessary replacement for this transparency. Kuhn's reaction to Muoth is contrary to his previous indication that peering behind a mask is joy-inducing. He clearly does not experience the same elation when the 'truth' he glimpses moves from a private setting to a social one. He does not question Muoth's sincerity, though; he is clear that he senses Muoth's authenticity. However, he is uncertain about the *value* of Muoth's transparency. Kuhn's tone toward internality in this passage is distinctly altered from before. This shift in tone reveals Kuhn's early acknowledgment of an internal/external interplay, which indicates that Kuhn is far more precocious in his understanding of this divide than Peter Camenzind at a comparable age. Kuhn recollects this episode by attributing his response to youthful inexperience: he was 'too young' [*zu jung*] to appreciate Muoth's candid behaviour. As Kuhn's narrative is retrospective, this reassessment foreshadows how the narrative will eventually reveal a different perception once it has illustrated more of his experiences.

As aforementioned, Kuhn's fluctuating perceptions of social sincerity throughout the novel most often pivot on his relationship with Muoth. Thus, soon after his introduction

¹²⁴ (42-43; SW 2, 310)

¹²⁵ It is worth noting that the original German 'Scham des Schmerzes' is more accurately translated as 'shame of pain', which has a slightly stronger effect than the translation 'any shame'.

to Muoth, Kuhn shifts views on him twice in quick succession. First, he accepts the personality that Muoth transparently displays; but as soon as he finds Muoth disagreeable again, he attributes this disagreeability to what he then perceives as Muoth's dishonest self-presentation. This occurs when Muoth arranges for Kuhn and the violinist Kranzl to rehearse a song together. Kuhn is infatuated with Kranzl's own transparency and, as a result, decides that Muoth's candour is equally acceptable:

It was a comfort to me to find this man [Kranzl] so natural and sincere. If he was one of Muoth's friends, perhaps I could also find a place among them.

Es war mir ein Trost, diesen Geigenmann [Kranzl] so einfach und bieder zu finden. Wenn der zu Muoths Freunden gehörte, konnte ich dort zur Not auch bestehen.¹²⁶

This passage shows yet another shifted perspective. Kuhn is drawn to the sincerity that he discerns Kranzl to divulge. He finds Kranzl's transparency more agreeable than Muoth's, which suggests that Kuhn's initial scepticism of Muoth is not necessarily scepticism of his transparency. It is, rather, his own subjective distaste for the personality traits that Muoth's transparency reveals. However, his chance alignment with Kranzl's personality revives his reverence for internality and inverts his opinion of Muoth. Through this inversion, Kuhn reinstates his previous worldview.

This renewal of Kuhn's Kantian worldview, however, fuels a very rapid turnaround toward Muoth when Kuhn's mood shifts and he once again finds Muoth unpleasant. After attending Muoth's birthday party, where Muoth teases Kuhn about his crippled leg, Kuhn walks Muoth's friend Marian home. Along the walk, Kuhn vehemently criticises Muoth, whom he now perceives as opaque and artificial. He tells Marian:

Oh, he puts on a pose. [...] He is an actor. What does he want to mock himself and others for? [...] The miserable wretch!

Ach, er macht sich interessant! [...] Er [ist] ein Komödiant. Was braucht er sich und andere zu verhöhnen? [...] Das Lästernaul!¹²⁷

As this shows, Kuhn's worldview wavers with his fluctuating mood.¹²⁸ His outburst reinstates his previous rejection of externality. While he initially symbolises this rejection

¹²⁶ (46; SW 2, 312)

¹²⁷ (56; SW 2, 318)

¹²⁸ Again, it is worth making a note on the translation: a more accurate translation of 'Lästernaul' might be 'gossip' or 'slanderer'.

through the metaphor of unmasking, in this passage, he replaces the mask with a ‘play’: he accuses Kuhn of hiding behind a performance. Kuhn’s changed metaphor from mask to ‘play’ requires closer attention because it links his previous mask to an important mask that appears later in the novel.

Although the first line of the English translation above is clearly a creative choice on the translator’s part, it is appropriate because it emphasises the performance or act that *er macht sich interessant* implies. Muoth *makes* himself interesting by putting on a ‘play’. This shifted representation of externality is similar to Yeats’s evolution of the ‘image’ into the ‘play’. A crucial difference between the ‘image’ and ‘play’ is that the former is static and the latter is fluid—that is, the ‘play’ is an ongoing act. Thus, while both are seen as concealments of internal ‘truth’, the image conceals with fixed meaning and the ‘play’ conceals through an ongoing process. In both Yeats’s poetry and Hesse’s novel, each concept is portrayed as dishonest. The dishonesty of the ‘play’, in Yeats’s poem, though, is not portrayed negatively, as we have already seen. And in this passage from *Gertrud*, we see a similar portrayal: the externality that Kuhn previously avoids appears as a static mask, while Muoth’s externality is construed as an ongoing ‘play’. One difference between Yeats’s poem and *Gertrud* is that, at this point in the novel, Kuhn does not (yet) construe Muoth’s ‘play’ as a protection but, rather, as a malicious sleight of hand. (Kuhn interprets it differently later in the novel.) It is crucial to highlight this parallel between Yeats’s poem and Hesse’s novel because it helps us identify a link between their early and later representations of masks. It reveals that both writers’ depictions of the Self develop through the same reconfigurations of the internal/external divide.

With the exception of Kuhn’s first impression of Muoth, the ambivalence we have seen displayed in the novel thus far is Kuhn’s ambivalence toward Muoth himself; and the changing perceptions we have seen all default to Kuhn’s favouring internality. Kuhn’s fluctuations are therefore most often determined by whether he can discern Muoth’s sincerity or whether he can perceive his ‘play’. However, Kuhn’s ambivalence is more directly determined by the notions of internality and externality themselves when he finally solidifies his admiration for Muoth. This occurs the day following the party, when Kuhn returns to Muoth’s house to collect his violin. After retrieving his violin and returning home, Kuhn reflects on their meeting:

For however much his manner annoyed me, it impressed me; he was the stronger character of the two. At the same time, he *displayed* a whimsical, childlike disposition in his conversation and behaviour which was often charming and which quite won me over. [...] A friendship was established between us, at that time my only one, and I almost began to fear the time when he would no longer be there [my italics].

Denn so empfindlich seine Art mich ärgerte, sie imponierte mir doch, er war der Stärkere. Daneben *zeigte* er im Gespräch und Benehmen eine launenhafte Kindlichkeit, die oft entzückend war und ganz mit ihm versöhnte. [...] Es entstand eine Freundschaft, damals meine einzige, und ich begann mich beinahe auf die Zeit zu fürchten, wo er nicht mehr da sein würde [my italics].¹²⁹

In this reflection, Kuhn acknowledges his fondness for Muoth, which he then maintains throughout most of the novel. Kuhn recognizes that Muoth's demeanour has changed from the night before, and the difference appeals to him. Kuhn's sudden departure from his opinion of Kuhn is significant because it implies his awareness that Muoth is merely putting on another 'play'. He states that Muoth *displays* [*zeigt*] an alluring personality, which is starkly different from his prior display but which is appealing enough to outweigh his perception of the belligerent Muoth who insulted him the night before. This claim is, of course, not explicit; but without even a mild suggestion that Kuhn perceives the current Muoth as more sincere, his implication that Muoth is once again acting suggests that Kuhn is unconcerned either way. In other words, the passage presents the ambiguity of Muoth's sincerity as irrelevant; and in light of this, Kuhn's implication indicates his growing awareness of a necessary internal/external interplay.

This development in Kuhn's perception of the internal/external divide grows even clearer when Kuhn more explicitly states his ambivalence on the matter of sincerity. For example, when Kuhn begins playing in an orchestra with Teiser, he is underwhelmed by what he observes as Teiser's underdeveloped internal Self. Yet, in the very same instance, what he ascertains as Muoth's external self-presentation captivates him:

I reproached myself for not being satisfied with the company of Teiser, who was good and loyal. [...] He was too happy, too cheerful, too contented; he seemed to have no depth. He did not speak well of Muoth. Sometimes when Muoth sang at the theater he looked at me and whispered: "He has faked it again! That man is quite spoiled. He doesn't sing Mozart and he knows why." I had to agree with him and yet I did so unwillingly. I was drawn to Muoth but I did not like to defend him.

¹²⁹ (64; SW 2, 324)

Muoth had something that Teiser did not have or understand and which bound me to him, and that was a continual desire, yearning and dissatisfaction.

Ich schalt mich selber, daß ich bei dem treuen, prächtigen Teiser nicht mein Genügen fand.[...] Er war mir zu heiter, zu sonnig, zu sehr zufrieden, er schien keine Abgründe zu kennen. Auf Muoth war er nicht gut zu sprechen. Manchmal im Theater, wenn Muoth sang, sah er mich an und flüsterte: “Da, wie der wieder pfuscht! Das ist schon ein ganz Verwöhnter! Mozart singt er keinen, er weiß warum.” Ich mußte ihm recht geben und tat es doch nicht mit dem Herzen, ich hing an Muoth und mochte ihn doch nicht verteidigen. Muoth hatte etwas, was Teiser nicht hatte und nicht kannte und was mich mit ihm verband. Das war das ewige Begehren, die Sehnsucht und Ungenüge.¹³⁰

This passage is the clearest illustration that we have seen so far that the novel’s motif of ambivalence is a metaphorical means to a specific end. It shows that Kuhn’s ambivalence is not merely a display of capricious indecision, but that it is a recurring pattern that alters slightly on each recurrence, each time emphasising more and more Kuhn’s gradual release of his tight grip on internal sincerity. This particular recurrence demonstrates Kuhn’s own recognition of his torn reverence. On the one hand, he privately rebukes what he recognises as Teiser’s underdeveloped internal Self: as he cannot discern any ‘depth’ [*Abgründe*] in Teiser, he finds him superficial. On the other hand, he agrees with Teiser that Muoth perpetually *acts*, at the same time acknowledging a stark allure of Muoth’s obvious superficiality. Additionally, Teiser’s claim that Muoth is aware of why he avoids singing Mozart signifies his perception (and Kuhn agrees) that Muoth himself is insincere. Mozart’s music is a common motif that Hesse uses to symbolise ‘depth’. In *Der Steppenwolf*, for example, Mozart is contrasted with jazz music to signify the deep substance of ‘high art’ versus the novel’s presentation that jazz is desultory and thus superficial—that is, the novel suggests that the ‘pop’ element of jazz renders it less heartfelt than Mozart. Teiser’s and Kuhn’s mutual judgment of Muoth, as the passage shows, expresses a similar view: it indicates their perception that Muoth circumvents singing music that has ‘depth’ in order to keep his ‘play’ intact.

We can thus see that Kuhn is at once dissatisfied with Teiser’s *lack* of internality while he is drawn to many of the characteristics that *conceal* Muoth’s. This simultaneous recognition is a certain shift in Kuhn’s perception of the internal/external divide. His

¹³⁰ (88; SW 2, 339-340)

opinion of Muoth alongside his opinion of Teiser exemplifies the continuation of his reverence for internality but also his abandonment of the notion that internality should be openly visible. Much like the passage in which Kuhn finally accepts Muoth's friendship, the above passage shows that Kuhn's ambivalence throughout the narrative illustrates his progressive recognition of a complex relationship between internality and externality.

Much like the speaker in *Never Give All the Heart*, Kuhn is eventually persuaded by heartbreak to accept the idea that a 'play' is an essential component of the Self. After Kuhn discovers Gertrud's and Muoth's marital engagement, he enters a prolonged period of depression, returns to his hometown, and cuts off communication with both Muoth and Gertrud. Nonetheless, he finally relents and agrees to meet the two at their house sometime after their marriage. Before Muoth arrives, Kuhn notices the sincerity with which Gertrud acts towards him. He notes that 'she had not swerved from her path and become untrue to her nature' [*{...} war sie nicht von ihrer Bahn gewichen und ihrem Wesen nicht untreu geworden*].¹³¹ However, upon Muoth's arrival, Gertrud's behaviour alters significantly, and she transforms into what Kuhn perceives as a different person:

They were an extremely handsome couple and made an impression wherever they went. Yet they were cool toward each other, and I thought that only Gertrude's strength of character and superior nature made it possible for her to *mask* this coolness with a polite and dignified veneer [my italics].

Sie waren ein wundervolles Paar schöner Menschen und machten Eindruck, wohin sie kamen. Doch war es zwischen ihnen kühl, und ich dachte mir, daß nur Gertruds Stärke und innere Überlegenheit ihn vermöge, diese Kühle so in Höflichkeit und würdige Form zu *verwandeln* [my italics].¹³²

As we can see, Kuhn's attitude toward externality varies from before. Earlier in the novel, he conveys disgust over his first encounter with Muoth's obvious superficiality. But in the passage above, he treats the very same notion of masking with respect. Importantly, like in Yeats's poem, the theme of heartbreak instigates this change of attitude. Thus, in light of Kuhn's own recent heartbreak, he detects Gertrud's suffering and empathises with her sudden transformation in the presence of Muoth. It is important to make note of the translation because the original verb *verwandeln* emphasises the *act* of Gertrud's presentation more than *maskieren* might. *Verwandeln* is a process and thus draws attention

¹³¹ (193; SW 2, 408)

¹³² Ibid.

to the masking effects of Gertrud's 'play'. The translator's choice of the English verb 'mask' generates a similar effect. In this passage, Kuhn extracts the mask of appearances depicted previously in the novel and transplants it into a social sphere; in doing so, he reproduces its deceptive nature in a positive light. We can therefore see that, at this point in his narrative, Kuhn acknowledges externalities—whether mask or 'play'—as dignified in their deception. He perceives Gertrud's insincere 'play' as necessary, and he admires the skill with which she performs it. Although Gertrud's act of masking is as dishonest as Muoth's, the heartbreak that Kuhn experiences shapes his gratitude for protective masking. Like Yeats's speaker, Kuhn 'gave all the heart and lost', and now he acknowledges the benefits of the 'play'.

Kuhn's adaption to masking grows even clearer when he explicitly states that Muoth removes his mask later in life. After Gertrud and Muoth separate, Muoth lives alone and has little contact with people. Kuhn visits him, though, and pities him when he observes how this solitude has changed Muoth and revealed his feeble core. Kuhn states, 'It was as if he had taken off a mask and I saw a child's face behind the hard, selfish features' [*Das war, als nehme er eine Maske ab und ich sähe hinter den harten selbstsüchtigen Zügen ein Kindergesicht versteckt*].¹³³ This metaphor once again equates the 'play' with the mask. Throughout the novel, Muoth's externality is primarily portrayed as a 'play'. However, this statement correlates the 'play' and the mask, but it removes the sinister connotations that we see depicted in *Peter Camenzind* as well as earlier in *Gertrud*. As a result of Kuhn's shifting ambivalence, along with his own heartbreak and the dignity that he perceives in Gertrud's external transformation, he no longer starkly divides externality from the internality that he initially perceived it to conceal. He now acknowledges a necessary interaction between the two. Kuhn's statement above, combined with the pity he expresses, implies his matured understanding of the *mask* that Muoth has worn throughout most of his life. This appearance of the mask symbol is crucial because it inverts the meaning of the mask from earlier in the novel. Initially, Kuhn stamps the mask with sinister connotations, 'unmasking' the world to reveal its 'truths'. However, as a result of Kuhn's developing perception of the internal/external divide, he accepts this final mask as an inevitable component of the human condition.

¹³³ (227; SW 2, 429)

So far, this analysis of *Gertrud* has revealed that, like Yeats's *Never Give All the Heart*, the novel is a clear stepping stone in Hesse's representations of the Self. His depictions develop from a concretely internal Self in *Peter Camenzind*—which Peter maintains one should transparently display—into Kuhn's empathetic acknowledgment in *Gertrud* that inaccurate external representations are necessary emotional guards. Kuhn's increasing awareness of this fact shows that he is a protagonist who begins to break away from traditional western conceptions of the Self. At the beginning of my explication of the novel, I state that the internal/external divide is the novel's predominant theme. I argue that the novel is so concerned with this divide that many of its primary motifs, such as music, also stem from this major theme. Now that Kuhn's developing perception of the divide is clearly demonstrated, it is necessary to highlight a few instances where the novel's music motif serves this exact rhetorical purpose. Doing so will illustrate the extent to which the tendrils of the internal/external theme piece the novel together.

The novel most often symbolises this theme through music by differentiating between Kuhn's perceptions of music and musicianship. Musicianship, for Kuhn, can be equated to internality because it is an inherent kernel within a musician that develops through his/her life experience; and *music*, for Kuhn, is an external representation of this musicianship. We have already seen Kuhn's existential claim that he dictates the shape of his own 'inner life' [*inneres Geschick*]. He supplements this claim by also expressing that he was a musician from a very early age:

At about the age of six or seven, I realized that of all the invisible powers the one I was destined to be most strongly affected and dominated by was music. From that moment on I had a world of my own, a sanctuary and a heaven that no one could take away from me or belittle, and which I did not wish to share with anyone. I had become a musician, though I did not learn to play any instrument before my twelfth year.

Etwa von meinem sechsten oder siebten Jahr an begriff ich, daß von allen unsichtbaren Mächten die Musik mich am stärksten zu fassen und zu regieren bestimmt sei. Von da an hatte ich meine eigene Welt, meine Zuflucht und meinen Himmel, den mir niemand nehmen oder schmälern konnte und den ich mit niemand zu teilen begehrte. Ich war Musiker, obwohl ich vor meinem zwölften Jahre.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ (3; SW 2, 283-84)

This passage is a model around which the entire novel's musical motif is shaped. Through Kuhn's assertion that his musicianship preceded his musical skills, it clarifies his distinction between musicianship and music itself. It indicates that his musician status is determined by factors beyond his technical skills: that is, it is an internal essence. Kuhn's hesitation to share his music with anyone else deepens this sentiment; it signifies that musicianship is an intangible internality and that music is the audible—and thus external—expression of this internality.

The novel develops this notion through its various characters' indications that they gain knowledge of one another through musical performances. We have already seen one instance of this with Kuhn and Teiser's assessment of Muoth's performance during rehearsals. They gather that his superficial performance does not sincerely reflect his musicianship, but rather that it is a *mask of* his musicianship. According to both men, this is why Muoth avoids Mozart: performing Mozart requires the music performed to access and reflect something deeper than Muoth's performances would be able to do. Gertrud and Marian feel differently, however. From their respective vantage points, Muoth's music represents his internality far more vividly than the 'play' he displays in society. For example, when Kuhn criticises Muoth after his birthday party, Marian retorts by asserting that Kuhn could know Muoth if he listened more closely to his music:

You don't know Muoth yet. [...] You have heard him sing haven't you? That is what he is like, fierce and violent, but mostly against himself. He is an emotional man; he has great vigor but no goal. At every moment he would like to taste the whole world, and whatever he has and whatever he does only constitutes an infinitesimal part of it. He drinks and is never drunk; he has women and is never happy; he sings magnificently and yet does not want to be an artist. If he likes anyone, he hurts him. He pretends to despise all who are contented, but it is really hatred against himself because he does not know contentment. That is what he is like.

Sie kennen Muoth noch nicht. [...] Haben Sie ihn denn nicht singen hören? So ist er, gewalttätig und grausam, aber am meisten gegen sich selber. Er ist ein armer, stürmender Mensch, der lauter Kräfte und keine Ziele hat. In jedem Augenblick möchte er die ganze Welt austrinken, und was er hat, und was er tut, ist immer nur ein Tropfen. Er trinkt und ist nie betrunken, er hat Frauen und ist nie glücklich, er singt so herrlich und will doch kein Künstler sein. Er hat jemand lieb und tut ihm weh, er stellt sich, als verachte er alle Zufriedenen, aber er ist Haß gegen sich selber, weil er nicht zufrieden sein kann. So ist er.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ (57; SW 2, 319)

The traits with which Marian describes Muoth are gathered solely through his singing. She detects dark self-hatred that, according to her, only his music conveys. She thus points out that Kuhn's negative assessment of Muoth's 'play' would be different if he could access Muoth's musicianship through his music. Thus, from Marian's angle, Muoth's 'play' might be artificial, but his music is an accurate representation of himself.

Like Marian, Gertrud also believes that she understands Muoth through his music. Before she ever meets Muoth, Gertrud tells Kuhn that she dislikes him because his stage performance communicates something that unnerves her. When Kuhn proposes that Gertrud perform in his opera alongside Muoth, she initially resists. She states:

I am not doing so willingly. [...] You know that I never sing for strangers, and before Heinrich Muoth it will be doubly painful, and not just because he is a famous singer. There is something about him that frightens me, at least on the stage.

Sehr gern tue ich's nicht [...] das wissen Sie ja. Ich singe sonst nie vor Fremden, und vor Herrn Muoth ist es mir doppelt peinlich. Nicht nur, weil er ein berühmter Sänger ist. Er hat etwas, was ich fürchte, wenigstens auf der Bühne.¹³⁶

As the passage suggests, Gertrud's knowledge of Muoth comes purely from his performance. Her judgment is less sympathetic than Marian's, but her confidence in her perception nonetheless fits within the model of music that the novel formulates at the beginning.

Music satisfies this function again through a letter correspondence between Kuhn and a poet who writes lyrics to his music. Neither Kuhn nor the poet ever meets one another beyond their exchanges of sheet music and lyrics. However, after two years of the poet's listening to Kuhn's music, he tells him that he knows him very well. In a letter to Kuhn, he writes:

I gather you are not a particularly happy person; that is revealed in your music. [...] As there is nothing else to make us rejoice, let us present something good to the public, something which will make it clear, even to those who are thick-skinned, that life is not lived on the surface alone. As we do not really know ourselves where to begin, it worries us to be aware of the wasted powers of others.

Sie können kein sehr glücklicher Mensch sein, das steht in Ihrer Musik. [...] Da uns doch sonst nichts Erfreuliches blüht, wollen wir den Leuten ein paar hübsche Sachen vorspielen, bei denen den Dickhäutern für Augenblicke klar wird, daß das Leben nicht bloß eine Oberfläche hat. Denn da wir doch mit uns selber nichts

¹³⁶ (127; SW 2, 364)

Rechtes anzufangen wissen, plagt es uns, die unnütze Kraft andere spüren zu lassen.¹³⁷

As we can see, in the same way that Marian and Gertrud access Muoth through his music, the poet gleans knowledge of Kuhn from his compositions. He tells Kuhn that his music allows him a glimpse into the internal ‘musicianship’ that the music reflects. Furthermore, the poet indicates that he shares Kuhn’s reverence for internality and sincerity by stating that his music symbolises the depth of life. This correspondence is thus yet another certain example of the Hesse’s use of music to further extenuate Kuhn’s distinction between internality and externality. The novel contains numerous examples of passages such as this one. However, there is no need to exhaust the point. It should be clear that music in *Gertrud* stands as a symbol for the internality that Kuhn believes defines the Self. Thus, as mentioned before, the novel’s portrayals of music and musicianship help explain why Hesse’s depictions of the Self have not yet become fully external in *Gertrud*. These portrayals of music show that Kuhn is sincerely convinced that the Self is internal, and the extent to which he accepts external concealments (i.e. Gertrud’s and Kuhn’s protective ‘masks’ as well as the ‘music’ performed throughout the novel) therefore derive from his maintained internal focus. Like Yeats’s ‘heart’, music symbolises a vulnerable internality that ‘plays’ protect; and, as shown, in *Gertrud*, *masks* also provide this protection. Now that we have seen the pattern of Hesse’s developing representations of the internal/external divide, alongside their parallels with Yeats’s poetry, we can examine the development of Yeats’s ‘image’ and ‘play’ into the physical mask that functions as a Nietzschean Mask. This analysis will highlight nuances in Yeats’s developing representations that will help us to then understand Hesse’s development examined in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

3.3.3 The Mask and The Player Queen

Yeats adopts the mask as his symbol for an external Self in his poem *The Mask* (1910). While the poem begins to formulate his portrayals of the Self as external, he articulates the parameters of this model for the Self most clearly in his play *The Player Queen*. First performed in 1919, the play incorporates a clear allusion to the poem, which indicates Yeats’s longstanding consideration of externality in this form. It is important to

¹³⁷ (107; SW 2, 352)

clarify that Yeats's adoption of the mask symbol is not an arbitrary implementation of a new metaphor for externality, though. Like the transition of his 'image' into the 'play', the mask embodies new characteristics that change the nature of the externality he represents. For instance, the 'image' represents a fixed and maliciously deceptive external self-representation; the 'play', on the other hand, is more fluid, yet it is justified in its deception. Both are inherently linked to the internality that they conceal, but the traits of the 'play' depicted in *Never Give All the Heart* change in ways that redefine the Self portrayed in *The Two Trees*. Likewise, as a new symbol for the same idea, the mask once again reformulates Yeats's depictions of the Self. As we will see, it fully replaces internality. It is a metaphor that overtakes Yeats's depictions of the Self as an internal essence and signifies that it is instead a concoction of externalities. The following analysis will show how Yeats's mask in the poem and the play are distinctly characteristic of the Nietzschean Mask (with an uppercase 'M'): they are Yeats's formulation of the Self through Nietzschean conceptions of externality.

The Mask is a short poem that was first published in a collection of poetry entitled *The Green Helmet and Other Poems* (1910). Like many of the poems in the collection, *The Mask* is about the nature of love. It is written as a dialogue between two lovers. Through this dialogue, the poem uproots Yeats's previous portrayals of the internal Self from its medieval soil and replants the ancient theatrical mask in its place. The poem's mask does not merely conceal the internal Self, though; it altogether eliminates elements of internality and redefines the Self as external. This will become apparent through the analysis that follows the poem. Below is the poem as it was originally published:

'Put off that mask of burning gold
With Emerald eyes.'

'O no, my dear, you make so bold
To find if hearts be wild and wise,
And yet not cold.'

'I would but find what's there to find,
Love or deceit.'

'It was the mask engaged your mind,
And after set your heart to beat,
Not what's behind.'

'But lest you are my enemy,

I must enquire.'
 'O no, my dear, let all that be;
 What matter, so there is but fire,
 In you, in me?'¹³⁸

The dialogue presented in this poem occurs between two lovers, and it juxtaposes each of their respective perceptions of the Self. The first, unmasked lover conveys leftover sentiments of the medieval conceptions that we have seen depicted in many other modern literary representations. He/she asks the second, masked lover to remove his/her mask. This request shows that the unmasked lover distinguishes between the internal Self and the external representation. Such a distinction implies his/her fear that these representations might be misrepresentations. This perspective aligns with Yeats's speaker in *The Two Trees* as well as the protagonists of the two Hesse novels thus far examined. The masked lover, however, opposes this view by asserting that the mask itself embodies the essence that initially intrigued the unmasked lover. He/she thus assures the unmasked lover that 'what's behind' the mask is inconsequential to the externality that evoked his/her attraction. The masked lover's contention demonstrates a shift in Yeats's representation of externality that has significant ramifications. First, it altogether abolishes the internal/external divide and drops concerns with whether or not the external presentation—the 'image', the 'play', and now the mask—is an honest and accurate portrayal of an assumed internal 'true' Self. Second, by eliminating this concern, the masked lover once again redefines Yeats's portrayal of the Self. Unlike the 'play' in *Never Give All the Heart*, which conceals a delicate internal Self, the mask in this poem *is* the Self.

Furthermore, by instituting the mask in place of the 'play', Yeats resurrects the ancient transformation process. This institution not only expunges residual medieval conceptions from his depictions of masks, but it also rebrands the ancient theatrical mask as a social one. In the previous chapter, we saw that the ancient mask was not seen as a disguise; it completely effaced the actor and transformed him into the 'meaning' it represented. This mask thus defined and shaped the personality of the actor wearing it. Similarly, the mask depicted in the poem above is entirely external from the masked person. Therefore, unlike Yeats's previous depictions of the 'play' as self-designed, the mask in the poem above entirely determines the role of the masked lover. The poem thus breaks away

¹³⁸ Yeats, W.B. *Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats*. Macmillan London Limited. London: 1981. (p. 106)

from longstanding medieval conceptions and reinstates the mask's ancient connotations. But, crucially, the poem applies the mask's *theatrical* characteristics to social interactions. Like Rilke, then, Yeats likens society to the theatre and equally likens social roles to acting. Unlike Rilke, however, whose novel questions whether or not the social mask is authentic, Yeats's poem completely evades the question of authenticity. Through this simple reappropriation of the ancient theatrical mask, Yeats thus redefines his conception of the Self: unlike the 'play', it is no longer shaped through an internal/external interplay, but it is instead a purely external expression with no traces of 'what's behind' emanating through it. And, as we can see, the poem cements this point by giving the masked lover the final word: he/she ends the conversation by light-heartedly trivialising the unmasked lover's reverence for internality.

Yeats's inversion of the internal to the external in this poem redefines his idea of the Self in a characteristically Nietzschean fashion. One of the most crucial components of the Nietzschean Mask is that it is fluid and thus not definitive in its meaning. While the fluidity of the mask's meaning in *The Mask* is not explicit, its abolishment of internality certainly is. *The Player Queen*, however, better illustrates how the various traits of Yeats's mask symbol discernibly coincide with Nietzsche's concept. The same positive attitude towards externality reverberates throughout *The Player Queen*, and Yeats's incorporation of a segment of his poem into the play indicates that the mask symbol in the play is a more developed incarnation of the symbol from the poem. I contend that the play's very purpose is to illustrate the illusion of internality and the ubiquity of externality and, furthermore, that the mask is Yeats's most important metaphor in this illustration. The play employs the traits of the Nietzschean Mask in a variety of ways, but, most importantly, it uses the mask symbol to signify Yeats's application of this concept to the Self. Yeats's mask, as we will see, therefore develops into a Mask.

I will demonstrate this through literary analysis; however, Yeats's own commentary on the extensive, twenty-seven year process of composing the play provides some useful

context.¹³⁹ For example, in an introduction to the 1922 print edition of the play, Yeats writes:

I began in, I think, 1907, a verse tragedy [*The Player Queen*], but at that time the thought I have set forth in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* was coming into my head, and I found examples of it everywhere.¹⁴⁰

This excerpt shows that Yeats began to formulate the ideas for *The Player Queen* a few years before composing *The Mask*. As stated above, by including a segment of the poem in the play, he certainly indicates that the poem's themes align with those of the play. Furthermore, Yeats later explicitly asserts that, once he adopted the mask as his model for the Self, this model dominated his poetic intentions. He makes this point in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*, a prose book that presents his early formulations of certain spiritual and occultist beliefs, which he would later expound upon in *A Vision*. Among these is an explanation of why the mask became such a pertinent symbol in his literature. Yeats claims that its purely external nature inspired him to release his grip on medieval conceptions of internal identity:

Some years ago I began to believe that our culture, with its doctrine of sincerity and self-realisation, made us gentle and passive, and that the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were right to found theirs upon the imitation of Christ or of some classic hero. Saint Francis and Caesar Borgia made themselves overmastering, creative persons by turning from the mirror to meditation upon a mask. When I had this thought I could see nothing else in life.¹⁴¹

This passage provides potent evidence that Yeats was very conscious of the development I have thus far shown. It shows that he was acutely aware of how his previous thoughts on identity were shaped by lingering medieval conceptions. The passage also makes it clear, however, that he refocused the lens through which he viewed the world by consciously turning his attention from the internal to the external Self. It is crucial that Yeats symbolises this act as a shift from meditating upon a mirror to meditating upon a mask because it reformulates a major theme from *The Two Trees*. As we have seen, this early poem illustrates the tree's reflection as an inaccurate representation of a tree that symbolises an

¹³⁹ For an annotated and detailed study of the evolution of the play, see: Bradford, Curtis. *W.B. Yeats: The Writing of the Player Queen*. Northern University Press. Dekalb: 1977. Bradford's analysis closely looks at the surviving 1,100 folios of the play, which Yeats composed and edited from 1907 to 1934.

¹⁴⁰ *The Variorum Edition of the Plays of W.B. Yeats*. Ed. Russel K. Alspach. The MacMillan Company. New York: 1966. (p. 761)

¹⁴¹ *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*. 'Anima Hominis', Chapter 6. Macmillan. Massachusetts: 1918.

internal Self. In the passage above, Yeats portrays medieval conceptions of internal identity through the act of gazing into a mirror, which implies that the Self is a reflected ‘image’ and not an internal ‘core’. Such an illustration suggests that Yeats’s re-evaluation of identity results from his acknowledging internality as an illusion. It indicates that the ‘core’ he previously depicted as the Self was merely a quixotic description of a mirror’s reflection. He *assumed* it was internal, but it was external all along. Thus, by phrasing his development as a turn from a mirror to the mask, Yeats suggests that he is merely exchanging one externality for another. The difference between these two symbols of externality is that the mirror connotes ‘authenticity’ while the mask is explicitly external. As we can see, Yeats’s reasoning is extremely Nietzschean. Nietzsche contends that awareness of the *Mask* is liberating because it slackens the restrictive legislation that we *assume* is ‘truth’. The passage above therefore instates Yeats’s liberation from the legislation of the Self that previously shaped his literary portrayals.

A close reading of *The Player Queen* confirms Yeats’s claim by demonstrating it in practice. For this analysis, I use the first printed edition of the play (1922) because, as previously stated, Yeats continues to develop the mask symbol throughout his career in ways that eventually digress from a Nietzschean model. This first print edition, however, is predominantly attuned to questions of internality, externality, and, of course, the Self. This edition is therefore a good case study for the development I wish to show because it is less peppered with esoteric references to Yeats’s own occultist doctrines, which inform his ongoing revisions of the play through 1934.

As the play develops, it grows evident that *The Player Queen* itself, the social ‘plays’, ‘images’, and masks within the play as well as the world in which the play takes place are all one phantasmagoria that obscures the lines of what is ‘real’. The play is essentially an illustration of a world so strictly legislated by its own ‘truths’ that its characters are unable to discern the ‘plays’ they perform as their own socially prescribed creations. Within the play, the Self is, of course, one such legislation. And, as we will see, the play signifies this with the symbol of a physical mask when the character Decima dons a stage mask that transforms her into a real queen.

Because the play constructs its conceptual Mask through a number of episodes, it is best to provide the following analysis primarily in the form of a summary that focuses on

the episodes pertinent to our discussion. However, this is not intended to be a full summary. Its purpose is merely to highlight the relevant aspects of the play in their proper context. The play is divided into two scenes, and from the start of its first scene, it begins to incorporate elements of the Mask. It opens with a view of two old men leaning from two windows of a house. Their age is indicated by the ‘grotesque masks’ they wear. The mask symbol is thus present from the very start of the play. But the significance of the symbol is not immediately clear; its meaning is developed throughout the course of the play. The old men discuss the view that they have of the town’s castle, which their description indicates is silhouetted by the rising sun in the distance. As the men talk, Septimus, a travelling player (actor) and self-proclaimed famous poet who is in town to perform at the castle, appears in the street below the house. He is intoxicated, causing the old men to reprimand him. He insists that they would be drunk as well if their wives were as ‘bad’ as his. Septimus is a crucial character for this study because, in the play’s second scene, his ostensibly drunken philosophy provides percipient commentary on the play’s major masking theme.

Once Septimus passes out on the street, some citizens and countrymen arrive and commence gossiping. The content of their gossip begins formulating the parameters of the novel’s Mask by alluding to concepts we have previously been exposed to in Yeats’s poetry: the ‘image’ and the ‘play’. For example, a character only known as ‘Third Citizen’ asks ‘First Countryman’ if he has ever seen the queen. This question instigates a pertinent dialogue for the Mask’s construction:

First Countryman: No

Third Citizen: Our Queen is a witch, a bad evil-living witch, and we will have her no longer for Queen.

Third Countryman: I would be slow to believe her father’s daughter a witch.

Third Citizen: Have you ever seen the Queen, countryman?

Third Countryman: No.

Third Citizen: Nor has anyone else. Not a man here has set eyes on her. For seven years she has been shut up in that great black house on the great rocky hill. From the day her father died she has been there with the doors shut on her, but we know now why she has hidden herself. She has no good companions in the dark night.¹⁴²

The crowd’s gossip continues this way throughout much of the first scene. I reveal its significance after summarising the remainder of their gossip. They exchange various

¹⁴² *The Collected Plays of W.B. Yeats*. Macmillan London Limited. London: 1972. (p. 393)

speculations, but they finally settle on who/what the queen is when the character ‘The Tapster’ tells a claimed eyewitness account of when he peeked into the queen’s chambers and saw her ‘coupling’ with a unicorn. The crowd then decides that their queen will give birth to a half-breed beast that will inherit the throne. Under the premise of preventing this beast from taking the throne, the crowd vows to kill the queen and storm off to the castle.

This episode lays an important foundation upon which the Mask in Scene II is built. Through the crowd’s banter, we see, first, that Yeats’s notions of the ‘image’ and the ‘play’ merge and, second, that the *illusion* generated by this murgence has a powerful influence over the crowd. This persuasive influence illustrates the very legislation that Nietzsche contends dominates the human intellect, but it requires a bit of dissecting in order to make this apparent.

Everyone in the crowd, with the exception of ‘Tapster’, admits to having never seen the queen. At the very outset of the play, then, the queen is nothing more than one of Yeats’s metaphorical ‘images’. That is, to the crowd, she is a pre-formulated idea. The crowd’s gossip indicates that this ‘image’ shapes their expectations of the queen, but having never seen her, they are uncertain of whether or not she embodies this culturally designed ‘image’. To phrase it in the terms of our analysis, the crowd is unsure if the queen ‘plays’ her role in accordance with the legislated parameters of a predetermined ‘image’ of a queen. Their need for the ‘play’ and ‘image’ to align is so established that when ‘Tapster’ claims the queen deviates from her role, they vow to kill her. The extremity of the crowd’s reaction is a satirical comment on humanity’s close relationship with its own illusions. It demonstrates how superficial ideas are easily accepted as universal ‘truths’ when they are deeply ingrained within a cultural mentality. The crowd perceives a violation of an established ‘truth’ when they believe that the queen deviates from her social script. Their vow to kill her is thus a vow to replace a ‘play’ and patch an ‘image’: they aim to put a ‘play’—not a *person*—in place that will function within the boundaries of their inherited values. The person in the role of the queen, as we can see, is thus reduced to the ‘image/play’ that defines this role.

Importantly, this reduction presents no internal/external divide. Unlike in *The Two Trees* and *Never Give All the Heart*, in which an externality in some form is closely linked to an internality in some form, the crowd’s gossip does not acknowledge a similar link. It is

clear in *The Player Queen* that the queen is only a symbol to the crowd, as she is not yet shown. The crowd's discussion of the concealed queen thus illustrates that they perceive the person in the queen's role, along with the 'play' that shapes this role (and the 'image' that defines this 'play') as one and the same. Their concern is with whether or not one of these externalities accurately represents yet another externality. By not showing the queen at this point, then, she is only defined by a dialogue about 'images' and 'plays'.

The crowd's uproar is clearly a Nietzschean commentary. Yeats combines his previous symbols for externality—'image' and 'play'—and eliminates his symbols for internality, signifying that the crowd is *unaware* of the purely external nature of their concerns. When the crowd is convinced that the queen deviates from the rigidly legislated 'image' of a queen, this conviction violates their 'reality' so much that they are very quickly inclined to kill in order to remould it. Thus, when the lines of their 'truths' grow blurry, extreme measures are justified in the name of reinstating it: they aim to reshape a suddenly revealed subjectivity back into an objective reality. This is precisely what Nietzsche aims to reveal through his *Masks*: humanity has grown so close to its own created illusions that it has forgotten they are illusions. In this scene, Yeats therefore shows how externalities become so deeply ingrained as 'truths' that they are left unquestioned when they are exposed as subjective. As we can see, when the crowd's worldview is tested, they respond with violence to force it back into its established shape.

This first scene additionally reveals how Yeats sets his play on two stages—a physical one and a symbolic, social one. The physical stage is, of course, the literal stage on which the play is presented to the audience. However, the crowd's sudden transition into a mob by their promptness to maintain a pre-formulated reality illuminates another, social stage on which the characters 'play' parts. Yeats designs a society where roles are performed with strict maintenance. Thus the players on the stage are also 'players' in a society. Importantly, the audience (or the reader) can observe this symbolic stage with very little effort, which allows the play to comment on this same aspect of modern day society. This social stage and its satirical effects grow even more apparent in the play's second scene as Yeats continues to skew the characters' perceptions of what is real.

3.3.3.1 *'Man is Nothing Till He is United to an Image'*

The second scene opens inside the castle, where the aforementioned travelling players prepare for a play entitled 'The Tragical History of Noah's Deluge'. The prime minister of the court heatedly speaks to a group of the players, and his monologue reveals that Septimus's wife Decima is missing. Decima is cast to play the part of Noah's wife alongside Septimus in the role of Noah. As the prime minister speaks, Decima peeks out from under the throne, which suggests that she has deliberately hidden herself. Soon, the prime minister and the other players leave the stage in search of Decima, leaving only Nona, a friend of Decima's—and, as we later find out, Septimus's lover. Nona is able to coax Decima from her hiding spot with a boiled lobster. When Decima appears, Nona refuses to give her any lobster until she dons the mask of Noah's wife. This mask is the most important mask in the play because it represents the same external properties that comprise the Nietzschean Mask. The play first indicates this through Decima's refusal to wear it. She states that she is only suited to play the part of a queen, though Nona disagrees:

Decima: [...] The moment ago as I lay here I thought I could play a queen's part, a great queen's part; the only part in the world I can play is a great queen's part.

Nona: You play a queen's part? You that were born in a ditch between two towns and wrapped in a sheet that was stolen for a hedge.

Decima: The Queen cannot play at all, but I could play so well. I could bow with my whole body down to my ankles and could be stern when hard looks were in season. O, I would know how to put all summer in a look and after that all winter in a voice.

Nona: Low comedy is what you are fit for.

Decima: I understood all this in a wink of the eye, and then just when I am saying to myself that I was born to sit up there with soldiers and courtiers, you come shaking in front of me that mask and that dress. I am not to eat my breakfast unless I play an old peaky-chinned, drop-nosed harridan that a foul husband beats with a stick because she won't clamber among the other brutes into his cattle-boat.¹⁴³

This dialogue brings the social stage into clearer focus by further obscuring what is 'real'. Decima insists that her personality and demeanour align better with the role of a queen than with Noah's wife. (Noah's wife is beaten for 'obstinacy' in the role Decima is supposed to perform.)¹⁴⁴ Decima claims she can *play* the part of queen better on a stage than the actual queen can do so off the stage. This simple contrast reveals that Decima links the social and

¹⁴³ Ibid., 408.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 403.

the theatrical stage. She equates a fictitious queen with a real queen and does not distinguish between the requirements of either role. For Decima, playing the part and being the queen are on the same plane. Nona, however, disagrees and retorts that Decima's peasant upbringing destabilises her alignment with the queen's role. Nona therefore does not refute Decima on the grounds of logic: as we can see, she also obscures the line between theatre and society. However, she contradicts Decima by inverting the order of the social and the theatrical. While Decima suggests that her acting skills qualify her to be a real queen, Nona asserts that Decima's longstanding social role inhibits her ability to play the theatrical role. From both women's perspectives, the theatrical and social stages are intertwined. The play's depiction of this intertwining implies that its characters fulfil roles in society through a process similar to fulfilling a role on a stage.

The two characters' inverted perspectives are also significant because, as mentioned above, they indicate that the society Yeats displays in *The Player Queen* is comprised entirely of 'players' that are unaware of their roles as such. Like the crowd in Scene I, Nona and Decima do not perceive the social 'play' they discuss as a scripted role. Nonetheless, by equating the 'real' roles that one 'plays' in society with fictional ones on a stage, they both unconsciously acknowledge it. We can therefore see that Yeats now represents the Self as entirely external: his characters at this point in the play are merely shaped by the 'plays' they fulfil. The Self he displays in the play is thus a role scripted by external factors. Furthermore, this script is so established that his characters do not discern the subjectivity of it. In other words, in *The Player Queen*, Yeats portrays the Self as external; and through his characters' unawareness of its externality, Yeats demonstrates the aspects of humanity that Nietzsche's Masks critique. He shows how easily the characters in the play discern their 'plays' as ontological and fixed, and not as subjective and fluid projections of the Self. This is a marked development in Yeats's representations of the Self. While *Never Give All the Heart* displays the 'play' as protective armour for a vulnerable internal Self, *The Player Queen* now presents the Self as purely external.

Yeats better elucidates this idea by further muddling the division of the play's social and theatrical stages through other characters who stand uncertainly on the hazy boundary between the two. For instance, towards the end of the play, as the mob gathers outside the castle, two actors inside the castle assume the mob is comprised of jealous actors who aim

to kill them. The two vainly argue over whom the mob is there to kill, and, during this argument, one actor recalls a past role he played as if it were a personal memory:

Second Player. It is of me they are jealous. They know what happened at Xanadu. At the end of that old play 'The Fall of Troy' Kubla Kahn sent for me and said that he would give his kingdom for such a voice, and for such a presence. I stood before him dressed as Agamemnon just as when in a great scene at the end I had reproached Helen for all the misery she had wrought.

First Player. My God, listen to him! Is it not always the comedian who draws the crowd? Am I dreaming, or was it not I who was called six times before the curtain? Answer me that—

Second Player. What if you were called six dozen times? The players of this town are not jealous because of the crowd's applause. They have that themselves. The unendurable thought, the thought that wrenches their hearts, the thought that puts murder into their minds is that I alone, alone of all the world's players, have looked as an equal into the eyes of Kubla Khan.¹⁴⁵

Like Decima and Nona, this second stage actor blends theatre and society and perceives his own existence within an ambiguous realm. On the one hand, he acknowledges his memory as a *role* he once played 'dressed as Agamemnon'; on the other hand, his use of the personal pronoun positions the memory on a different stage. The dramatic eloquence with which he recalls the memory personalises it even more. This acknowledgment of both stages in one short exclamation is an unambiguous demonstration that this player does not distinguish between his roles on either stage. Therefore, like the argument between Decima and Nona, the two actors' argument also illuminates the similarities between the on-stage act and the off-stage 'play'. Furthermore, the Second Player's inability to differentiate between the two demonstrates the prevailing influence of external factors that shape his sense of Self. That is, his discernibly ambiguous existence places both social and theatrical 'plays' under a comparative light. An actor's role on stage is clearly determined by a script. Thus, by putting the social and theatrical 'plays' under the same comparative light, Yeats suggests that the Second Player's social role is equally determined by a social script. Once again, we can see properties of the Nietzschean Mask at work because, through the Second Player's self-conception, Yeats demonstrates a strict legislation of the Self.

At this point, it should be evident that the obscure line between the social and theatrical stages in *The Player Queen* primarily serves to illustrate the obscurity of the Self. Yeats's critique is not one of society; rather, it is one of the individual *in* society. He

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 418.

presents characters whose actions are determined by the various roles they fulfil. We have seen this through the crowd's expectations of the queen, as well as through Decima's, Nona's, and the other players' blending of theatre and society. Yeats does not cease his portrayal of the external Self at the 'play', though. He layers it even thicker with the symbol of the mask. As stated above, the play first indicates this through Decima's refusal to wear the mask of Noah's wife. But the mask's meaning is further shaped through Decima's relationship with Septimus.

Towards the end of the argument between Decima and Nona (shown above), Nona states that she will wear the mask and play the part instead. However, Decima is jealous of this proposal. She states, 'When I married him [Septimus], I made him swear never to play with anybody but me, and you well know it'.¹⁴⁶ Decima's jealousy arises from the same obscure division of theatre and society already demonstrated. Similar to the Second Player above, Decima perceives that the roles of the wife, both on *and* off stage, are indistinguishable, which lessens the gap between the two stages and blurs the line of 'reality' even more. Decima's statement thus indicates that if Nona and Septimus play the part on stage, then they have equally 'played' the part off stage. Decima relents and allows Nona to wear the mask and play the part, however, when she discovers that Nona and Septimus have a longstanding affair. Upon her relent, she states, 'I threw away a part and I threw away a man—she has picked both up'.¹⁴⁷ Once again, the two roles merge. It is necessary to note, though, that Decima does not *equate* the two roles; instead, she simply does not *distinguish* them. This is an important difference because, on the one hand, it illustrates to the audience/reader just how vague her conception of the Self is, while on the other, it shows how concrete this vagueness appears to *her*.

The difference between Decima and the Second Player is that, for Decima, the *mask* ultimately merges the social and theatrical roles. This is apparent when Decima recites part of a song that Septimus wrote for her. This song is an excerpt from Yeats's *The Mask*, and, according to Decima, it paints a portrait of her relationship with Septimus:

Decima: Because I am a devil I have his every thought. You know how his own
song runs. The man speaks first—{singing}
Put off that mask of burning gold

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 410.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 414.

With emerald eyes,
and then the woman answers—
O no, my dear, you make so bold
To find if hearts be wild and wise
And yet not cold.

Nona: His every thought—that is a lie. He forgets all about you the moment you're out of his sight.¹⁴⁸

This excerpt from Yeats's poem instates the mask as the most significant symbol in *The Player Queen*. This is not only because it embodies the elements of both the 'image' and the 'play' within a single object, but also because it removes the implied internality to which both notions are linked in Yeats's earlier works. This removal has already been shown through an explication of the poem. However, Yeats's incorporation of the poem into *The Player Queen* adds another facet to the mask symbol in the play. If Septimus's 'song' were to continue, it would state that it 'was the mask that engaged' his mind, not 'what's behind'. Therefore, since the play has already illustrated the Self as obscure and shown its characters' inability to discern it as such, Septimus's description of his wife *as* a mask signifies that the mask is the play's principal symbol for the Self. This undergirds my previous contention that Decima avoids wearing the mask of Noah's wife in order to avoid adopting its subordinate meaning. Like the mask in the ancient theatre, the mask in this play entirely transforms the character, fully effacing its wearer and leaving no trace of who is behind it. The difference in Yeats's play—as shown through the increasingly obscure division of stages—is that the masks worn on and off stage are indistinguishable. By resisting the mask, Decima thus resists an unwanted self-transformation.

As stated at the beginning of this section, Septimus's own drunken philosophising less abstrusely corroborates this function of the mask. When Septimus finally enters the castle in Scene II ('a little soberer'),¹⁴⁹ he appears to arbitrarily babble. Ironically, though, this seemingly random gibberish expounds upon the play's symbolism more explicitly. For example, as he prepares to flee the castle with Nona, the two gather stage props and costumes to carry with them. While doing so, Septimus tells her that he has made a profound discovery: 'Tie all upon my back and I will tell you the great secret that came to me at the second mouthful of the bottle. *Man is nothing till he is united to an image* [my

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 411.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 416.

italics].¹⁵⁰ This second sentence is the most crucial line in the play because it articulates the precise externality of the Self that the play's symbolism progressively brings into focus.¹⁵¹ It is evident through the characters' interactions in the play that its major themes predominantly centre on the 'image', the 'play', and the mask. Septimus's oracular exclamation, however, better illuminates the underlying foundation that links the three: they are all Yeats's evolved symbols for a purely external Self. Septimus's statement essentially means that a person is shaped and defined by 'images' that pre-exist him/her, and, even more importantly, that one's identity is determined through attachment to such an 'image'. Yeats has thus clearly subordinated his previous romanticised depictions of an existential Self, and, in its place, elevated a new Self with a malleable exterior on which pre-legislated meanings are implanted. In other words, he has instituted a notion of a Self that is no longer defined by a 'core' but rather by external factors that shape it. Therefore, Septimus's exclamation even further substantiates my argument that Decima refuses to wear the mask of Noah's wife in order to avoid a particular self-transformation: to rephrase the above statement, her refusal to don the mask is her refusal to unite to an 'image'.

3.3.3.2 *The Change is Now Complete*

In the play's final, climactic episode, the three symbols of externality that Yeats implements throughout the play converge into a phantasmagoric sequence that culminates by amplifying the Nietzschean properties of the mask object. In this episode, the castle's occupants prepare to flee as the mob outside the castle becomes more turbulent. Also during this episode, two of the aforementioned crucial components of this analysis occur: the two players' argument over whom the mob intends to kill as well as Septimus's critical exclamation. Finally, and most significantly, during this rapidly sequential peak of the play, Decima eventually dons the mask and transforms herself into the queen, which eradicates every trace of 'Decima, the wife of Septimus'. A few essential components of these events require scrutiny in order to tease out the Nietzschean characteristics.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 420.

¹⁵¹ Septimus's statement is a precursor to one of Yeats's most quoted lines: 'How can we know the dancer from the dance?' (from *Among School Children* [1928]). This famous line is commonly interpreted as symbolising the fusion of the dancer (or person) and the 'image' (the dance). The dancer, through the process of dancing, in many ways becomes the idea that the 'image' (the dance) represents. See Ellmann's *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* (1949) for one such interpretation of the poem.

First, as Septimus and Nona prepare to leave the castle together without Decima, they collect stage props and costumes to carry with them. According to Septimus, these are the most essential items because they are physical embodiments of ‘imagery’:

It is necessary that we who are the last artists—all the rest have won over to the mob—shall save the *images* and implements of our art. We must carry into the safety the cloak of Noah, the high-crowned hat of Noah, and the mask of the sister of Noah [my italics].¹⁵²

The significance of this passage hardly requires an explanation at this point in our analysis. Septimus clearly preserves these items because they are crucial markers of identity. For him, they are the emblematic ‘imagery’ that he claims shapes and thus defines ‘man’; therefore, as cited above, he orders Nona to ‘Tie all upon [his] back’.¹⁵³ However, Nona forgets the most essential item: the mask.

Once Nona and Septimus escape, Decima is left alone on stage holding a pair of scissors, which she indicates will be used to commit suicide. But the queen enters and stops her. The two then decide to alter roles, mutually consigning Decima to sacrifice herself to the mob. The two switch apparel, after which the play’s stage directions inform the reader that ‘*The change is now complete*’.¹⁵⁴ The meaning of this stage direction is twofold. Although it serves as an indication to the play’s director that Decima should be fully dressed before the next line is recited, it also signals to the reader that a symbolic transformation has occurred. The subsequent event reinforces the dual meaning of this line as a bishop enters the scene and informs Decima that the Prime Minister has managed to subdue the mob. Decima then appears to them and states, ‘I am Queen. I know what it is to be Queen. If I were to say to you I had an enemy you would kill him—you would tear him in pieces, would you not?’¹⁵⁵ The crowd enthusiastically agrees. It has already been established that they have never seen the queen. Thus, when Decima appears to them in queen’s clothing, she fits the parameters of their established ‘image’ of a queen. In other words, she *unites* to an ‘image’ and ‘plays’ the part of a queen.

Unmasked, however, Decima still undulates between the obscure social and theatrical stages. But Yeats syncs these two stages into one by altogether eclipsing Decima

¹⁵² Ibid., 420.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 420.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 427.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 427-428.

with the mask. This simple gesture assembles all of the play's symbolic components into a singular object that is endowed with all the complexities of the Nietzschean Mask. When the players, who know Decima's face, return to the stage and ask to see the queen, she dons the mask and appears before them. She then recites the play's final monologue:

My loyal subjects must forgive me if I hide my face—it is not yet used to the light of day, it is a modest face. [...] You are banished and must not return upon pain of death, and yet not one of you shall be poorer because banished. That I promise. But you have lost one thing that I will not restore. A woman player has left you. Do not mourn her. She was a bad, headstrong, cruel woman, and seeks destruction somewhere and with some man she knows nothing of; such a woman they tell me that this mask would well become, this foolish, smiling face! Come, dance.¹⁵⁶

This final monologue pinpoints the underlying theme of the play. Decima's words signify that, by wearing the mask, she has united to an 'image' and adopted a new 'play'. The monologue indicates that the *mask* has enacted the precise transformation process that I have argued Decima previously fears. Decima tells the players not to mourn 'a woman player' who has left them, which establishes that Decima is metaphorically 'dead'. However, through the masking process, a queen is born in her place. The new meaning that appears to both the actors and the crowd thus emanates from the mask alone. The monologue exemplifies how Yeats has resurrected the ancient transformation process of masking. Ian Jenkins's analogy (see previous chapter) is therefore applicable to this particular representation. As Jenkins says, the ancient mask completely effaces the personality behind the mask and redefines the meaning of the wearer. Yeats achieves this exact function through his literary portrayal of the stage mask. Crucially, though, Yeats extends this function to society. His play merges the theatrical and social stages and illuminates how their scripts, 'plays', 'images', etc. are all indistinguishable; and, importantly, he instates the mask as his most vital symbol for combining these elements.

We can finally see that the mask symbol in the play has all the properties of the Nietzschean Mask. Early in the play, Decima resists the 'image' to which the mask is tied: an 'obstinate' woman who is beaten. But when she removes it from its initial context of 'The Tragical History of Noah's Deluge', she reappropriates it within a new context and thus redefines the 'image' to which it is linked. This simple change of context and subsequent change of meaning establishes that this mask is fluid and its meaning subjective.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 430.

Thus this mask exposes the very same illusive nature of ‘truth’ as Nietzsche’s Masks. Yeats employs the mask to reveal the very same illusive nature of the Self. Unlike before, when Yeats depicts the Self as an internal ‘core’, which is sometimes disguised by a mask of concealment, the mask in *The Player Queen* is an object of subjective transformation that represents an externally determined Self. In other words, Yeats depicts the Self as a Mask.

This section has shown how *The Player Queen* is an examination of the Self through which Yeats illustrates how the notion of the Self is as equally dispersive as notions of ‘truth’. The characteristics of the Nietzschean Mask are evident throughout the play, and in its final, culminating scene, Yeats implements a mask object comprised of these properties to exemplify the external nature of the Self. In Sumiko Sugiyama’s *What is ‘The Player Queen’ All About?*, Sugiyama claims that over half a century after the play’s first performance, a question ‘still seems to linger; no one, in fact, seems to know exactly what *The Player Queen* is all about.’¹⁵⁷ Sugiyama argues that the play’s dense layers of thematic concerns make it difficult to glean a dominant focus. Although this may be true, especially considering Yeats’s continued edits of the play for roughly a decade after its initial publication, I have at least shown that the play is largely concerned with Yeats’s developed portrayal of the Self as a fluid externality. In light of Yeats’s evolving representations of the Self, the evidence for such a case is strong, and a thorough understanding of the Nietzschean Mask helps to illuminate the prevalence of this theme throughout *The Player Queen*.

3.4 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has revealed a parallel development between Hesse’s and Yeats’s literary representations of the Self. It has shown how both writers’ early representations contain elements of residual medieval conceptions of the Self as defined by an internal ‘core’. They both initially depict this notion as a ‘truth’ that should be transparent. However, as their works develop, the necessity of an external cover—in Yeats’s case, the ‘play’, in Hesse’s, the actual mask object—is represented as a necessary protection for an internal Self, which they both represent with the symbol of the ‘heart’. Finally, though, we have

¹⁵⁷ Sugiyama, Sumiko. *What is ‘The Player Queen’ All About?* “Irish Writers and the Theatre.” Ed. Masaru Sekine. Colin Smythe Ltd. Buckinghamshire: 1986. (p.179)

seen the properties of the Nietzschean Mask at work in Yeats's *The Player Queen* and how these properties allow Yeats to design his developed representation of the Self as a purely external and illusive concept.

Revealing Yeats's development alongside Hesse's has had numerous benefits. First and foremost, it has allowed me to better tease out the intricacies of this development with more illustrations. The heavily abstract nature of the internal/external division of Self is difficult to demonstrate, and the Nietzschean notion of the exclusively external nature of all knowledge is equally difficult to explain. However, with this comparative approach, I have been able to make these concepts palpable. By providing Yeats as a referential backdrop for Hesse's similar development, the intricacies of Hesse's representational shift from the internal to the external Self are more easily discernible. The remainder of this project is committed to demonstrating how Hesse, like Yeats, institutes the Nietzschean Mask as a symbol for the external Self. The final two chapters of this project will demonstrate how the narratives of *Der Steppenwolf* and *Das Glasperlenspiel* are, much like *The Player Queen*, constructed through the properties of the Mask to convey this externality. These chapters will also show how the appearances of the mask object in both novels are symbols for the conceptual Mask.

Chapter 4: Mask of Fiction: Fictional Narrative as a Semiotic Mask in *Der Steppenwolf*

4.1 Chapter Introduction

Der Steppenwolf (1927) is the first novel in which Hesse presents an idea of the Self that is entirely external. He constructs this depiction through what I call a Mask of Fiction—a stylistic expression of the Nietzschean Mask through a fictional narrative. This Mask materialises in the form of an explicitly labelled fictional manuscript through which the protagonist Harry Haller symbolises his growing realisation of the Self’s externality. As Yeats does in *The Player Queen*, Hesse inverts his former portrayals of the Self as an internal core (or ‘kernel’) into an intricately woven externality in *Der Steppenwolf*. This chapter will demonstrate how the novel’s narrative construction spawns from its underlying thematic occupation with the Mask. Similar to how *The Player Queen* pronounces the externality of its characters by obscuring the social and theatrical stage, *Der Steppenwolf* also magnifies the very same concept by blurring the levels of reality and fiction. This magnified conception of Self, as we will see, advances Hesse’s portrayals of externality beyond the ambivalence that Kuhn expresses in *Gertrud*. It should be noted that, in all cases throughout this chapter, the word ‘Mask’ (with a capital ‘M’) refers to the Nietzschean Mask as I have previously defined it. Additionally, one important facet of the Nietzschean Mask to remember for this analysis is the manner in which it conveys information through the process of ‘impressions’. This concept, in short, means that the Mask does not convey knowledge through rational prescription but, rather, it generates a variety of interpretations through ambiguous language (see chapter 2 for a more detailed explanation). This is important to recall here because, in *Der Steppenwolf*, Hesse employs this facet more than Yeats.

We have already seen how Yeats portrays the external Self through Decima’s physical mask of the Queen in *The Player Queen*. The Mask in *Der Steppenwolf*, however, is less literal. Hesse represents this same concept of Self by emphasising the necessity of fiction as an effective channel of self-representation. This chapter highlights the contours of this Mask by demonstrating how Harry Haller’s fictional manuscript serves the same function as Decima’s mask/Mask. The first step in this process is to understand how the

novel's triadic structure functions. In order to draw attention to Haller's Mask and enact its 'impression' of Haller's personality, Hesse intertwines three diegetic levels of narration that interrelate and corroborate one another. Below I will demonstrate some debates over the function of this triadic pattern and illustrate how its chief purpose is to illuminate the novel's Mask by concocting a narrative pattern that explicitly highlights the fictional traits of Haller's narrative. As we will see, the explicit unreliability of Haller is his most *reliable* trait because it makes his Mask visible from the very start of his manuscript. It will then grow apparent that the visibility of Haller's Mask is necessary in order for the novel's fantastical imagery and surreal episodes to convey ineffable realities. The conveyance of these realities through fiction is the semiotic function of Haller's manuscript by which we will consider it a Mask.

4.2 The Effects of the Novel's Structure

4.2.1 Novel Summary

In order to explain the narrative structure on which the following analysis centres, a brief summary of the novel and its three interlaced narratives is necessary. The novel begins with a foreword that introduces us to Harry Haller through the perspective of a fictional editor [*Herausgeber*]. The editor narrates how he first meets Haller at his aunt's house, where they both live as lodgers. He describes Haller as introverted, mysterious, and intellectual, but also as an ill-mannered, dishevelled alcoholic. The editor claims that his numerous encounters with Haller never provide him with a tangible sense of his personality. However, upon finding Haller's manuscript, he explains that he has accessed Haller better than any of their physical encounters allowed. He states:

How deep the loneliness into which his life had drifted on account of his disposition and destiny and how consciously he accepted this loneliness as his destiny, I certainly did not know until I read the records he left behind. Yet, before that, from our occasional talks and encounters, I became gradually acquainted with him, and I found that the portrait in the records was in substantial agreement with the paler and less complete one that our personal acquaintance had given me.¹⁵⁸

In wie tiefe Vereinsamung er sich auf Grund seiner Anlage und seines Schicksals hineingelebt hatte und wie bewußt er diese Vereinsamung als sein Schicksal erkannte, dies erfuhr ich allerdings erst aus den von ihm hier zurückgelassenen Aufzeichnungen; doch habe ich ihn immerhin schon vorher durch manche kleine

¹⁵⁸ All English translations of the novel will come from *Steppenwolf*. Translated by Basil Creighton (Updated by Joseph Mileck). Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc. 1963. (p. 4)

Begegnungen und Gespräche einigermaßen kennengelernt und fand das Bild, das ich aus seinen Aufzeichnungen von ihm gewann, im Grunde übereinstimmend mit dem freilich blässeren und lückenhafteren, wie es sich mir aus unsrer persönlichen Bekanntschaft ergeben hatte.¹⁵⁹

Following the editor's introduction, Haller's manuscript begins from his own perspective. He narrates a number of experiences in an unspecified city.¹⁶⁰ Haller finds himself on the fringes of modern society, looking inward with ambivalent longing and disdain for the fatuousness that he sees rising within its culture: its mediocre art, music, and literature, the inauthentic reproduction of music through the radio, as well as the general simplicity of the modern intellect, etc.

Haller often represents this ambivalence towards this culture through a wolf/man dichotomy, whereby he views himself as only a half-tamed member of society. When he acts according to the social norms, his wolf side bares its teeth and condemns him; and when he acts against the grains of society, his man side equally condemns. Late one night, after a bout of heavy drinking, a man approaches Haller in a street and hands him a pamphlet that reads 'Treatise on the Steppenwolf' [*Traktat vom Steppenwolf*].¹⁶¹ When he arrives home, Haller reads the pamphlet, which begins the novel's third narrative. The pamphlet is written by 'Immortals' [*Unsterbliche*], who provide their assessment of Haller's wolf/man state. (Below I demonstrate how the treatise is not necessarily a separate narrative, as scholars commonly construe it; its location within Haller's own manuscript signifies that it is a facet of his own fictional narrative. We must first illuminate the parameters of Haller's Mask in order to see this, though.) According to the treatise, all people need to perceive the Self as a single unity. The treatise reminds Haller that he believes this unity is false and that his self-prescribed duplicitous state is a metaphor for this illusion. However, the treatise also informs him that his metaphor is equally illusive: the personality, it states, is a bundle of numerous complexities:

¹⁵⁹ (SW 4, 7)

¹⁶⁰ Joseph Mileck believes this city to be Basel: 'The setting of *Der Steppenwolf* is no less actual than its tale is intimately autobiographical. The scantily depicted nameless city with its *Martinsvorstadt*, its market area bustling with night life, its dark and quiet ancient quarter with steep twisted streets and a grey stone wall between a little church and an old hospital, and its cozy pub the Steel Helmet (*Stahlhelm*, which actually was the inn *Zum Stahl*) was Hesse's Basel'. (*Hermann Hesse: Life and Art*. University of California Press. Berkeley: 1978. [p. 179]).

¹⁶¹ In the original German print, this third narrative appears in italics. None of the English versions of the novel are printed this way, though.

For there is not a single human being [...] who is so conveniently simple that his being is explained as the sum of two or three principal elements; and to explain so complex a man as Harry by the artless division into wolf and man is a hopelessly childish attempt. Harry consists of a hundred or thousands of selves, not two.

Denn kein einziger Mensch, [...] daß sein Wesen sich als die Summe von nur zweien oder dreien Hauptelementen erklären ließe; und gar einen so sehr differenzierten Menschen wie Harry mit der naiven Einteilung in Wolf und Mensch zu erklären, ist ein hoffnungslos kindlicher Versuch. Harry besteht nicht aus zwei Wesen, sondern aus hundert, aus tausenden.¹⁶²

As the passage shows, the Treatise illuminates the multiplicity of the Self, and it encourages Haller to face his complex nature by ceasing his attempts to dig into the ‘truth’ of a Self too complex to definitively unravel. The Immortals provide Haller with two suggestions for comprehending his complex nature: to embrace humour and—crucial to this analysis—fiction. They write:

For the close of our study there is left one last fiction, a fundamental delusion to make clear. All interpretation, all psychology, all attempts to make things comprehensible require the medium of theories, mythologies, and lies; and a self-respecting author should not omit, at the close of an exposition, to dissipate these lies so far as may be in his power.

Zum Schluß unsrer Studie bleibt noch eine letzte Fiktion, eine grundsätzliche Täuschung aufzulösen. Alle “Erklärungen,” alle Psychologie, alle Versuche des Verstehens bedürfen ja der Hilfsmittel, der Theorien, der Mythologien, der Lügen; und ein anständiger Autor sollte es nicht unterlassen, am Schluß einer Darstellung diese Lügen nach Möglichkeit aufzulösen.¹⁶³

I argue that this statement is a clear reference to the Nietzschean Mask. In section 40 of *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, Nietzsche encourages his readers to embrace lies as a means of interpreting and conveying illusive ‘truths’; and here, the Immortals encourage Haller to do the same. As we disentangle the novel’s narrative structure below, it will grow clearer that the above passage is also a crucial hint that Haller’s own fiction is one such lie: it is a Nietzschean Mask that conveys his growing awareness of his personality’s external nature.

After the treatise ends, the novel returns to Haller’s narrative. Not long after reading the treatise, Haller meets Hermine, a prostitute he befriends. Hermine introduces Haller to Maria—with whom he has a sexual relationship—and Pablo, a local jazz musician. The

¹⁶² (66; SW 4, 60)

¹⁶³ (65; SW 4, 59)

three of them urge Haller to laugh at life's absurdities. Their encouragement not only echoes the Treatise, but it also echoes the Immortals who wrote the Treatise, such as Goethe and Mozart, who occasionally appear to Haller in visions. Laughter, for these characters, is a gesture that physically exposes the external layers that mask everything (in the Nietzschean sense). Through laughing, they show that they do not take life as seriously as Haller, which indicates their awareness that internal 'truths' are farcical.

Haller's various experiences through Hermine, Pablo, and Maria culminate at the end of the novel at a masked ball, where Haller attends unmasked. The significance of Haller's unmasked face will be explained further below, as we must first discern the novel's Mask. At the ball, Haller is invited to smoke opium and enter Pablo's magic theatre [*Magische Theater*], where he steps behind a curtain and discovers a number of doors with different inscriptions on them. Each inscription describes an experience available behind the door. Haller's experience behind each door is surreal and fantastical. Behind one, for instance, Haller fights in a war against automobiles, shooting and killing them with a rifle. Behind another, he witnesses a stage performance, where a man and a wolf alternate the roles of tamer and tamed. Haller steps through a number of these doors, and behind a final door, he finds Hermine and Pablo in a post-coital embrace, whereupon Haller stabs Hermine to death. Mozart and Pablo then appear to Haller fused as one being, once again urging him to embrace humour as a tool for self-understanding. The novel concludes with the Immortals' assurance that Haller will one day accomplish this feat.

4.2.2 Previous Views on the Novel's Structure

It is clear through this summary that the novel's structure is an essential component of its meaning, and numerous interpretations of the novel attempt to explain its significance. Triadic patterns are a prevalent focus of Theodore Ziolkowski's structural analysis of Hesse's novels: *The Novels of Hermann Hesse: A Study in Theme and Structure* (1965).¹⁶⁴ In a chapter titled 'The Steppenwolf: A Sonata in Prose' Ziolkowski argues that Hesse

¹⁶⁴ *The Novels of Hermann Hesse: A Study in Theme and Structure*. Princeton University Press. New Jersey: 1965.

designs the three sections of the novel as a ‘sonata-form’.¹⁶⁵ He states that the novel approximates different keys by contrasting the ‘attitudes of Harry Haller as Steppenwolf, on the one hand, and as *Bürger*, on the other; the first represents, as it were, the tonic, and the second the dominant’.¹⁶⁶ Ziolkowski further observes that the layers of narration are significant in *what* they represent in the novel and not just in how they function. He notes that the treatise makes a distinction between three types of people, ‘differentiated relatively according to their degree of individuation’: that of the *Bürger* or the bourgeois ego on one end, the supremacy of the Immortals [*Unsterbliche*] who have transcended the trivialities of the bourgeois life on the other, and in the middle is the Steppenwolf, torn between these two extremities.¹⁶⁷ For Ziolkowski, the three narratives of the novel thus ‘present three treatments of Haller’s soul, as perceived retrospectively from the three points of view outlined in the theoretical tract: *Bürger—Steppenwolf—Immortals*’.¹⁶⁸ Ziolkowski therefore views each of the narratives as different facets of Haller’s soul, which correspond with one another through a sonata-form, recapitulating in the end.

Julia Kahl similarly perceives a presentation of three types of people [*Menschentypen*] in the novel. In her thesis ‘Die Reflexion von Identität in Hermann Hesses “Steppenwolf”’ (2003), she observes the leitmotifs of the novel:

In the novel, Hesse distinguishes between three basic types of people. I refer to the bourgeois, the so-called Steppenwolfs, and the Immortals [my translation].

Hesse unterscheidet in seinem Roman drei grundlegende Menschentypen. Die Rede ist von den Bürgern, den sogenannten Steppenwölfen und den Unsterblichen.¹⁶⁹

Kahl’s argument also parallels Ziolkowski’s by noting that each of the novel’s narratives is written through language that is representative of each respective type:

¹⁶⁵ It is important to note here that Ziolkowski differentiates between the ‘sonata-form’ and the ‘sonata’. ‘Sonata’ is ‘a generic name for any major composition of one to four movements, of which one (usually the first) must be in “sonata-form”. [...] “Sonata-form” refers to the structure of the first movement alone’ (Ziolkowski 189-90). In the exposition of a sonata, two themes are stated: one in the tonic; the other in the dominant. As it progresses, the two themes develop as a series of potentialities; and in the recapitulation they are both restated in the original form that they appeared in the exposition, but now they are both in the tonic alone, resolving the conflict.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 186.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁶⁹ Kahl, Julia. *Die Reflexion von Identität in Hermann Hesses “Steppenwolf.”* MA Thesis. Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, 2003. GRIN Verlag. Norderstedt, 2003. Print. (p. 41).

The editor's foreword is from a bourgeois perspective, his records are from his view as a Steppenwolf, and the Treatise is probably recorded from the Immortals' perspective [my translation].

Im Vorwort des Herausgebers von einem Bürger, in seinen Aufzeichnungen aus seiner Sicht als Steppenwolf und der Traktat zeichnet seine Existenz wohl aus Sicht der Unsterblichen.¹⁷⁰

We can see from this passage that, unlike Ziolkowski, Kahl does not necessarily perceive each narrative as a symbolic image of each of these types within Haller; although she does agree that Haller is torn between each type as he strives to become an Immortal.¹⁷¹ Thus, for Kahl, each of these *Menschentypen* is a facet of Haller's personality, but the narratives themselves present only a *perspective* from each of these *Menschentypen*; they are not necessarily facets of Haller's psyche.

Other critics find the novel's triadic structure bewildering and confusing. For example, in an essay titled *Hesse, 'Der Steppenwolf'* (2007), Peter Hutchinson claims that the structure of narration in the novel represents a delineation of character. He argues that the three narratives 'provide an alternative image of the central character', which produces a bewildering effect that Hesse's contemporaries often perceived as purposeful.¹⁷² Theodore Jackson extends this ascription to Hesse's own bewilderment. In his dissertation, 'Hermann Hesse as Ambivalent Modernist' (2010), Jackson asserts that the layers of narrative are purposefully bewildering because they represent 'Hesse's own mental anguish'.¹⁷³ This reading of the novel is, unfortunately, an unfair interpretation that generates from the same biographical focus that I have argued handicaps many interpretations of Hesse's work. By writing off the novel as purposefully bewildering, Jackson discredits its complexity and ignores how the three narratives communicate *with* and comment *on* one another.

Martin Swales, on the other hand, perceives a much more complex interplay of the three narratives. In his essay, '*Der Steppenwolf*' (2007), Swales observes how 'the historical parameters of Harry's experience' are taken up in the text by the bourgeois

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 41.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 41.

¹⁷² "Hesse, *Der Steppenwolf*." *Landmarks in the German Novel*. Ed. Peter Hutchinson. Lang, Bern: 2007. 151-66. (p. 154).

¹⁷³ "Hermann Hesse as Ambivalent Modernist." (2010). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. <http://openscholarship.wustl.edu>. Retrieved on 6 April 2014. (p. 159).

narrator, whose account ‘tallies in certain particulars with Harry’s own account’.¹⁷⁴ For example, both Haller and the editor narrate an encounter with one another on the stairs one evening; also, each of their narratives provides a separate account of their experience at a concert they each attend separately. Numerous other instances support this interpretation as well. The interplay of the editor’s and Haller’s narratives, according to Swales, ‘extend[s] to Harry’s psychological crises’ because we can see through the editor’s commentary on Haller that he understands Haller’s personal struggle as a larger symbol for modern humanity’s loss of identity.¹⁷⁵ By following Swales’s argument, we can view the editor’s introduction as an interpretative *guide* to Haller’s fictional narrative. By directly spotlighting the corroborative interplay between the editor’s narrative and Haller’s narrative, Swales is the closest to observing Haller’s Mask. However, he still does not quite discern it.

I therefore argue that a deeper analysis of this interplay is needed to bring the Mask into focus because, much like Nietzsche’s Masks, Haller’s narrative conceals *and* reveals. But without knowledge of its presence, its concealing traits override its revealing ones. The novel’s interactive structure allows Hesse to enact the Mask’s revealing function. The Mask requires the editor’s introduction to define it and validate its masking characteristics. With the editor’s prescriptive commentary on Haller’s symbolic narrative, he constructs a frame through which to read Haller’s manuscript. Haller’s Mask is visible within the boundaries of this frame. The following section illuminates this frame and reveals the Mask that appears within it.

4.2.3 Relying on Unreliability: The Editor’s Validating Frame

We should first establish where the Treatise fits within the novel’s narrative interplay. As stated above, it is an extension of Haller’s manuscript and is thus part of Haller’s own narrative—that is, it is written by Haller. Many scholars interpret Hermine, Maria, and Pablo as projections of different facets of Haller’s psyche. For example, Julia

¹⁷⁴ Swales, Martin. *Der Steppenwolf*. “A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse.” Ed. Ingo Cornils. Camden House. New York: 2009. 171-186. (p. 174).

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 174.

Kahl¹⁷⁶, Helsa Esselborn-Krumbiegel¹⁷⁷ and Theodore Jackson¹⁷⁸ each propose that the novel's other central characters are symbols of Haller's broken personality. We can extend this interpretation to the treatise as well. If the characters within Haller's narrative serve as symbolic representations, then all aspects of his narrative must do the same. The interjection of the treatise is therefore another of Haller's own fictional projections of his personality, which means that we can understand the novel's structure as double- and not triple-layered. Now that the place of the Treatise is established, we can analyse the interplay that makes the Mask visible and illuminate how these supposed projections of Haller's psyche are actually components of his Mask of Fiction.

The above quote from the treatise—which alludes to Nietzsche's Masks by claiming that lies are essential tools of expression—defines the nature of Haller's manuscript. But this allusion alone is not necessarily clear evidence that Haller's manuscript is a successful implementation of the Mask. Hesse includes the editor's introduction to make this apparent: the editor's perspective on Haller's manuscript indicates that the manuscript effectively serves this function, namely that it is a more adequate communicative tool when its fictional nature is obvious. We have seen the editor's explicit claim that his physical encounters with Haller do not provide as thorough an understanding of Haller's character and personality as his manuscript does. However, he also explicitly designates the

¹⁷⁶ Kahl likens Hermine to a Jungian *Seelenbild*. She claims, 'Hermine symbolises the feminine part of his soul, which Harry has never developed and of which he must first become aware. As an image of a soul, Hermine is, in the sense of Jungian psychology, the "Anima" [my translation]. [*Hermine verkörpert den weiblichen Teil seiner Seele, den Harry nie entwickelt hat und dessen er sich erst bewusst werden muss. Als Seelenbild ist Hermine im Sinne der Jungschen Psychologie die 'Anima'*]' (Kahl 31). According to Jung, the 'Anima' is 'the archetype of life [...] For life comes to a man through the Anima, although he believes that it came to him through the mind. He masters his life through the mind, but life lives in him through the Anima [my translation]. [...] *der Archetypus des Lebens. [...] Denn das Leben kommt zum Manne durch die Anima, obwohl er der Ansicht ist, es käme ihm durch den Verstand. Er meistert das Leben durch den Verstand, aber das Leben lebt in ihm durch die Anima*] (Jung, *Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken*, 231).'²

¹⁷⁷ Esselborn-Krumbiegel argues that the three serve as a '*Spiegelsymbol*' for Haller: 'Like in *Klein and Wagner and Demian*, in *Steppenwolf* other people are mirrors in which the protagonist can recognise unlied aspects of himself [my translation]. [*Wie in Klein und Wagner und Demian werden auch im Steppenwolf andere Menschen dem Helden zu Spiegeln, in denen er ungelebte Anteile seines Selbst erkennt*].' (Esselborn-Krumbiegel, Helga. *Gebrochene Identität: Das Spiegelsymbol bei Hermann Hesse*. "Michael Lindberg: Hermann Hesse und die Psychoanalyse. 'Kunst als Therapie.'" Internationales Hermann Hesse-Kolloquium in Calw, 1997. Gegenbach, Bad Liebenzell. 1997. 130-48. (p. 5-6).

¹⁷⁸ Jackson states, 'Haller [...] with the help of some other characters that are fragments of his personality, dismantle the aspects of the lone wolf which force him into isolation' (Jackson, "Hermann Hesse as Ambivalent Modernist." 138).

manuscript as fiction, which reveals that his comprehension of Haller is an effect of his manuscript's masking characteristics. He states:

It was not in my power to verify the truth of the experiences related in Haller's manuscript. I have no doubt that they are for the most part fictitious, not, however, in the sense of arbitrary invention. They are rather the deeply lived spiritual events which he has attempted to express by giving them the form of tangible experiences.

Es war mir nicht möglich, die Erlebnisse, von denen Hallers Manuskript erzählt, auf ihren Gehalt an Realität nachzuprüfen. Ich zweifle nicht daran, daß sie zum größten Teil Dichtung sind, nicht aber im Sinn willkürlicher Erfindung, sondern im Sinne eines Ausdrucksversuches, der tief erlebte seelische Vorgänge im Kleide sichtbarer Ereignisse darstellt.¹⁷⁹

Here the editor advises readers of Haller's manuscript to approach it with awareness of its fictional nature. Along with the editor's acknowledgment of the manuscript's effective communication, this passage also signifies that Haller's manuscript is the sort of Nietzschean Mask to which the treatise alludes. The manuscript is a lie that Haller tells in order to convey his ineffable personality.

We should briefly recall the characteristics of the Mask in order to understand how Haller's fiction can perform its semiotic function. Nietzsche's Masks are metaphorical symbols that represent the externality of 'truth' and the illusion of internality. For Nietzsche, knowledge is veiled in language, which is inherently metaphorical and thus subjective. External layers of potential interpretations perpetually enshroud all concepts and words, rendering definitive meaning illusive. These external layers are Nietzsche's Masks; and Nietzsche contends that in order to grasp the essence of anything, one must recognise the Masks' presence rather than searching for illusive 'truths' that lay below the Masks. The editor's introduction in *Der Steppenwolf* serves this exact purpose: it indicates the presence of Haller's Mask by designating his manuscript as fiction and enacts the semiotic effect of this fiction as a Mask. For the editor, Haller's personality is thus more comprehensible through a vehicle of fiction. He verifies this effect through his claim that the obvious fiction of Haller's manuscript 'impresses' his personality better than the 'truth' of his prescribed encounters with Haller. We have seen Hesse's earlier portrayals of the Self as internal, along with his increasingly ambivalent depictions of it as an externality. In *Der Steppenwolf*, though, we see an entirely positive representation of the Self's externality. The explicitly

¹⁷⁹ (22; SW 4, 22)

fictional nature of Haller's manuscript marks it as an external presentation of the Self; and the editor's introduction verifies the positivity of its effect. His introduction is thus crucial for the Mask's visibility because it frames the Mask and renders the *unreliability* of Haller's manuscript reliable.

Gustav Landgren has also noted Haller's unreliability, but he overlooks the effect of this narrative technique as a method of conveying his ineffable personality. Landgren extrapolates Haller's unreliability to the novel's other narratives, arguing that the interplay of unreliable narratives generates a deliberate *mise en abyme* effect, whereby Haller's personality is infinitely recreated. In other words, like Hutchinson, Landgren finds the complex interplay of narratives deliberately bewildering. Like most other critics, Landgren considers the treatise a separate narrative from Haller's manuscript. He argues that each of the novel's three narratives is presented on a different diegetic level: the extra-, intra-, and metadiegetic levels:

The editor's introduction is therefore the narration (extradiegetic), Haller's records narrate that narration (intradiegetic), and the treatise narrates that narration (metadiegetic) [my translation].

Das Vorwort des Herausgebers ist demgemäß das Erzählen (extradiegetisch), die Aufzeichnungen Hallers erzähltes Erzählen (intradiegetisch) und der Traktat vom Steppenwolf erzähltes erzähltes Erzählen (metadiegetisch).¹⁸⁰

According to Landgren, these three diegetic levels generate narrative unreliability, providing the necessary distance between the narrator and the text for each narrator to shift between different categories of unreliability.¹⁸¹ He provides specific instances that render each of these narrators unreliable. For example, he asserts that the editor's unreliability arises from his shifting opinion of Haller's manuscript:

[...] think of how the anonymous editor initially ruthlessly discards Haller's manuscript but later assesses it as an interesting document of the times [my translation].

¹⁸⁰ *Prolegomena zur Konzeptionalisierung unzuverlässigen Erzählens im Werk Hermann Hesses mit Schwerpunkt auf dem Steppenwolf*. "Orbis Litterarum." Vol. 68. Issue 4. John Wiley and Sons Ltd. Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz: 2013. 312-339. (p. 319).

¹⁸¹ Landgren aligns three primary categories of unreliable narration with each diegetic level: the 'theoretical' (*theoretisch unverlässiges Erzählen*) with the extradiegetic; the 'mimetic partial' (*mimetisch teilweise unzuverlässiges Erzählen*) with the intradiegetic; and the 'mimetic indecisive' (*mimetisch unentscheidbares Erzählen*) with the metadiegetic (Landgren 315). For an extensive definition of each unreliable plane, see: Martinez, M. and Scheffel. *Einführung in die Erzähltheorie*. Beck. Munich: 1999.

man denke daran, wie der anonyme Herausgeber die Aufzeichnungen Hallers zunächst rabiat verwirft, um sie später als ein interessantes Zeitdokument einzuschätzen.¹⁸²

The novel does not support Landgren's claim, though. A narrator's changing opinion is not adequate evidence to determine his/her unreliability. The editor's transparency about the effect of Haller's manuscript, in fact, reassures his reliability.

The unreliable narrator was defined by Wayne C. Booth in his influential study *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961).¹⁸³ In the book, Booth claims that a 'narrator is *reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's¹⁸⁴ norms), *unreliable* when he does not [my italics]'.¹⁸⁵ The unreliable narrator is not necessarily a liar: he/she just 'believes him- [or her-] self to have qualities which the author denies him [or her]'.¹⁸⁶ He cites *Huckleberry Finn* as an example: 'the narrator claims to be naturally wicked while the author silently praises his virtues behind his back'.¹⁸⁷ With unreliable narrators, the reader must therefore depend on his/her 'powers of inference' to determine the author's 'ideal of taste or judgment and moral sense' more so than with reliable narrators.¹⁸⁸ However, when a reliable narrator is intentionally deceptive, it is not 'sufficient to make a narrator unreliable'.¹⁸⁹ His or her narration is, in such a case, still in accordance with the implied author's vantage point.

As we can see, Landgren's definition of unreliable narration does not explain the novel's deliberate corroborative interplay. He labels subjective humanly distrust as textual unreliability and, by doing so, overlooks the communicative effect of Hesse's use of narrative interplay. The editor is a reliable commentator on Haller's manuscript simply because no incidental irony contradicts his claims. Therefore, his introduction corroborates the reliability of Haller's explicit fiction and determines its function as a *Mask of Fiction*.

¹⁸² Ibid., 320. (My translation)

¹⁸³ Booth, Wayne. *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. University of Chicago Press. Chicago: 1961.

¹⁸⁴ The implied author is an 'implied version of [the actual author]', discovered or created through the writing process (Booth 70-71). It is therefore a suggested presence or voice—unavoidably generated through unconscious means during the writing process—which is separate from the narrator's voice and also from the physically real author's voice because it is only present in that particular work through its relationship with that particular narration.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 158-59.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

We can rely on the editor's assessment and accept his implied invitation to unmask Haller, and by doing so, we are able to ascertain the Nietzschean-like 'impressions' that it generates. The following section unmasks the magic theatre and the masked ball episodes, demonstrating how the externality of Haller's manuscript is a reverberation of Haller's own realisation of his external Self.

4.3 Unmasking Through Masking: The Magic Theatre and the Masked Ball

With the contours of the Mask in sight, we can analyse how Haller conveys his developing acceptance of the external Self through his narrative/Mask's fictional content. Haller most clearly marks his manuscript as fiction through surreal and fantastical episodes. These episodes violate his reader's empirical expectations, which emphasises the fiction of his manuscript while simultaneously highlighting the metaphorical significance of these violations. With a distinct label of fiction on them, these surreal episodes invite interpretations. Through such episodes, Haller sketches his developing understanding of his own externality, and he concludes this illustration with a symbolic display of the Masks that enshroud him in Pablo's magic theatre. Pablo's theatre represents Haller's infinite externalities; and its position at the end of the novel signifies Haller's culminated realisation of the external Self. In this section, I demonstrate Haller's developing awareness of his externality and illustrate how the novel's masking effects allow us to advance popular interpretations of Pablo's magic theatre a step further. The general scholarly consensus is that Pablo's theatre represents Haller's fragmented soul, but this interpretation places too much emphasis on Haller's internal psyche. I will show how Haller's narrative Mask renders the theatre an *external* portrayal of Haller's fluid personality. Once this is clear, the significance of Haller's unmasked face at the masking ball will also become evident. Before we can see that Pablo's theatre is a *developed* self-portrayal, we must concisely outline a few points in the novel where Haller gradually slackens his tight grip on the western conception of the internal Self that we have prevalently seen in many western works of literature, particularly in Hesse's earlier novels.

Haller's self-understanding primarily unfolds through contemplations of his stunted personality. He makes it clear from the beginning of his manuscript that he is severely depressed. Although he initially attributes this depression to the mediocrity of modernity,

he eventually reveals that the actual root of his mental anguish is his stunted personality. He illustrates this through his perception that he no longer experiences the epiphanies through which self-development often occurs. As mentioned before, epiphanies and moments of awakening are standard symbols of growth in *Bildungsromane*, and in the subsequent chapter on *Das Glasperlenspiel* we will see that these occurrences are very instrumental in Hesse's most developed portrayal of the Mask. In *Der Steppenwolf*, though, Haller's lack of epiphanies illustrates his development by revealing his initial internal focus. For example, while musing upon his youth, a time when these moments of realisation were common for him, Haller claims that when they seldom occur in his middle age, they quickly bury themselves deep within him:

Once it happened, as I lay awake at night, that I suddenly spoke in verses, in verses so beautiful and strange that I did not venture to think of writing them down, and then in the morning they vanished; and yet they lay hidden within me like the hard *kernel* within an old brittle husk [my italics].

Einmal geschah es nachts, daß ich im Wachliegen plötzlich Verse sagte, Verse viel zu schön und viel zu wunderlich, als daß ich daran hätte denken dürfen, sie aufzuschreiben, die ich am Morgen nicht mehr wußte und die doch in mir verborgen lagen wie die schwere *Nuß* in einer alten brüchigen Schale [my italics].¹⁹⁰

This passage clearly shows Haller's early belief that the Self is defined by an internal core. He perceives the moments that shape him as nested within his psyche. This self-understanding is similar to Peter Camenzind's and Kuhn's (as well as Yeats's early lyrical voices'). All three protagonists embrace the western notion that 'truth' is a fixed internality and that the Self is one such 'truth'. In this passage, Haller acknowledges his inability to develop this internal 'kernel' [*Nuß*] and, as we have already seen, he therefore concocts a wolf/man dichotomy that allows him to attribute his stunted self-knowledge to cultural shifts beyond his control. This wolf/man division symbolises Haller's difficult decision between settling into a familiar social sphere—which he disdains yet finds comforting—or altogether abandoning it. By assessing himself through this symbol of ambivalence, Haller ignores the reality that his self-realisation is actually stunted by his belief in a 'core' that embodies self-knowledge. That is, Haller embraces the notion of an internal Self, which

¹⁹⁰ (34-35; SW 4 31)

prevents him from discerning that the complexity of his wolf/man self-conception is actually an oversimplification.

However, as shown, the treatise reveals to Haller that his dichotomous self-perception is too simplistic, and it teaches him that external layers, such as lies and mythologies, are essential tools of comprehension and expression. We can now see that this same critique of Haller's wolf/man division also foreshadows his later liberation from this simple duality. Furthermore, by offering these two perspectives (his perceived internality and the treatise's objection to his wolf/man dichotomy) at different places in the manuscript, Haller illustrates his developing self-perception. He first projects his belief in an internal core; then through the treatise, he projects his growing realisation that this core is an illusion. At the end of the novel, Pablo's magic theatre signifies the endpoint of this development. Pablo invites Haller into his theatre as the masked ball comes to a close. Upon entering the theatre, Pablo tells Haller:

I can throw open no picture gallery but your own soul. [...] You have no doubt guessed long since that the conquest of time and the escape from reality, or however else it may be that you choose to describe your longing, means simply the wish to be relieved of your so-called personality. That is the prison where you lie. And if you were to enter the theater as you are, you would see everything through the eyes of Harry and the old spectacles of the Steppenwolf. You are therefore requested to lay these spectacles aside and to be so kind as to leave your highly esteemed personality here in the cloakroom where you will find it again when you wish. [...] We are in a magic theater; a world of pictures, not realities.

Ich kann Ihnen keinen andern Bildersaal öffnen als den Ihrer Seele. [...] Ohne Zweifel haben Sie ja längst erraten, daß die Überwindung der Zeit, die Erlösung von der Wirklichkeit, und was immer für Namen Sie Ihrer Sehnsucht geben mögen, nichts andres bedeuten als den Wunsch, Ihrer sogenannten Persönlichkeit ledig zu werden. Sie ist das Gefängnis, in dem Sie sitzen. Und wenn Sie so, wie Sie sind, in das Theater träten, so sähen Sie alles mit den Augen Harrys, alles durch die alte Brille des Steppenwolfes. Sie werden darum eingeladen, sich dieser Brille zu entledigen und diese sehr geehrte Persönlichkeit freundlichst hier in der Garderobe abzugeben, wo sie auf Wunsch jederzeit wieder zu Ihrer Verfügung steht [...] wir sind hier in einem magischen Theater, es gibt hier nur Bilder, keine Wirklichkeit.¹⁹¹

In this passage, Pablo encourages Haller to loosen his grip on the notion of a 'true' Self that he embraces. He warns Haller that he will be 'relieved of his personality' [*sogenannten Persönlichkeit ledig zu werden*] and that its illusive nature will grow apparent in the magic

¹⁹¹ (200-201; SW 4, 165-168)

theatre. As a character within Haller's manuscript, Pablo is a fictional projection of Haller's; therefore, his invitation to Haller is an expression of Haller's own desire to shed the simplistic personality by which he defines himself. Furthermore, by asking Haller to remove the 'spectacles' [*Brille*] through which he views the world, Pablo draws a stark distinction between consensus reality and the pictures viewed in his theatre. This distinction echoes the treatise: it suggests that the images encountered in the theatre are made of theories, mythologies, and/or lies. This echo acts as a frame for Haller's experience in the theatre in a similar way that the editor's introduction frames Haller's entire manuscript. It explicitly labels Haller's encroaching experience in the theatre as fiction and encourages him to distance himself from the 'truth' of his experience and anticipate the 'impressions' it will generate.

A common interpretation of the magic theatre is that it presents a collage of imagery that represents various aspects of Haller's personality. Ziolkowski, for example, states that everything Haller sees in the theatre 'is a reflection of his own soul and a product of his eidetic vision under the influence of narcotics'.¹⁹² He further argues that Haller's murder of Hermine symbolises his inability to differentiate between two planes of reality: his idealised reality, which he takes too seriously, and the plane of consensus reality. The lesson Haller must learn in the theatre, according to Ziolkowski, is 'to perceive the eternal spirit behind the spurious phenomena of external reality'.¹⁹³ Esselborn-Krumbiegel similarly argues that the magic theatre is a metaphorical mirror of Haller's soul:

By entering Pablo's Magic Theatre, Harry reaches the high point of his self-searching. The look in Hermine's eyes, which has already promised a self-encounter, prepares Harry for the experience of himself in the picture gallery of his soul [my translation].

Mit dem Eintritt in Pablos Magisches Theater erreicht Harrys Selbstsuche ihren Höhepunkt. Der Blick in Hermine's Augen, der bereits Selbstbegegnung verhieß, macht Harry bereit zur Erfahrung seiner selbst im Bildersaal seiner Seele.¹⁹⁴

Other critics even extend the metaphor to Hesse's own identity crisis at the time of writing the novel.¹⁹⁵ These interpretations all share one fundamental basis: they view the theatre as

¹⁹² *Hermann Hesse's Steppenwolf: A Sonata in Prose*. (p. 129)

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 131.

¹⁹⁴ *Gebrochene Identität: Das Spiegelsymbol bei Hermann Hesse*. (p. 7)

a metaphor for the ‘internal’.¹⁹⁶ However, when Haller’s manuscript is discernible as a Mask, a new perspective is possible. The multifaceted personality portrayed in the theatre is no longer a fragmented soul (or psyche) with implications of internality; it is instead a symbol of the external layers that perpetually shift and move to generate an *illusion* that Haller’s personality is a former stable entity that is now profoundly broken. With the Mask in sight, we can discern that Haller does not discover a path *through* his broken personality in the theatre, nor does he see fragments that he must piece together. Rather, he discovers that the complexities and fragmentation, which he formerly believed to generate from cultural dissatisfaction, are, in fact, inherent complexities of an external Self. Thus when Haller enters the theatre with its fictional nature in mind, his search for ‘truth’ is not as serious as previous interpretations grant it. The theatre does not teach him to ‘perceive the eternal spirit behind the spurious phenomena of external reality’, as Ziolkowski argues. In fact, it teaches him to abolish the very notion of an eternal spirit and embrace the perpetual shifting of external layers that define him.

I do not intend to attempt a thorough investigation of the contents within the theatre episode. The numerous elements that construct each experience render it as fluid as the externality it represents, and such a lengthy genealogy is unnecessary. However, it is useful to explain how at least a couple of these experiences in the theatre represent the overall external nature of Haller’s personality. The first point is his reflection in the mirror. When Haller first enters the theatre, he encounters a large mirror in which his reflection appears abnormally happy: it laughs and smiles. But it quickly divides into multiple reflections, and each one is different: some are young, some are older than him, some of them play games, and each one is dressed differently. They all share one common trait, though: they are jovial. The images in the mirror extend Pablo’s advice to Haller upon entering the theatre. They do not reflect his simplistic self-perception but instead present a visual display of the treatise’s earlier description of his multifaceted personality. Even the initial reflection, which quickly dissolves into smaller images, laughs when it appears in the mirror.

¹⁹⁵ For instance, see: Seymour L. Flaxman. *Der Steppenwolf: Hesse’s Portrait of the Intellectual*. “Modern Language Quarterly.” Vol. 15. Issue 4. 1954. 349-358. Also see: Mileck, Joseph. *Life and Art*. (p. 196)

¹⁹⁶ Martin Swales interprets the episode as Haller’s path to reintegration: ‘[In the novel] we also hear Jungian aspirations toward wholeness, towards a re-integration of the multi-faceted personality’. (*Der Steppenwolf*. “A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse.” Ed. Ingo Cornils. Camden House. New York: 2009. 171-86. [p. 179]).

Furthermore, each of these images moves, which indicates that they are not fixed and therefore contain no fixed meaning. The laughter of each reflection further emphasises this fluidity because, as Haller frequently indicates throughout his manuscript, laughter is an expression of externality. It is the means through which the novel's other main characters and the Immortals express the illusiveness of concrete meaning. The externality that the mirror represents is thus unmistakable. The multitudinous Hallers in the mirror make up a collage of external layers.

Hesse's use of the mirror for this collage is similar to Yeats's use of the window pane to represent the very same concept in *The Two Trees*. Both works depict reflections as dishonest or unreliable. However, there is a crucial difference: the dishonesty of the tree's reflection in Yeats's poem is a deceptive representation of the 'truth' that the actual tree is purported to embody. In *Der Steppenwolf*, though, the indiscretion of the image's dishonesty guarantees its reliability. The fictional status of the images in the mirror is necessary for the images' communicative functions. Both works, of course, rest at different points of development for each writer. But it is nonetheless significant that they both used the image of a reflection to contrast externality and internality. By doing so, they both exhibit the inherent distance between the representation and the represented, and they each suggest where 'truth' lies within this distance. In the case of Yeats's poem, the 'truth' of the tree is outside the image of the tree (i.e. it is embodied by the 'actual' tree). As we can in Haller's case, though, the very existence of a distance between himself and the image of himself altogether eliminates 'truth' from the equation and suggests that nothing lies below *or* beyond the image. Keeping in mind Pablo's guiding advice to Haller's entry to the theatre, it is clear that the images Haller sees in the mirror are, in the Nietzschean sense, representations of other representations. Thus, when the mirror shatters, Haller can see the infinity of this pattern of self-representation.

Haller's experiences behind each door are even more layered than the images in the mirror because they are not reduced to the limited content of a singular image. However, scholars often attempt to reduce them in this way. For example, the first door that Haller enters initially appears to be a symbol of his disdain for the dehumanisation caused by

modern technology.¹⁹⁷ The sign on the door reads ‘Jolly Hunting: Great Hunt in Automobiles’ [*Auf zum fröhlichen Jagen! Hochjagd auf Automobile*].¹⁹⁸ Behind the door, Haller engages in a war against automobiles. These cars are symbolic of the proverbial ‘Machine’—the modern technology that Haller frequently criticises. While such an interpretation of this episode is corroborated by Haller’s ongoing concern with this theme throughout his manuscript, to reduce the entire episode to a singular meaning is as naively simplistic as Haller’s wolf/man division. There are many other elements in the episode that, when analysed, alter this definitive representation. For instance, it is equally important that Haller engages in this war against technology with his childhood friend, Gustav. Incorporating a childhood memory into this episode is certainly worthy of scrutiny when one considers that the theatre conveys Haller’s personality. Furthermore, the irony that Haller and Gustav fire rifles at the cars problematizes any definitive readings of this episode as entirely ‘anti-technology’. Additionally, Haller’s and Gustav’s dialogue meditates upon the politics and moralities of war and, specifically, of their own involvement in the battle they fight against these machines. The genealogical possibilities of this episode are endless, and when we once again consider Pablo’s advice to Haller—along with the imagery in the mirror—the endless externalities through which these genealogies shape this complex element of Haller are easily discerned.

Of course, the theatre is not necessarily so abstract that one cannot place value on a given interpretation. Its purpose is certainly not to diffuse meaning; but neither is each episode a fragment of Haller’s personality with definitive parameters that he can piece back together, as we have seen some scholars, like Hutchinson and Landgren, argue. But when we can detect Haller’s Mask and the externality of the Self that it conveys, we can see that the episodes behind each door are collages of imagery even more fluid and external than the mirror; and when considered alongside the mirror, Haller’s experiences behind each door generate a general ‘impression’ of his fluid and external personality. It should

¹⁹⁷ For example, see Kiesel’s article on the structure of the novel. Kiesel states that the war against the automobiles is ‘in the form of dark humour, a denouncement of modern civilization [my translation] [*Dies ist in Form von schwarzem Humor eine Anprangerung der moderne Zivilisation*]. Kiesel, Dagmar. *Das Gespaltene Selbst. Die Identitätsproblematik in Hermann Hesses Steppenwolf und Bei Friedrich Nietzsche*. “Nietzsche Studien.” Ed. Abel, Günter and Stegmaier, Werner. Vol. 39. November 2010. 398–433 (p. 14). Also, see Boulby’s *Hermann Hesse: His Mind and Art*. Boulby argues that Haller’s ‘war to the death between man and machine’ is representative of Hesse’s own disgust with modern civilization (p. 178).

¹⁹⁸ (205; SW 4, 169)

therefore be clear that Haller's entry into the theatre is his own fictional portrayal of his initiation into accepting the external Self. It is his culminating realisation of a pattern that, as we have seen, he unfolds throughout his manuscript. The novel's clearest resonance of the magic theatre's teachings is certainly Haller's manuscript: through his manuscript, Haller physically enacts the conceptual externality that the magic theatre portrays. In other words, he conveys his externality through a Mask concocted of numerous layers of fiction. Thus, as stated in this chapter's introduction, Haller's conveyance of his personality through fiction is the semiotic function of his manuscript by which we can consider it a Mask.

The significance of Haller's unmasked face at the masked ball can now be made clear. When Haller attends the ball near the end of the novel, unlike the other guests, he wears no mask (i.e. mask object) on his face. The absence of a physical mask spotlights the conceptual Mask that Haller wears. His physically unmasked face at the ball, along with his subsequent experiences in the magic theatre, complete the construction of the Mask that his narrative assembles throughout the novel. His unmasked face emphasises the presence of his *Mask* and therefore indicates that his experiences at the masked ball—the imagery, the occurrences, the dialogues, etc.—are all elements of his Mask's design. Donning a physical mask would conceal the necessary symbolism that his unmasked face generates. Thus, while the other guests make a transformation through the external imagery of their physical masks (an important function of masks, as we have seen in other parts of this thesis), Haller's very *lack* of a physical mask signifies the external 'imagery' of his own personality, which perpetually shifts and transforms. And, as demonstrated in previous paragraphs, the continuous transformation made through the constant shifting of this external 'imagery' grows even clearer once Haller enters the magic theatre.

4.4 Chapter Conclusion

Harry Haller is one of Hesse's most significant characters because he breaks from a cultural pattern that permeates through many of Hesse's characters prior to *Der Steppenwolf*. Although characters such as Peter and Kuhn acknowledge an internal/external division of Self, they are nonetheless still sentimental towards the deeply entrenched internality that shapes western self-conceptions. Haller, on the other hand, is Hesse's first character to denounce this cultural foundation and redefine himself through non-traditional

means. Haller acknowledges the roots of the self-conception he reformulates in the ‘Treatise of the Steppenwolf’. In this treatise, he identifies his identity crisis as a product of a western identity crisis. Importantly, though, Haller’s answer to this crisis is the Mask:

Man is an onion made up of a hundred integuments, a texture made up of many threads. The ancient Asiatics knew this well enough, and in the Buddhist Yoga an exact technique was devised for unmasking the illusion of the personality. The human merry-go-round sees many changes: the illusion that cost India the efforts of thousands of years to unmask is the same illusion that the West has labored just as hard to maintain and strengthen.

[...] der Mensch ist eine aus hundert Schalen bestehende Zwiebel, ein aus vielen Fäden bestehendes Gewebe. Erkannt und genau gewußt haben dies die alten Asiaten, und im buddhistischen Yoga ist eine genaue Technik dafür erfunden, den Wahn der Persönlichkeit zu entlarven. Lustig und vielfältig ist das Spiel der Menschheit: der Wahn, zu dessen Entlarvung Indien tausend Jahre lang sich so sehr angestrengt hat, ist derselbe, zu dessen Stützung und Stärkung der Okzident sich ebenso viele Mühe gegeben hat.¹⁹⁹

As we have seen, Haller’s method of unmasking the illusion he identifies in this passage is to *mask* it. His specific terminology highlights this fact. The ‘Asiatics’ *unmasked* [*entlarvt*] the personality to reveal an illusion, but the western world’s struggle to maintain this illusion demands a different approach. The treatise suggests that the West adamantly maintains its need to see ‘truths’ as internal, which thwarts its recognition that the unity it perceives is an illusion. While Nietzsche acknowledges that this appearance of unity is necessary in order to satisfy our need to see the world coherently, he also urges us to recognise its illusive nature (see Chapter 2). As we have seen, Haller comes to view the world through this Nietzschean lens; and, in his manuscript, he thus adopts the characteristics of the Mask in order to non-literally convey his developed realisation of this very illusion. His manuscript is a metaphorical vehicle that simultaneously describes and *functions as* the external Self that he comes to recognise. Importantly, Hesse activates the masking characteristics of Haller’s manuscript and indicates its function as a Mask of Fiction by providing the editor’s introduction to the manuscript.

¹⁹⁹ (69; SW 4, 62)

Nietzsche scholar Dagmar Kiesel has also noticed a connection between Haller's self-conception and the Nietzschean Mask. In her essay *Das Gespaltene Selbst*, she equates Nietzsche's conception of the fragmented Self with Haller's own fragmentation and credits the Mask as Hesse's inspiration for this portrayal of Haller:

The concept of the Mask, which brought Hesse to describe Haller's superficial constitution of the Self, is important for Nietzsche in many respects [my translation].

Der Begriff der Maske, den auch Hesse zur Beschreibung der vordergründigen Konstitution eines Selbst bei Harry Haller gebraucht, ist für Nietzsche in mehrfacher Hinsicht von Bedeutung.²⁰⁰

Kiesel perceives the externality of the Self portrayed in the novel, and her observation of the Nietzschean Mask as a foundation for this portrayal aligns with my own view. However, Kiesel's analysis does not note Hesse's *enactment* of this concept through Haller's manuscript. Although Kiesel has made a much more acute observation about Haller's fragmented Self than other scholars have, in order to fully ascertain the crucial role that the Nietzschean Mask plays in Hesse's developed depictions of the Self, it is crucial to note that this Nietzschean concept is not only a thematic concern of the novel, but that it is also a narrative tool.

I have demonstrated this precise application of the Mask throughout this chapter. It should be evident at this point that *Der Steppenwolf* shows significant developments in Hesse's literary portrayals of the Self, his application of the mask metaphor for these portrayals, and, most importantly, his adoption of the Nietzschean Mask as a narrative device for conveying this development. Not only have I shown how Haller's conception of the Self is external in a Nietzschean sense, but I have additionally elucidated how Hesse incorporates images of mask objects to depict this relationship between self-conception and the act of *masking*. Thus, similar to the masks and 'images' seen in Yeats's *The Player Queen*, the physical masks that appear in *Der Steppenwolf* point to the elements of the Nietzschean Mask out of which Haller's narrative is constructed. Now that we have seen this crucial turning point in Hesse's portrayals of the Self, in the following chapter, we will see how Hesse's continued occupation with externality and expression through narrative

²⁰⁰ Kiesel, Dagmar. *Das Gespaltene Selbst. Die Identitätsproblematik in Hermann Hesses Steppenwolf und Bei Friedrich Nietzsche*. "Nietzsche Studien." Ed. Abel, Günter and Stegmaier, Werner. Vol. 39. November 2010. 398–433. (p. 406)

masking develops in his most profound work *Das Glasperlenspiel*. In this novel, Hesse implements the characteristics of the Mask even more effectively than in *Der Steppenwolf*.

Chapter 5: Masked *Bildungsroman*: *Das Glasperlenspiel* and the External Self

5.1 Chapter Introduction

In *Das Glasperlenspiel*, Hesse constructs a Mask through techniques of narrative framing similar to those in *Der Steppenwolf*. However, the process is much more complex in *Das Glasperlenspiel*. The layers of the Mask are less obvious and, as a result, the Mask is more effective. This chapter reveals the final development of Hesse's narrative masking and demonstrates how the characteristics of the Nietzschean Mask become a more active part of this novel, both thematically and as a narrative construction, than in previous ones. Through *Das Glasperlenspiel*'s narrative Mask, Hesse unveils a development in his literary depictions of the Self. Like Yeats, Hesse's portrayals of the Self grew increasingly external throughout his life. We have already seen this through Haller's Mask of Fiction. Now we must explore the culminating point of this development: Hesse's final depiction of the external Self in his last and most elaborate novel, *Das Glasperlenspiel*. (As in the previous chapter, all mentions of the Mask [with a capital 'M'] refer to the Nietzschean Mask as I have previously defined it.)

Hesse makes the contours of the novel's Mask visible through deliberate ironic tensions. The novel's narrator (whom I refer to as the biographer) prescribes direct claims that he undercuts with subtle irony to indicate that he is actually implying the opposite. The Mask arises from the tension these ironic contradictions create. Since the novel's layers of superficial claims and ironic contradictions are built in complex ways, the analysis of the novel's Mask requires a number of analytical steps. After the introduction and a brief summary (Section 5.2) that contextualises the novel in the terms of our discussion, the chapter is divided into four sections, which each unveils a different facet of the Mask and its purposes.

Section 5.3 demonstrates the ways in which the novel's narrative frame is more sophisticated than the frame we have explored in *Der Steppenwolf*. In *Der Steppenwolf*, the editor frames the novel with an introduction, which indicates that Haller's narrative is intended as a Mask; in *Das Glasperlenspiel*, however, the biographer (narrator) subscribes to a specific style of historiography but contradicts this stated objective with irony that

indicates his application of a historical methodology different from his claimed objective. Specifically, the biographer purports to chronicle the life of Josef Knecht, a significant historical figure in the society of intellectual elite to which the biographer belongs (Castalia, or in German, *Kastalien*). He asserts that his biography links together specific historical moments in Castalia and does not explore Knecht's individual development. But through ironic jests at this claim, he indicates that he actually does not subscribe to this Castalian method of historiography, as it eliminates the significance of individual personalities. This section will show how the relationship between the biographer's 'superficial claim' and the irony beneath it generates a frame within which the biographer's Mask is discernible. The notion of the 'superficial claim' that I define in this section will be pertinent to my entire analysis. As we will see, the superficial claim makes up the surface of the narrative Mask that I reveal.

Section 5.4 demonstrates the 'intended meaning' behind the Mask that Section 5.3 illuminates: a *Bildungsroman* of Knecht. In light of the Castalian Order's attempts to stunt self-development, Knecht and his biographer nonetheless share a devotion to it, and I argue that this similarity between the two men arises from the biographer's admiration for Knecht. The strongest clue to this is the biographer's inclusion in his narrative of Knecht's Lives [*Lebensläufe*], which are fictional self-portrayals that Castalian citizens are encouraged to write immediately after their schooling. The Castalian Order claims that the Lives are meant to be a creative outlet of self-expression and thus self-development; however, my analysis will highlight how the biographer's Mask unveils the contradiction of the Order's claim and reveals that the exercises are actually meant to stunt growth in the name of encouraging it. This function of the Mask has a dual benefit: it also indicates that Knecht acknowledged the Castalian Order's hidden intention but nonetheless utilized his Lives for the Order's claimed purpose. This section of the chapter thus shows how Knecht's Lives are *Masks of Fiction*, and it illustrates how their inclusion (along with some of Knecht's poetry) in the narrative is a facet of the biographer's Mask. Hesse's inclusion of these ancillary materials (Knecht's poetry and Lives) has generated much discussion as to their function in the novel. My analysis will provide strong evidence that these supplementary materials are included as a hint at the biographer's hidden focus on Knecht's *Bildung*. Section 5.5 will then provide close readings of each Life in order to demonstrate the effect

of these Masks of Fiction. It will reveal that Knecht's own Lives, much like Harry Haller's manuscript, serve to 'impress' his conceptualising 'truth' as external and the Self as one such externality.

Section 5.6 sketches the ways in which the biographer's own narrative 'impresses' the developing process of the concepts we will have seen 'impressed' through Knecht's Masks of Fiction. The biographer's consistent focus on Knecht's self-defined awakenings [*Erwachen*] depicts Knecht's developing conception of the Self. These awakenings, as I will demonstrate, are characteristic *Bildungsroman* epiphanies, moments through which a character experiences a sense of realisation and totality. The biographer highlights these experiences of Knecht's, and through his masking process, he reveals that Knecht's perception of these moments shifts between sensing the finalisation they bring, on the one hand, and perceiving them as ongoing and gradational on the other. I contend that the biographer incorporates a masked commentary alongside his inclusion of these experiences in his narrative. His commentary illuminates Knecht's developing self-awareness, which eventually culminates into his perception of the Self as external. I will show how this is Hesse's *clearest depiction* of the Self as a Nietzschean Mask, which is a significant thematic development that no previous scholarship has addressed.

Section 5.7 concludes my analysis with an explanation of why the Mask is necessary. Within the context of the novel, I argue that the biographer masks his biography in order to narrate a *Bildungsroman* under the noses of a social order that bans them. His irony often illuminates various dystopian traits of Castalian society, in particular, their abolishment of the individual. Thus, as his presumed readership is Castalian, the biographer must mask his narrative of an individual as one that instead serves his superficial claim: to present Knecht's life as merely a cog in the Castalian wheel of time. Outside the context of the novel, I argue that the overarching dystopian theme of the novel allows Hesse a useful channel through which to enact the many complexities of the Nietzschean Mask. I do not necessarily contend that this is *why* Hesse sets his final novel in a dystopian society. Nonetheless, by elucidating the ways in which the narrative Mask reveals Castalia's dystopian nature, it will grow evident why this setting is appropriate for Hesse's final employment of the Mask.

The tension that arises from the narrative design that this chapter examines is the cause of some debate over how to interpret the novel. Some only perceive the biographer's superficial claim and thus read the novel as a portrayal of the precedence Knecht gives to societal service over self-development. Theodore Ziolkowski, for example, argues that the novel's first English translation, *Magister Ludi*,²⁰¹ is misleading because it suggests that it is 'simply another German *Bildungsroman*, a pretty fiction of personal development unrelated to the more general concerns of society'.²⁰² In Colin Wilson's *The Outsider* (in which Wilson examines the relationship between modern creativity and alienation), Wilson additionally states that the novel does not fit the format of a *Bildungsroman* because it does not chronicle an individual's internal development in relation to his experiences with his outer environment.²⁰³ Other scholars, such as Mileck, Sorell, and Bishop, similarly view the novel as a final medley of Hesse's lifelong developing ideas but not necessarily as one concerned with self-development.²⁰⁴ While these scholars certainly recognise basic characteristics of the *Bildungsroman* model in the novel, they generally perceive that, in *Das Glasperlenspiel*, Hesse no longer depicts self-development to be as important as he has done in his prior novels. This view, as this chapter demonstrates, is a result of only perceiving the Mask's superficial appearance. Other scholars, however, label the novel a *Bildungsroman*. For instance, in his extensive study on Hesse's last three novels, Peter Roberts claims that the novel is a *Bildungsroman* precisely for its conscious engagement with the genre.²⁰⁵ Jeong-Hee Kim agrees with this contention and cites Roberts to help define the *Bildungsroman* in her book on narrative inquiry.²⁰⁶ Furthermore, Soren Brier uses the novel as an anecdote in his study of human semiotics, explicitly labelling the novel an 'intricate *Bildungsroman* about humanity's eternal quest for enlightenment'.²⁰⁷ From the

²⁰¹ *Magister Ludi*. Translated by Mervyn Savill. Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. New York: 1949.

²⁰² Ziolkowski, Theodore. "Foreword to *The Glass Bead Game*." Picador: 1969.

²⁰³ Wilson, Colin. *The Outsider*. Phoenix. London: 1956. (p. 56)

²⁰⁴ See: Mileck, Joseph. *Biography and Bibliography. Vol 1*. "Life and Works." (p. 91)

Sorell, Walter. *Hermann Hesse: The Man Who Sought and Found Himself*. "Modern German Authors: New Series." Vol. 2. (p. 53). Bishop, Paul. *Beads of Glass, Shards of Culture, and the Art of Life: Hesse's Das Glasperlenspiel*. "A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." (215-240)

²⁰⁵ Roberts, Peter. *From West to East and Back Again: An Educational Reading of Hermann Hesse's Later Work*. Sense Publishers. Rotterdam: 2012. 51-54.

²⁰⁶ Kim, Jeong-Hee. *Understanding Narrative Inquiry: The Crafting and Analysis of Stories as Research*. Sage Publications Inc. Singapore: 2016.

²⁰⁷ Brier, Soren. *Cybersemiotics: Why Information is Not Enough!* University of Toronto Press. Toronto: 2008. (Digital copy). (Found in book's final notes.)

above examples, it is clear that differing readings of the novel result from perceiving either one side of the Mask or the other. But no study scrutinises the negotiation between these two sides of the Mask. This chapter examines the complex interplay of the Mask's layers and reveals that the novel is indeed a *Bildungsroman* that emerges from behind the superficial Castalian-focused layer of the Mask. Through this demonstration, we will see that Hesse's final depiction of the Self as *external* emerges from the interweaving of layers with which Hesse has constructed his novel's Mask.

5.2 Summary

A brief summary of the novel is necessary for the purposes of our discussion. The novel begins with a fictitious Latin epigraph purported to be written by Albertus Secundus, the father of the Glass Bead Game. This quotation—translated by the novel's protagonist Josef Knecht—sets the tone of the novel by reflecting upon the relationship between history, narration, and fiction. A thorough understanding of how the novel interlaces these three themes is necessary to understand the content of this quote. I therefore revisit the quote in this chapter's conclusion, after I have demonstrated the function of the novel's Mask. In the conclusion, I will highlight how this Latin epigraph is the novel's first hint at its Mask.

Following the epigraph, the main narrative of *Das Glasperlenspiel* begins with a general introduction, much like in *Der Steppenwolf*. This time, though, the same narrator that provides the novel's main narration is also the one who provides the introduction. In the introduction, the narrator establishes that the purpose of his story is to tell the biography of Josef Knecht, a prominent figure in the history of the utopian (and as we will later see, *dystopian*) society to which the narrator belongs: Castalia [*Kastalien*]. Castalia is a 'futuristic' society, established after the Age of the Feuilleton (which the narrator implies is the Twentieth Century). At the time the narrator is writing (roughly the year 2400), Castalia has already existed for hundreds of years. It was established as a place where the world's most esteemed intellectuals and scholars could live separately from the 'secular' world (i.e. the working world) for the sole purpose of 'preserving' culture. Castalians believe they accomplish this feat through living a scholarly lifestyle. (I refer to the world beyond Castalia as 'secular' because the tenets upon which Castalian society is founded are internalised by its denizens to an almost religious-like extent. Castalia's 'internalisation' of ideas will grow clearer in section 5.6, where Castalia's ideology is closely analysed.) It is

important to note, however, that while the Castalian Order emphasises the importance of scholarship, Castalians do not study history as rigorously as they do other fields of study because they perceive it as merely an account of occurrences. For Castalians, history has happened as it happened [*Die Geschichte ist geschehen*],²⁰⁸ and it therefore requires no further intellectual attention. A more thorough explication of this view is included in the section following this summary.

Due to this perspective on history, the novel's Castalian narrator claims that he takes an interest in Knecht's life only insofar as his life contributes to certain significant aspects of Castalian history. Specifically, he claims to narrate Knecht's historical contribution to the Glass Bead Game [*Das Glasperlenspiel*], which is an important cultural tradition in Castalia. While the novel never explains in much detail exactly how this game is played, the reader gathers through the narrator/biographer's descriptions of the game that its players design and rearrange various symbolic representations of forms of 'knowledge' from a number of scholarly fields. They then compete to create the best combination of these symbols in order to represent these various forms of knowledge as one harmonious and unified 'truth'.

After Knecht's biographer states his purposes for telling Knecht's story, he then begins his account of Knecht's life. Not much is known of Knecht's origins—his parents or his birthplace—so his story begins in an elite school from the secular world. Soon, though, Knecht's exceptional talent for playing music gains him an esteemed reputation among his teachers, and as a result, the 'Music Master' from Castalia is invited to come and gauge Knecht's worth as a potential student of the Castalian schools. The Music Master deems him worthy, and he admits Knecht to Castalian society at the Eschholz School. An important mentor-pupil relationship develops between the Music Master and Knecht,²⁰⁹ and throughout the novel, Knecht frequently exchanges letters with him and visits him at his house in Montepoort, a former monastery where the Music Master resides.

Upon leaving Eschholz, Knecht commences his higher studies in Waldzell, a Castalian school that, as the biographer tells us:

²⁰⁸ (19; SW 5, 15)

²⁰⁹ Mentor-pupil relationships are an important aspect of all of Hesse's novels. Consider, for example, Demian and Sinclair in *Demian*, Hermine and Harry Haller in *Der Steppenwolf*, and Goldmund and Narziß in *Narziß und Goldmund* (which is arguably a two-way mentor-pupil relationship because both parties fulfil both roles).

traditionally cultivated a tendency toward universality and toward an alliance between scholarship and the arts. The highest symbol of these tendencies was the Glass Bead Game.²¹⁰

[so wurde in Waldzell] traditionell eine Tendenz zur Universalität und zur Verschwisterung zwischen Wissenschaft und Künsten gepflegt, und oberstes Sinnbild dieser Tendenzen war das Glasperlenspiel.²¹¹

After completing his prescribed studies in Eschholz at the age of twenty-four, Knecht commences his years of free study [*Studienjahre*], a time when he, like all students of the Castalian Order, is permitted to engage in self-guided study of his subjects of choice. It is during this period that Knecht produces his ‘Three Lives’ [*Lebensläufe*], which are short-story fictional representations of his own life. These Lives will be crucial to our study of narratives as Masks, as I will illustrate below how they fit within our definition of Masks of Fiction.

The Castalian Order eventually ceases Knecht’s *Studienjahre* and relocates him to Mariafels, a monastery outside of Castalia, where he lives for a number of years as a diplomat with the purpose of establishing a future bond between Castalia and the secular world.²¹² Here Knecht not only performs his task well, but he also develops another important mentor-pupil relationship with Father Jacobus, a monk who teaches Knecht the importance of studying history critically. Jacobus stresses the value of analytical studies of history, and he points out the shortcomings of discrediting them, as Castalians do. The views purported by Jacobus echo the teachings of Jacob Burkhardt, who had a significant influence on Hesse throughout his writing the novel.²¹³ Jacobus is an important figure in the novel because he is the catalyst for Knecht’s non-Castalian perception of history, a

²¹⁰ All English translations are from: *The Glass Bead Game*. Translated by Richard and Clara Winston. Picador. New York: 1969. (p. 86)

²¹¹ (SW 5, 74)

²¹² While there are conceptual problems with referring to the monastery as ‘secular’, for the sake of our discussion, as I mentioned before, the word ‘secular’ will be used to speak of everything outside the perimeters of Castalia.

²¹³ Hesse deliberately modelled Jacobus on Burkhardt. In 1944, Hesse wrote to Ludwig Renner: ‘In regards to Father Jacobus and History, the father has received the forename of Jacob Burkhardt, the historian that I love above all others (my translation)’. [*Was den Pater Jakobus und die Historie betrifft, so hat der Pater aus alter Anhänglichkeit und Verehrung den Vornamen von J. Burckhardt bekommen, des Historikers, den ich vor allen anderen liebe.*] (GW 3, 240). The essential tenets of Burkhardt’s views on historiography seen in *Das Glasperlenspiel* are his perspectives on how to study and understand history. Specifically, Burkhardt promoted the notion of ‘cultural history’, which studies history in terms of its cultural foundations, such as art, music, politics, daily life, etc. History, for Burkhardt (and Father Jacobus), is not a grand narrative; it is a more complex collective of narratives.

perception that we will later see influences Knecht's future biographer to surreptitiously mask his narrative under the gaze of the Castalian Order, allowing him an outlet for his own analysis of Knecht's life.

Knecht's success at Mariafels, combined with his past impressive displays of playing the Glass Bead Game, prompts the Castalian Order to 'call' (*berufen*) Knecht to become the new Magister Ludi: the highest and most esteemed player of the Glass Bead Game. Knecht accepts the offer and performs the role with notable success for many years. Eventually, however, his own realisations of Castalia's shortcomings—particularly, their seemingly deliberate ignorance of history—combined with his own sense of self-will,²¹⁴ move him to resign from this post and enter the secular world as a private tutor to the son of a friend. He then circulates a letter to the Castalian Order, requesting permission to leave the Order. Upon denial of this request, Knecht quits Castalia anyway.

At this point in the novel, the narration takes a significant turn: the biographer incorporates the 'Legend of Knecht' that grew amongst Castalians after Knecht's departure. Knecht's biographer tells us that this part of his narrative is only a Legend because the documentation for its claims is meagre. Yet he includes it in his narration because it provides a feasible explanation of Knecht's life after Castalia. The narrator's inclusion of this Legend is significant because, as I will later show, putting feeble documentation into consideration is contrary to his claimed perspective on studying history. That is, he allows an interpretation of Knecht's life—indeed a likely fictional fabrication—regardless of his claimed Castalian historical perspective. We will thus see below how this inclusion in itself is an example of the irony that generates the novel's Mask.

According to his Legend, Knecht leaves Castalia and takes on the role of personal tutor for his friend Plinio Designori's son Tito. In order to obtain some solitude for their initial acquaintance and the commencement of Tito's studies, Knecht and Tito travel to a private mountain cabin that belongs to Designori. After Knecht's first night in the cabin, he awakens the following day to find Tito going for a morning swim in the lake. Tito urges Knecht to join him, and after only a bit of persuasion, Knecht enters the cold water and is never seen again; as the Legend suggests, he is presumed drowned. This concludes the novel's main narration, after which the biographer incorporates a collection of poetry that

²¹⁴ Or in Hesse's words, *Eigensinn*. (SW 12, 101-106).

Knecht furtively wrote (other than the Lives, creative fiction is banned in Castalia) while at Eschholz, as well as Knecht's aforementioned three Lives. I will discuss this poetry and the three Lives in more detail further below because the Lives themselves reflect the value Knecht places on creative expression and individual development. Importantly, the biographer's inclusion of these documents indicates that he also shares this value.

5.3 Narrative Framing

As previously stated, in order to understand how *Das Glasperlenspiel* functions as a Mask, the purpose of the novel's irony must first be understood because this irony creates a 'frame' through which the Mask grows visible. We should recall how Hesse constructs *Der Steppenwolf* as a narrative frame: he provides an editor's introduction, which serves to make the reader aware of Haller's Mask of Fiction and urges him/her to approach Haller's narrative with intentions of unmasking. That is, the editor's introduction guides us to question the meaning that Haller's Mask is intended to 'impress' upon us (refer to Chapter 2 for a reminder of the Nietzschean process of 'impression').

Similarly, in *Das Glasperlenspiel*, Hesse provides a foreword with a function comparable to that in *Der Steppenwolf*. It contains a crucial difference, though. The introduction in *Das Glasperlenspiel* is provided by the same narrator of the novel's primary narration: Knecht's biographer. In his introduction, the biographer does not directly state that his narrative should be read for its masking effects. He instead defines his Castalian perspective on history and biography and asserts his purposes in narrating Knecht's biography. Throughout the rest of the novel, subtle irony frequently contradicts these introductory claims. Therefore, the novel's Mask is not blatantly spotlighted in the introduction, as it is in *Der Steppenwolf*. Instead, the frame for the novel's Mask depends upon this irony to highlight its presence. Our first step in perceiving the Mask's visibility, then, must be to understand the biographer's superficially claimed view on history. The following sub-section demonstrates how the biographer constructs this superficial claim.

5.3.1 The Superficial Claim

The first facet of the novel's Mask is its superficial claim: the claim that Knecht's biographer purports to make, which disguises the intended meaning behind the Mask's surface. This claim is a specific understanding of history. In the novel's introductory chapter—'A General Introduction' [*Versuch einer allgemeinverständlichen Einführung in*

seine Geschichte—the biographer situates his intentions for writing Knecht’s biography within a rigid Castalian definition of historical (and biographical) studies. He defines history in the pragmatic terms of his Castalian Order:

History is *as it has happened*. Whether it was good, whether it would have been better not to have happened, whether we will or will not acknowledge that it has had “meaning”—all this is irrelevant [my italics].

Die Geschichte *ist geschehen* – ob sie gut war, ob sie besser unterblieben wäre, ob wir ihren ‘Sinn’ anerkennen mögen, dies ist ohne Bedeutung [my italics].²¹⁵

This passage expresses an extremely cursory approach to history. As we can see, Castalians place no value on historical analysis. Since past occurrences are fixed in time, Castalians regard them as immovable facts. That is, for the Castalian, history consists of traceable occurrences, and beyond their mere existence as such, they require no further scholarly consideration. From their point of view, one cannot analyse or interpret history; historical studies therefore have no place in their society. Later in the novel, Father Jacobus (and eventually Knecht as a result of Jacobus’s influence) labels this historical perspective as ‘mathematical’. Jacobus tells Knecht:

You [Castalians] treat history as a mathematician does mathematics, in which nothing but laws and formulas exist, no reality, no good and evil, no time, no yesterday, no tomorrow, nothing but an eternal, shallow mathematical present.

Ihr behandelt Weltgeschichte wie ein Mathematiker die Mathematik, wo es nur Gesetze und Formeln gibt, aber keine Wirklichkeit, kein Gut und Böse, keine Zeit, kein Gestern, kein Morgen, nur eine weige, flache, mathematische Gegenwart.²¹⁶

Jacobus’s analogy is an appropriate one. Mathematics consists of set rules and laws with which one cannot tamper interpretively or creatively. Mathematics has no ‘meaning’, per se, because it contains no metaphorical significance or perceivable depth beyond its established surface rules. According to Castalians, history is fixed like the rules of mathematics: it is an immobile past. In their view, it therefore contains no depth or meaning beyond the sequence of occurrences it records.

The biographer continuously puts forward this historical perspective throughout the entire novel, as he frequently validates his narration by telling the reader where and how he

²¹⁵ (19; SW 5, 15)

²¹⁶ (168; SW 5, 150)

obtained certain information. For instance, when the Music Master's health is in decline, Knecht tells Carlo Ferromonte of his concern for the Music Master. The biographer informs his reader that he knows the nature of Knecht's and Ferromonte's dialogue because 'their conversation has been preserved in a letter of Ferromonte's' [*Er hat das Gespräch jener Stunde in einem Brief festgehalten*].²¹⁷ By referencing an external source for the historical occurrence that he records, the biographer establishes it as a 'fact'. Another example comes when Knecht is at Waldzell. At the school, he begins to doubt his friendship with Plinio Designori. The biographer tells us that, during this time of doubt, Knecht turns to his mentor the Music Master for advice. Knecht writes a letter to the Music Master. The biographer includes this letter in his biography because 'it has been preserved' [*{...}der uns erhalten ist*].²¹⁸ However, the biographer also claims that he cannot present the Music Master's response because he does not possess physical evidence of this response:

It would be of the greatest value to us if we possessed the Music Master's reply to this cry for help in black and white. But the reply was given orally.

Es wäre uns überaus wertvoll, die Antwort des Meisters auf diesen Hilferuf ebenfalls schwarz auf weiß zu besitzen. Dies Antwort ist aber mündlich erfolgt.²¹⁹

Instances such as these reflect the above-mentioned Castalian perception of history and demonstrate the biographer's (claimed) loyalty to this perspective. He is eager to demonstrate that he only incorporates 'facts' that are verifiable through tangible evidence, implying that his narration never deviates from a rigid timeline of traceable occurrences. In other words, he takes pains to show that he is not an interpreter; he is a recorder. This characteristic of his narration is crucial for our study because it is the foundation of the biographer's superficial claim. The biographer designs the surface of his Mask through this ostentatious ascription to the Castalian historical perspective.

Unsurprisingly, Castalians also approach biographical studies from the same mathematical perspective. The biographer explains that the Castalian's interest in a biographical account eliminates the internalities of an individual and focuses only on the external factors of a person's life: namely, his/her contribution to the historical period within which he/she existed. The biographer states:

²¹⁷ (255; SW 5, 231)

²¹⁸ (96; SW 5, 83)

²¹⁹ (97; SW 5, 85)

Certainly, what nowadays we understand by personality is something quite different from what the biographers and historians of earlier times meant by it. For them, and especially for the writers of those days who had a distinct taste for biography, the essence of a personality seems to have been deviance, abnormality, uniqueness, in fact all too often the pathological. We moderns, on the other hand, do not even speak of major personalities until we encounter men who have gone beyond all original and idiosyncratic qualities to achieve the greatest possible integration into the generality, the greatest possible service to the suprapersonal. [...] Indeed, many of [history's] greatest figures, such as St. Thomas Aquinas, appear to us—like early Greek sculptures—more the classical *representatives of types than individuals* [my italics].

Es ist ja allerdings das, was wir heute unter Persönlichkeit verstehen, nun etwas erheblich anderes, als was Biographen und Historiker früherer Zeiten damit gemeint haben. Für sie, und zwar namentlich für die Autoren jener Epochen, welche eine ausgesprochene biographische Neigung hatten, scheint, so möchte man sagen, das Wesentliche einer Persönlichkeit das Abweichende, das Normwidrige und Einmalige, ja oft geradezu das Pathologische gewesen zu sein, während wir Heutigen von bedeutenden Persönlichkeiten überhaupt erst dann sprechen, wenn wir Menschen begegnen, denen jenseits von allen Originalitäten und Absonderlichkeiten ein möglichst vollkommener Dienst am Überpersönlichen gelungen ist. [...] manche ihrer größten Gestalten, wie etwa der heilige Thomas von Aquino, erscheinen uns, gleich frühgriechischen Plastiken, mehr als klassische *Vertreter von Typen denn als Einzelpersonen* [my italics].²²⁰

This passage shows that the Castalian places no significance on an individual person's life as an element of history unless that person has made a noteworthy contribution to his/her society or, more generally, the world. A 'life', for the Castalian, is an *occurrence* or an *event*, a notch on a timeline that links together preceding and succeeding occurrences. As Castalians see it, the internal details of a person's life spawn a trivial meta-narrative that desultorily splinters outward from the straight timeline of history that Castalia has drawn. Due to this perception, they *extract* personality from the person and *remove* the individual from history.

This biographical perspective is an essential tenet of Castalian society, and it is the underlying theme of the novel that the irony I will demonstrate below undercuts. It is thus crucial to have a full grasp on its essence. The biographer's simile—that a great historical figure is like an ancient Greek sculpture—can help us to better understand it. This simile is an eloquent image for the Castalian perspective. A Greek sculpture is non-malleable and

²²⁰ (12; SW 5, 9)

static; it is constructed of the same substance both internally as it is externally; and the rigidity of this material renders its shape fixed and unyielding. Furthermore, a sculpture's external appearance determines the 'meaning' it represents. Therefore, a sculpture's material consistency also renders its 'meaning' equivocally fixed and unyielding. To put it more succinctly, the external appearance of a sculpture determines its 'meaning', and the inner/outer inflexibility of the sculpture solidifies that meaning. Likewise, for the Castalian, a significant historical figure represents an external 'meaning', which Castalians determine by the contribution he/she makes to history. Therefore, like a sculpture, a historical figure's external 'appearance' determines his/her 'meaning'. This 'meaning' is also fixed and unyielding, rendering a study of his/her personality (or, in the terms of our discussion, his/her 'internality') irrelevant. A person's only place in history, for the Castalian, is the link he/she provides in the historical timeline.

It is clear that Castalia's views on biography stem from their mathematical views on history. The novel's Castalian narrator asserts that his own incentive for chronicling Knecht's life is a direct influence of this perspective:

If we have nevertheless persisted in our endeavor to determine some of the facts about the life of Ludi Magister Josephus III [Josef Knecht], and at least to sketch the outlines of his character, we believe we have done so not out of any cult of personality, nor out of disobedience to the customs, but on the contrary solely in the service of truth and scholarship. [...] A glance at the early history of that life of the mind we now lead, namely, a glance at the development of the Glass Bead Game, shows us irrefutably that every phase of its development, every extension, every change, every essential segment of its history, whether it be seen as progressive or conservative, bears the plain imprint of the person who introduced the change. He was not necessarily its sole or actual author, but he was the instrument of transformation and perfection [...] In this sense, we have endeavored to obtain information on the life of Joseph [Josef] Knecht, Master of the Glass Bead Game, and especially to collect everything written by himself. We have, moreover obtained several manuscripts we consider worth reading.

Wenn wir trotzdem auf unsrem Versuche bestanden haben, einiges über das Leben des Ludi Magister Josephus III. festzustellen und uns das Bild seiner Persönlichkeit andeutend zu skizzieren, so taten wir es nicht aus Personenkult und aus Ungehorsam gegen die Sitten, wie wir glauben, sondern im Gegenteil nur im Sinne eines Dienstes and der Wahrheit und Wissenschaft [...] Aber ein Blick in die Vorgeschichte eben dieses Geisteslebens, namentlich in die Entwicklung des Glasperlenspieles, zeigt uns unwiderstehlich, daß jede Phase der Entwicklung, jeder Ausbau, jede Änderung, jeder wesentliche Einschnitt, sei er fortschrittlich oder konservativ zu deuten, unweigerlich zwar nicht seinen einzigen und eigentlichen

Urheber, wohl aber sein deutlichstes Gesicht gerade in der Person dessen zeigt, der die Änderung einführte, der zum Instrument der Umformung und Vervollkommnung wurde. [...] In diesem Sinne bemühten wir uns um Nachrichten über das Leben des Glasperlenspielmehsters Josef Knecht, und namentlich um alles von ihm selbst Geschriebene, sind auch mehrerer Handschriften habhaft geworden, die wir für lesenswert halten.²²¹

From this passage, we can see that the biographer applies Castalia's inflexible definition of biography to Knecht's life. Importantly, he claims to enact Castalia's extraction of individual personalities from history: Knecht is 'an instrument of transformation' [*ein Instrument der Umformung*]. Furthermore, he insists that he generates his narration by referencing 'valid' sources and documents, which, once again, flaunts his Castalian methodology. According to the passage, then, the biographer's purpose in telling Knecht's story is to plug a gap in the Castalian timeline; he namely aims to provide a link that explains certain characteristics of the Glass Bead Game. It should now be clear why Josef *Knecht* (literally 'servant') is the name of the novel's protagonist²²² because we can view him as an instrument that provided a significant *service* to his society. Knecht's biographer narrates his life as the cause of an effect, blocking it off into an isolated external occurrence within a chronological list of other external occurrences. The story that Knecht's biographer claims to narrate is a story of Knecht's service to Castalia and the Glass Bead Game, and not the story of his developing personality or, rather, his personal development.

At this point, Castalia's perception of history (and biography as an element of history) is clear. They view history 'mathematically': as a record of occurrences that, once documented, are as solidified as a mathematical formula. Knecht's biographer claims that Knecht's life is one such occurrence, which he thus chronicles from this 'mathematical' perspective. It is now necessary to examine the ways the biographer intentionally

²²¹ (12-14; SW 5, 8-10)

²²² Some critics have pointed out the contrast between Knecht's name and Goethe's Wilhelm Meister (from *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* [1795-96]) because 'Meister' means *master*, and because Goethe's novel is often considered the first German *Bildungsroman*. Joseph Mileck, for example, states that Knecht is passive (i.e. he is a servant) and Wilhelm Meister is proactive (i.e. he is a master). (*Hermann Hesse's "Glasperlenspiel."* University of California Press. Berkeley: 1952). Also see Inge D. Halpert's "Wilhelm Meister and Josef Knecht". *The German Quarterly*. Vol. 34. Issue 1. January 1961. 11-20. Halpert argues that Hesse's depictions of his protagonists' inclinations to 'serve' started as early as *Die Morgenlandfahrt* (1932). Furthermore, in Hans-Joachim Hahn's *Hermann Hesse's Goethe* ("A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." Ed. Ingo Cornils. Camden House. Rochester: 2009. 395-420.), Hahn argues that the parallels between Knecht and Wilhelm Meister may be a mutually held belief between Goethe and Hesse that life follows a series of *Stufenfolgen* ('graduations' or 'steps').

contradicts these Castalian views with subtle irony in order to indicate the Mask in which he enshrouds his narrative. After highlighting this irony, the *Bildungsroman* that the Mask ‘impresses’ will become evident.

5.3.2. Ironic Tensions

Most of the examples of irony I present in this sub-section come from the *Studienjahre* (‘Years of Study’) chapter of the novel because this chapter contains some of the novel’s strongest examples of when the biographer undercuts his superficial claim with his intended meanings. In the *Studienjahre* chapter, the biographer develops a stark tension between an ideal (and naïve) Castalian perception of ‘freedom’ and his own criticism of that perception. He defines and advocates Castalia’s perception of ‘freedom’, then through ironic language, he illustrates how this ‘freedom’ is actually ‘service’. By analysing this narrative technique, it will become clear that the method through which the biographer most frequently generates irony is by pitting various claims against contrary descriptions of those claims. (The discussion of Castalia’s notions of ‘freedom’ and ‘service’ additionally provides important context for a later analysis of Castalia’s dystopian characteristics [Section 5.7] because it demonstrates the ways in which Castalian society restricts individuality.) This sub-section will conclude with a discussion of the chapter’s English translation—‘Years of Freedom’—because this translation suggests that the layers of irony over the biographer’s descriptions of the Castalian’s *Studienjahre* (literally, ‘study years’) is so effective that the novel’s translators have favoured its effect.

Within the following analysis, I will also highlight the ways in which Hesse’s use of humour to generate irony is a development in his writing. I will show that his use of humour is an enactment of certain reflections on the importance of humour we have already seen depicted in *Der Steppenwolf*. It is important to consider this development because it evolves alongside Hesse’s masking techniques and plays an important role in Hesse’s use of the Mask. Once Hesse’s development has been addressed and the novel’s Mask made evident, we can then turn our attention in the following section to the *Bildungsroman* that the Mask simultaneously conceals and reveals.

Most of the irony in the *Studienjahre* chapter pivots on the concept of ‘freedom’. A Castalian’s *Studienjahre* are the years that commence just after his schooling is complete, but, although the chapter title suggests that this period is a continuation of one’s schooling,

the biographer layers the chapter's superficial claim with quixotic depictions of the period as a time of individual pursuits (i.e. a time of 'freedom'):

There is, after all, always something wonderful and touchingly beautiful about a young man, for the first time released from the bonds of schooling, making his first ventures toward the infinite horizons of the mind. At this point he has not yet seen any of his illusions dissipated, or doubted either his own capacity for endless dedication or the boundlessness of the world of thought.

Es ist ja auch immer aufs neue etwas Wunderbares und rührend Schönes um die schweifende Entdeckungs- und Eroberungslust eines Jünglings, der zum erstenmal frei vom Schulzwang sich den unendlichen Horizonten des Geistigen entgegen bewegt, dem noch keine Illusion zerflattert, kein Zweifel weder an der eigenen Fähigkeit zu unendlicher Hingabe, noch an der Unbegrenztheit der geistigen Welt gekommen ist.²²³

The above passage demonstrates the most essential element of the superficial claim found in *Studienjahre*: its glorification of Castalian 'freedom'. In his fashion of emphasising his own Castalian stance, in this passage, the biographer loyally boasts the superiority of Castalians over non-Castalians by pointing out that, when a Castalian is released from the 'bonds of schooling' [*Schulzwang*], he still *chooses* to pursue the 'infinite horizons of the mind' [*unendlichen Horizonten des Geistigen*] and dedicate himself to the 'boundlessness of the world of thought' [*Unbegrenztheit der geistigen Welt*]. His statement carries an important implication: that each Castalian chooses the same path (the admirable path of scholarship). The biographer thus glorifies the intellectual benefits of Castalian 'freedom' and applauds the pragmatic Castalians who (inevitably) engage in these intellectual practices.

The biographer attributes his undoubting faith that all Castalians choose this noble path to the careful guidance that Castalians receive during their schooling:

Were [these years of freedom] not preceded by the psychic hygiene of meditation exercises and the lenient supervision of the Board of Educators, this *freedom* would even be dangerous for such natures and might prove a nemesis to many, as it used to be to innumerable highly gifted young men in the ages before our present education pattern was set, in the pre-Castalian centuries. The universities in those days literally swarmed with young Faustian spirits who embarked with all sails set upon the high seas of learning and academic freedom, and ran aground on all the shoals of untrammelled dilettantism. Faust himself, after all, was the prototype of brilliant amateurishness and its consequent tragedy [my italics].

²²³ (110; SW 5, 96)

[...] ohne die vorangegangene Zucht der Eliteschule, ohne die seelische Hygiene der Meditationsübungen und ohne die mild geübte Kontrolle der Erziehungsbehörde wäre diese *Freiheit* für solche Begabungen eine schwere Gefahr und müßte vielen zum Verhängnis werden, wie sie es in den Zeiten vor unsrer heutigen Ordnung, in den vorkastalischen Jahrhunderten, unzähligen hohen Begabungen gewesen ist. An den Hochschulen jener Vorzeit hat es zu gewissen Zeiten von jungen faustischen Naturen geradezu gewimmelt, welche mit vollen Segeln aufs hohe Meer der Wissenschaften und der akademischen Freiheit fuhren und alle Schiffbrüche eines ungezügelten Dilettantismus erleiden mußten; Faust selber ist ja der Prototyp des genialen Dilettantismus und seiner Tragik [my italics].²²⁴

As this passage shows, the biographer's claimed faith in the Castalian student is equated with faith in the Castalian system. His expression of these patriotic sentiments is not dissimilar to his manner of frequently reminding the reader of the Castalian methodology that shapes the biography he writes. In both cases, one can discern that his writing caters to a patriotic readership. His flattery, however, serves the purpose of beguilement: while his loyalists are likely beaming from this adulation, the biographer has inserted a tinge of irony, which is indiscernible to their distracted gaze. He accomplishes this through the aforementioned technique of creating tension. He contrasts the Castalian notion of 'freedom' with a pre-Castalian one in a manner that *claims* the superiority of one over the other but *illustrates* the contrary. He defines Castalian 'freedom' as a period during which students rigorously continue the same scholarly endeavours that they previously conducted under close guidance. In contrast, he defines the *pre-Castalian's* 'freedom' as a time during which the student pursued personal, capricious fancies (those 'young Faustian spirits' [*jungen faustischen Naturen*]). Importantly, in the former, the admirable Castalian's continuing devotion to his schooling is a result of the Order's well-instituted practice of carefully cultivating its students. In the latter, the lack thereof results in consequent 'tragedy' [*Tragik*].

These are certainly two very different notions of 'freedom', and when we inspect them alongside one another, the biographer's Mask is discernible. The first 'freedom' suggests that the Castalian has internalised the codes of his society so manifestly that his personal endeavours during his time of 'freedom' *will* be scholarly. It is almost as if he has no choice in the matter: meticulously crafted Castalian ideology dictates his decision.

²²⁴ (111; SW 5, 97)

During the pre-Castalian time of ‘freedom’, on the other hand, capricious desires are fair game. The possibilities of how to occupy one’s time are numerous. Through this comparison, it is clear that Castalian ‘freedom’ is more restrictive. However, the biographer layers each perception of ‘freedom’ with strong words in order to *claim* otherwise. For instance, a Castalian’s inevitable decision is a result of ‘lenient supervision’ [*die mild geübte Kontrolle*], while the pre-Castalian’s fate—without such lenient supervision—ends in ‘tragedy’ [*Tragik*]. It is not inherently obvious how exactly a predetermined decision constitutes a ‘freedom’, nor is it obvious how one’s ability to decide one’s own path is ‘tragic’. As we can see, the biographer’s descriptive language labels each respective ‘freedom’ with characteristics contrary to their obvious nature; which ‘freedom’ is ‘better’ is solely dependent on this descriptive language. Thus the biographer’s evocative language is a facet of his superficial claim.

However, his Mask emerges when one removes this descriptive language and examines each ‘freedom’ without it, as we have done. The biographer institutes expressive language that thickly coats this passage with patriotic sentiments, distracting his Castalian cohorts while simultaneously presenting a very unconvincing definition of ‘freedom’ (Castalian) alongside a more convincing one (pre-Castalian). By doing so, he suggests that the Castalian perception of ‘freedom’ is naïve and thus wrong. His grandiloquence masks his intentions, yet the very same grandiloquence (in its absurdity) suggests the falsity of his words: that is, it *conceals and reveals* his meaning. Therefore, the above passage urges the biographer’s more perceptive readers to remove his evocative language and unmask the meaning that lies below.

Most of the biographer’s critique of Castalian ‘freedom’ similarly highlights the extent to which this ‘freedom’ is restrictive. In many comparable instances, he reveres the Castalian over the non-Castalian. For example, in the following passage, he states that ‘worldly’ desires do not tempt the Castalian:

The hierarchy grades the student solely by his qualities of mind and character. On the other hand most of the *freedoms*, temptations, and dangers to which so many talented youths succumb at the secular universities do not exist in Castalia. Not that there is a dearth of danger, passion, and bedazzlement there—how could these elements ever be completely absent from human life? But at least certain opportunities for going off the rails, for disappointment and disaster, have been eliminated. There is no danger of the Castalian student’s becoming a drinker. Nor

can he waste the years of his youth in tomfoolery, or the empty braggadocio of secret societies, as did some generations of students in olden times. Nor is he apt to make the discovery someday that his degree was a mistake, that there are gaps in his preparatory education which can never be filled. The Castalian Order of things *protect* him against such blunders [my italics].

In materieller und geistiger Hinsicht dagegen sind von den *Freiheiten*, Verlockungen und Gefahren, welchen an weltlichen Hochschulen viele Begabte zum Opfer fallen, in Kastalien die meisten nicht vorhanden; es besteht auch hier noch Gefahr, Dämonie und Verblendung genug - wo wäre das Menschendasein von ihnen frei -, aber der kastalische Student ist immerhin manchen Möglichkeiten der Entgleisung, der Enttäuschung und des Untergangs entzogen. Weder kann es ihm geschehen, daß er der Trunksucht verfällt, noch kann er seine Jugendjahre an die renommtischen oder geheimbündlerischen Gepflogenheiten gewisser Studentengenerationen der älteren Zeit verlieren, noch auch kann er eines Tages die Entdeckung machen, daß sein studentisches Reifezeugnis ein Irrtum war, daß er erst im Lauf seiner Studienzeit auf nicht wieder auszufüllende Lücken in seiner Vorbildung stößt; vor diesen Mißständen *schützt* ihn die kastalische Ordnung [my italics].²²⁵

We can once again see the biographer's technique of stating one idea while simultaneously coating it with contrary descriptions in order to create a tension. Much like his contrast of pre-Castalian and Castalian 'freedom', in this passage he contrasts the notion of *secular* 'freedom' with Castalian 'freedom'. He places secular 'freedom' into a category of negative phenomena, alongside 'temptations' and 'dangers' [*Verlockungen* and *Gefahren*]. However, he uses the same word—freedom [*Freiheit*—when he speaks of both notions of 'freedom'. He does not state that this 'freedom' is merely a secular *perception* of 'freedom', though; he instead labels the secular student's opportunism as definitive 'freedom'. This ambiguous use of the word prompts the reader to look for contradictions.

One notable contradiction is that the absence of opportunities—which, in this case, are very tactfully labelled as 'freedoms'—would normally constitute a restriction. Nonetheless, the biographer posits that the Castalian will not waste his 'free' years pursuing such unguided desires. In other words, since secular 'freedoms' do not come pre-packaged with Castalia's strict training, they are unrestricted and are therefore dangerous. As the biographer claims, Castalia thus *eliminates* these *opportunities*. The elimination of opportunities is certainly a restriction: a direct contrast of freedom. However, from the above passage, one can discern a (naïve) Castalian ideal that the removal of opportunities

²²⁵ (111; SW 5, 97-98)

somehow displaces desire: or as the passage puts it, this removal ‘protects’ him [*schützt ihn*] from such desires. Another way to put it, though, is that Castalia boasts of how it ‘frees’ its citizens from making the wrong choices. During his years of ‘freedom’, the Castalian will not choose to engage in distracting behaviour, such as drinking, because this choice is simply not available to him.

The irony in this passage is evident on its own: the elimination of a personal choice is the elimination of a personal freedom (i.e. it is a restriction). But the biographer further draws our attention to this irony by, once again, using strong, descriptive language to layer a thick claim over a subtle suggestion. First, he labels the secular right of choice as a ‘freedom’ but equates this ‘freedom’ with ‘danger’ and ‘temptation’. Second, he claims that Castalia removes these ‘dangers’ and ‘temptations’ from its society. Thus, without directly stating it, the biographer suggests that Castalia also removes certain ‘freedoms’ from its society. Importantly, the biographer situates this suggestion (i.e. this ironic claim) within a section that defines the Castalian student’s ‘freedoms’. In other words, within a passage meant to discuss Castalia’s ‘freedom’, he both labels secular ‘freedoms’ as such and draws attention to the removal of these ‘freedoms’ from Castalian society. The contradiction is unmistakable, and the Mask is once again apparent.

Other ‘temptations’ removed from Castalia are the temptations of love, marriage, and sexual promiscuity:

The danger of wasting himself on women or on losing himself in sports is also minimal. As far as women are concerned, the Castalian student is not subject to the temptations and dangers of marriage, nor is he oppressed by the prudery of a good many past eras which imposed continence on students or else made them turn to more or less venal and sluttish women. [...] Since the Castalian has no money and virtually no property, he also cannot purchase love. [...] The young men, for their part, are not interested in birth and fortune, are prone to grant at least equal importance to mental and emotional capacities, are usually endowed with imagination and humor and, since they have no money, must make their repayment by giving more of themselves than others would. In Castalia, the sweetheart of a student does not ask herself: will he marry me? She knows he will not. Actually, there have been occasions when he did; every so often an elite student would return to the world by way of marriage, giving up Castalia and membership in the Order. But these few, rare cases of apostasy in the history of the schools and of the Order amount to little more than a curiosity.

Auch die Gefahr, sich an Frauen oder an sportliche Exzesse zu verschwenden, ist nicht eben groß. Was die Frauen betrifft, so kennt der kastalische Student weder die

Ehe mit ihren Verlockungen und Gefahren, noch kennt er die Prüderie mancher vergangenen Epoche, welche den Studenten entweder zu geschlechtlicher Askese zwang oder ihn auf mehr oder weniger käufliche und dirnenhafte Weiber anwies. [...] Da es für den Kastalier kein Geld und so gut wie kein Eigentum gibt, existiert auch die Käuflichkeit der Liebe nicht. [...] er fragt nicht nach Herkunft und Vermögen, ist gewohnt, geistige Fähigkeiten den vitalen mindestens gleichzustellen, hat meistens Phantasie und Humor und muß, da er kein Geld hat, mehr als andre mit dem Einsatz seiner selbst bezahlen. Die Studentenliebste in Kastalien kennt die Frage nicht: wird er mich heiraten? Nein, er wird sie nicht heiraten. Zwar ist tatsächlich auch dies schon geschehen; es hat sich je und je der seltene Fall ereignet, daß ein Elitestudent auf dem Weg der Heirat in die bürgerliche Welt zurückkehrte, unter Verzicht auf Kastalien und die Zugehörigkeit zum Orden. Doch spielen diese paar Fälle von Abtrünnigwerden in der Geschichte der Schulen und des Ordens kaum eine andre Rolle als die einer Kuriosität.²²⁶

Again the biographer loads his claims with terminology meant to distract his Castalian readers. His apparent two favourite terms—‘temptation’ and ‘danger’ [*Verlockungen* and *Gefahren*]²²⁶—stand in place of more positive descriptions of ‘freedom’, such as ‘opportunity’ [*Möglichkeit*] or ‘ability’ [*Fähigkeit*]. In this case, the notions of love and marriage are labelled oppressive and dangerous. They are dangerous because they distract the Castalian from his liberty to ‘choose’ the path of scholarship. However, the Castalian Order ‘protects’ the Castalian from these distractions, again, through the process of removal: they remove both money and private property from Castalia, eliminating the option to marry and, furthermore, the alternative option of satisfying sexual urges with prostitutes. Maintaining his patriotic position, the biographer also asserts that, as a result of these removals (or, rather, these *restrictions*), the Castalian does not desire love or marriage. Not only does this mirror the above-discussed implication that all Castalians will undoubtedly make the same decisions, but it also reiterates the implication that removing possibilities equally eliminates desire. As previously established, this implication carries a strong tinge of irony. Therefore, the confidence the biographer expresses that the Castalian *always* chooses the same path ironically suggests that his confidence depends, rather, on his certainty that the Castalian’s options are limited to only one path. That is to say, in this passage, the biographer implies that the Castalian’s ‘choices’ are dictated by his restrictions.

Additionally, this passage incorporates a very significant theme of the novel—that of ‘service’—which demands some attention here because it is an important theme in my

²²⁶ (112; SW 5, 98)

later analysis of Knecht's fictional Lives [*Lebensläufe*]. In the passage, the biographer asserts that the Castalian will undoubtedly choose to wholeheartedly devote himself to his society: 'since they have no money, they make their repayment by giving more of themselves than others would' [*da er kein Geld hat, mehr als andre mit dem Einsatz seiner selbst bezahlen*]. This statement generates a firm tension. On the one hand, the biographer states that the Castalian has a restriction: no money. On the other hand, he asserts that they make a *choice to serve* as a result of this restriction. Moreover, this choice is a 'repayment' [*bezahlen*], which results from the Castalian's recognition of his 'duty' [*Einsatz*]. The biographer's expressed certainty that the Castalian will make this repayment to Castalia results, yet again, from the limitations of the Castalian's choices. His service to society, then, is another result of his lack of options.

Another layer of irony that is evident in this passage is the biographer's deviation from his claimed Castalian methodology: he provides an interpretation of a historical occurrence. He claims that Castalians never fall in love and leave Castalia to marry except in a few very rare cases. Furthermore, he states that these rare cases 'amount to little more than a curiosity' [*kaum eine andre Rolle als die einer Kuriosität*]. This statement is, superficially, meant to reassert the superiority of a Castalian by classifying these susceptibilities to love as intellectual curiosities. It reminds the reader that the Castalian is never a deviant from the Castalian 'order of things'. Behind this superficial claim, though, one can see a hidden gesture. The biographer interprets these events and applies meaning to them. In this case, he supplies his opinion of what the internal causes of these external occurrences are. This example sings Castalia's praises at the same time that it deviates from its 'mathematical' perception of history. Once again, the biographer makes a direct claim while he illustrates an alternative meaning. If one questions the biographer's deviation from his Castalian methodology, as the irony of this gesture urges one to do, his intended meaning emerges from behind his superficial claim, which, in this case, is a display of a non-mathematical historical interpretation.

The absence of love and sexual opportunity in Castalia provides further material for the biographer's critique of Castalian 'freedom'. In place of romance, he claims, Castalia grants its citizens a plethora of scholarly options during his time of 'freedom':

For young men of versatile talents—and Knecht was one of these—the scope thus allowed him is wonderfully enticing and a source of continual delight. The authorities permit such students, if they do not drift into sheer idleness, almost *paradisiacal freedom*. The student may dabble in all sorts of fields, combine the widest variety of subjects, fall in love with six or eight disciplines simultaneously, or confine himself to a narrower selection from the beginning. Aside from observing the general rules of morality that apply to the whole Province and the Order, nothing is asked of him except presentation once a year of the record of the lectures he has attended, the books he has read, and the research he has undertaken at the various institutes. His performance comes in closer check only when he attends technical courses and seminars, including courses in the Glass Bead Game and the Conservatory of Music. Here every student has to take the official examinations and write the paper or do the work required by the head of the seminar, as is only natural. But no one forces him to take such courses. For semesters or for years he may, if he pleases, merely make use of the libraries and listen to lectures. [...] Aside from good moral conduct, nothing is required of them except the composition of a “Life” every year [my italics].

Für die vielseitig Begabten und Interessierten—und zu ihnen gehörte Knecht—haben die paar ersten Studienjahre durch diese sehr *weitgehende Freiheit* etwas wunderbar Verlockendes und Entzückendes. Gerade diesen vielseitig Interessierten läßt die Behörde, wenn sie nicht etwa geradezu ins Bummeln geraten, eine beinahe *paradiesische Freiheit*; der Schüler mag nach Belieben sich in allen Wissenschaften umsehen, die verschiedensten Studiengebiete miteinander vermischen, sich in sechs oder acht Wissenschaften gleichzeitig verlieben oder von Anfang an sich an eine engere Auswahl halten; außer der Innehaltung der allgemeinen, für Provinz und Orden geltenden moralischen Lebensregeln wird nichts von ihm verlangt als jährlich einmal der Ausweis über die von ihm gehörten Vorlesungen, über seiner Lektüre und seine Arbeit in Instituten. Die genauere Kontrolle und Prüfung seiner Leistungen beginnt erst dort, wo er fachwissenschaftliche Kurse und Seminare besucht, zu welchen auch die Glasperlenspiels und der Musikhochschule gehören; hier freilich hat jeder Studierende sich den offiziellen Prüfungen zu stellen und die vom Seminarleiter verlangten Arbeiten zu leisten, wie es sich von selbst versteht. Aber niemand zwingt ihn in diese Kurse, er kann semesterlang und jahrelang nach Belieben auch nur in den Bibliotheken sitzen und Vorlesungen hören. [...] Es wird von ihnen, außer dem moralischen Wohlverhalten, nichts an Leistung verlangt als jedes Jahr die Abfassung eines ‘Lebenslaufes’ [my italics].²²⁷

This passage is significant not only because it is another example of the novel’s Mask, but also because it is the most humorous passage I have provided so far. It is necessary to highlight the use of humour here because it is a development in Hesse’s employment of humour since *Der Steppenwolf*. To perceive this, we must, of course, closely examine the biographer’s descriptive language.

²²⁷ (112-13; SW 5, 99)

The first of the passage's many tensions arises from the biographer's expressive praises of Castalia's 'leniency': during the Castalian's *Studienjahre*, the Castalian authorities must 'permit' [*läßt die Behörde*] the Castalian his 'paradisiacal freedom' [*paradiesische Freiheit*]. The tensions within this claim are unmistakable. The Castalian's 'paradisiacal freedom' is granted by an authority. We can compare this to earlier descriptions of secular 'freedom'. Secular students *enter* a time of 'freedom'; Castalian students are *permitted* certain 'freedoms'. Nonetheless, the biographer qualifies the limited selection of 'freedoms' that the Castalian Order allots the Castalian as 'paradisiacal'. This description is therefore a carefully designed contradiction. Furthermore, during this permitted time of 'paradisiacal freedom', the Order only *requires* a few things: that a student observe Castalia's rules of morality, and that he presents an annual record of all his attended lectures, books he has read, and research he has undertaken at various institutes; furthermore, if he attends seminars, he takes an exam; and, as an apparent afterthought, the biographer also states that the Castalian must compose a 'Life' [*Lebenslauf*] each year during his permitted 'freedom'. This extensive list of requirements hardly describes 'paradisiacal freedom'. The biographer thus clearly supplements his direct claim with a description of its very opposite, and in this case, the exaggeration of this description highlights his wit.

Second—and this is where the humour shines most—this 'paradisiacal freedom' allows the Castalian to 'dabble' in many fields or 'fall in love with six or eight disciplines simultaneously' [*der Schüler mag (...) sich in sechs oder acht Wissenschaften gleichzeitig verlieben*]. Alternatively, he can 'confine himself' to a more limited selection from the start [*an sich an eine engere Auswahl halten*]. The language selected for this passage serves a deliberately ironic purpose: to suggest that scholarship replaces both love and sex. Phrasings such as 'fall in love' [*verlieben*], 'confine himself', and 'dabble' [*umsehen*] carry connotations of both romance and promiscuity. One does not necessarily need linguistic tensions to see the irony present in these claims, though. The sheer hilarity of claiming that a young man would prefer falling in love with multiple subjects over multiple partners is evidence enough. To better illustrate nonetheless, we can compare the Castalian's 'intellectual promiscuity' to the overt sexual promiscuity of a character such as Goldmund in Hesse's *Narziss und Goldmund*. In this novel, Goldmund leaves the abbey in which he

lives and aimlessly travels around the countryside for the mere sake of life experience. During this time of freedom, Goldmund dabbles in various activities, such as sculpting; but, more importantly, he also falls in love and has affairs with many women, sometimes more than one at the same time. Through this comparison with *Narziß und Goldmund*, the ‘freedoms’ to which the Castalian is confined reveal themselves as less plausibly appealing to young men recently released from the ‘bonds of schooling’. Again, though, we do not necessarily need the context of Hesse’s corpus to see this. The humour of the biographer’s claims ‘impresses’ this meaning.

Now that we can see the significant role of humour in the production of the novel’s irony, it is useful to devote some space to understanding how this use of humour is a development on Hesse’s part. This development is a response to musings upon humour seen in *Der Steppenwolf*, and it is crucial for this chapter because, in *Das Glasperlenspiel*, these musings have developed into a tool that Hesse actively employs in the construction of the novel’s Mask.

5.3.2.1. ‘Einmal würde ich das Lachen lernen’

In order to ascertain how the humour employed in *Das Glasperlenspiel* is a development, it is necessary to first briefly recall how *Der Steppenwolf* enacts the theme. As noted by eminent Hesse scholars like Martin Swales, humour is a significant theme in *Der Steppenwolf*.²²⁸ The novel depicts laughter as a virtuous and necessary act that will allow the cantankerous Haller to discern the externalities that define him. Throughout the novel, the ‘Treatise on the Steppenwolf’ and the secondary characters Hermine, Pablo, and Mozart attempt to communicate the importance of learning this ability to Haller. In *Der Steppenwolf*, the ‘Treatise of the Steppenwolf’ best lays the foundation for the novel’s numerous musings upon humour:

[Those who] remain in the fold and from whose talents the bourgeoisie reaps much, have a third kingdom left open to them, humour. [...] In its imaginary realm the intricate and many-faceted ideal of all Steppenwolves finds its realisation. Here it is possible not only to extol the saint and the profligate in one breath and to make the poles meet, but to include the bourgeois, too, in the same affirmation. [...] Humour

²²⁸ See: Swales, Martin. *Der Steppenwolf*. “A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse” (2009). Some other works that speak of the novel’s humour are: Mileck, Joseph. *Hermann Hesse: Life and Art* (1978). Boulby, Mark. *Hermann Hesse: His Mind and Art* (1967). Kahl, Julia. *Die Reflexion von Identität in Hermann Hesses “Steppenwolf”* (2003).

alone, that magnificent discovery of those who are cut short in their calling to highest endeavour, those who falling short of tragedy are yet as rich in fights as in affliction, humour alone (perhaps the most inborn and brilliant achievement of the spirit) attains to the impossible and brings every aspect of human existence within the rays of its prism. To live in the world as though it were not the world, to respect the law and yet to stand above it, to have possessions as though “one possessed nothing,” to renounce as though it were no renunciation, all these favourite and often formulated propositions of an exalted worldly wisdom, it is in the power of humour alone to make efficacious.

[...] den Gebundenbleibenden, deren Talenten oft das Bürgertum große Ehren zollt, ihnen steht ein drittes Reich offen, eine imaginäre, aber souveräne Welt: der Humor. In seiner imaginären Sphäre wird das verzwickte, vielspältige Ideal aller Steppenwölfe verwirklicht: hier ist es möglich, nicht nur gleichzeitig den Heiligen und den Wüstling zu bejahren, die Pole zueinander zu biegen, sondern auch noch den Bürger in die Bejahung einzubeziehen. [...] Einzig der Humor, die herrliche Erfindung der in ihrer Berufung zum Größten Gehemnten, der beinahe Tragischen, der höchstbegabten Unglücklichen, einzig der Humor (vielleicht die eigenste und genialste Leistung des Menschentums) vollbringt dies Unmögliche, überzieht und vereinigt alle Bezirke des Menschenwesens mit den Strahlungen seiner Prismen. In der Welt zu leben, als sei es nicht die Welt, das Gesetz zu achten und doch über ihm zu stehen, zu besitzen, “als besäße man nicht”, zu verzichten, als sei es kein Verzicht – alle diese beliebten und oft formulierten Forderungen einer hohen Lebensweisheit ist einzig der Humor zu verwirklichen fähig.²²⁹

This passage suggests that Haller’s stunted individuation is a result of his lack of humour. He takes the world too seriously, and as a result, his own development suffers. However, he perceives his deep depression and constant dissatisfaction as an outcome of his disgust with society. For example, Haller perceives that modern technology, such as radios, destroy authenticity through mechanical reproduction; mass media perpetually drivels asinine information for the sake of entertainment; jazz music is impulsive and is thus an insult to the careful crafting of masters like Mozart; and the widespread appreciation of this desultory music destroys the ‘high culture’ that Haller embraces, etc. One way to view Haller’s disgust is that the culture to which he belongs is the Age of the Feuilleton, the degraded culture out of which Castalia spawns as an alternative community in *Das Glasperlenspiel*. In a sense, Castalia is Haller’s utopian ideal. It is a society that eliminates the inane elements of modern culture in the name of an idealised perfection.

²²⁹ (62-63; SW 4, 57-58)

Haller has no Castalia, though, and his personal depression thus results from his ambivalent desire to belong to a culture he despises: the Age of the Feuilleton. In response, he passionately embraces his own preferences and grows disheartened over external factors beyond his control. Therefore, ‘The Treatise’, Mozart, Hermine, and Pablo all urge Haller to laugh, rather than grimace, at the absurdities he observes in this Age of the Feuilleton. The novel suggests that, by doing so, Haller can release his embrace of his idealistic Self within his ideal community. In other words, if he could recognise the *humour* of his surroundings, he could recognise the absence of internality and release his tight grip on ‘truth’. Alternatively, as the passage puts it, he could ‘live in the world as though it were not the world’ [*In der Welt zu leben, als sei es nicht die Welt*] through laughter.

Haller’s masking technique has already been demonstrated, and it has already been established that the ‘Treatise’, Mozart, Hermine, and Pablo’s words within Haller’s manuscript are Haller’s own projections. This provides insight into one of the concluding statements of his manuscript: ‘One day I would learn how to laugh’ [*Einmal würde ich das Lachen lernen*].²³⁰ As the next to last line in the novel, this proclamation emphasises the importance of humour in *Der Steppenwolf*. It acknowledges that Haller has learned this importance, but it also depicts that, even by the novel’s end, he has yet to develop the ability to laugh.

In *Das Glasperlenspiel*, however, the biographer/narrator both understands this importance and possesses the ability to laugh. This is clear through the above-cited depiction of the ‘paradisiacal freedom’ that permits the Castalian his intellectual promiscuity. Most importantly, though, the biographer employs this ability to a satirical effect. He not only possesses the ability to laugh at the absurdities of his own society, but he also puts this ability to use in critiquing those absurdities. This significant development in Hesse’s writing is important for this study because his earlier depictions of the crucial characteristics of humour are now a facet of the Mask he designs. The Mask of Fiction in *Der Steppenwolf* does not contain humour as a narrative device; the novel merely reflects upon humour thematically. But in *Das Glasperlenspiel*, these reflections have developed into a crucial element of the novel’s Mask.

²³⁰ (248; SW 4, 203)

Hesse's friend and fellow writer Thomas Mann quickly ascertained the purpose of the novel's humour when he read it, and he perceived its role in Hesse's narrative technique. He even believed that the novel's humorous irony was so effective that Hesse's own readership would overlook the intended effect of his Mask. After Hesse sent Mann a copy of the novel's first edition, Mann later wrote to Hesse and stated that he could sense how the serious themes of Hesse's novel were layered with irony that enshrouds them in an 'artful, mischievous joke' [*Kunstspäß voller Verschmitztheit*].²³¹ Based on this observation, Mann deemed the novel a 'parody of biography and scholarship [(eine) Parodie des Biographischen und der gravitatischen Forscher-Attitüde ist]. However, he also told Hesse, 'but people won't dare laugh, and you will be secretly irritated by their earnest respect' [*Die Leute werden nicht zu lachen wagen, und Sie werden sich heimlich ärgern über ihren stockernsten Respekt*].²³² What Mann meant by this was that Hesse's readership would pay such close attention to the *claim* of the novel that they would unfortunately miss the effect of Hesse's narrative technique; they would overlook its intended meaning and not perceive the Mask.

The scholar Sidney M. Johnson's interpretation of the Castalian's 'Years of Freedom' confirms Mann's prediction. In his essay on the Lives, Johnson states that, during Castalians' 'years of freedom' they:

are left completely to themselves and can pursue their intellectual interests at any of the various institutes, laboratories, and archives of the province. The *only* restriction placed on their activity is the requirement of composing each year a fictitious autobiography in which they portray themselves as an imaginary person [...] [my italics].²³³

Johnson clearly overlooks the irony that Mann detects; and, as Mann foresaw, many readers would do this. Mann did not necessarily perceive the novel's narrative construction as a Nietzschean Mask, *per se*; however, he certainly understood that the claims the biographer makes are only one side of the novel's content and that *behind* these claims lay an alternative meaning.

²³¹ 8 April 1945. *Hermann Hesse - Thomas Mann: Briefwechsel*. Suhrkamp Verlag. Frankfurt am Main: 1968. (p. 104).

²³² Ibid.

²³³ *The Autobiographies in Hermann Hesse's Glasperlenspiel*. ("The German Quarterly." Vol. 29. Issue 3. May 1956.) (p. 160-161).

In light of Mann's contention, it is unsurprising that Richard and Clara Winston have translated *Studienjahre* as 'Years of Freedom' because this translation underscores the effectiveness of the novel's Mask. In order to understand how it achieves this effect, an examination of the chapter's original German title is necessary. The original German alludes to the chapter's irony through a communicative exchange between the chapter's title and its content; this interplay creates a double-sided ironic tension that comments on itself. To grasp this, we can first consider the three contradicting meanings that the chapter conveys: (1) the title superficially claims that the chapter is about a student's 'years of study'; (2) the actual content of the chapter superficially depicts these years of study as 'years of freedom'; (3) these superficial depictions of the 'years of freedom' are undercut by irony that suggests these years are, in fact, the very opposite of 'freedom'. The first tension arises from the chapter title's superficial claim and the chapter content's superficial claim. That is, on the surface of the Mask, the chapter's superficial content does not reflect the claim of its title: the title claims that the chapter is about 'years of study' while its content depicts 'years of freedom'.

However, a second tension arises once the superficial layer of the Mask is removed from the chapter's content. This tension results from the irony previously demonstrated. Thus, as stated above, the chapter's title itself is the first hint of the chapter's ubiquitous irony. It serves as a direct indication of the irony to follow because, as already shown, the Castalian's 'years of freedom' are, in fact, 'years of study'. The novel's first English translator, Mervyn Savill, translated the title of the novel as *Magister Ludi* and the *Studienjahre* chapter as 'Apprenticeship'.²³⁴ This chapter title (much like Ziolkowski observes with Savill's translation of the whole novel's title [see this chapter's introduction]) emphasises the *Bildung* that the Castalian is purported to accrue during this period. Furthermore, it is almost certainly an allusion to Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*). Savill's translation thus promotes reading the novel as a *Bildungsroman*, and it shows that he favours the biographer's ironic intentions over his superficial claim.

However, the Winstons' translation of *Studienjahre* as 'Years of Freedom' clearly favours the superficial claim of the chapter's content over its ironic intentions. I do not

²³⁴ *Magister Ludi*. Translated by Mervyn Savill. Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. New York: 1949.

venture to speculate over whether or not the Winstons overlooked the chapter's irony (as Mann said, 'people will not dare to laugh'). But it is clear that, with this translation they intend to highlight the chapter's superficial claim. Doing so does not necessarily dampen the ironic effect, though, because the irony in the translation of the chapter's content is still evident; therefore, this translation also still indicates that these 'years of freedom' are not what the biographer claims they are. What is most important about this translation, however, is that it demonstrates the effectiveness of the chapter's irony. It shows that the Winstons chose to replace *Studienjahre*—which generates a dual-sided ironic tension and draws attention to the irony in the chapter—with a translation that instead emphasises the chapter's superficial claim. In other words, the Winstons' translation emphasises the Mask's outer layer. The purposeful tension between the German title and the chapter's content is stark; but the Winstons' translation eliminates this tension. Whatever the Winstons' intentions in eliminating this tension may have been is difficult to say; but in any case, the influence of the Mask on their translation is evident.

In this section, I have demonstrated how the irony in *Das Glasperlenspiel* functions as a more effective frame than the editor's introduction in *Der Steppenwolf* because it at once generates *and* frames the novel's Mask. I have further illustrated the biographer's use of this Mask to critique Castalian society and its notion of 'freedom'. I have also highlighted the development of humour and its significant role in the novel. And, finally, the effectiveness of the novel's Mask has been demonstrated through Richard and Clara Winstons' English translation of *Studienjahre*. Now that the novel's Mask is visible and its concealing/revealing properties made clear, the *Bildungsroman* that it also conceals and reveals can be brought to light. The following section provides this demonstration.

5.4 The Intended Meaning: The *Bildungsroman*

With the parameters of the Mask in sight, it is possible to illuminate its primary function: to simultaneously conceal and reveal a *Bildungsroman* of Knecht's life. As previously mentioned, the novel is not always read as a traditional *Bildungsroman* (see chapter introduction). In this section, though, I demonstrate that this perspective results from acknowledging only the surface—i.e. the superficial claim—of the novel's Mask.

Beneath the surface, the Mask ‘impresses’ the biographer’s display of his own fascination with Knecht’s life and makes apparent the self-development that both he and Knecht value.

One of the novel’s strongest indications of this shared value is the importance the biographer grants Knecht’s three Lives [*Lebensläufe*] as Masks of Fiction. The biographer conceals this personal perspective behind a Castalian one, claiming that the tradition of composing these Lives in Castalia is an exercise of intellect and that its self-exploratory potential is minimal. However, through the same masking technique demonstrated above, the biographer ‘impresses’ the personal value that he places on the Lives as vehicles of self-expression. One of the most important values ‘impressed’ through Knecht’s Lives is his awareness of the externality of the Self. The following sub-sections will illuminate these effects of the Mask. Once these are demonstrated, Section 5.5 will then illuminate the biographer’s own masked alignment with the self-perception Knecht formulates in his Lives. It will demonstrate how the biographer’s frequent illustrations to Knecht’s ‘awakenings’ [*Erwachen*] reveals that his *Bildungsroman* serves to chronicle Knecht’s increasing acceptance of the externality of the Self.

5.4.1 The Three Lives: Masks as the Transitory Garb of an Entelechy

It has been shown that, during a Castalian’s *Studienjahre*, the Order grants him the ‘freedom’ to produce various fictional compositions through which he envisions himself in different historical periods from different geographical locations. These compositions are known as his ‘Lives’ [*Lebensläufe*]. The biographer claims that this is a ‘much-mocked custom’ [*oft bespöttelte Sitte*]²³⁵ because the Order views creative literature as a merely playful exercise and thus deems it insignificant to scholarship. Nonetheless, the Order still ‘allows’ the Castalian (or *requires* him, as the Mask indicates) to compose Lives during his *Studienjahre*. According to the biographer, though, this practice is continued, not for the purpose of individual creative expression, but instead as an exercise that allows the Castalian to develop an understanding of a given historical period. He makes this clear through ironic jests at the Castalian perception of the Lives. The following passage demonstrates one such instance:

[A student’s Life] was to be a fictitious autobiography set in any period of the past the writer chose. The student’s assignment was to transpose himself back to the surroundings, culture, and intellectual climate of any earlier era and to imagine

²³⁵ (113; SW 5, 99)

himself living a suitable life in that period. Depending on the times and the fashion, imperial Rome, seventeenth-century France, or fifteenth-century Italy might be the period most favored, or Periclean Athens or Austria in the time of Mozart. [...] [I]t was a game in the imaginative faculties, to conceive of oneself in different conditions and surroundings. In writing such Lives students made a stab at a cautious penetration of past cultures, times, and countries, just as they did in many seminars on stylistics, and in the Glass Bead Game as well. They learned to regard their own persons as *masks, as the transitory garb of an entelechy*. The custom of writing such Lives had its charm, and a good many solid benefits as well, or it probably would not have endured for so long [...] Although serious, creative literary work had been frowned on for generations, and replaced partly by scholarship, partly by the Glass Bead Game, youth's artistic impulse had not been crushed. [...] What is more, while writing these Lives some of the authors took their first steps into the land of self-knowledge. [...] In addition, these Lives were extremely revealing to the teachers during those periods in which the students enjoyed maximum freedom and were subject to no close supervision. The compositions often provided astonishingly clear insight into the intellectual and moral state of the authors [my italics].

[...] das heißt einer fiktiven, in eine beliebige Zeit zurückverlegten Selbstbiographie. Der Schüler hatte die Aufgabe, sich in eine Umgebung und Kultur, in das geistige Klima irgendeiner frühern Epoche zurückzusetzen und sich darin eine ihm entsprechende Existenz auszudenken; je nach Zeit und Mode war das kaiserliche Rom, das Frankreich des siebzehnten oder das Italien des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts, das perikleische Athen oder das Österreich der Mozartzeit bevorzugt [...] es war eine Übung, ein Spiel der Imaginationskräfte, sich das eigene Ich in veränderten Lagen und Umgebungen vorzustellen. Man übte sich dabei, so wie man es in vielen stilkritischen Seminaren und so oft auch im Glasperlenspiel tat, im behutsamen Eindringen in vergangene Kulturen, Zeiten und Länder, lernte seine Eigene Person als *Maske, als vergängliches Kleid einer Entelechie betrachten*. Die Sitte, solche Lebensläufe zu schreiben, hatte ihren Reiz und hatte manche Vorzüge, sie hätte sich sonst wohl auch nicht so lange erhalten. [...] War auch seit Generationen das eigentliche, ernsthafte Dichten verpönt und teils durch die Wissenschaften, teils durch das Glasperlenspiel ersetzt, so war doch der Künstler- und Gestaltungstrieb des Jugendalters nicht erledigt [...] Auch mochte mancher Verfasser dabei die ersten Schritte ins Land der Selbserkenntnis tun. [...] Außerdem aber waren diese Aufsätze für die Lehrer gerade während der Zeit, in welcher die Studierenden die größte Freiheit genossen und keiner genauen Kontrolle unterlagen, sehr aufschlußreich und gaben ihnen über das geistige und moralische Leben und Befinden der Verfasser oft überraschend deutliche Auskunft [my italics].²³⁶

This description of the Lives generates multiple narrative tensions that arise through contrasting claims. First, the biographer pits two explanations of the Lives and their benefits against one another. He emphasises their intellectual value as a means of

²³⁶ (113-15; SW 5, 100-101)

understanding a historical period, on the one hand (their purpose is to penetrate ‘past cultures, times, and countries’ [*in veränderten Lagen und Umgebungen vorzustellen*]); but, on the other, he suggests that they also contain value as tools of self-exploration (they function as ‘masks, as a transitory garb of an entelechy’ [*Maske, als vergängliches Kleid einer Entelechie betrachten*]). There is clearly a key word in this latter claim: he specifically describes the Lives as ‘masks’ [*Maske*], which emphasises the externality of the Castalian student’s ‘entelechy’. This description is contradictory to the Castalian perception of creative fiction previously discussed, and it is a crucial facet of the biographer’s intended meaning. I further expound upon this specific description in the following sub-section, in which I argue that Knecht’s Lives are Masks of Fiction in the same vein as Haller’s manuscript; but in order to do so, the multiple tensions within the above passage first require untangling.

The second tension in this passage arises through the biographer’s claim that, although the Castalian Order mocks this practice, they maintain it as a way of appeasing youthful creative drives. In other words, the Castalian Order allows the compositions to continue in order to *expunge* youth’s creative urges. By openly mocking the practice in this way, the Order trivialises creativity and stamps it with immaturity, thus labelling it a social taboo for Castalian adults.

These claims and the tensions they generate are direct. The biographer states them in plain view—on the surface of the Mask—which indicates that he has no need to mask the message that they convey. It is thus the Castalian Order themselves—and not the biographer—that has generated these two particular tensions. However, they have done so with a motive: they ‘allow’ students to compose Lives as an outlet for creative expression and self-exploration; but they also indoctrinate the notion that this creative practice is merely playful and will one day be outgrown. This superficial tension simultaneously promotes and trivializes the Lives. The motive is clear: the Castalian student is expected to shun creativity in his adulthood. This raises two significant questions: why does the Castalian Order generate this tension? Why not just directly trivialise creativity and abolish the Lives altogether?

From below the surface of the Mask, the biographer generates another tension to answer these questions. His descriptions of the Lives ironically suggest that the Lives serve

another purpose entirely: to bar the Castalian youth's creative capacity and stunt their imagination altogether and, crucially, to do so under the banner of Castalian 'freedom'. He indicates that the Order retains the composition of the Lives in order to create an *appearance* that they encourage youthful creativity and self-discovery when, in fact, they maintain the practice as a means of indoctrinating a Castalian definition of 'creativity' that eliminates self-discovery and self-expression entirely. This act of indoctrinating their own definition of 'creativity' is a similar practice to their indoctrination of 'freedom'. The Order thus intrinsically manifests this ideology and further limits the Castalian's individuality in the name of promoting it. To better discern this fact, Castalia's brand of 'creativity' requires further analysis.

The biographer explicitly states that the Castalian Order openly frowns upon creative fiction and mocks the exercise of composing Lives: 'creative literary work had been frowned on for generations' [*seit Generationen das eigentliche, ernsthafte Dichten verpönt*]. Although the Order frowns upon this practice, they also recognise youth's artistic impulses, as indicated by their continued allowance of the Lives' composition. This apparent contradiction indicates that the Order maintains the practice of composing Lives in order to create an appearance that Castalian youth have the 'freedom' to exercise these impulses. While the biographer *claims* that these Lives permit students to step into the land of 'self-knowledge' [*Selbsterkenntnis*], he *describes* the Lives' nature in a manner that indicates definite limitations on how much 'self-knowledge' the students can gain through their compositions. He describes them as 'cautious penetrations' [*behutsamen Eindringen*] of various historical periods; furthermore, he indicates that the student's role in composing the Lives is to envision a chosen period and sketch the details of it accurately. In other words, he describes the exercise as a playful research project (i.e. it is a scholarly assignment), and the very specific parameters of this assignment minimise the amount of creative expression the Castalian is permitted. The biographer's description thus implies that the Castalian Order defines its own brand of 'creativity' in much the same way that they establish their own definition of 'freedom'. They repackage 'creativity' as a pedagogical exercise that places limits on the Castalian's imagination: Castalian youth are encouraged to utilise their imagination to describe historical realities and *not* fictions. By this definition, the student's imaginative faculties can only extend to realistic measures. He

can only fictionally portray himself within the context of a historical reality, which is certainly a limitation on *how much* creativity he can exercise through his Lives. As we can see, then, the biographer states that the Lives are ‘creative’ exercises but describes them contrarily. He thus generates yet another ironic tension that subtly critiques Castalia. He strengthens this irony in his characteristic patriotic fashion by assuring his reader that this exercise in creativity does not contradict Castalian values:

Furthermore, from the pedagogic point of view the Lives were not a bad idea at all. They provided a legitimate channel for the creative urge of youth.

Des weiteren waren die Lebensläufe, pädagogisch kein schlechter Gedanke, ein legitimer Kanal für das dichterische Bedürfnis des jugendlichen Alters.²³⁷

This passage makes two important ironic suggestions about creativity. First, by labelling the Lives a ‘legitimate channel’ [*legitimer Kanal*] for creative expression, the biographer draws attention to the fact that there are also *non-approved* channels of creative expression. He thus masks a suggestion that the Order only approves this exercise as an outlet of creative expression because it allows them a certain amount of control over the student’s creative thinking. Second, the very act of legitimating the Lives draws attention to a Castalian cultural need to understand the Lives’ contribution to Castalian society. In other words, this act of legitimising gives value to the Lives by defining how Castalia—and not the Castalian—benefits from the Lives’ composition. By specifying that the Order approves the pedagogical value of the Lives, the biographer assures his reader that Castalian students will not run amok in imaginative fancies that have no scholarly benefit. The Castalian brand of ‘creativity’ is therefore another product of Castalia’s elimination of the individual. In this instance, though, the irony is even greater: this particular removal of individuality results from an exercise purported to encourage self-exploration. Importantly, the biographer provides his critique of this ‘creativity’ through his narrative Mask.

It is worth noting that the Castalian Order’s approved outlet of creative expression, history, reinforces the Castalian brand of historiography we have already seen—‘History is as it happened’ [*Die Geschichte ist geschehen*].²³⁸ By encouraging ‘creative’ expressions of Castalia’s very limited historical timeline, the Order persuades students to think creatively

²³⁷ (115; SW 5, 101)

²³⁸ (19; SW 5, 15)

and imaginatively only to better visualise things *as they are or have been*. Thus, the Order's allowance of the Lives' composition not only indoctrinates their unique brand of 'creative thinking'—teaching the Castalian that his imagination is a tool for visualising established (and approved) 'facts' and not for the seemingly paltry practice of fabrication—but it also helps solidify many other components of Castalian ideology. It melds Castalia's brands of historiography, 'freedom', and 'creativity' into a composite mindset that creates a complacent Castalian who strips away his own individuality. As shown, the Order first generates an appearance that the Lives' primary purpose is for individual development and self-development (they are purported 'masks'). Second, they openly mock the custom, labelling this personal development as a social taboo for adults. Therefore, instead of blatantly forbidding the Castalian from composing the Lives in his adulthood, the Order intrinsically bars the Castalian from continual self-development through subtly building a cultural mindset. The Castalian is presented his 'freedom' of self-expression but is simultaneously socialised to inhibit his own self-development. The Order consciously instigates this through carefully constructing Castalia's ideology. Their conscious construction of this ideology is only clear, however, when the biographer's Mask is evident.

5.4.1.1. Knecht's Masks of Fiction

It is evident through the biographer's description of the Lives that he intends to illuminate how the Castalian's self-development is innately stunted and his individuality suppressed. We can now look at the biographer's personal perception of the importance of individuality, self-exploration, and self-development. As shown above, the biographer claims that, through the Lives, the Castalian learns to understand himself through 'masks [...] the transitory garb of an entelechy' [*Maske, als vergängliches Kleid einer Entelechie betrachten*]. We have seen that the biographer superficially states this claim as an ideal promoted by the Castalian Order, which my analysis reveals is actually *not* their intended purpose. However, the biographer's specific words in his description of this superficial claim are extremely significant because they directly label Knecht's Lives as Masks in the Nietzschean sense of the term. They label the Self as an entelechy and the Lives as Masks of this entelechy. A brief explanation of *entelechy* will make it clearer why this label is significant. Following that, I will demonstrate how the biographer's masked presentation of Knecht's own Lives reveals the *Bildungsroman* that he composes.

‘Entelechy’ (or *entelecheia*)—to put it as concisely as possible—refers to a perpetual state of being/becoming. The concept was first formulated by Aristotle in his *Physics* (335-323 B.C.) to describe a dynamic that he sees within the ‘actuality’ of all things.²³⁹ For Aristotle, something’s state of being is defined through a dynamical relationship between its simultaneous state of ‘actuality’ and ‘potentiality’. He constructs the term by combining *entelēs* (‘full-grown’), *echein* (‘to possess’), and *telos* (‘end’ or ‘purpose’).²⁴⁰ As its etymology reveals, ‘entelechy’ embodies multiple meanings, some of which are seemingly contradictory to one another. The effect of these contradictions is appropriate, though, because they indicate that a state of being (or an actuality) is a constant motion. In other words, for Aristotle, no ‘being’ (or ‘actuality’) is static or fixed: its state of totality is defined through its perpetual movement. Aristotle thus perceived the process of becoming something *as* that something’s state of being; this process/state is an ‘entelechy’.²⁴¹ Aristotle’s most notable application of the term is in *De Anima* (‘On the Soul’), in which he defines the human ‘soul’ as an entelechy.²⁴²

This explanation should clarify why the biographer’s application of ‘entelechy’ to the notion of Self is important. It establishes that the Self is an ongoing process: an endless advancement toward a *telos* whose state of actuality is determined by this progressive process.²⁴³ Therefore, the precise use of ‘entelechy’ to define the Self directly describes the Castalian Lives as Nietzschean Masks and indicates Hesse’s use of the term for this very

²³⁹ *Physics*. “Oxford World’s Classics.” Translated by Robin Waterfield. Oxford University Press. Oxford: 1999.

²⁴⁰ Sachs, Joe. *Aristotle: Motion and its Place in Nature*. “Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy.” www.iep.utm.edu. Retrieved on 25 January 2016.

²⁴¹ ‘Entelechy’ has been used by other philosophers and writers as well. For example, the German metaphysician Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz used the term to help define what he called ‘monads’ in his French-language text *La Monadologie* (1714). ‘Monads’ are simple substances that make up the ‘composites’ of the physical world (not unlike atoms). Leibniz argues that his monads are entelechies because they are a dynamic: that is, they are self-sufficient sources of their own internal action. (See: Leibniz, G.W. *The Principles of Philosophy Known as Monadology*. “Early Modern Texts.” <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/leibniz1714b.pdf>).

-Also, Goethe used the term in spiritual references, literary works, and even in his later scientific writings. For example, in an early draft of *Faust*—Goethe’s most famous drama, which appeared in different edited versions from 1790 to 1829—Goethe wrote that the angels carried Faust’s *Entelechie* away. However, Goethe later changed the term to *Unsterbliches* (‘immortal part’). (Astrilla Orle Tantilillo. *Goethe’s Modernisms*. Continuum. New York: 2010. [p.36]). I do not intend to interpret the implications of this change but merely want to point out that ‘entelechy’ was a concept that sometimes appeared in Goethe’s reflections upon immortality and the soul.

²⁴² *De Anima*. 412a – 412b.

²⁴³ This description is not unlike David Hume’s description of the Self or Wordsworth’s poetic portrayal of the Self as a process. (Refer to Chapter 2.)

signification. ‘Entelechy’ emphasises the fluidity and transience of the Self, toward which we have seen Hesse’s depictions gradually shift. In the same way Nietzsche claims that the ‘truth’ of anything (its core or its ‘kernel’) is an illusion, Hesse uses ‘entelechy’ to define the Castalian student through a perpetual state of ‘becoming’; this continuously transitory state indicates that the Self is not static. Therefore, as ‘transitory garbs’ of this ‘entelechy’, the masks to which the biographer refers are clearly Masks; specifically they are Masks of Fiction. They are channels through which the Self is represented. These Masks translate the transient nature of the Self into something concrete (i.e. words), and through their transience, they represent the Self’s perpetual state of becoming. This is precisely how we have seen Haller’s manuscript function in *Der Steppenwolf*. As a specified *fiction* of his life, it is a transcription of his entelechy into words. Thus in *Das Glasperlenspiel*, the biographer’s terminology for defining the Lives is an *exact description* of Masks of Fiction: it specifies that the Castalian’s Lives can function as transcriptions of his entelechy into words.

We have seen, of course, that the Castalian Order only purports this purpose but does actually not intend for the Castalian student to enact it. Knecht, however, disregards the Order’s attempts to stifle his self-exploration and instead conceptualises his Lives exactly as the Order superficially promotes them: as transitory garbs of his entelechy. That is, Knecht employs his Lives as Masks of Fiction. Below I show how the value that the biographer places on Knecht’s Lives as important biographical documents reveals his own alignment with Knecht’s perception of his Lives as Masks of Fiction. This alignment indicates that the biographer’s definition of the Lives as Masks—and the Self as an entelechy—is not only a regurgitation of Castalian propaganda; it is an accurate representation of the value he places on self-development. We will thus see that the biographer, like Knecht, embraces the falsely purported ideals within the Order’s propagandistic attempts to stifle the Castalian’s entelechy. (In order to avoid confusion with narrative temporality, from this point forward, I refer to the events around the protagonist Josef Knecht’s life in the past tense, while references to the biographer and his narration remain in the present.)

We must first look at the biographer’s masked evidence that Knecht was not influenced by Castalian encouragement to use his Lives as vehicles of historical research.

Following that, a thorough literary analysis of the Lives themselves will further illuminate this fact. In his description of the Lives, the biographer tells us that, in their Lives:

The authors cast themselves as the characters they longed to become. They portrayed their dream and their ideal.

[...] die Verfasser der meisten Lebensläufe schilderten sich in demjenigen Kostüm und als denjenigen Charakter, als welcher zu erscheinen und sich zu verwirklichen ihr Wunsch und Ideal war.²⁴⁴

The irony within claims like this one has already been shown; the Castalian Order does not actually expect these ‘authors’ to write their Lives to this effect. However, in the following passage the biographer indicates that Knecht nonetheless embraced this ideal and was not affected by the socialisation that prevented Castalians from utilising their Lives to this end:

[...] after Knecht handed in his third [life], “Indian” Life, the Secretariat of the Board of Educators suggested that if he wrote any additional Lives he ought to set them in an era historically closer to the present and more richly documented, and that he should pay attention to historical detail. We know from anecdotes and letters that he thereupon actually engaged in preliminary research for a Life set in the eighteenth century. He cast himself as a Swabian pastor who subsequently turned from the service of the Church to music, who had been a disciple of Johann Albrecht Bengel, a friend of Oetinger, and for a while a guest of Zinzendorf’s congregation of Moravian Brethren. We know that he was reading and taking notes on a quantity of old and often out-of-the-way books on church organization, Pietism, and Zinzendorf, as well as on the liturgy and church music of the period. [...] He also honestly tried to write an account of Zinzendorf, who both intrigued and repelled him. But in the end he dropped this project, content with what he had learned from it. He declared that he had lost the capacity for making a Life out of these materials through having studied the subject from too many angles and accumulated too many details. In view of this statement, we may justifiably regard the three Lives he did complete rather as the creations of a poetic spirit than the works of a scholar. In saying this we do not think we are doing them any injustice.

[...] Knecht nach der Überreichung seines dritten, des “indischen” Lebenslaufes von der Kanzlei der Erziehungsbehörde nahegelegt wurde, er möge einen etwaigen noch folgenden Lebenslauf in eine historisch näherliegende und reicher dokumentierte Epoche verlegen und sich mehr um das historische Detail kümmern. Wir wissen aus Erzählungen und Briefen, daß er daraufhin in der Tat Vorstudien zu einem Lebenslauf aus dem achtzehnten Jahrhundert gemacht hat. Er wollte darin als schwäbischer Theologe auftreten, der den Kirchendienst später mit der Musik vertauscht, der ein Schüler Johann Albrecht Bengels, ein Freund Oetingers und eine Weile Gast der Gemeinde Zinzendorfs war. Wir wissen, daß er damals eine Menge alter, zum Teil entlegener Literatur über Kirchenverfassung, über Pietismus und

²⁴⁴ (115; SW 5, 100-101)

Zinzendorf, über Liturgie und Kirchenmusik jener Zeit gelesen und exzerpiert hat. [...] und sich um die Würdigung Zinzendorfs, der ihn ebenso interessierte wie abstieß, ehrlich bemüht hat. Am Ende ließ er diese Arbeit liegen, zufrieden mit dem, was er bei ihr gelernt hatte, erklärte sich aber für unfähig, daraus einen Lebenslauf zu machen, denn er habe viel zu viel Einzelstudien getrieben und Details gesammelt. Diese Aussage berechtigt uns vollends, in jenen ausgeführten drei Lebensläufen mehr die Schöpfungen und Bekenntnisse eines dichterischen Menschen und eines edlen Charakters als die Arbeiten eines Gelehrten zu sehen, womit wir ihnen nicht Unrecht zu tun meinen.²⁴⁵

This passage contains the novel's most significant evidence for Knecht's use of his own Lives as Masks of Fiction. Furthermore, as mentioned above, it exemplifies the contradiction between the biographer's two claims that (1) the Order allows Castalian students 'maximum freedom' [*größte Freiheit*] in the composition of their Lives and (2) that the Lives give the Order insight into the 'intellectual and moral state of the authors' [*geistige und moralische Leben und Befinden der Verfasser*].²⁴⁶ The Secretariat's 'suggestion' to Knecht indicates that the Order certainly does interfere with the student's 'freedom' when the insight provided by his Lives is unsatisfactory. The biographer draws attention to this interference, again, through an ironic tension. He first asserts that the Castalian student has the 'freedom' of uncensored creativity; then, directly following this assertion, he writes of the insight the Order gains from reading each student's Lives. These two claims together *seem* to imply that the Order invests genuine but passive interest in observing a student's personal development. However, as the Secretariat's 'suggestion' to Knecht reveals, the Order's curious gaze is far from passive. Indeed, it is precisely the close supervision that the biographer claims is not the Order's interest. Thus, once again, the biographer's Mask conceals and reveals his message: by stating these two claims and then providing the anecdote about the Secretariat's 'suggestion', the biographer challenges the Castalian Order's prohibition of self-development right under their nose. Most importantly, by illustrating the Order's attempt to implement this prohibition upon Knecht, the biographer allows an 'impression' of Knecht's personal embrace of self-development to emanate from behind the novel's Mask. The Secretariat's 'suggestion' that Knecht should focus more attention on historical detail implies that Knecht's three Lives are absent of

²⁴⁵ (115; SW 5, 101-102)

²⁴⁶ (115; SW 5, 101)

such detail. The biographer's inclusion of this 'suggestion' thus indicates his intent to illuminate the self-development that Knecht values.

A reading of the Lives certainly confirms this interpretation. For instance, Knecht's first Life, *Der Regenmacher* ['The Rainmaker'], is set in the vague period of 'many thousands of years ago' [*vor manchen tausend Jahren*], in the unlikely historical scenario 'when women ruled' [*die Frauen waren an der Herrschaft*].²⁴⁷ This introduction immediately categorises the Life as fiction. Knecht distinguishes his story from actual history by situating it in an intangible time period. By doing this, he removes all scholarly focus from his work and fixes his attention on creative fiction alone. Furthermore, he treats the story as a self-representative canvas: he makes himself the focal point by appropriately naming his protagonist 'Knecht'. In the narrative, 'Knecht' lives with and works under the apprenticeship of his village's rainmaker, an archetypal wise old man. The rainmaker is the only male that holds authority in the village and his primary talent is (believed to be) controlling the weather. The story's primary message is that meaning is transitory. Throughout 'Knecht's' apprenticeship, he learns that life experience is far more valuable than *intellect* because intellect attempts to fix meaning in a transitory world. The narrative signifies this lesson through many symbols, but primarily through the ongoing succession of rainmakers: the protagonist 'Knecht' eventually graduates from his apprenticeship and takes on the title of rainmaker; then, after he dies a sacrificial death, his son Turu takes on the role for a new generation. Throughout this succession of rainmakers, each rainmaker passes knowledge down to his successor, whose own experience then develops and alters the shape of this knowledge; and the cycle continues as each rainmaker's knowledge develops in ways that spawn newer forms of knowledge. To put it another way, each rainmaker's gained knowledge is not ontological in his perception; each instead views his knowledge as ever fluid and developing. *Der Regenmacher* is a symbol for Knecht's (without the quotation marks) own experienced realisation of the same perception. In this sense, Knecht's Life serves the same purpose as his poetry (shown below): to muse upon his own experiences and attempt to extract meaning from them. As we will see below, his poetry also often centres on the transitory nature of all things (life, thoughts, time, etc.) in contrast to the static meaning that humanity attempts to give these inevitable developments.

²⁴⁷ (446; SW 5, 409)

A more extensive analysis of the content of Knecht's Lives and poetry is provided below. But at this point, the Secretariat's 'suggestion' requires further examination because the biographer's masked critique of this 'suggestion' additionally unveils the *Bildungsroman* he composes.

As shown, the Secretariat's 'suggestion' to Knecht indicates that Knecht was not influenced by the Order's propagandistic aim. That is, he disregarded their intended historical distraction and embraced the façade they promoted: to utilise the lives as Masks. Knecht's abandonment of his fourth Life illustrates this point further. The passage above shows that Knecht attempted to take the Secretariat's 'suggestion' into account when composing his fourth Life. He approached it from a scholarly angle, researching and compiling 'facts' from the historical period he chose to describe. However, he eventually abandoned this project on the grounds that he was content with what he had learned from it: he had 'studied the subject from too many angles and accumulated too many details' [*viel zu viel Einzelstudien getrieben und Details gesammelt*]. Knecht never transformed these historical 'details' into an actual Life because they distracted him and dissolved his motivation to compose it. Clearly, then, Knecht's desired focus was not on historical documentation. He viewed his fourth Life as a completed research project, but historical accuracy was not his aim in composing Lives. Once he had compiled a suitable amount of information on his chosen historical period, he had reached a satisfactory conclusion. Knecht's abandonment of his fourth Life not only suggests that he treated his Lives as Masks of Fiction, but it also shows that the Order's obstruction of self-development is ultimately effective. Their interference with Knecht's composition (i.e. the Secretariat's 'suggestion') successfully distracted him from his imaginative musings upon the Self and discouraged his continuance of this practice.²⁴⁸

The biographer admires Knecht's approach to composing his Lives. He hints at this admiration by first acknowledging their lack of convention then subsequently stating their value despite this ostensible deficiency. He states that since Knecht's Lives cannot be regarded as scholarly projects, they can instead be regarded as the 'creations of a poetic

²⁴⁸ Hesse actually composed this fourth life, but it was not published in his lifetime. It was first published in 1965 under the title *Der vierte Lebenslauf Josef Knechts* (found in: *Prosa aus dem Nachlaß*. Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt: 1965.)

spirit' [*die Schöpfungen und Bekenntnisse eines dichterischen Menschen*].²⁴⁹ This does not diminish their value in his view, though. He adds, 'In saying this we do not think we are doing them any injustice' [*und {...} womit wir ihnen nicht Unrecht zu tun meinen*].²⁵⁰ In these quotes, the biographer acknowledges the non-Castalian nature of Knecht's Lives but also expresses his appreciation for them, regardless of this nature. One could even argue that he expresses this admiration precisely *for* their non-Castalian nature because, at this point, it should be clear that the biographer's own feeling toward Castalia is hardly admiration.

Although the biographer's opinion of Knecht's Lives is telling of his respect, the importance of this reverence is most clearly expressed through the value he places on the Lives within the context of his biography. In his very first mention of Knecht's Lives, the biographer states:

Three such Lives written by Joseph Knecht have been preserved. We intend to reproduce their full text, and regard them as possibly the *most valuable part of our book* [my italics].

Von Josef Knecht sind drei solche Lebensläufe erhalten, wir werden sie wortgetreu mitteilen und halten sie für den vielleicht *wertvollsten Teil unseres Buches* [my italics].²⁵¹

This quote is the piece of the biographer's Mask that reveals his *Bildungsroman* of Knecht. Combined with his expressed reverence for Knecht's poetic spirit, this quote clearly communicates that his biography is a 'transitory garb of *Knecht's* entelechy'. Thus his inclusion of Knecht's Lives in his biography confirms that this biography centres on Knecht's self-development rather than on his contribution to a broader Castalian history (as he purports on the surface of his Mask).

In this sub-section, we have seen how the biographer ironically indicates that the Order encourages Castalian students to compose Lives in order to restrict creative thinking and self-exploration in the very name of promoting these qualities. We have additionally seen how Knecht utilised (at least three of) his Lives for the exact self-exploration that the Order intends to bar. In light of these two points, the quote directly above clearly shows

²⁴⁹ (116; SW 5, 102)

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ (115; SW 5, 101)

that the biographer incorporates these ‘most valuable documents’ into his biography because they function as Masks. They have the same communicative potential as Harry Haller’s manuscript in *Der Steppenwolf*. The biographer thus includes them in order to provide ‘impressions’ of Knecht’s ‘entelechy’.

Now that the biographer’s Mask is discernible and its effects are evident, we can look at where the novel stands in Hesse’s developing depictions of the Self. By approaching Knecht’s Lives as Masks of Fiction, we are able to glean Hesse’s final representation of this conception. The following section provides a more extensive analysis of the content of Knecht’s Lives and his poetry. It will highlight specific parallels between Knecht’s biographical life and his fictional Lives in order to further elaborate the extent to which Knecht employed his Lives for their self-exploratory and self-expressionistic effects. And, most importantly, it will demonstrate Knecht’s central concern: the *transitory and external* nature of the Self.

5.5 Parallels, Self-Exploration, and Masked Expressions in the Lives

We have established that Knecht’s Lives and poetry are Masks of Fiction in the same vein as Harry Haller’s manuscript. Unlike with Haller, though, one can analyse the content of Knecht’s Masks within the context of a biographical narration provided by his biographer. Below I highlight the parallels between Knecht’s biography and his Lives in order to explicate the ways in which he formulates his own self-conception through fictional representation. Doing so will, first and foremost, elucidate Knecht’s belief that Masks of Fiction are a more effective means of expression (i.e. ‘*impression*’) than non-fictional prescriptions. This analysis will reveal a crucial link between Knecht’s Lives and poetry, Harry Haller’s manuscript, and the queen’s mask/Mask in Yeats’s *The Player Queen*. We will see that Knecht’s fictional writings both sketch *and* enact his perception of the Self as external and transitory.

With this analysis of Knecht’s Lives, I also hope to build upon a previous attempt to give more scholarly attention to the Lives. Very few interpretations of the novel focus on Knecht’s Lives, and Knecht’s ‘Legend’ [*Legende*], which ends with his death, is often

treated as the novel's conclusion.²⁵² Most of this scholarship spawns from the popular tendency to turn to Hesse's non-fiction as a guideline for interpreting his novels (see Chapter 1). For instance, Hesse refers to Knecht's death as 'sacrificial' in a letter to his son Bruno in 1944, and some scholars, such as Ziolkowski, use this reference as a basis for their analyses of this 'sacrifice'.²⁵³ Few approaches to the novel, however, regard Knecht's Lives as significant. I.A. and J.J. White have noted this shortage of scholarship regarding the Lives and have attempted to incite a new discussion.²⁵⁴ They claim that most secondary literature on Knecht's posthumous writings either merely notes the parallels between the Lives and his biography, or it briefly outlines the Lives with little analysis of their significance within the context of the novel.²⁵⁵ In an attempt to provoke a deeper discussion about the Lives, the Whites argue that parallel themes between the Lives and Knecht's biography vary from Life to Life and thus symbolise Knecht's developing understanding of these themes. While the Whites made this observation in 1986, their article appears to have satisfied Hesse scholars and saturated the discussion at its very genesis because most scholarship since either still continues to ignore the Lives, or it treats them with the same lack of importance that the Whites noted.

The Whites were right to argue that the Lives are more significant than many commentators allow, but their observation that parallel themes signify parallel developments is simply another notation of a parallel. The banality of this observation is perhaps why the Whites' article failed to instigate a more thorough discussion about the novel's supplementary writings. However, the mere fact that the Lives (and also the poetry for the sake of my discussion) are a small component of a larger novel is prompting enough

²⁵² For a few interpretations, see: Otto Friedrich Bollnow: *Unruhe und Geborgenheit im Weltbild neuerer Dichter*. (p. 58); Hilde D. Cohn: *The Symbolic End of Hermann Hesse's "Glasperlenspiel."* (p. 356); Oskar Seidlin. *Hermann Hesse's "Glasperlenspiel."* (p. 269).

²⁵³ Hesse wrote, 'this death is no accident, but it is a sacrificial death; and the young Tito is thereby touched deeper and committed for life, as if it could have happened any other way (my translation)' [*dieser Tod ist kein Zufall, sondern er ist ein Opfertod, und der junge Tito wird dadurch tiefer angefaßt und fürs ganze Leben verpflichtet, als es auf irgendeine andre Art hätte geschehen können*]. (Michels, Volker. *Materialien zu Hermann Hesses 'Das Glasperlenspiel'*. Vol. 1. Suhrkamp. Frankfurt am Main: 1973. [p. 235]).

-For interpretations based on this letter, see: Ziolkowski ("The Glass Bead Game: Beyond Castalia." in *The Novels of Hermann Hesse: A Study in Theme and Structure*. (p. 302-329). Also see: Kenneth Negus: *On the Death of Joseph Knecht in Hesse's "Glasperlenspiel."* (181-189).

²⁵⁴ White, I.A. & J.J. *The Place of Josef Knecht's Lebensläufe Within Hermann Hesse's Das Glasperlenspiel*. "Modern Language Review." Vol. 81. Issue 4. Oct. 1986. 930-43.

²⁵⁵ For instance, see Sidney M. Johnson's *The Autobiographies in Hermann Hesse's Glasperlenspiel*. "The German Quarterly." Vol. 29. Issue 3. May 1956. 160-171. In this essay, Johnson merely summarises each of Knecht's three Lives with little critical interpretation.

to dig deeper into the meanings that these parallels convey. A thorough understanding of Hesse's masking techniques can help to unveil the complexities that lay within these parallels and to reveal their import. Now that I have demonstrated clear layers of masking within Hesse's narrative structures and illuminated symbolic representations of the Mask's various characteristics (such as its 'impressing' effect) in Hesse's fiction, we can put the parallels between Knecht's Lives, poetry, and biography under the appropriate lens needed to magnify their deeper meaning. As I demonstrate Knecht's perception that Masks of Fiction express the Self more accurately than non-fiction can, the necessity of judging the Lives' value with the same criteria as the novel's primary narrative will become clear. Knecht's fictional representations of the themes that continuously crop up throughout his biography explain far more about his character than his biography does, and they provide an explanation of why it takes Knecht almost forty years to denounce and quit the society that inhibits his development. Thus, through the following analysis, it will become evident that Knecht's Lives are not merely supplementary to the novel but are on equal grounds with its main narration. They are the novel's strongest clues that Knecht views the Self through a Nietzschean lens.

5.5.1 Der Regenmacher

Knecht's first Life is *Der Regenmacher* (*The Rainmaker*). While a brief summary of *Der Regenmacher* is provided above, this Life requires closer scrutiny because it contains some of the most telling examples of Knecht's commentary upon his nonfictional life through a fictional one. The first indication of this is the protagonist's name: Knecht. For the sake of clarity, from this point forward, I refer to this fictional representation of Knecht as Knecht (2). Knecht shares many traits with his protagonist, and their mutual name signifies Knecht's awareness of his ostensible fate as a servant. (As mentioned before, in German, Knecht means 'servant'.) Like Knecht, Knecht (2) is an orphan. Furthermore, while Knecht's prodigious musical talent draws the Music Master's attention, Knecht (2)'s exceptional character and cleverness attracts the attention of his village's Rainmaker. Out of these intrigues, another of Hesse's prevalent mentor-pupil relationships develops: while the Music Master becomes Knecht's cherished mentor, the Rainmaker becomes Knecht (2)'s. These particular parallels between Knecht and Knecht (2) are significant because, through them, Knecht highlights his name and its meaning—'servant'—and obliquely

comments on the fate this name has seemingly determined for him. For example, Knecht presents Knecht (2)'s admiration for the Rainmaker and his profession as a deeply rooted desire to serve:

The boy was pursuing him like a hunter following a spoor, and mutely offering his *services* and his company [my italics].

[...] er ihm wie ein Jäger auf der Spur war und stumm seine *Dienste* und seine Gesellschaft anbot [my italics].²⁵⁶

The specific use of the word 'services' [*Dienste*] in this passage echoes the prevalence of this theme throughout Knecht's own biography, and importantly, Knecht presents this theme as a predetermined result of his orphanage. With no mother or father and no sense of home, Knecht substitutes community and society for family, and devotes his life—at least at the time of writing his fictional Lives—to serving Castalia. As illustrated throughout this chapter, Knecht's scholarship and intellectual endeavours are Castalian expectations (i.e. services to his community). Knecht (2)'s attraction to rainmaking is therefore an outcome of his orphanage, which predetermines his fate as a servant to society (i.e. a *Knecht*). As the Rainmaker's primary task is a service to his community (controlling the weather and determining the outcome of the village's crops), Knecht (2)'s desire to fulfil this role thus suggests that Knecht recognises the irony within his own name, and it comments on Knecht's own role as a servant to his society, Castalia. This parallel between Knecht and his protagonist is therefore a symbolic indication that Knecht's devotion to Castalia does not necessarily arise from passionate zeal for Castalian culture but rather from his fated role as a servant to society.

Aside from sharing his name, Knecht also accords Knecht (2) with two particularly notable characteristics that echo his biography: his vivid imagination and his recognition that life experience is more valuable than intellect, the latter of which he learns from his mentor Turu, the Rainmaker. Knecht's Lives as Masks of Fiction are symbolic embodiments of both of these characteristics combined. It is thus crucial to fully grasp Knecht's fictional depictions of the two. To illustrate the richness of Knecht (2)'s imagination, Knecht describes the village where Knecht (2) lives as lacking in culture, but he also stresses how Knecht (2)'s imagination flourishes against this bland backdrop.

²⁵⁶ (451; SW 5, 413)

The village had no culture and arts. [...] But Knecht's life and the world of his imagination were no poorer on that account. The world surrounded him like a picture book full of inexhaustible mysteries. Every day he conquered another little piece of it, from the animal and plant life to the starry sky; and between mute, mysterious nature and the breathing soul in his solitary, nervous boyish frame there dwelt all the kinship and all the tension, anxiety, curiosity, and craving for understanding of which the human soul is capable.

[Die Siedlung] kannte weder Bildung noch Künste [...] Das Leben Knechts und seine Vorstellungswelt war darum nicht weniger reich, als unendliches Geheimnis und Bilderbuch umgab ihn die Welt, deren er sich mit jedem neuen Tag ein neues kleines Stück eroberte, vom Tierleben und Pflanzenwuchs bis zum Sternenhimmel, und zwischen der stummen, geheimnisvollen Natur und seiner vereinzelt, in anger Knabenbrust atmenden Seele war alle Verwandtschaft und war auch alle Spannung, Angst, Neugierde und Aneignungslust vorhanden, deren die Menschenseele fähig ist.²⁵⁷

The descriptive language and vivid illustrations of this passage show that Knecht wishes to emphasise the vibrancy of Knecht (2)'s imagination and convey the grandeur of his aesthetic sentiments. Furthermore, the eloquence of the description has a dual effect: while Knecht establishes the intensity of Knecht (2)'s imaginative faculties, his manner of doing so employs a vibrant imagination not dissimilar to the one he describes. That is to say, Knecht describes a vivid imagination through metaphors generated from his own vivid imagination. Therefore, by emphasising the importance of Knecht (2)'s imaginative thinking, Knecht symbolises this value for himself. There are numerous passages in the *Life* that further support this argument. For instance, Knecht describes Knecht (2)'s walk home from the Rainmaker's hut one evening with rich detail:

Contentedly, he sauntered along. The night wind whispered in the trees. Branches creaked. There were smells of moist earth, of reeds and mud, of the smoke of wood still partly green, an oily and sweetish smell that meant home more than any other; and finally, as he approached the youth hut, there was its smell, the smell of boys, of young men's bodies.

Zufrieden schlenderte er dahin, in den Bäumen flüsterte der Nachtwind und knackte leise, es roch nach feuchter Erde, nach Schilf und Schlamm, nach Rauch von halbgrünem Holz, ein fettiger und etwas süßer Geruch, der mehr als jeder andre Heimat bedeutete, und zuletzt, als er sich der Knabenhütte näherte, roch es nach ihr, roch nach Knaben, nach jungen Menschenleibern.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ (453-54; SW 5, 415-16)

²⁵⁸ (454; SW 5, 416)

The descriptive nature of passages such as this one not only highlights the value Knecht places on creative thinking, but it also demonstrates the extent to which Knecht was unaffected by Castalian socialisation. It exhibits Knecht's concentration on details generated from his own imagination; and, at the same time, it displays the very lack of historical detail that the Secretariat later urged Knecht to accentuate. Knecht's descriptive and metaphorical language thus signifies that his Lives are exercises in creative fiction and not ones of a scholarly nature.

The second most notable trait that Knecht confers on Knecht (2) is his belief that experience trumps intellect. In the previous brief summary of *Der Regenmacher*, I pointed out that Knecht's narrative depicts the development of intellect as a naïve means of ascribing arbitrary (and fixed) meaning to a transitory world; Knecht therefore portrays experience as a more worthwhile pursuit because, within this pursuit, the transitory is acknowledged as inevitable and accepted as such. For instance, Turu ('The Rainmaker') focuses most of his pedagogical efforts on ensuring that Knecht (2) acquires this knowledge:

In this course of instruction there were no concepts, doctrines, methods, script, figures, and only very few words. The Master trained Knecht's senses far more than his intellect. A great heritage of tradition and experience, the sum total of mankind's of nature at that era, had to be administered, employed, and even more, passed on. A vast and dense system of experiences, observations, instincts, and habits of investigation was *slowly and hazily laid bare to the boy*. Scarcely any of it was put into concepts; virtually all of it had to be grasped, learned, tested with the senses [my italics].

Es gab für diese Unterweisung keine Begriffe, keine Lehre, keine Methode, keine Schrift, keine Zahlen und nur sehr wenig Worte, und es waren Knechts Sinne viel mehr als sein Verstand, welche von seinem Meister erzogen wurden. Es galt, ein großes Gut an Überlieferung und Erfahrung, das gesamte Wissen des damaligen Menschen um die Natur, nicht bloß zu verwalten und auszuüben, sondern weiterzugeben. Ein großes und dichtes System von Erfahrungen, Beobachtungen, Instinkten und Forschergewohnheiten *tat sich langsam und dämmernd vor dem Jüngling auf*, beinahe nichts davon war auf Begriffe gebracht, beinahe alles mußte mit den Sinnen erspürt, erlernt, nachgeprüft werden [my italics].²⁵⁹

This passage expresses why Turu values experience over intellect: he believes that an 'impression' of knowledge is more enduring than a prescription of knowledge. In other words, he believes that if one acquires knowledge of one's own accord, then he/she more

²⁵⁹ (455; SW 5, 417)

readily accepts it. Turu therefore ‘slowly and hazily’ [*langsam und dämmernd*] lays his teachings in front of Knecht (2), allowing Knecht (2) to gain an ‘impression’ of the knowledge Turu passes to him. As we have seen numerous times, this is one of the effects of the Nietzschean Mask. Turu’s method is eventually effective because later in the narrative, Knecht (2) gains Turu’s intended ‘impression’ and even grows aware of the method through which it was made:

Knecht [2] had more to learn with his feet and hands, his eyes, skin, ears, and nose, than with his intellect, and Turu taught far more by example and by dumbshow than by words and prescription.

Knecht [2] hatte mehr mit den Sinnen, mehr mit Fuß und Hand, mit Auge, Hautgefühl, Ohr und Geruchsinn zu lernen als mit dem Verstand, und Turu lehrte weit mehr durch Beispiel und Zeigen als durch Worte und Lehren.²⁶⁰

This passage is particularly significant because it indicates Knecht’s belief that experience is valuable specifically for its transitory nature. *Der Regenmacher* narrates an ongoing cycle of knowledge passed down through three Rainmakers, and it is evident from this passage that much of Turu’s knowledge is now ‘impressed’ onto Knecht (2). Furthermore, Knecht (2)’s newfound pursuit of experience suggests that this ‘impressed’ knowledge will intermingle with his own new experiences, out of which new knowledge will emerge. It is thus clear that, through this Life, Knecht intends to suggest how experience develops knowledge better than the intellect and that it is more valuable for this very reason.

The above two passages depict a relationship between the imagination and the acquisition of knowledge. Together they are strong indicators that Knecht embraced the Mask as the most effective channel for relaying knowledge and ideas. The two passages are therefore clear indications that Knecht’s Lives are Masks of Fiction through which he conveys his meditations upon the Self. To make this clearer, it is helpful to recall the nature of Haller’s manuscript in *Der Steppenwolf* because the same process of ‘impressing’ knowledge and meaning rather than prescribing it is exercised in this Life. Haller learns to acknowledge his own external nature, and he expresses this through fictional imagery and metaphors because it is far too complex to merely state. He therefore represents it through symbols that provide an ‘impression’ of understanding—that is, his manuscript enacts an objective correlative of an intangible Self that cannot be relayed through direct prescription.

²⁶⁰ (461; SW 5, 423)

Likewise, the lesson that Turu eventually ‘impresses’ upon Knecht (2) in *Der Regenmacher* is an enactment of the same means for a similar effect. Turu, however, does not ‘impress’ for the sake of self-expression; he instead ‘impresses’ for the sake of pedagogy: to teach the young Knecht (2) the value of experience. He ‘slowly and hazily’ [*langsam und dämmernd*] presents Knecht (2) with a ‘dense system of experiences, observations, instincts and habits of investigation’ [*Ein großes und dichtes System von Erfahrungen, Beobachtungen, Instinkten und Forschergewohnheiten*].²⁶¹ Turu’s method of teaching functions exactly like Haller’s Mask of Fiction. It generates an ‘impression’ that circumvents intellect, sharpens Knecht (2)’s senses, and hones his ability to glean knowledge from his personal experiences.

With the obvious parallels between Knecht and Knecht (2), it is apparent that Knecht (2)’s developed awareness of the lesson his Master ‘impresses’ on him signifies Knecht’s own awareness of the same ideal and, crucially, his own deliberate employment of this very masking method. For example, although Knecht was a young man at the time he composed his Lives, his eventual flight from Castalia twenty or so years later strongly indicates that Knecht (2)’s embrace of experience is a facet of himself. While Knecht leaves the ‘intellectual Utopia’ of Castalia for the sake of having experiences in an unfamiliar environment (i.e. the ‘secular’ world), Knecht (2)’s developing embrace of this process of ‘impression’ therefore symbolises Knecht’s parallel development of the same value. *Der Regenmacher* ‘impresses’ the value Knecht places on experience and self-development to his reader. Thus, through this Life, Knecht at once generates and illuminates the contours of a Mask of Fiction. And much like Haller, the ‘impression’ Knecht intends to make with his Mask is personal and individual.

One final theme in *Der Regenmacher*, which is vital for our analysis, is the notion of life’s transience and the instability of meaning inherent within this transience. This theme is also the primary focus of much of Knecht’s poetry, which I demonstrate after this sub-section. In *Der Regenmacher* Knecht signifies his awareness of this instability through Knecht (2)’s observation of a meteor shower that prompts fear throughout the village. When the villagers witness this phenomenon, they perceive it as stars ‘raining’ [*der*

²⁶¹ (455; SW 5, 417)

Sternregen]²⁶² from the sky. This rain foretells doom for the villagers because it signifies change. After the meteor shower, Knecht (2) derives meaning from his observance:

Like all who watched this nocturnal spectacle, he thought the familiar stars themselves were wavering, scattering, and plunging down, and he expected that if the earth itself did not swallow him first, the firmament would soon appear black and emptied. After a while, however, he recognized what others could not know—that the well-known stars were still present, here and there and everywhere; that the frightful dispersion was taking place not among the old, familiar stars but in the space between earth and sky, and that these new lights, fallen or flung, so swiftly appearing and swiftly vanishing, glowed with a fire of another sort from the old, the proper stars. This was somewhat reassuring and helped him regain his balance. But even if these were new, *transitory*, different stars scattering through the air, still it meant disaster and disorder [my italics].

Wie alle, denen dieser nächtliche Anblick geworden war, glaubte er die wohlbekanntesten Sterne selbst wanken, dahinstieben und hinabstürzen zu sehen und erwartete das Gewölbe, falls nicht vorher die Erde ihn erschlänge, in Bälde schwarz und ausgeleert zu sehen. Nach einer Weile freilich erkannte er, was andere zu erkennen nicht fähig waren, daß die wohlbekanntesten Sterne hier und dort und überall noch vorhanden waren, daß das Sterngestiebe nicht unter den alten, vertrauten Sternen ein schreckliches Wesen trieb, sondern im Zwischenraum zwischen Erdboden und Himmel, und daß diese fallenden oder geworfenen, neuen, so schnell erscheinenden und so schnell schwindenden Lichter in einem etwas anders gefärbten Feuer glühten als die alten, die richtigen Sterne. Dies war ihm tröstlich und half ihm sich wiederfinden, aber mochten das nun auch neue, *vergängliche*, andre Sterne sein, deren Gestöber die Luft erfüllte: grausig und böse, Unheil und Unordnung war es doch [...] [my italics].²⁶³

As this passage indicates, stars, which the villagers observe as immobile, are symbols of permanence. They represent the constancy of the external world and the consistency of the villagers' worldview; that is to say, they represent fixed and invariable meaning. However, the meteor shower razes this perception and reshapes the villagers' worldview; their unexpected observation that stars are impermanent and transient increases their awareness of the inconstancy of their own cosmology. The physical movement of the meteors thus signifies the instability of 'truth', which causes 'disaster and disorder' [*Unheil und Unordnung*].

Since the villagers hold the rainmaker accountable for phenomena of this nature, they accuse Knecht (2) of instigating this disturbance in their rationale. Knecht (2) is aware

²⁶² (480; SW 5, 442)

²⁶³ (476-77; SW 5, 438)

of the logical ramifications of the meteor shower, but he is also perceptive of the villagers' difficulty in accepting that their worldview is no longer ontological. Therefore, in order to restore integrity to the rainmaker's role for his son and successor (also named Turu), Knecht (2) sacrifices his life. While this sacrificial act restores a sense of order to the villagers, more importantly, it symbolises Turu's inheritance of Knecht (2)'s knowledge and implies its further development throughout Turu's life. The 'raining' stars are therefore a catalyst for a new period of developing knowledge, and they represent the village's (slowly) growing awareness of the *transitory nature of 'truth'*. The transience of meaning that Knecht sketches through this episode in *Der Regenmacher* is undoubtedly a trait of the Nietzschean Mask, as Nietzsche designs his Masks to convey this very message. In the following sub-sections, we will see that this is a common representation in Knecht's writings and, crucially, that he models his portrayals of the Self as similarly transient.

5.5.2 Knecht's Poetry: *Klage and Stufen*

Knecht's literary representations of transience are not restricted to depictions of the fluidity of knowledge. His poetry, for example, reveals his awareness that humanity's desire for solidified meaning also applies to notions of the Self. The highly self-contemplative nature of his poetry indicates that Knecht's concerns with matters of self-development were deeply rooted and ongoing from a very early age. It is worth examining a few instances of parallels between *Der Regenmacher* and Knecht's poetry because these instances illuminate the perpetuity of Knecht's conscious reflections upon the Self from their youthful origins onward. The novel does not make it clear when Knecht's poetry was written, but it suggests that his composition of poetry began in Waldzell and continued throughout his life until he accepted the role of Magister Ludi.

Knecht's first poem, *Klage* ('Lament'), depicts early manifestations of his contemplating the very same theme of transience/intransience seen in *Der Regenmacher*. The poem, however, is more direct in its manner of expression. While in *Der Regenmacher* Knecht masks his meditations with imagery and subtler narration, in this poem, he candidly states his growing consciousness of this notion. An analysis is provided below the poem:

No permanence is ours; we are a wave
That flows to fit whatever form it finds:
Through day or night, cathedral or the cave
We pass forever, craving form that binds.

Mold after mold we fill and never rest,
 We find no home where joy or grief runs deep.
 We move, we are the everlasting guest.
 No field nor plow is ours; we do not reap.

What God would make of us remains unknown:
 He plays; we are the clay to his desire.
 Plastic and mute, we neither laugh nor groan;
 He kneads, but never gives us to the fire.

To stiffen into stone, to persevere!
 We long forever for the right to stay.
 But all that ever stays with us is fear,
 And we shall never rest upon our way.

Uns ist kein Sein vergönnt. Wir sind nur Strom,
 Wir fließen willig allen Formen ein:
 Dem Tag, der Nacht, der Höhle und dem Dom,
 Wir gehn hindurch, uns treibt der Durst nach Sein.

So füllen Form um Form wir ohne Rast,
 Und keine wird zur Heimat uns, zum Glück, zur Not,
 Stets sind wir unterwegs, stets sind wir Gast,
 Uns ruft nicht Feld noch Pflug, uns wächst kein Brot.

Wir wissen nicht, wie Gott es mit uns meint,
 Er spielt mit uns, dem Ton in seiner Hand,
 Der stumm und bildsam ist, nicht lacht noch weint,
 Der wohl geknetet wird, doch nie gebrannt.

Einmal zu Stein erstarren! Einmal dauern!
 Danach ist unsre Sehnsucht ewig rege,
 Und bleibt doch ewig nur ein banges Schauern,
 Und wird doch nie zur Rast auf unsrem Wege.²⁶⁴

This poem is essentially a concise exposition of the meteor shower and Knecht (2)'s death in *Der Regenmacher*. It indicates Knecht's early awareness that humanity craves fixed meaning in an immanently transitory world. In the poem, Knecht suggests that this need for fixed meaning extends to all aspects of life, and especially to conceptions of one's Self. As shown in Chapter 3, Hesse conveys this precise humanly yearning for solidified self-

²⁶⁴ (429; SW 5, 397)

understanding through his earlier characters, such as Peter Camenzind and Kuhn, who search for a static ‘internality’ in which they expect to find their true Selves. *Klage*, though, indicates that, unlike Peter and Kuhn, Knecht perceived such conceptions as illusory from a very early age. The poem’s opening line makes this clear. Throughout the entire poem, in fact, Knecht does not reflect so much as he proclaims. His assertive tone indicates that, at the time of composing the poem, his perception was already well established.

Klage is not only significant because it exemplifies Knecht’s concerns with self-understanding, but because it is a succinct exemplification of the very shift in Hesse’s depictions of the Self that this study examines. It signifies his development from representing the Self as internal to representing it as external. The second and third stanzas, for example, embody this very development: they portray the individual as malleable and impermanent: ‘Mold after mold we fill and never rest [...] [God] kneads, but never gives us to the fire’. [*So füllen Form um Form wir ohne Rast (...) (Gott) wohl geknetet wird, doch nie gebrannt*]. Again, these lines show that, at a young age (compared to Hesse’s earlier characters), Knecht viewed the Self as external: they assert that the Self is an endlessly pliable externality, and not a solidified, stable sculpture, which characters like Peter Camenzind aspire to discover within themselves. This early self-discovery for Knecht is a biographical foreshadowing of his eventual flight from Castalia: Knecht leaves Castalia because *experience* is his method of self-understanding throughout a lifetime of transience.

Klage does not only represent Knecht’s manner of self-understanding, though; it also illuminates his prodigious insights about humanity as a whole. Throughout the poem he identifies with ‘we’ (*wir* and *uns*), indicating his awareness of the insights that his poem illustrates within himself. Importantly, he acknowledges ‘our’ need (or at least ‘our’ *desire*) for stasis. While the poem begins with the bold proclamation that ‘we’ possess *no* permanence, it ends with a precociously wise claim in the final stanza: he states that ‘we’ persevere to become solid stones—to establish an intransigent sense of Self. His poetic ascription of this ‘we’ suggests that he also empathises with his fellow human’s aspiration for solidity, regardless of his recognition of its impossibility. Thus, like in *Der Regenmacher*, *Klage* demonstrates Knecht’s acknowledgment of the illusory nature of fixed meaning and similarly ends by demonstrating humanity’s stubborn persistence down a path toward an elusive sense of permanence. In *Der Regenmacher*, Knecht (2) dies to

preserve the villagers' very need to maintain this sense, which frees his son from their persecution. Knecht's poetic meditations upon this need for permanence, combined with his literary representation of Knecht (2)'s sacrifice, provides another hint as to why it took him more than twenty years (after the composition of his *Lives*) to leave Castalia and embark on a journey that embraces the transitory nature of the Self and appropriates the experience that his compositions encourage. In other words, together the poem and the *Life* show that Knecht recognised the transience of the Self but struggled to fully accept it.

Knecht's poem *Stufen* ('Stages'), on the other hand, expresses a slightly different sentiment toward transience. The poem proclaims Knecht's acceptance of it and encourages his reader (whomever he may have expected would read his furtive poetry) not to resist it. While *Klage* depicts Knecht's recognition of life's transience, it ends by suggesting the futility of this awareness; *Stufen*, however, cries for action:

As every flower fades and as all youth
Departs, so life at every stage,
So every virtue, so our grasp of truth,
Blooms in its day and may not last forever.
Since life may summon us at every age
Be ready, heart, for parting, new endeavor,
Be ready bravely and without remorse
To find new light that old ties cannot give.
In all beginnings dwells a magic force
For guarding us and helping us to live.

Serenely let us move to distant places
And let no sentiments of home detain us.
The Cosmic Spirit seeks not to restrain us
But lifts us stage by stage to wider spaces.
If we accept a home of our own making,
Familiar habit makes for indolence.
We must prepare for parting and leave-taking
Or else remain the slaves of permanence.

Even the hour of our death may send
Us speeding on to fresh and newer spaces,
And life may summon us to newer races.
So be it, heart: bid farewell without end.

Wie jede Blüte welkt und jede Jugend

Dem Alter weicht, blüht jede Lebensstufe,
 Blüht jede Weisheit auch und jede Tugend
 Zu ihrer Zeit und darf nicht ewig dauern.
 Es muß das Herz bei jedem Lebensrufe
 Bereit zum Abschied sein und Neubeginne,
 Um sich in Tapferkeit und ohne Trauern
 In andre, neue Bindungen zu geben.
 Und jedem Anfang wohnt ein Zauber inne,
 Der uns beschützt und der uns hilft, zu leben.

Wir sollen heiter Raum um Raum durchschreiten,
 An keinem wie an einer Heimat hängen,
 Der Weltgeist will nicht fesseln uns und engen,
 Er will uns Stuf' um Stufe heben, weiten.
 Kaum sind wir heimisch einem Lebenskreise
 Und traulich eingewohnt, so droht Erschlaffen,
 Nur wer bereit zu Aufbruch ist und Reise,
 Mag lähmender Gewöhnung sich entrafen.

Es wird vielleicht auch noch die Todesstunde
 Uns neuen Räumen jung entgegenenden,
 Des Lebens Ruf an uns wird niemals enden ...
 Wohlan denn, Herz, nimm Abschied und gesunde.²⁶⁵

In this poem, Knecht prompts his reader to approach each stage of life with full consent to the changes each one brings. The novel does not specify how much time may have passed between the composition of *Klage* and that of *Stufen*, but there is a clear shift in Knecht's perspective between the two poems. The former illuminates his initial indecision and ambivalence towards embracing transience as a credo, but *Stufen* demonstrates his effort to promote it as such.

Stufen does not necessarily depict permanence as an unavoidable human pursuit, though. Rather, it portrays it as an illusory goal that humanity futilely attempts to reach—as the Winstons translate it, 'we' are the 'slaves of permanence'. Yet it encourages Knecht's reader (himself?) to absorb the 'truths' [*Weisheiten*] established in each of life's stages but warns that these stages (and their 'truths') will eventually fade 'as every flower fades' [*Wie jede Blüte welkt*]. Although *Weisheit* may be more accurately translated as 'wisdom', the poem suggests that in each stage where one gains *Weisheit*, it has an appearance of permanence. I therefore maintain the Winstons' translation as 'truth' because it draws

²⁶⁵ (444; SW 5, 407)

attention to the *illusion* of permanence within each attained *Weisheit*. In a following analysis of Knecht's third life, *Indischer Lebenslauf*, I also demonstrate a similar pattern and explain how this pattern is illustrative of Martin Swales's view that the illusion of permanence is a standard *Bildungsroman* motif: he argues that in each stage where 'permanence' is assumed to be attained in the *Bildungsroman* model, a previous stage is 'relativized' and forgotten. In other words, while moments of life-changing realisation in a *Bildungsroman* often appear to the protagonist—and perhaps to the reader, too—as a capstone of all self-development, they are, by default, gradational. As Swales puts it in his analysis of Mann's *Der Zauberberg*, 'there are insight moments in the novel [...] Yet, each time, the insight moment is forgotten, [it] is relativized by what follows it'.²⁶⁶ *Indischer Lebenslauf* and *Stufen* present this process of 'relativizing'. However, *Stufen* suggests that a fading 'truth' does not necessarily die; it merely develops. For example, the poem ends with the claim that even the hour of death may reveal new 'truths'. In other words, no 'truth' is solidified, even after a lifetime of experience. In *Stufen*, Knecht thus encourages acceptance of the transitory nature of 'truth' and the transitory nature of the Self that results from this gradation of 'truth'.

It is worth noting that *Stufen* is not Knecht's original title for this poem. Later in the novel, after having long forgotten this poem from his youth, Knecht recalled one line from the poem: 'In all beginnings dwells a magic force . . .' [*Und jedem Anfang wohnt ein Zauber inne . . .*]. Knecht recalled this line to his friend Tegularius, after which Tegularius procured the poem's original manuscript from a desk drawer. Upon looking at the manuscript, Knecht recalled his composition process:

He had written it on one of those special days on which he had experienced that spiritual shock which he called "awakening." [...] The title of the poem had obviously been written even before the poem itself, and had seemingly been intended as the first line. It had been set down in a large impetuous script, and read: "Transcend!" [...] Later, at some other time, in a different mood and situation, this title as well as the exclamation mark had been crossed out, and in smaller, thinner, more modest letters another title been written in. It read: "Stages".

Er hatte sie an einem jener besonderen Tag geschrieben, an welchen das seelische Erlebnis ihm zuteil geworden war, das er Erwachen nannte. [...] Sichtlich war die Überschrift des Gedichtes, noch vor dem Gedicht selbst, als dessen erste Zeile entstanden. Mit großen Buchstaben in stürmischer Handschrift war sie hingestellt

²⁶⁶Swales, Martin. *The German Bildungsroman: From Wieland to Hesse*. Princeton. New Jersey. 1978. p. 107.

und lautete: ‘Transzendieren!’ [...] Später erst, zu einer anderen Zeit, in anderer Stimmung und Lebenslage, war diese Überschrift samt dem Ausrufezeichen gestrichen und war in kleineren, dünneren, bescheideneren Schriftzeichen dafür eine andere hingeschrieben worden. Sie hieß ‘Stufen’.²⁶⁷

This change of the poem’s title reflects an important (and precocious) shift in Knecht’s perspective. ‘Transcend’ [*Transzendieren*] encourages an aspiration for the very solidity that *Stufen* portrays as impossible. ‘Transcend’ [*Transzendieren*] suggests that solidity is attainable, while *Stufen*, on the other hand, suggests it is not. This edit, then, further reflects Knecht’s continuing ambivalence toward the transient/intransient divide; but the poem’s completed form shows that, while Knecht favoured the notion of peace through solidity, his realistic insight dominated the poem’s final composition.

Another crucial theme appears in the passage above. It states that Knecht wrote the poem during a moment of ‘awakening’ [*Erwachen*]. Moments of ‘awakening’ are *Das Glasperlenspiel*’s version of the epiphanies Swales claims are relativized in the *Bildungsroman* model. Thus the continuous cycle of new ‘truths’ depicted in *Stufen* not only parallels Knecht’s third Life (shown below), but it also echoes the nature of Knecht’s own ‘awakenings’ [*Erwachen*], which are included in his biography. In Section 5.6, I provide an analysis of these ‘awakenings’ in order to make apparent the biographer’s display of Knecht’s ongoing negotiation with the internality/externality of the Self. This analysis will show that each of Knecht’s ‘awakenings’ emerges as a development from a previous ‘awakening’, much like the ‘truths’ depicted in *Stufen*. The successions of stages one observes in Knecht’s biography, his poetry, and his Lives, are all equally gradational and generate an *illusion of finality*. Therefore, in *Das Glasperlenspiel*, Knecht’s and his biographer’s mutual interest in an individual’s continuous accumulation of *Bildung* is a mutual interest in one’s *stages* of development, and not in one’s penultimate individuation. *Stufen* represents an early stage in Knecht’s increasingly active pursuit of experience as a means of embracing the transience of life. Furthermore, it signifies his awareness that these stages are merely stages and not moments of final realisation. The poem’s concerns reverberate and develop throughout Knecht’s life, as I have already demonstrated with *Der Regenmacher* and which I will demonstrate further with Knecht’s third Life *Indischer Lebenslauf* (*Indian Life*).

²⁶⁷ (373; SW 5, 343)

Before critiquing *Indischer Lebenslauf*, though, it is important to consider how the above analysis of *Stufen* and *Klage* can help us reconsider a very general and broad consensus regarding Hesse's poetry. Critics often disregard Hesse's poetry as trivial 'self-help' manuals or 'therapeutic' scribbles. Olaf Berwald argues that such criticisms result from regurgitating the same kinds of biographical interpretations of Hesse's work that I have argued stumps deeper analysis of his works. Berwald claims that scholars:

still have not even begun to approach Hesse's lyrical output with the thoroughness and perceptive openness that these multilayered yet accessible texts invite. Apart from reiterated divisions of Hesse's lyrical output into distinct phases based upon a narrow understanding of the author's biography, and redundant recyclings of evocative but unnuanced labels, such as "confessional poetry in the spirit of Goethe,"²⁶⁸ patient reflections on Hesse's lyrical works remain an exception.²⁶⁹

As we can see, Berwald accredits the superficial readings of Hesse's poetry to the prevalent tendency within Hesse scholarship to extract biographical instances from his life and read his texts as personal journals.²⁷⁰ Ingo Cornils further observes that such discrediting of Hesse's work extends beyond his poetry to the entirety of his corpus, and he states that much of this consensus may be a factor of 'the admittedly highly successful marketing strategists' who have helped to cultivate an image of Hesse as a spiritual guide.²⁷¹

What I have shown through the above analysis of *Stufen* and *Klage*, however, is that the ostensible simplicity of the poems in *Das Glasperlenspiel* is necessary within the context of the novel. They are *fictional* compositions by Hesse's *fictional* protagonist, and their nature as such allows them to serve a much larger function within the context of the whole novel. They are components of the narrative's complex Mask, and they reflect the numerous themes of the novel. Specifically, they help convey Knecht's continuing contemplation of the internality versus the externality of the Self. In a personal journal in

²⁶⁸ Here Berwald references both Bernhard Spies (*Hermann Hesses Lyrik: Psychologisierung als Modernisierung*). "Hermann Hesse und die literarische Moderne. Kulturwissenschaftliche Facetten einer literarischen Konstante im 20. Jahrhundert: Aufsätze. Ed. Andreas Solbach. Suhrkamp. Frankfurt am Main: 2004. 118-33) and Sikander Singh (*Hermann Hesse*. Reclam. Stuttgart: 2006. 247).

²⁶⁹ Berwald, Olaf. *Hesse's Poetry*. "Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." Ed. Ingo Cornils. Camden House. Rochester: 2009. (p. 242).

²⁷⁰ For more examples of similar readings of Hesse's work as 'self-help' guides see: Klaus-Peter Philippi (*Hermann Hesse und die heutige Germanistik in Deutschland*. "Hermann Hesse Jahrbuch." Vol. 2. Ed. Mauro Ponzì. Niemeyer. Tübingen: 2005. 19-33.); Ritchie Robertson. (*Gender Anxiety and the Shaping of the Self*. "The Cambridge Companion to the Modern German Novel. Ed. Graham Bartram. CUP. Cambridge: 2004. 46-61.)

²⁷¹ *Introduction: From Outsider to Global Player: Hermann Hesse in the Twenty-First Century*. "A Companion to the Works of Hermann Hesse." Ed. Ingo Cornils. Camden House. Rochester: 2009. (p. 7).

1957, Hesse reflected upon *Stufen*, stating himself that the poem is part of *Das Glasperlenspiel* and its author is Josef Knecht:

[...] the poem belongs to *Glasperlenspiel*, a book, in which, among other things, the religions and philosophies of India and China play a roll. There the idea of the rebirth of all beings is dominant, not in the sense of a Christ-like afterlife with paradise, purgatory, and hell. This idea is very familiar to me, as it is to the fictional author of that poem, Josef Knecht [my translation].

[...] das Gedicht gehört zum *Glasperlenspiel*, einem Buch, in dem unter anderem die Religionen und Philosophien Indiens und Chinas eine Rolle spielen. Dort ist die Vorstellung der Wiedergeburt aller Wesen dominierend, nicht im Sinn eines christlichen Jenseits mit Paradies, Fegefeuer und Hölle. Diese Vorstellung ist mir durchaus geläufig und sie ist es auch dem fiktiven Verfasser jenes Gedichtes, Josef Knecht.²⁷²

Here Hesse explicitly labels Knecht as the poet of *Stufen*, which emphasises the necessity of interpreting the poem within the context of *Das Glasperlenspiel*. Although Hesse likens himself to Knecht, such a comparison equally differentiates his personal, non-fictional endeavours from the fictional context of Knecht's. While my intentions are not to use Hesse's own reflections upon his fiction to substantiate my argument, in light of the above demonstration that *Stufen* and *Klage* are clear components of the novel's narrative Mask, Hesse's statement cannot be disregarded. As his statement indicates, Hesse certainly did not compose the poems found in *Das Glasperlenspiel* as irrelevant bonus material. They are carefully crafted as part of the novel. Unfortunately, multiple publications of Hesse's poetry often isolate it from its necessary context. My interpretation of Hesse's poetry, however, shows that when one reads the poems within the proper *textual* context, their seeming simplicity is revealed as part of a much more intricate design. Now that the importance of Knecht's (and Hesse's) poetry is established, we can continue with our analysis of Knecht's Lives.

5.5.3 Indischer Lebenslauf

Like in *Der Regenmacher*, Knecht situates *Indischer Lebenslauf* ('Indian Life') in an unspecified ancient time, which minimises his attention to historical detail and accents the story's focus on his personal reflections. The story begins:

When Vishnu, or rather Vishnu in his avatar as Rama, fought his savage battles with the prince of demons, one of his parts took on human shape and thus entered the

²⁷² (GW 11, 100)

cycle of forms once more. His name was Ravana and he lived as a warlike prince by the Great Ganges.

Einer von Vishnu, vielmehr dem als Rama menschengewordenen Teile von Vishnu, in einer seiner wilden Dämonenschlachten mit dem Sichelmondpfeil getöteten Dämonenfürsten war in Menschengestalt wieder in den Kreislauf der Gestaltungen engetreten, hieß Ravana und lebte als kriegerischer Fürst an der großen Ganga.²⁷³

As we can see, Knecht directly specifies the story's geographical scenery—somewhere near the Ganges—but he leaves its time period vague. He sets it in an ancient, mythological time through references to Indian (Hindu) mythology, specifically Vishnu, a central god of Hinduism, who often appears in the form of the avatar Rama and who once fought mythological battles with a prince of demons.²⁷⁴ The time during which these mythological battles are believed to be fought, however, is vague. With this imprecise historical period, Knecht therefore once again circumvents historical fact and focuses his narrative on imaginative projections of himself through the novel's protagonist Dasa.

Unsurprisingly, the name *Dasa* carries symbolic significance as well. It is a Sanskrit word that means 'devotee' or *servant*.²⁷⁵ Therefore, like Knecht (2) in *Der Regenmacher*, Dasa (the character) is a fictional representation of Knecht, and the occurrences of Dasa's life are symbolic depictions of Knecht's self-exploration through a Mask of Fiction.²⁷⁶ *Indischer Lebenslauf* also engages with many of the same themes as *Der Regenmacher* (service, transience, experience, etc.), and it chronicles Dasa's life throughout a number of experiences that interlace these themes using imagery, actions, and internal musings. A brief summary of the Life is necessary in order to examine how the story thematically parallels *Der Regenmacher* and Knecht's biography.

Dasa is the son of a prince. His mother dies when he is young, and his father remarries a woman with private ambitions to power. After giving birth to her own son Nala, the woman contrives a plan to remove Dasa from his role as his father's successor.

²⁷³ (520; SW 5, 480)

²⁷⁴ Knott, Kim. *Hinduism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press. Oxford, New York: 1998. (p. 16, 18, & 47).

²⁷⁵ "Dasa." Def. 2. *SpokenSanskrit.de*. Web: 1 December 2015.

²⁷⁶ According to Joseph Mileck, Dasa's name is the only one of significance in the Life. He states, 'All the Indian names in *Indischer Lebenslauf* are appropriately Indian, but with the exception of Dasa, none is readily accountable or even invites a guess. They may have been purposive choices, but they may also have been casual recollections from Hesse's reading of such of India's epics as the *Mahabharata* or the *Ramajana*. Without author comment, no more than conjecture is possible' (*Life and Art*, 282).

However, one of his father's court Brahmans discovers her plot and arranges to sneak Dasa away with a group of herdsmen. Dasa leaves with unusual fervour and happily lives with these herdsmen throughout his youth, travelling the countryside. (Wayward travelling of this nature is a common theme found in German Romanticism, and Hesse frequently revisits this theme in his novels).

One day Dasa wanders away from the herdsmen and into the woods, where he encounters a holy man—a yogi—who motionlessly meditates and never speaks a word. Dasa admires the yogi, perceiving his inaction and meditation as an embodiment of intransigence and permanence. Out of respect for the yogi, Dasa brings him gifts for the few days that the herdsmen occupy the area. Soon after this encounter, Dasa witnesses his brother Nala succeed his father as prince at a ceremony in the city where he lived as a young child. While at this festival, Dasa observes many young women, which intrigue him and instigate his aspiration to marry. Soon after the festival, he travels with the herdsmen to the wetlands, where he meets his future wife Pravati. Nala and his court one day trek to these same wetlands to hunt, and upon seeing Pravati, Nala woos her and wins her over. When he discovers this, Dasa murders Nala and flees the region, eventually ending up in the woods where he initially encountered the yogi.

Finding the yogi still there, Dasa shuns the life of experience and deems the yogi his master—even though the yogi never vocally agrees to this role—in order to find the peace that he perceives the yogi to have found. However, Dasa is unsuccessful in this aspiration, and out of frustration, he one day petulantly demands that the yogi tell him how to achieve his presumably static state of being. The yogi merely laughs and speaks one word: *Maya*. *Maya* is a Hindu concept that, in most contexts, concisely refers to the illusion of reality.²⁷⁷ This is a crucial word choice on Knecht's (and Hesse's) part because it draws attention to the externality of the Self with which Dasa struggles to accept. (This will grow clearer through the analysis following this summary.) Furthermore, the yogi's reaction to Dasa contains two noteworthy thematic parallels from our previous analyses. First, the yogi's laughter echoes the theme of humour in *Der Steppenwolf*: his laughter serves the same purpose as that of the Immortals in Haller's manuscript. When Dasa asks the yogi how to

²⁷⁷ For a more thorough explanation of *Maya* and its various interpretations see: Hiriyanna, M. *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers. Delhi: 1995.

achieve his enlightenment, the yogi's laughter encourages Dasa to recognise the importance of humour for the same reasons that Mozart, Hermine, and Pablo encourage Haller to recognise this importance in *Der Steppenwolf*. The yogi's exclamation of 'Maya' and his laughter together imply that Dasa's perception of 'reality' is far more *superficial* than he may be aware. Second, it is significant that the yogi does not explain the meaning of his laughter or his purpose for laughing. Much like Turu the rainmaker, he just 'lays it before' Dasa and teaches through 'impression', leaving Dasa to comprehend the yogi's action of his own accord. (The yogi's perpetual silence is another instance of his teaching through the process of 'impression' as well. This will be further expounded below.)

After his exclamation, the yogi sends Dasa to the stream to fetch a gourd of water. At the stream, Dasa finds Pravati, who informs him that after Nala's death, he became the new prince. She convinces him (with little effort) to assume his rightful role as prince. He then returns to his childhood home and lives a lavish life, during which Pravati bears him a son. However, Dasa eventually goes to war with a neighbouring prince, loses the war (and his son in the process), and is finally imprisoned. When he awakens from his first night of imprisonment, though, he finds himself standing at the very stream where Pravati had previously found him. He quickly understands that his life as a prince was a vision, and he ecstatically determines that this realistic vision has taught him the meaning of *Maya*. He then lives out the rest of his life in the woods as an accepted apprentice of the yogi.

Through this summary, it should be apparent that *Indischer Lebenslauf* resonates many of the same themes as the Life and poetry analysed above: service, experience, learning/teaching through 'impression', and transience/permanence. I have already demonstrated the parallel between Dasa's and Knecht's names. But, as this is Knecht's most obvious symbolic portrayal of his own life, the extent to which Knecht relates Dasa's name to his decisions and providences requires further examination. For example, when Dasa first witnesses the yogi, he immediately reveres him as a master:

More motionless than a tree, whose leaves and twigs stir in respiration, motionless as the stone image of a god, the yogi sat before his hut; and from the moment he had seen him the boy too remained motionless, fascinated, fettered, magically attracted by the sight. He stood staring at the Master.

Regungsloser als ein Baum, der doch mit Laub und Zweigen atmend sich bewegt, regungslos wie ein steinernes Götterbild saß der Yogin an seinem Orte, und ebenso

regungslos verharrte vom Augenblick an, in dem er ihn wahrgenommen, der Knabe, am Boden festgebannt, in Fesseln geschlagen und zauberisch angezogen von dem Bilde. Er stand und starrte den Meister an.²⁷⁸

This encounter occurs before Dasa decides to learn the yogi's way of life. His perception that the yogi is a *Master* thus indicates his own unconscious desire toward service and foreshadows his future as the yogi's servant. As noted before, not long after Dasa's mother dies, Dasa is forced to leave his home and his father. As a wayward herdsman, then, he is in essence an orphan. Like both Knecht and Knecht (2), he finds camaraderie through services to others. The narrative provides little evidence that Dasa is particularly dutiful towards the herdsmen with whom he travels, but as the above-cited episode with the yogi indicates, the inclination to serve is present in Dasa, the same as in Knecht and Knecht (2).

Dasa's inclination to serve perpetuates throughout the story, and eventually this inclination is fully actualised. For example, while Dasa believes that he is a prince, he responds to his foe's violence with counter-violence, even against his own preferences. He reacts out of a sense of duty and service to his subjects and, most importantly for himself, a sense of duty to his son:

Thievery and the flouting of his authority could not suffice to kindle his rage and spur him to action. It would have been more natural to him to have dismissed the news of the raid with a compassionate smile. But to have done so, he knew, would have been to commit a bitter injustice to the messenger. [...] Moreover, all his other subjects, though they had not been harmed in the least, would also have felt wronged. They would have resented his passivity, not understanding why the prince could not protect his country better. [...] He realized that it was his duty to undertake this expedition of reprisal. But what is duty? How many duties there are that we so often neglect without the slightest compunction? [...] As soon as the question arose in his mind, his heart answered it [...] in the person of his son.

[...] der Diebstahl und die Beleidigung seiner Fürstenrechte nicht hinreichen würden, ihn zu Zorn und Tat zu entflammen, und daß es ihm gemäßer gewesen wäre, die Nachricht vom Viehraub mit einem mitleidigen Lächeln abzutun. Damit jedoch, das wußte er, hätte er dem Boten, der mit seiner Botschaft bis zu Erschöpfung gerannt war, bitter Unrecht getan, und nicht weniger den Menschen, welche beraubt worden, und jene, welche gefangen, weggeführt und aus ihrer Heimat und ihrem friedlichen Leben in Fremde und Sklaverei verschleppt worden waren. Ja, auch allen seinen anderen Untertanen, welchen kein Haar gekrümmt worden war, hätte er mit einem Verzicht auf kriegerische Rache Unrecht getan, sie hätten es schwer ertragen und nicht begriffen, daß ihr Fürst sein Land nicht besser

²⁷⁸ (523; SW 5, 482-83)

beschütze [...] Er sah ein, es sei seine Pflicht, diesen Racheritt zu tun. Aber was ist Pflicht? Wie viele Pflichten gibt es, die wir oft und ohne jede Herzensregung verabsäumen! [...] Kaum war die Frage in ihm auf gestiegen, so hatte sein Herz schon Antwort gegeben [...] in seinem Sohne!²⁷⁹

This passage not only illustrates Dasa's disposition to service, but it also offers an important reflection upon the practice of serving. Dasa questions why this service is more necessary than others and why he cannot disregard it as he might another service. While he believes his son's well-being is the definitive answer to this question, his consideration of his other subjects cannot be disregarded. His role as prince, above all, is a service to his community. Like Knecht (2), Dasa's inclination to serve is so entrenched that it steers him toward a position of service upon which the majority of his society depends. Knecht's portrayals of both Knecht (2)'s and Dasa's achievement of these roles in their society foreshadows Knecht's own ascension to the role of Magister Ludi. That is, Knecht's depictions of characters with strong propensities to serve are fictional portrayals of his recognising the same inclination within himself. Thus, much like how Dasa's encounter with the yogi signifies Dasa's inclination to serve and foreshadows his eventual service, *Der Regenschmied* and *Indischer Lebenslauf*—written early in Knecht's own life—signify *Knecht's* predisposition to serve and foreshadow his eventual path toward a high level of service to Castalia: that of Magister Ludi.

An inclination to serve is not the only attribute that Dasa shares with Knecht and Knecht (2). He also shares their ambivalence towards the acceptance of life's transitory nature: although he recognises the transience of meaning, he simultaneously longs for a sense of a fixed Self. This is evident through his admiration of the yogi (discussed below), but also through a juxtaposition that Knecht creates between physical movement and physical stasis. Throughout the story, Knecht equates Dasa's happiness with the freedom of a nomadic lifestyle and equates his dissatisfaction with the restriction of immobility. For instance, when he first leaves his father's court to join the herdsmen, Dasa is oddly cheerful and willing. The story states that '[...] Dasa gladly joined the band of herdsmen' '[...] *Dasa schoß sich ihr und den Hirten gerne und freundlich an*].²⁸⁰ Dasa's atypical enthusiasm for leaving his home behind at such a young age reveals his natural drive for

²⁷⁹ (544-45; SW 5, 503)

²⁸⁰ (521; SW 5, 481)

experience and self-development. And it is clear in the narrative that, as he travels and learns the herdsmen's lifestyle, his sense of a permanent home quickly fades:

He liked the life of the herdsmen, learned to know the forest and its trees and fruits, loved the mango, the wild fig, and the varinga tree, plucked the sweet lotus root out of green forest pools, on feast days wore a wreath of the red blossoms of the flame-of-the-woods. [...] Dasa did not completely forget his former home and his former life, but soon these seemed to him like a dream.

Ihm gefiel das wohl, er lernte die Hirten und Kühe und ihr Leben kennen, lernte den Wald kennen und seine Bäume und Früchte, liebte den Mango, die Waldfeige und den Varingabaum, fischte die süße Lotoswurzel aus grünen Waldteichen, trug an Festtagen einen Kranz aus den roten Blüten der Waldflamme [...] Dasa vergaß seine vorige Heimat und sein voriges Leben nicht ganz, doch war es ihm bald ein Traum geworden.²⁸¹

This passage shows that Dasa relishes in the nomadic life of the herdsmen. Knecht portrays this period of travel as Dasa's most content period. No major conflicts arise for Dasa during this time, and, most importantly, during this period he has agency in his own outcome. Dasa's life with the herdsmen is the only period of his life that ends by his own decision: he abandons it when he settles and marries Pravati. During all the other stages of his life, on the other hand, Dasa has no agency in his fortunes and, more often than not, his *misfortunes*. For example, he has no choice in leaving his home behind at the beginning of the story; this fate is decided for him through a plot to end his life. Furthermore, when he leaves the herdsmen and marries Pravati, the story tells us that 'his happiness did not last long' [*sein Glück währte nicht lange*]:

There was ample room for much else, for vexatious demands on the part of his father-in-law, for the taunts of his brothers-in-law, and for the whims of his young wife.

[...] es blieb noch Raum für mancherlei, für lästige Ansprüche des Schwiegervaters, für Sticheleien von seiten der Schwäger, für Launen der jungen Frau.²⁸²

It is clear that the bliss Dasa experiences while travelling with the herdsmen quickly fades when he settles. In addition to this discontent throughout his marriage, it is important to note that the marriage culminates in devastation, calamity, and Dasa's fugitive flight from his home. Similarly, Dasa's later reunion with Pravati—albeit this occurs in either a vision

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² (528; SW 5, 487)

or a hallucination—also generates a period of suffering over which he has no control, and it, too, ends with devastation: the ravaging of his city, the death of his son, and the crucially symbolic image of Dasa physically fettered as a war prisoner. One can discern a clear pattern from these examples: Dasa's periods of physical stasis always leave him stunted, restricted, and discontent. But as a nomadic herdsman, he is content and in control of his fate: again, it is the only stage of his life that he abandons of his own accord. It is worth recalling that he does this out of infatuation for Pravati, though, and not out of dissatisfaction with the nomadic lifestyle. His decision resounds a theme from Knecht's other fictional writings. Just as Dasa's unusual enthusiasm to leave his initial home demonstrates his natural drive for experiential growth, his later conscious choice to cease the nomadic lifestyle demonstrates an equal but incompatible drive for a sense of *permanence*. These illustrations of Dasa's ambivalent feelings toward transience are further expressions of Knecht's own reflections upon the transience/intransience divide. They express the same sentiments that he craftily illustrates through the meteor shower and Knecht (2)'s sacrifice in *Der Regenmacher* and which he states more directly in *Klage* and *Stufen*.

As readers, we are able to discern that the juxtaposition between the nomadic lifestyle and the settled one is reflective of Dasa's ambivalence toward a transient versus intransient state of Self. We can observe the full scale of Dasa's narrated life and assess his comfort or discontent within its various stages. Therefore, we can also draw the conclusion that Dasa's happiness is unwavering when he is nomadic (i.e. when he does not resist a transitory state). Dasa, however, does not detect this pattern, as indicated by his continuing pursuit of permanence throughout the narrative. While the story's illustration of the transience/intransience dichotomy indicates Knecht's precocious recognition that intransience (i.e. a fixed Self) is an illusion, in Dasa he designs a character who is unable to recognise his aspiration toward permanence as the source of his frequent grief. Through Dasa, Knecht not only illustrates the futility of pursuing a fixed sense of Self, but he also indicates his own awareness of humanity's blindness towards this futility. As Dasa is a representation of Knecht, Dasa's pursuit of permanence thus comments on *Knecht's* inability to cease this same pursuit in light of his clear awareness that its aim is an illusion. *Indischer Lebenslauf*, like the poem *Stufen*, is therefore a figurative exposition of

humanity's potent drive toward a fixed sense of Self, and it displays Knecht's recognition of this drive within himself.

The story's conclusion is the starkest illustration of this very potency. Even after Dasa's vision brings him misery, he continues to pursue a state of intransigence by settling in the forest with the yogi as his accepted apprentice. This concluding image of Dasa in the forest with the yogi not only indicates that the yogi symbolises intransigence in the story, but also that he symbolises the very *illusion* of intransigence with which Knecht's Lives and poetry are primarily concerned. It is crucial to focus more closely on the yogi and the illusion he represents because this image not only concludes Knecht's story, but it also ends the novel *and* Hesse's entire oeuvre without ever actualising the individuation that the protagonist seeks. We only see Dasa's ongoing commitment to an illusion. By examining the yogi, we will be able to understand that the novel's seemingly enigmatic ending is Hesse's conclusive depiction of the Self as an endless process of external construction (i.e. a Mask). The following sub-section provides this analysis.

5.5.3.1 The Yogi

Throughout this sub-section, the meaning of the yogi's previous exclamation—*Maya!*—will grow clear. We will see that, as the only word the yogi speaks in the story, 'Maya' is the yogi's proclamation of the illusory reality he represents. However, while the reader is able to perceive the yogi's symbolism, it is significant that Dasa does not. He is deluded by the yogi's illusory state and is thus drawn to it, as indicated by the story's numerous positive representations of the yogi's permanent state. However, the narrative never illustrates that Dasa achieves the same sense of fixed Self that he perceives the yogi to embody. The narrative ends by showing Dasa in the yogi's company; but, with no clear illustration that Dasa actually attains the same state as the yogi, the story's ending suggests that Dasa will maintain his pursuit of this illusion.

As aforementioned, Dasa's encounters with the yogi are the story's only exceptions to the above-demonstrated pattern of negative outcomes that arise from immobility throughout Dasa's life. These positive depictions have an ironic function: they signify the stronghold that the illusion of intransigence has on Dasa. For example, when Dasa first witnesses the yogi, he admires his physical immobility and perceives it as an external embodiment of an internally fixed state:

More motionless than a tree, whose leaves and twigs stir in respiration, motionless as the *stone image of a god*, the yogi sat before his hut; and from the moment he had seen him the boy too remained motionless, fascinated, fettered, magically attracted by the sight. He stood staring at the Master. He saw a spot of sunlight on his shoulder, a spot of sunlight on one of his relaxed hands; he saw the flecks of light move slowly away and new ones come into being, and he began to understand that the streaks of light had nothing to do with this man, nor the songs of birds and the chatter of monkeys from the woods all around [...] nor all the multifarious life of the forest. All this, Dasa sensed, everything the eyes could see, the ears could hear, everything beautiful or ugly, engaging or frightening—all of it had no connection at all to this holy man. [...] The whole world around him *had become meaningless superficiality*. [...] For this yogi, he felt, had plunged through the surface of the world, through the superficial world, into the ground of being, into the secret of all things. He had broken through and thrown off the magical net of the senses, the play of light, sound color, and sensation, and lived secure in the essential and unchanging [my italics].

Regungsloser als ein Baum, der doch mit Laub und Zweigen atmend sich bewegt, regungslos wie ein steinernes Götterbild saß der Yogin an seinem Orte, und ebenso regungslos verharrte vom Augenblick an, in dem er ihn wahrgenommen, der Knabe, am Boden festgebannt, in Fesseln geschlagen und zauberisch angezogen vom dem Bilde. Er stand und starrte den Meister an, sah einen Fleck Sonnenlicht auf seiner Schulter, einen Fleck Sonnenlicht auf einer seiner ruhenden Hände liegen, sah die Lichtflecken langsam wandern und neue entstehen und begann im Stehen und Staunen zu begreifen, daß die Sonnenlichter nichts mit diesem Mann zu tun hätten, noch die Vogelgesänge und Affenstimmen aus dem Wald ringsum, [...] noch das ganze vielfältige Leben des Waldes. Dies alles, spürte Dasa, alles, was die Augen sehen, die Ohren hören, was schön oder häßlich, was lieblich oder furchterregend ist, dies alles stand in keiner Beziehung zu dem heiligen Mann, die ganze Welt um ihn her war ihm *Oberfläche* und bedeutungslos geworden [...] der Yogin war durch die Oberfläche der Welt, durch die Oberflächenwelt hinabgesunken in den Grund des Seienden, ins Geheimnis aller Dinge, er hatte das Zaubernetz der Sinne, die Spiele des Lichtes, der Geräusche, der Farben, der Empfindungen durchbrochen und von sich gestreift und weilte festgewurzelt im Wesentlichen und Wandellosen [my italics].²⁸³

The ebullience of this passage's description connotes the strong appeal of the yogi and the state of permanence that Dasa perceives him to embody. Dasa interprets a division between the yogi's external body and his internal mind. This is another literary representation of the internal/external divide we have seen portrayed in many works, such as Hesse's *Peter Camenzind* or Yeats's *The Mask*. This is significant because Dasa's attraction to the yogi's state is ultimately an attraction to the deeply seated western perception that 'truth' (and the

²⁸³ (523-24; SW 5, 482-83)

Self) is internal, which we have also seen depicted in these other works. The passage states that the yogi had ‘plunged through the surface of the world and [...] lived secure in the essential and unchanging’ [*durch die Oberfläche der Welt {...} hinabgesunken {...} und weilte festgewurzelt im Wesentlichen und Wandellosen*]. This indicates that the internal/external division portrayed in the passage is a division of the Self, and furthermore, that Dasa perceives the yogi to have gained access to an internal, intransigent, and thus ‘true’ Self. Knecht strengthens Dasa’s interpretation by describing the yogi as a ‘stone image’ [*steinernes Götterbild*]. This is not the novel’s first depiction of a statue as a symbol for permanence: as shown in a previous section, the biographer employs this same metaphor to describe Castalia’s perception of individuals as fixed ‘types’ [*Typen*].²⁸⁴ While Knecht’s biographer institutes the metaphor as an ironic gesture to signify Castalia’s removal of individuality from its ideology (see section 5.3.1), Knecht’s description of the yogi as a ‘stone image’ amplifies Dasa’s conception that the Self is inflexible. We will see further below, however, that the story’s conclusion indicates that his understanding is a result of the potency of the very illusion the yogi represents.

This encounter strongly makes a mark on Dasa because he returns to the yogi twice throughout the narrative. Knecht attributes this lasting allure to two major thematic concerns that he frequently revisits in his fiction: (1) service and (2) comprehension through ‘impressions’. For example, after equating the yogi with a statue, the story describes the manner of Dasa’s comprehension:

The boy, although once tutored by Brahmans who had cast many a ray of spiritual light upon him, did not understand this with his intellect and would have been unable to say anything about it in words, but *he sensed it* as in blessed moments one senses the presence of divinity; he sensed it as a shudder of awe and admiration for this man, sensed it as love for him and longing for a life such as this man sitting in meditation seemed to be living. Strangely, the old man reminded him of his origins, of his royalty. Touched to the quick, he stood there [...] captivated by the incomprehensible *stillness and impassivity* of the man, by the bright serenity of his face, by the power and composure of his posture, by the complete dedication of his *service* [my italics].

²⁸⁴ (12; SW 5, 9) The statue is also an important symbol in Hesse’s *Narziss und Goldmund*. In this novel, Goldmund, who is most content when he lives a nomadic and proactively experiential lifestyle, nonetheless aspires to be a sculptor because sculptures are intransigent, permanent, and therefore, in his view, the highest form of beauty.

Der Knabe, obwohl einst von Brahmanen erzogen und mit manchem Strahl geistigen Lichtes beschenkt, verstand dieses nicht mit dem Verstande und hätte mit Worten nicht darüber zu sagen gewußt, aber *er spürte es*, wie man zu gesegneten Stunden die Nähe des Göttlichen spürt, er spürte es als Schauer der Ehrfurcht und der Bewunderung für diesen Mann, spürte es als Liebe zu ihm und als Sehnsucht nach einem Leben, wie dieser in der Versenkung Sitzende es zu leben schien. Und so stand Dasa, auf wunderliche Weise durch den Alten an seine Herkunft [...] eingefangen von der unbegreiflichen *Stille und Unberührbarkeit seiner Gestalt*, von der lichten Ruhe seines Antlitzes, von der Kraft und Sammlung seiner Haltung, der vollkommenen Hingabe seines *Dienstes* [my italics].²⁸⁵

The first phrase I have italicised demonstrates that Dasa's own understanding of the yogi is not an articulation of his 'intellect' [*Verstande*]; he instead 'senses' [*spürte*] what the yogi embodies. Portrayals of the lasting effects of comprehending by way of 'impression' have been thoroughly demonstrated in my analysis of *Der Regenmacher*. In light of this, we can see how Knecht's return to this theme in *Indischer Lebenslauf* explains the yogi's continued allure throughout Dasa's narrative. He returns to the yogi because he is unconsciously attracted to an idea of the Self that arises through an 'impression' of the yogi. This 'impression' is one of a fixed, stable Self (indicated in the passage by the second phrase I have italicised).

As shown in the explanation of Nietzsche's Masks in Chapter 2, 'impressions' are agglomerate. That is, while the intellect is shaped through words, which have illusory and *presumed* fixed meaning, 'impressions' are by nature fluid and therefore contain many components that cannot be fully represented and articulated through language. Knecht's description of the yogi is thus multifaceted and comprehensive; it contains many elements. In order to emphasise the yogi's potent allure for Dasa, Knecht incorporates one particularly fundamental component into the 'impression' left by the yogi: service (see third italicised phrase). The significance of this theme in Knecht's writings is established at this point. It is depicted as an unconscious personality trait that steers the fate of his protagonists. Therefore, by weaving service into the 'impression' described above, Knecht bolsters the impact of the yogi's 'impression' on Dasa. Furthermore, the intersection of service and intransigence within this 'impression' offers an explanation for why Dasa does not discern the pattern of distress that his continued pursuit of a fixed Self brings throughout the story. It suggests that Dasa's attraction to intransience is as deeply

²⁸⁵ (524; SW 5, 483)

manifested as his fate to serve. The element of service in Dasa's 'impression' of the yogi therefore renders him unable to sense the futility of his venture toward a fixed sense of Self.

The yogi's influence over Dasa is sustained throughout the narrative. After his initial encounter with the yogi, Dasa returns to him on two occasions. For example, after fleeing his home and wife, Dasa fondly reminisces on his days as a vagabond. But he soon abandons these memories and returns to the yogi:

And one day his roaming led him through a hilly region of lush grass which looked lovely and serene and seemed to welcome him, as though he ought to know it. [...] Now he looked back upon it across vast chasms of irrevocability. [...] It all sounded and smelled of refuge, home; never before, used as he was to the roaming herdsman's life, had he ever felt that a countryside was so homelike, so much part of him. [...] He felt drawn to the forest which lay beyond the green meadows. In among the trees, amid the dusk speckled by sunlight, the feeling of returning home intensified, and led him along paths which his feet seemed to find by themselves, until he passed through a fern thicket, a dense little forest of ferns in the midst of the greater woods, and reached a tiny hut. On the ground in front of the hut sat the motionless yogi whom he had once watched, and to whom he had brought milk and butter.

Und eines Tages führte die Wanderung ihn durch eine grasreiche Hügelgegend, die mutete ihn schön und heiter an und schien ihn zu begrüßen, als müsse er sie kennen: [...] aus fernen Tiefen der Unwiederbringlichkeit blickte sie zu ihm herüber. [...] Wie Zuflucht und Heimat klang und duftete es hier, noch nie hatte er, des schweifenden Hirtenlebens gewohnt, eine Gegend so als ihm zugehörig und heimatlich empfunden. [...] Es zog ihn über die grünen Weiden hin zum Wald, unter die Bäume, in die mit kleinen Sonnenflecken bestreute Dämmerung, und hier verstärkte sich jenes Gefühl von Wiederkehr und Heimat und führte ihn Wege, die seine Füße von selbst zu finden schienen, bis er durch eine Farnwildnis, einen dichten Kleinwald inmitten des großen Waldes, zu einer winzigen Hütte gelangte, und vor der Hütte an der Erde saß der regungslose Yogin, den er einst belauscht und dem er Milch gebracht hatte.²⁸⁶

This passage not only accents the lasting allure of the yogi, but it also reinforces Knecht's frequent literary indications that 'impressions' are more influential forms of comprehension than intellectual assessment. Although Dasa is able to coherently process the sensations that his memories as a nomad evoke, it is evident in the passage that his unconscious pull toward the yogi overpowers these coherent thoughts. In other words, the abstract 'impression' of the yogi shapes Dasa's aspirations more concretely than his own rationale. This reinforced portrayal of 'impressions' also reminds one of the above shown

²⁸⁶ (531-33; SW 5, 490-92)

juxtaposition between Dasa's life as a nomad and one of stability. It is once again evident that Dasa does not discern the negative effects of his strive for stability. While he consciously acknowledges that his wayward travelling incites congenial memories, he nonetheless reburies these recollections when the unconscious allure of the yogi spurs him forward. This is clear when, upon this second encounter with the yogi, the potency of the yogi's image entices Dasa to stay with him and achieve an intransigent state similar to the yogi's:

Dasa stopped, as if he had just *awakened*. Everything here was the same as it had been; here no time had passed, there had been no killing and suffering. Here, it seemed, time and life were hard as crystal, frozen in eternity. [...] Dasa lived with him like a *servant* in the presence of a nobleman [...] [my italics].

Wie *erwachend* blieb Dasa stehen. Hier war alles, wie es einst gewesen war, hier war keine Zeit vergangen, war nicht gemordet und gelitten worden; hier stand, so schien es, die Zeit und das Leben fest wie Kristall, gestillt und verewigt. [...] Dasa lebte neben dem Ehrwürdigen wie ein *Diener* in der Nähe eines Großen [my italics].²⁸⁷

As this shows, Knecht once again links Dasa's draw to the yogi with his inborn servitude, amplifying the effect of the yogi's apparent intransigence. Dasa's previous perception that the yogi retains a stable sense of 'Self' intensely re-emerges and compels him to remain in the forest. As the pattern of Dasa's life reveals prior to this second encounter, though, his aspiration for solidity is never actualised. Thus is the case when Dasa remains in the forest to model himself after the yogi. For instance, when imitating the yogi's demeanour, his attention is easily diverted:

[...] he tired quickly; he found his limbs stiff and his back aching, was plagued by mosquitoes or bothered by all sorts of itches which compelled him to move, to scratch himself, and finally to stand up again.

[...] war er meistens recht bald ermüdet, hatte steife Glieder und Schmerzen im Rücken bekommen, war von Mücken belästigt oder von wunderlichen Empfindungen auf der Haut, von Jucken und Reizungen überfallen worden, welche ihn zwangen, sich wieder zu rühren, sich zu kratzen und am Ende wieder aufzustehen.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷ (531-33; SW 5, 490-92)

²⁸⁸ (534; SW 5, 493)

The quickness of Dasa's distraction hints at the *illusion* the yogi represents in the story. It suggests that the yogi's state is unattainable. This particular distraction is only one instance of failure within a continuous pattern of unsuccessful attempts. Therefore, Dasa's initial encounter with the yogi sets him on a trajectory toward a stable sense of Self, but as this second encounter reveals, Dasa cannot achieve it. (Below, my explication of the story's inconclusive ending will confirm the constancy of this pattern.) Dasa's consternation at his moot attempts eventually culminates in an outburst at the yogi, during which Dasa orates his dispiriting life story and pleads with the yogi to advise him how to achieve his intransigent state. The yogi only responds, however, with laughter and the critical exclamation '*Maya!*'²⁸⁹ Discouraged, Dasa then leaves the yogi and (unknowingly) lives a lifetime through a momentary vision.

In the section analysing the poem *Stufen*, I explain Martin Swales's contention that epiphanies in the *Bildungsroman* model occur in a 'relativizing' pattern. That is, moments of realisation (when finality and 'truth' emerge to a character) soften the effect of previous realisations. *Stufen* comments on this process, indicating Knecht's awareness that his own aspiration for a sense of solid Self is an illusion that each of his 'awakenings' [*Erwachen*] resurfaces and magnifies. Dasa is an archetype of someone blinded by the radiance of this very illusion. As we have seen, the yogi lingers at the edge of his consciousness, guiding him back to the forest through each stage (*Stufe*) of his life. This is evident through all of Dasa's encounters with the yogi and especially his final one. For instance, when Dasa first decides to remain in the forest, his realisation of this desire is explicitly labelled as an 'awakening' [*Erwachen*] (see two passages above). Dasa experiences a number of these awakenings, and the most crucial of which relativizes his initial awakening and reveals to him the same pattern of failed attempts at intransigence that we have so far uncovered:

It had been Maya! Dasa stood there shattered. Tears ran down his cheeks. [...] The chances were that this young man had already been *wakened* once or several times before, and had breathed a mouthful of reality, for otherwise he would not have come here and stayed so long. But now he seemed to have been *properly awakened* and become ripe for setting out on the long journey. It would take a good many years just to teach this young man the proper posture and breathing. [...] It bound him in *discipline and service*. There is no more to be told about Dasa's life, for all the rest took place in a realm beyond pictures and stories. He never again left the forest [my italics].

²⁸⁹ (538; SW 5, 495)

[...] es war Maya gewesen! Dasa stand erschüttert, es liefen ihm Tränen über die Wangen. Vermutlich war ja dieser junge Mensch schon früher einmal oder einige Male geweckt worden und hatte einen Mundvoll Wirklichkeit geatmet, sonst wäre er nicht hierher gekommen und so lange geblieben; jetzt aber schien er *richtig geweckt* worden zu sein und reif für den Antritt des langen Weges. Es würde manches Jahr brauchen, um diesem jungen Menschen auch nur Haltung und Atmen richtig beizubringen. [...] [Der] nahm ihn in *Zucht und Dienst*. Mehr is von Dasa Leben nicht zu erzählen, das übrige vollzog sich jenseits der Bilder und Geschichten. Er hat den Wald nicht mehr verlassen [my italics].²⁹⁰

It is important to note that this passage spans the final pages in the novel, and the last line I have included is the final line of both the story and the novel. We can thus see that a significant amount of space is allotted for expounding on the grandeur of Dasa's final, culminated epiphany. And, as evidenced by the segments I have emphasised in the passage above, many of the most crucial themes of *Indischer Lebenslauf* (and of the entire novel) are laced into this final *Erwachen*: service, 'impressions', and an explicit indication that the moment occurs as an awakening. These final pages of the Life and novel are extremely significant because they craft together these major themes and unveil the characteristically Nietzschean nature of the Self that Knecht constructs throughout his fictional Lives. Most importantly, though, is that this final depiction of the Self that Knecht designs is also *Hesse's*. It is therefore crucial to understand how the themes that concoct the patchwork of Knecht's final awakening are pieced together to 'impress' the exact opposite definition of the Self to which Dasa believes he awakens.

It is clear from the above passage that Dasa's final awakening relativizes his previous ones. It reveals to Dasa the ostensible reasons why his life has thus far developed through a pattern of unfulfillment. As is often the nature of epiphanies, the unique appearance of this moment convinces Dasa that his current realisation is a capstone: he perceives that his newfound outlook can reveal the exit from the path he traverses and can illuminate the route to the stability he craves. Dasa thus remains in the *service* of the yogi, once again convinced that he can obtain the intransigence that the yogi connotes. However, the ambiguity of the story's ending contradicts Dasa's epiphany. It suggests that his awakening merely onsets yet another phase in the pattern the story has illustrated. That is, the narrative never conclusively illustrates Dasa's final achievement or failure. Instead, the

²⁹⁰ (555-58; SW 5, 513-16)

reader is simply informed that ‘there is no more to be told about Dasa’s life’ [*Mehr is von Dasas Leben nicht zu erzählen*].

The ambiguity of this statement situates Dasa’s goal outside the reader’s line of vision. In other words, the attainability of the yogi’s state is removed from the parameters of the narrative, leaving the reader to envision Dasa’s achievement of his/her own accord. Thus the implied success of Dasa’s final aim for a stable sense of Self is far less tangible than the concrete illustrations of his failed attempts throughout the whole narrative. With no conclusive evidence of Dasa’s success, this open ending reiterates the *illusiv*e nature of Dasa’s goal. One can certainly imagine that Dasa eventually actualises his objective, but the story’s dependency on the reader’s own foresight to assume this determination leaves Dasa’s final sense of solidity lingering in a realm of uncertainty.

This ending is an appropriate extension of the pattern of Dasa’s life that unfolds throughout the narrative because it puts a final sheen on the allure and inescapable temptation of Dasa’s goal. Furthermore, it resembles the principal message of Knecht’s poetry: ‘To stiffen into stone, to persevere! / We long forever for the right to stay. [...] And we shall never rest upon our way’ [*Einmal zu Stein erstarren! Einmal dauern! / Danach ist unsre Sehnsucht ewig rege, {...} Und wird doch nie zur Rast auf unsrem Wege*].²⁹¹ As I have shown, Dasa’s life is driven by this very perseverance. He is Knecht’s literary representation of humanity’s futile drive toward a fixed sense of Self. And with no conclusive depiction of his ever ‘stiffening into stone’, it is clear that Dasa’s pattern of futile attempts are an endless cycle. The closing image of Dasa in the service of the yogi is thus a symbol of Dasa’s *service to an illusion*.

The conclusion to *Indischer Lebenslauf* provides significant evidence for the overall concern of this dissertation. It is not only an ending to the story, but also to the novel and Hesse’s entire oeuvre. My interpretation of this ending differs significantly from most, and it is worth briefly considering this difference because it offers an entirely new perspective on Hesse’s novels. Many critics have understood the conclusion of the story as a signification of Dasa’s definitive success in individuation. Swales, for example, argues that the absence of any episodes illustrative of Dasa’s success in fact assures his imminent achievement. He claims:

²⁹¹ (429; SW 5, 397)

Dasa has reached the point where his life leaves behind that mode of being which can be chronicled narratively. The lived peace, the certainty beyond friction and change, the wholeness of wisdom—these cannot be conveyed in plot or palpable image. This perception, with which Hesse's novel closes, focuses for us the central thematic concerns within *The Glass Bead Game*: the nature of the story and of the hero, and above all, the relationship of that life, of that selfhood, to notions of human and cultural wholeness.²⁹²

Swales's contention is a common one.²⁹³ But this interpretation places far too much faith in Knecht's (and indeed Hesse's) optimism about the notion of an intransigent Self. While Hesse's early protagonists are certainly optimistic about the stability of an internal Self, it is important to recall that these novels all nonetheless end on pessimistic notes. Peter Camenzind, for instance, never achieves the individuation he pursues, yet, like Dasa, he maintains a tight grip on the idea of its possibility throughout the entirety of *Peter Camenzind*. As we have seen so far in this chapter, Knecht does not approach this pursuit with as much optimism as Peter Camenzind. His poetry and Lives consistently reveal his perception that the Self is transient and thus external. Swales's interpretation of the novel's conclusion therefore invests too much trust in its final claim that Dasa's life becomes too spiritual and abstract to illustrate; he interprets this final claim as solid evidence that this Life (and the novel) concludes with an encouraging indicator that an intransigent Self is attainable. I have shown, however, that a deeper understanding of the characteristics of the Nietzschean Mask through which Hesse designs his novel can enlighten readings such as Swales's. With the traits of the Mask in mind, it is clear that the novel's closing claim is actually an ironic indication of the very opposite of the claim. This Life, the novel, and Hesse's oeuvre all end by 'impressing' an image of a transient, fluid, and most importantly, *external* Self. Thus the novel's ending does not imply the breadth and brilliance of Dasa's pending solidity, but rather, it 'impresses' the consistent distance between Dasa and his illusive goal. Crucially, the illusion that drives Dasa forward is the same notion of an internal Self that we have seen embraced in many works of western literature. Hesse's

²⁹² Swales, Martin. *The German Bildungsroman: From Wieland to Hesse*. Princeton, New Jersey. 1978. 129-130.

²⁹³ For instance, see: Johnson, Sidney. *The Autobiographies in Hermann Hesse's Glasperlenspiel*. "The German Quarterly." Vol. 29. Issue 3. May 1956. (p. 165). Additionally, see: White, I.A. & J.J. *The Place of Josef Knecht's Lebensläufe Within Hermann Hesse's Das Glasperlenspiel*. "Modern Language Review." Vol. 81. Iss. 4. Oct. 1986. (p. 938).

penultimate indication that this notion is merely an illusion is stark evidence that his final literary representation of the Self takes on the form of the Nietzschean Mask.

It is evident at this point that *Indischer Lebenslauf* is thematically consistent with Knecht's poetry and his first Life. It sketches Knecht's understanding that humanity's strive for a sense of permanent Self is an impossible venture. Additionally, as a Mask of Knecht's own life, it helps explain why it took Knecht forty years to abandon his own service to intransience and embrace the external nature of the Self. His biography reveals that, like Dasa, Knecht remained in the proverbial forest with the yogi throughout most of his life, fully aware that he would never reach his goal. As the biographer's Mask indicates, though, Knecht eventually left the forest. Before considering the biographer's masked focus on Knecht's awakenings, however, it is instructive to very briefly consider the thematic consistency of Knecht's second life, *Der Beichtvater*.

5.5.4 Der Beichtvater

Knecht's second Life, *Der Beichtvater* ('The Father Confessor'), thematically parallels his other two Lives and his biography. It is therefore worth considering a few examples of these parallels in order to demonstrate the consistency of Knecht's use of his Lives as Masks of Fiction. Below, I provide a brief summary of *Der Beichtvater* that highlights instances of themes, such as servitude, transience/intransience, and learning/teaching through 'impressions'.

Like Knecht's other two Lives, the protagonist's name directly alludes to Knecht: Josephus Famulus, often shortened to Josef. Unsurprisingly, his surname is Latin for 'service'. Josef shares many characteristics with his author, and like his author, he values education and learning. For many years, he studies numerous pagan books in order to acquire as much knowledge as possible; but after exposure to Christian doctrine, he converts to Christianity and avidly listens to the sermons of pious hermits. These sermons inspire him to commence a pilgrimage in the vein of St. Paul and St. Anthony in order to attain penitence. The narrative describes his travels as arduous and implies that the nomadic lifestyle is a form of spiritual atonement through penitence. While Josef's goal is repentance, the narrative focuses on his self-development throughout his journey. Similar to Dasa's contentment through mobility as a herdsman, Josef finds satisfaction through self-discoveries that are consequent of his nomadic life.

Throughout his journey Josef acquires a ‘gift of listening’ [*Gabe des Zuhörens*],²⁹⁴ which soon gains him the role of ‘confessor’ [*Beichtvater*] to whom others relay their sins. This act of listening is described as a form of ‘impressionistic’ teaching:

His function was to arouse confidence and to be receptive, to listen patiently and lovingly, helping the imperfectly formed confession to take shape, inviting all that was dammed up or encrusted within each soul to flow and pour out. When it did, he received it and *wrapped it in silence*. [...] Imposing penances and punishments was not his business, nor did he even feel empowered to pronounce a proper priestly absolution. Neither judging nor forgiving was his affair [my italics].

Sein Amt war, Vertrauen zu erwecken und zu empfangen, geduldig und liebevoll zuzuhören, dadurch der noch nicht fertig gestalteten Beichte vollends zu Gestalt zu verhelfen, das in den Seelen Gestaute oder Verkrustete zum Fluß und Abströmen einzuladen, es aufzunehmen und *in Schweigen einzuhüllen*. [...] Bußen und Strafen zu verhängen, war nicht seines Amtes, auch zum Aussprechen einer eigentlichen priesterlichen Absolution fühlte er sich nicht ermächtigt, es war weder das Richten noch das Vergeben der Schuld seine Sache [my italics].²⁹⁵

As this shows, Josef receives confessions with silence. His silence enacts the same ‘impressionistic’ method of teaching that Turu, Knecht (2), and the yogi employ. By circumventing instruction, Josef’s silence coerces those who confess to interpret their own transgression and ‘consign it to the past’ [*der Vergangenheit übergeben zu haben*].²⁹⁶ This passage is thus another of Knecht’s representations of teaching/learning by way of ‘impression’. Like Knecht’s other protagonists, Josef differentiates between ‘impressions’ and rational prescription, and likewise, he favours the former over the latter as a pedagogical tool.

Although Josef experiences frequent phases of tranquillity through his role as confessor, he eventually perceives its monotony as stagnation, and, as a result, he grows depressed and suicidal. Thus, much like in Knecht’s other Lives, the desire for solidity and stability spawns discontentment. Josef believes to have fixed his life’s purpose. However, his dissatisfaction with a sense of permanence demonstrates the frustration he experiences when personal development is stunted. The fluctuation of his tranquillity eventually produces a desire to actively pursue new experiences. As an old man, he reflects:

²⁹⁴ (490; SW 5, 450)

²⁹⁵ (491; SW 5, 451-52)

²⁹⁶ (491; SW 5, 452)

But peace, too, is a living thing and like all life it must wax and wane, accommodate, withstand trials, and undergo changes [...] Everything ran sluggishly along in limp tedium and joylessness. This is old age, he thought sadly. He was sad because he had expected aging and the gradual extinction of his passions to bring a brightening and easing of his life, to take him a step nearer to harmony and mature peace of soul, and now age seemed to be disappointing and cheating him by offering nothing but this weary, gray, joyless emptiness, this feeling of chronic satiation.

Indessen ist auch der Friede etwas Lebendiges, auch er wie alles Lebende muß wachsen und abnehmen, muß sich anpassen, muß Proben bestehen und Wandlungen durchmachen [...] es lief alles träg in einer lahmen Müdigkeit und Unlust dahin. Es sei das Alter, dachte er traurig. Traurig war er, weil er vom Altwerden und vom allmählichen Erlöschen der Triebe und Leidenschaften sich eine Aufhellung und Erleichterung seines Lebens, einen Schritt weiter zur ersehnten Harmonie und reifen Seelenruhe versprochen hatte, und weil nun das Alter ihn zu enttäuschen und betrügen schien, indem es nichts brachte als diese müde, graue, freudlose Öde, dies Gefühl unheilbarer Übersättigung.²⁹⁷

As this shows, Josef's old age does not yield a stable sense of Self. After this realisation, Josef sets out to find a fellow father confessor rumoured to be exceptional. This confessor's name is Dion Pugil.²⁹⁸ Josef intends to confess to Pugil and also to observe and learn his methods. Upon finding him, the relationship that develops is yet another thematic parallel: a mentor-pupil relationship. As we can see, this kind of relationship plays an important role in all of Knecht's Lives (as well as Hesse's novels). Furthermore, Pugil teaches through 'impressions'. For example, he never tells Josef his name; he instead waits for Josef to realise on his own that he has found Pugil. And, as Pugil never explicitly conveys his method, Josef only discerns Pugil's 'impressionistic' pedagogy through observation. After living with Pugil for years, Josef asks him why he never offers penances. Pugil responds:

[...] I did impose a long and stern penance on you, without calling it such. I took you with me and treated you as my servant, and led you back to your duty, forcing you to hear confessions when you had tried to escape from that.

[...] Habe ich dir ja damals eine strenge und lange Buße auferlegt, wenn schon ohne Worte. Ich habe dich mitgenommen und als meinen Diener behandelt und dich zu dem Amt zurückgeführt und gezwungen, dem du dich hattest entziehen wollen.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁷ (493; SW 5, 454-55)

²⁹⁸ Joseph Mileck points out the symbolic significance of this name: 'Dion Pugil, like Josephus Famulus, is precisely what his Latin family name suggests: a pugilistic person, a severe hermit-confessor who is forever fighting demons and pommeling his penitents. Dion may be a contraction of Dionysus, and if so, the name could refer to Pugil's general incontinence or allude to a wild life preceding his conversion' (*Life and Art* 282).

²⁹⁹ (514; SW 5, 474)

This passage contains two thematic parallels: ‘impressions’ and service. Pugil does not *tell* Josef what he expects him to learn, nor does he tell him that he is his servant; he simply treats him like a servant. Josef is thus left to progressively unfold the meaning of Pugil’s actions on his own. Additionally, Josef’s role as a servant is clearly an important parallel. However, the significance of this theme is well established at this point and there is no need to elaborate beyond noting that Josef, like Knecht and his other protagonists, is often guided by an inclination to serve.

Josef does not aspire to solidity and permanence to the extent that the characters Dasa and Knecht (2) do. Also, not as much space is allotted to reflecting upon the juxtaposition between transience and intransience as in the other two Lives. However, these themes are nonetheless present, as shown through the misery that overwhelms Josef when he feels idle or when he discovers that maturity does not yield a fixed sense of Self. Furthermore, *Der Beichtvater* contains one extremely important feature that neither of the other two Lives includes. It features an image of a mask object as a symbol for fluidity. One day Josef observes Pugil differently than he had before:

A trace of unfriendly sternness appeared upon his dignified countenance. But that was overlaid by another expression, virtually another face that seemed like a *transparent mask*: an expression of ancient and solitary suffering which pride and dignity would not allow him to express [my italics].

Dieser schien in Nachsinnen versunken, ein Zug von abweisender Strenge erschien auf seinem würdevollen Antlitz, über welchen jedoch noch ein anderer Ausdruck, ja ein anderes Gesicht, wie eine *durchsichtige Maske* gelegt schien, ein Ausdruck alten und einsamen Leides, dem der Stolz und die Würde keine Äußerung erlauben [my italics].³⁰⁰

The mask that appears in this passage does not serve the purpose of concealment. Rather, the ‘transparency’ [*durchsichtigkeit*] described identifies the mask as one that reveals. This translucency makes the mask discernibly external, which enables Josef to glean the external meaning it embodies rather than the internal meaning it conceals. The passage shows that the mask reveals ancient wisdom, which Josef perceives to enshroud his confessor. This mask symbol is thus not a modern mask of disguise but an ancient mask of transformation. Clearly, this mask is a characteristic Mask: it is a mask object that conveys by means of

³⁰⁰ (503; SW 5, 464)

‘impression’. By enshrouding Pugil in this fluid Mask, the narrative sketches a Self concocted of shifting external layers of wisdom and knowledge. This passage thus indicates that, like Knecht’s other Lives, Knecht uses this Life to ‘impress’ a definition of a strictly external Self.

Although this appearance of a Mask in Knecht’s Life has profound implications, the story’s ending is not as poignant as those of *Der Regenmacher* or *Indischer Lebenslauf*. It ends anticlimactically with Josef’s death soon after a fruit grows on a tree he had planted over Pugil’s grave. There is no clear depiction of his final devotion to intransience, nor are there any indications that Josef is as consciously aware of the transience/intransience dichotomy as a character such as Knecht (2). The ending is slightly unsatisfactory in this regard, but it is nonetheless still clear at this point that *Der Beichtvater* explores the same themes as Knecht’s other two Lives. Most significantly, though, is that it is clearly not a historical exercise in the manner that the Castalian Order intends. It is instead a Mask of Fiction through which Knecht reveals numerous facets of his own self-realisation.

* * *

This critique of the supplementary material in *Das Glasperlenspiel* has provided stark evidence that Hesse’s developed literary representations of the Self are modelled on the Nietzschean Mask. Together, Knecht’s three Lives and poetry reveal that Knecht is Hesse’s most insightful protagonist in terms of self-understanding. Multiple threads of narrative, imagery, biographical allusions, and philosophical negotiations all collide, mingle, and coalesce in these Masks of Fiction in order to unveil and scrutinise the overwhelming desire for intransience that blinds Hesse’s previous protagonists from discerning the transience that shapes their lives. While Haller’s Mask in *Der Steppenwolf* certainly performs a similar function, Knecht’s youthful reflections upon the subject show that he is Hesse’s most intellectually precocious protagonist. His wisdom is most estimable when his Lives also ‘impress’ his recognition that, regardless of his insight, he, too, is affected by this same drive for an intransigent sense of Self.

As shown, the ending of *Das Glasperlenspiel* is just as daunting as some of Hesse’s preceding novels, concluding with implied ellipses that suggest Dasa will persevere down an endless path toward an illusory objective. However, the reassuring illustrations of immobility and transience offered in Knecht’s Lives redeem this conclusion. In much the

same way that Nietzsche encourages his readers to embrace the Mask precisely for the externality that enables it to liberate knowledge from the constrictions of ‘truth’, Knecht’s Lives offer solace in the external nature of the Self they present. While the Lives expose and critique the historically embraced notion of intransience (i.e. the internal Self) that has strictly defined western identity since the Middle Ages, they additionally portray a liberating sensation that arises when this self-conception is acknowledged as an illusion. This analysis of Knecht’s Lives has therefore shown how Hesse’s inclusion of these supplementary narratives within *Das Glasperlenspiel* serves the primary purpose of better expounding upon the Nietzschean model for the Self that Hesse develops throughout his literary career. The following two sections return to the biographer’s narrative Mask and demonstrate how the themes that shape Knecht’s Lives are visible on the surface of the novel’s main narrative when their characteristics are better understood.

5.6 Awakenings, Transcendences, and Stages

It has already been noted that Knecht’s biographer considers Knecht’s Lives the ‘most valuable’ [*wertvollsten Teil*] section of his biography. Now that the function of these Lives is clear, we can observe how the biographer weaves the values and teachings ‘impressed’ by the Lives into the fabric of his own narrative. Below, I highlight the biographer’s masked focus on Knecht’s developing self-conception throughout his biography. By demonstrating this focus, we can determine with finality that *Das Glasperlenspiel* is a masked *Bildungsroman*. The biographer’s incorporation of Knecht’s self-conception into his narrative reveals with certainty that his biography does not follow the Castalian historical model: it is unquestionably a narration of a developing conception of the Self.

The strongest evidence of the biographer’s focus on Knecht’s *Bildung* comes from his interpretations of Knecht’s many stages of awakenings [*Erwachen*]. Throughout the novel, the biographer demonstrates the stages of Knecht’s awakenings along with Knecht’s progressive understanding of these moments. Knecht’s perception of his awakenings develops from the naïve end-all perception that Swales notes is standard for protagonists in the *Bildungsroman* model into full comprehension of the gradational nature of awakenings, which the poem *Stufen* critiques. The development of Knecht’s awakenings is important because unique characteristics presented within each one reveal that the biographer

interprets Knecht's self-development by employing the intellectual tools he has gleaned from Knecht's Lives.

Few studies analyse Knecht's awakenings as a thematic development within the novel. Critics generally view the novel's awakenings as markers of Knecht's growth, but rarely do they closely investigate the developing characteristics of each one. For example, in an article entitled '*Stufen des Erwachens' im Lebenslauf Magister Ludi Josef Knecht* [*'Stages of Awakenings' in the Life of Magister Ludi Josef Knecht*] (2005), Johannes Heiner outlines Knecht's awakenings and divides them into seven stages (*Stufen*). He labels Knecht's first encounter with the Music Master as his first awakening, and he states that Knecht's seventh and final awakening results from his pedagogical devotion to Tito, who inherits Knecht's 'spirit' through Knecht's sacrificial death. Heiner writes:

Josef Knecht's spirit goes to Tito. These seven stages thus depict the merging of the universe/resolution with the space/stages of the "cosmic consciousness" by Ken Wilber. The ego agrees to die and in death to take another form or move to another person. This would actually be the stage of enlightenment, which Josef Knecht reaches in death [my translation].

Josef Knechts Geist geht auf Tito über. Diese siebte Stufe stellt also die Verschmelzung mit dem Universum/Auflösung im All/Stufe des "kosmischen Bewusstseins" nach Ken Wilber³⁰¹ dar. Das Ego erklärt sich damit einverstanden, zu sterben und im Tod eine andere Form anzunehmen oder auf einen anderen Menschen überzugehen. Es wäre dies eigentlich die Stufe der Erleuchtung, die Josef Knecht im Tod erreicht.³⁰²

Heiner's argument that Knecht's death is sacrificial is not uncommon.³⁰³ While such an interpretation may seem to coincide with my own reading of *Der Regenmacher* (because Knecht [2] sacrifices himself for his successor's sake) it is important to bear in mind that in the chronology of the novel, *Der Regenmacher* predates Knecht's death by about twenty

³⁰¹ See: Wilber, Ken. *Kosmic Consciousness*. "Sounds True Radio." 1 September 2003. Wilber's text is primarily a self-help, therapeutic one that borrows its ideas from a number of philosophies and religions. Its most fundamental idea is that all of humanity is connected through a 'limitless Self' that endlessly evolves. Wilber claims that, once one is aware of this 'limitless Self', he/she can become a more active part of it. Wilber's ideas are too contemporary to apply to *Das Glasperlenspiel*, and Heiner's attempt to impose Wilber's theories on the story thus lacks contextual validity and renders his reading too speculative.

³⁰² Heiner, Johannes. "'Stufen des Erwachens' im Lebenslauf Magister Ludi Josef Knecht." *Lyrikritik*. lyrikritik.de. (16 February 2005). Retrieved on 21 December 2015. (par. 8-9)

³⁰³ For instance, see: Bollnow, Otto Friedrich. *Unruhe und Geborgenheit im Weltbild neuerer Dichter*. (p. 58); Cohn, Hilde D. *The Symbolic End of Hermann Hesse's "Glasperlenspiel"*. (p. 356); Seidlin, Oskar. *Hermann Hesse's "Glasperlenspiel"*. (p. 269); Ziolkowski, Theodore. *"The Glass Bead Game: Beyond Castalia."* in *The Novels of Hermann Hesse: A Study in Theme and Structure*. (p. 302-329); Negus, Kenneth: *On the Death of Joseph Knecht in Hesse's "Glasperlenspiel"*. (181-189).

years. It would thus be trite to argue that a consistency of the novel's 'sacrifice' theme substantiates Heiner's argument that Knecht's death is deliberate and sacrificial: this would suggest that *Der Regenmacher* functions as a symbolic indication that Knecht is clairvoyant. Furthermore, there is certainly no textual evidence that Knecht's 'spirit' intermingles with Tito's spirit upon Knecht's death, as Heiner argues. Heiner's reading of the novel's conclusion is thus too presumptuous. However, his contention that Knecht experiences an awakening at the brink of death is nonetheless thematically consistent with Knecht's poem *Stufen*. In *Stufen*, Knecht formulates a view that awakenings occur in an endless pattern and that even the moment before death generates no sense of final realisation; and, as we have seen, the novel's conclusion is reflective of this pattern.

When one considers the gradational nature of each awakening presented in the novel, the seven stages that Heiner has labelled are much too limited; nuances within each awakening make it difficult (and audacious) to number them as rigidly as Heiner has done. While some of Knecht's awakenings are explicitly labelled as such, in other instances, similar experiences are described with characteristics that resemble the episodes when the actual term *Erwachen* appears (e.g. feelings of transformation, perceiving the world through new eyes, sensing that 'truth' has been uncovered, etc.). Both kinds of representations are in tandem, though, because they progressively illustrate Knecht's developing perception of the externality of the Self. I have chosen five episodes that are reflective of this pattern.

The novel's first clear awakening occurs after Knecht's first meeting with the Music Master (as Heiner also observes). The biographer does not distinctly label this particular awakening. Instead, he marks it by emphasising Knecht's sense that his meeting prompts a transformative experience that reveals to him his 'purpose':

Many years later Knecht told his pupil that when he stepped out of the building, he found the town and the world far more *transformed* and enchanted than if there had been flags, garlands, and streamers, or displays of fireworks. He had experienced his vocation, which may surely be spoken of as a sacrament. The ideal world, which hitherto his young soul had known only by hearsay and in wild dreams, had suddenly taken on visible lineaments for him. Its gates had opened invitingly. This world, he now saw, did not exist only in some vague, remote past or future; it was here and was active, it glowed, sent messengers, apostles, ambassadors, men like this old Magister (who by the way was not nearly so old as he then seemed to

Joseph). And through this venerable messenger an admonition and a *call* had come from that world even to him, the insignificant Latin school pupil [my italics].

Knecht hat viele Jahre später seinem Schüler erzählt: als er aus dem Hause trat, fand er die Stadt und die Welt viel mehr *verwandelt* und verzaubert, als wenn Fahnen und Kränze, Bänder und Feuerwerke sie geschmückt hätten. Er hatte den Vorgang der Berufung erlebt, den man recht wohl ein Sakrament nennen darf: das Sichtbarwerden und einladende Sichöffnen der idealen Welt, welche bis dahin dem jungen Gemüt nur teils vom Hörensagen, teils als glühenden Träumen bekannt gewesen war. Diese Welt existierte nicht nur irgendwo in der Ferne, in der Vergangenheit oder Zukunft, nein, sie war da und war aktiv, sie strahlte aus, sie schickte Sendboten, Apostel, Gesandte aus, Männer wie diesen alten Magister, der übrigens, wie es Josef scheinen wollte, eigentlich doch gar nicht so sehr alt war. Und aus dieser Welt, durch einen dieser ehrwürdigen Sendboten, war auch an ihn, den kleinen Lateinschüler, Mahnung und *Ruf* ergangen [my italics]!³⁰⁴

Knecht's retrospective account of this youthful realisation conveys many of the previously discussed 'capstone' sentiments typical of the *Bildungsroman* epiphany. In other words, this description suggests that Knecht perceived this moment as a finalised realisation. Importantly, when paraphrasing Knecht, the biographer describes the experience as a 'call' [*Ruf*]. (It is worth noting that the word *Berufung* in the same passage [translated as 'vocation' in the English version] can also be interpreted as 'calling', which denotes sentiments of 'awakening' more than 'vocation' might. Additionally, the title of the chapter in which this episode occurs is '*Berufung*', and its English translation is 'The Calling'.) This 'call' transforms Knecht into a musician in the sense that he decides to devote his life to music (i.e. he will *serve* music). By indicating that Knecht has fully realised his life's purpose through this moment, this passage is thus characteristic of the *Bildungsroman* epiphany: it shows Knecht's sense of totality through a momentary sense of transformation.

It is worth pointing out that the description of this awakening is indicative of the biographer's Mask because it enacts the previously discussed historical methodology that masks the biographer's private intentions. By attributing his paraphrased description of this awakening to Knecht's own account, the biographer once again legitimates his historiography. He emphasises the physical source of his documentation while distracting from the fact that his inclusion of this information deviates from his superficial claim (that the biography he narrates serves to link gaps in Castalian history). In other words, he masks

³⁰⁴ (55-56; SW 5, 47)

the fact that his inclusion of this account is a biographical interpretation of Knecht's self-development. By referencing his source, he thus designates his *means* as Castalian and justifies his *end*, which is individual.

Knecht's second awakening—which Heiner excludes from his outline—occurs at the end of the same chapter and, like his first one, results from an encounter with the Music Master. After graduating from Eschholz at the age of seventeen, Knecht and a fellow graduate trek to the Music Master's home in Monteport. On the way, the two boys pause on a hilltop to discuss fellow students who left Eschholz to enter the 'secular' world. Knecht claims to admire the 'leap' [*das Springen*] these students took and expresses that he hopes to one day exercise similar courage. However, after they visit the Music Master, both boys experience a mutual feeling of transformation. On their return to Eschholz, they pause at the same spot as before and silently contemplate their previous conversation:

The two boys tramped back, and both were gayer and more talkative than they had been on the way to Monteport. The few days in different air and amid different sights, the contact with a different sphere of life, had relaxed them, made them freer from Eschholz and the mood of parting there. [...] By the time they had once again reached that peak above Eschholz, with its prospect of the institution and its trees, the conversation they had had there seemed to both of them far away in the past. All things had taken on a new aspect. They did not say a word about it; they felt a little ashamed of what they had felt and said so short a while ago, which already had become outmoded and insubstantial.

Die beiden wanderten zurück, beide waren unterwegs heiterer und gesprächiger als auf dem Herweg, die paar Tage mit anderer Luft und anderen Bildern, die Berührung mit einem anderen Lebenskreise hatten sie aufgelockert, von Eschholz und von der dortigen Abschiedsstimmung freier gemacht. [...] Und als sie jene Höhe über Eschholz mit der Aussicht auf Anstalt und Bäume wieder erreicht hatten, da schien ihnen beiden ihr Gespräch, das sie geführt, schon weit in der Vergangenheit zu liegen, die Dinge hatten alle einen neuen Aspekt gewonnen; sie sagten kein Wort, sie schämten sich ein wenig der Gefühle und Worte von damals, die so rasch überholt und inhaltlos geworden waren.³⁰⁵

The shame that Knecht experiences when recalling his previous perspective shows that his experience in Monteport has altered his view and revealed to him that his new outlook is 'correct'. The biographer describes Knecht's sense of awakening in a similar manner as the first one shown. Like before, the world appears anew to Knecht, and he senses a coinciding internal adaptation to his newly discovered surroundings. Furthermore, his view that this

³⁰⁵ (85; SW 5, 74)

new perspective eradicates previous sentiments once again suggests that he does not yet fully accept the gradational nature of epiphanies. However, as shown above through his fiction, his awareness of relativizing epiphanies was well established once he composed his Lives and poetry. The passage at hand therefore illustrates Knecht's early resistance to the idea that his newfound sense of solidity is merely one *Stufe* of many to come.

Knecht first acknowledges that his awakenings occur in stages after he visits Elder Brother in the Bamboo Grove [*Bambusgehölz*]. Aspiring to learn more about the 'Book of Changes' (or the *I Ching*), Knecht travels to the Bamboo Grove to study under Elder Brother, a known expert on the text. With some reluctance, Elder Brother accepts Knecht as his pupil (e.g. mentor-pupil relationship). The biographer unravels the significance of Knecht's experience in the Bamboo Grove:

Afterward Joseph Knecht described the months he lived in the Bamboo Grove as an unusually happy time. He also frequently referred to it as the "beginning of my awakening"—and in fact from that period on the image of "awakening" turns up more and more often in his remarks, with a meaning similar to although not quite the same as that he had formerly attributed to the image of vocation. It could be assumed that the "awakening" signified knowledge of himself and of the place he occupied within the Castalian and the general human order of things; but it seems to us that the accent increasingly shifts toward self-knowledge in the sense that from the "beginning of his awakening" Knecht came closer and closer to a sense of his special, unique position and destiny, while at the same time the concepts and categories of the traditional hierarchy of the world and of the special Castalian hierarchy became for him more and more relative matters.

Nachmals hat Josef Knecht die Monate seines Lebens im Bambusgehölz nicht nur als eine besonders glückliche Zeit, sondern auch des öftern als den 'Beginn seines Erwachens' bezeichnet, wie denn von jener Zeit an das Bild vom Erwachen häufiger in seinen Äußerungen verkommt, mit einer ähnlichen, doch nicht durchaus gleichen Bedeutung, wie er sie vorher dem Bild der Berufung beigelegt hatte. Daß das 'Erwachen' eine jeweilige Erkenntnis seiner selbst und des Ortes, and dem er innerhalb der kastalischen und der menschlichen Ordnung überhaupt stand, zu bedeuten hat, ist zu vermuten, doch scheint uns der Akzent mehr und mehr auf die Selbsterkenntnis sich zu verschieben, in dem Sinn, daß Knecht vom 'Beginn des Erwachens' an mehr und mehr sich einem Gefühl seiner besonderen, einmaligen Position und Bestimmung näherte, während ihm die Begriffe und die Kategorien der überkommenen allgemeinen und speziell kastalischen Hierarchie immer mehr zu relativen wurden.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁶ (131-32; SW 5, 116-17)

Unlike the two passages above, in this passage, the biographer directly labels Knecht's *Erwachen* as such and acknowledges their occurrences in stages. However, while this episode marks the 'beginning' of Knecht's awakenings, it also indicates that this 'beginning' is merely one stage in a succession of many prior stages. The biographer indicates this by equating the characteristics of this explicit *Erwachen* with the novel's earlier description of Knecht's calling to vocation. By stating that awakenings are gradational, then comparing them to Knecht's earlier experiences, the biographer subtly illuminates Knecht's previous refusal to accept the temporary and illusory nature of his epiphanies. Therefore, in this passage the biographer brightly spotlights the same personal struggle with solidity that we have seen Knecht 'impress' through the content of his Lives and poetry.

While the biographer displays Knecht's awakenings as gradational, Knecht's own documented accounts of each awakening do not always reflect his distinct awareness of this. For example, while Knecht claims that his journey to the Bamboo Grove marks the beginning of his awakening, it is important to note that this claim is retrospective. In most instances, it is the *biographer's depictions* of Knecht's awakenings that magnify their gradational nature. Thus the struggle for solidity represented through Knecht's fictional protagonists is a persisting struggle throughout Knecht's biographical life. Clearly, Knecht's Masks of Fiction suggest that he discerned the gradational pattern of his struggle. But as characters such as Dasa illustrate, the grandeur of a single awakening, combined with the potency of solidity's allure, can overpower one's ability to recognize this endless cycle. As we have seen, in many cases, single awakenings sometimes overpower Knecht's own insight. It is necessary to consider a couple more of Knecht's awakenings in order to demonstrate how the biographer's masking technique is responsible for highlighting this crucial correlation between Knecht's Lives and his biographical life.

After leaving Mariafels, a monastery in which Knecht lived for a number of years, Knecht experiences another sense of change:

[...] Joseph felt something like rapture on returning to Waldzell. It was as if Waldzell were not only home and the most beautiful place in the world, but as if it had become even lovelier and more interesting in the meanwhile; or else he was returning with fresh and keener eyes. And this applied not only to the gates, towers, trees, and river, to the courtyards and halls and familiar faces. During this furlough he felt a heightened receptivity to the spirit of Waldzell, to the Order and the Glass Bead Game. It was the grateful understanding of the homecoming traveller now

grown matured and wiser. ‘I feel’, he said to his friend Tegularius at the end of an enthusiastic eulogy on Waldzell and Castalia, ‘I feel as if I spent all my years here asleep, happy enough, to be sure, but unconscious. Now I feel awake and see everything sharply and clearly, indubitable reality. To think that two years abroad can so sharpen one’s vision’.

[...] ihm wollte scheinen, dies Waldzell sei nicht nur seine Heimat und der schönste Ort der Welt, sondern es sei auch inzwischen noch hübscher und interessanter geworden, oder als habe er neue Augen und ein gesteigertes Sehvermögen mitgebracht. Und dies galt nicht nur den Toren, Türmen, den Bäumen und den Fluß, den Höfen und Sälen, den Gestalten und altbekannten Gesichtern, er empfand auch während seines Urlaubs für den Geist Waldzells, für den Orden und das Glasperlenspiel jene gesteigerte Aufnahmefähigkeit, jenes gewachsene und dankbare Verständnis des Heimgekehrten, des Gereisten, des reifer und klüger Gewordenen. ‘Mir ist’, sagte er zu seinem Freund Tegularius am Schlusse eines lebhaften Lobgesangs auf Waldzell und Kastalien, ‘mir ist, als habe ich alle die Jahre hier im Schlaf hingebacht, glücklich zwar, aber wie ohne Bewußtsein, und als sei ich jetzt erwacht und sähe alles scharf und klar, als Wirklichkeit bestätigt. Daß zwei Jahre Fremde so die Augen schärfen können!’.³⁰⁷

The sentiments expressed by Knecht in this passage echo those experienced during his ‘call to vocation’: he acknowledges an internal shift in perspective as the world appears anew, and he is conscious of the fact that his new outlook arises from internal changes brought through external experiences. However, the statement above does not directly allude to the pattern of *Stufen* demonstrated elsewhere. Knecht’s confidence that this moment redefines him echoes the same certainty expressed at the time of his ‘call to vocation’. Thus Knecht’s assessment of this experience illustrates a resurgence of his blindness to the pattern he has already acknowledged.

The biographer, however, frames Knecht’s experience in language that illuminates its gradational nature. He does not portray the experience as a finalised realisation; rather, he speaks of it as an escalation or a moment of growth. For instance, he claims that living abroad made Knecht more mature and wise [*reifer* and *klüger*]. This description is very different from Knecht’s own. We have already established the biographer’s technique of masking his own biographical interpretations. As this episode shows, the biographer reifies his ‘scholarly’ [*sachlichen*] approach by including Knecht’s ‘authentic’ statement. Yet, by introducing language with slightly different connotations, he also lays out his own interpretation that this moment is merely another segment of a previously illuminated

³⁰⁷ (180-81; SW 5, 161)

sequence. The biographer maintains his focus on this pattern throughout his whole narrative. One more example should make this point clear. After Knecht completes his training to become Magister Ludi, he experiences another awakening:

After the intensity of the struggle to prove himself, he was now overcome once more by a sense of *awakening*, of cooling and sobering. He saw himself in the innermost heart of Castalia, sat in the highest rank of the hierarchy, and discovered with strange sobriety and almost with disappointment that even this very thin air was breathable, but that he who now breathed it as though he had never known anything different was altogether changed [my italics].

Nach der Glut und Hingabe des Kampfes um seine Bewährung überkam ihn nun ein *Erwachen*, eine Erkühlung und Ernüchterung, er sah sich im Innersten Kastaliens, sah sich im obersten Rang der Hierarchie und nahm mit wunderlicher Nüchternheit, beinahe Enttäuschung wahr, daß auch diese sehr dünne Luft sich atmen lasse, daß aber freilich er, der sie nun atmete, als kenne er keine andre, durchaus gewandelt sei [my italics].³⁰⁸

In this passage, the biographer once again specifically labels Knecht's experience as an *Erwachen*. It is not portrayed as a conclusive realisation, though, but rather as a moment of perspective that brings clarity. Importantly, in this instance, the biographer provides no supplementary quote from Knecht. The reader only sees the biographer's second-hand interpretation. With previous evidence in mind that explicitly labelled moments of awakening like the one above are *Stufen*, the unambiguous *Erwachen* label above indicates that this passage is certainly one such *Stufen*. It is evident from descriptions such as this that similar descriptive instances (where no specific label is given to Knecht's experience) comfortably fit within the same category of explicit *Erwachen*.

Towards the end of the novel, the biographer offers a final assessment of Knecht's awakenings that sums up the primary message revealed through the pattern that unfolds throughout his narrative. Before quitting Castalia, Knecht meets with the president of the Castalian Order Master Alexander to explain how his awakenings have guided him in his decision to enter the 'secular' world. The biographer summarises Knecht's account in his own words:

“Awakening,” it seemed, was not so much concerned with truth and cognition, but with experiencing and proving oneself in the real world. When you had such an awakening, you did not penetrate any closer to the core of things, to truth; you grasped, accomplished, or endured only the attitude of your own ego to the

³⁰⁸ (230; SW 5, 208)

momentary situation. You did not find laws, but came to decisions. [...] Language did not seem designed to make communications from this realm of life.

Es ging, so schien es, beim “Erwachen” nicht um die Wahrheit und die Erkenntnis, sondern um die Wirklichkeit und deren Erleben und Bestehen. Im Erwachen drang man nicht näher an den Kern der Dinge, an die Wahrheit heran, man erfaßte, vollzog oder erlitt dabei nur die Einstellung des eigenen Ich zur augenblicklichen Lage der Dinge. Man fand nicht Gesetze dabei, sondern Entschlüsse. [...] Mitteilungen aus diesem Bereich des Lebens schienen nicht zu den Zwecken der Sprach zu zählen.³⁰⁹

This concise explication of Knecht’s negotiated comprehension of awakenings emphasises the precise externality of the Self that I argue the novel portrays. It suggests that the internality of ‘truth’ is an illusion, and it illuminates the parallel between Knecht’s biography and the notion of the Self that the text of Knecht’s fiction ‘impresses’. Furthermore, it loosely sketches the shifting parameters of the Self and exemplifies how Knecht’s self-conception is starkly different from Hesse’s earliest characters.

With the biographer’s evaluation in mind, we can therefore clearly see that his alternation between the explicit and non-explicit throughout the novel serves to reveal the continuity of a pattern that Knecht does not himself always perceive. In some instances, we have seen that Knecht is unaware that his awakenings occur in a pattern; in others, it is clear that he discerns this ongoing chain yet resists the fluidity of Self that it suggests; while other times, he is wholly conscious of the pattern and accepts its implications. What is most significant about Knecht’s fluctuating perception, though, is that the biographer’s narrative Mask reveals how all of the instances are segments of a singular pattern: a pattern that, throughout the entire novel, continuously highlights Hesse’s culminated depiction of the external nature of the Self. There is no need to expound upon Knecht’s *Erwachen* any further because it should be clear through the evidence thus provided that the biographer’s narrative outlines Knecht’s perpetual awakenings. It demonstrates how Knecht’s perceptions of these moments swing between a sense of finalisation and internal solidity, on the one hand, and a sense of fluidity and externality on the other.

* * *

This section completes my demonstration of the biographer’s masked portrayals of Knecht’s developing self-conception. We have seen that the biographer presents Knecht’s

³⁰⁹ (380; SW 5, 350)

Lives as the most valuable documents of his biography and, through his narrative masking, he teases out the parallels between the thematic concerns of Knecht's fiction and his biography. Most importantly, this section has provided thorough evidence that the biographer's own biographical intention is to portray Knecht's developing realisation that the Self is not defined by an internal core with definite parameters, but rather as an external shell that is as equally fluid and indefinite as the nature of 'truth' itself. We have now seen the many characteristics of the Nietzschean Mask at work in the novel. Before concluding this chapter, however, it is necessary to understand why the narrative is constructed through characteristics of the Mask. In my analysis of *Der Steppenwolf*, I reveal how Hesse's enactment of these characteristics allows his text to function as a conceptual Mask. In *Das Glasperlenspiel*, Hesse additionally provides an inter-textual explanation for the biographer's Mask. The following section highlights this inter-textual explanation. It argues that Castalia's dystopian characteristics oblige the biographer to claim devotion to the suprapersonal over the individual and thus mask the very self-development on which we have seen his narrative centres.

5.7 The Castalian Dystopia: Ideology and Servitude

The oft perceived utopian characteristics of Castalia are an object of much debate. Ziolkowski, for example, claims that utopian traits are only evident in the novel's introduction but nowhere else in the novel.³¹⁰ Ziolkowski's view is, not surprisingly, informed by Hesse's own reflections on Castalia. Throughout the novel's composition, Hesse sometimes spoke of Castalia's utopian traits. But after the novel's completion, he claimed that it was not a fully realised utopia.³¹¹ In 1944, he wrote to the literary critic Emil Staiger:

Actually, with the book I have intended neither a utopia (in the sense of a dogmatic Program), nor a prophecy; but I have tried to represent what I consider to be one of the genuine and legitimate ideas, the realisation of which can be felt in many places in world history [my translation].

Eigentlich habe ich bei dem Buch weder an eine Utopie (im Sinne eines dogmatischen Programms) gedacht noch an eine Prophezeiung, sondern ich habe etwas darzustellen versucht, was ich für eine der echten und legitimen Ideen halte,

³¹⁰ *The Novels of Hermann Hesse: A Study in Theme and Structure*. Princeton University Press. New Jersey: 1965. 283-338.

³¹¹ *Gesammelte Briefe* 2, 457; SW 5, 727.

und dessen Verwirklichung man an vielen Stellen der Weltgeschichte fühlen kann.³¹²

In this letter, Hesse denies the notion that Castalia represents a perfect society, but he nonetheless maintains that it is an *ideal* society given its relative historical context. But this does not necessarily mean that Castalia's flaws are a total abatement of the ideals that Hesse has prescribed the society, as Ziolkowski argues. Rather, it suggests that Castalia's flaws are evident alongside its ideals.

Other critics have perceived that the utopian theme is consistent throughout the novel. For instance, in a study on utopian idealism within Hesse's work, Lawrence Wilde states that 'although [Hesse] creates a flawed utopia, he retains a utopian striving for the creation of a society embodying ideals of intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual refinement, while rejecting the idea that it can be prescribed in any particular form'.³¹³ This view, of course, echoes Hesse's own claim from the above letter. Wilde recognises the consistency of the novel's utopian theme and contends that, although Hesse does not fully actualise his utopia, he nonetheless promotes its ideals.

Both Ziolkowski's and Wilde's positions are unconvincing. Given the restrictive nature of Castalian 'freedom' and 'creativity' that I have demonstrated, I argue that the novel presents Castalia's utopian ideals as *flawed ideals*. While Hesse claims that he did not intend to create a dogmatic utopia, he has nonetheless created one that presents itself as such; and as I have shown, not only does the novel present flaws within Castalia's utopian ideals, but it specifically paints these flaws as deliberate manipulations of the Castalian Order. The biographer's extensive praises of Castalia and its utopian idealism mask an underlying suggestion that it is, in fact, the very opposite of a utopia. Below, I highlight Castalia's *dystopian* traits and argue that these very traits explain the biographer's need to mask his narrative as I have shown he does.

Castalia's abolishment of individuality and personality, their replacement of the individual with the 'type', and, most importantly, their embrace of service to the Suprapersonal [*Überpersönlichen*], are the primary factors that deem it a dystopian society

³¹² January 1944. *Gesammelte Briefe* 3, 235.

³¹³ Wilde, Lawrence. *The Radical Appeal of Hermann Hesse's Alternative Community*. "Utopian Studies." Vol. 10. Issue 1. 1999. 86-97. For a similar view, also see: Freedman, Ralph. *Hermann Hesse: Pilgrim of Crisis*. Jonathan Cape. London: 1979. (p. 348).

(see section 5.3). These ideologies in themselves reek of dystopian sentiments, but the strongest signal of Castalia's dystopian nature is the Castalian's unquestioning embrace of the loss of his own individuality through Castalia's ideology of self-denial (also demonstrated in section 5.3 of this chapter). The Castalian's willingness to give up his sense of Self is a depiction of a common theme in many dystopian societies from popular literature. In Zamyatin's *We* (1924), for instance, the citizens of the glass-constructed city of 'One State' are all assigned identification numbers in place of names. Furthermore, 'One State' dictates every individual's behaviour by a series of formulas and equations. Similarly, in Orwell's *1984* (1949) 'Airstrip One' (previously known as Great Britain) persecutes individualism and 'thoughtcrimes' (i.e. thinking for one's self). In both books, strict devotion to the 'State' and its ideology is a person's sole function in society. The similarities between Castalia and these two dystopian societies are unmistakable. In *Das Glasperlenspiel*, the biographer's own apparent embrace of Castalian ideology is most often represented through his frequent reminders of his Castalian approach to historiography, which is a blatant protestation of loyalty to the Castalian Order. Why, though, is he so firmly devoted to this ideology (or at least to giving the appearance that he is)? In *We* and *1984*, fears of persecution and death arguably determine the citizens' devotion to their societies. However, a consistent depiction of socialisation is also prevalent in both novels. One can see in both novels that the citizens of each society play their roles without question; they have internalised and accepted their States' ideologies as inherent 'truths'. In the following paragraphs, I offer two cases that have been made for each of these possibilities in *Das Glasperlenspiel*. I then argue that the biographer has *not* internalised the Castalian ideology but that he is nonetheless well aware of the Castalian Order's expectation that he has.

Some scholars have taken the first position, arguing that the Castalian Order has manifested these ideologies so well that Castalian citizens are resolutely faithful to them on principle. In other words, it is out of socialisation, and not fear, that Castalians steadfastly embrace this ideology. It is helpful here to recall my earlier explanation of why I refer to the world beyond Castalia as 'secular' (see section 5.2): because Castalia implements its values in much the same way a religion does. They establish their values as 'truths', and as such, Castalians do not question them. From this viewpoint, the biographer is exemplary of

this ideological effect. Erhard Friedrichsmeyer takes this stance. He contends that the biographer boasts his own Castalian traits out of sincere and credulous devotion to Castalia: ‘[the biographer is] reverentially stiff [...] longwinded, repetitious, *humourless*, preachy while struggling to be objective and modest, he is a pedant [my italics]’.³¹⁴ Friedrichsmeyer perceives that the biographer is so passionately devoted to Castalia that his Castalian patriotism is naïve and even arrogant: he says he is ‘preachy’ and pedantic. However, Friedrichsmeyer does not discern the humour that the biographer employs, a characteristic of the narrative that this study has already demonstrated as indisputably present and prevalent. Clearly, the Mask bedazzles Friedrichsmeyer. Friedrichsmeyer’s perception of the biographer results from the Castalian traits that the biographer purports in his superficial claim (i.e. the external layer of his Mask): his boastful Castalian methodology, his seemingly naïve view of the ‘freedoms’ that the Castalians are allowed, and the superiority of Castalia in relation to the ‘secular’ world, etc. As I have shown, though, these traits are all merely superficial layers of the biographer’s Mask.

An alternative perspective on why the biographer is such an eager proponent of Castalia and Castalia’s ways—and I partially ascribe to this view—is that he is aware of the dystopian nature of the ‘Utopia’ he describes. That is to say, he does not have the freedom (and I do not use the term ironically here) to narrate his biography in any manner but the Castalian one. He therefore writes not out of passionate Castalian patriotism but, rather, out of fear of deviance. Osman Durrani has reflected on this point, going as far as calling Castalia a ‘Police State.’ In his article, *Hermann Hesse’s Castalia: Republic of Scholars or Police State?*,³¹⁵ Durrani argues that Knecht’s ‘biography was compiled with the interests of Castalia in mind’.³¹⁶ However, he does not put forward the view that the biographer has internalised these interests, thus unconsciously promoting them as an ideological effect. Instead, Durrani contends that Castalia is a restrictive society not unlike a Nazi ‘police state’. He states:

Constant surveillance, and frequent recourse to espionage, are well established traditions in the province. Knecht’s visit to Mariafels is nothing short of a carefully-

³¹⁴ Friedrichsmeyer, Erhard. *Hagiography and Humor in Hesse’s Glasperlenspiel*. “Hermann Hesse Heute.” Ed. Adrian Hsia. Bonn: 1980. 259-269. (p. 261)

³¹⁵ Durrani, Osman. *Hermann Hesse’s Castalia: Republic of Scholars or Police State?* “Modern Language Review.” 77. 1982. 655-669.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 657

planned attempt to infiltrate the Church, as all parties recognize. [...] Castalia is seen to subject its own agents to surveillance. Returning from Mariafels, Knecht becomes aware of the fact that he himself is now being observed [...] and after he has become Magister Ludi, he is allocated an officer ‘Einpeitscher und Kontrolleur’ [whip and inspector] to watch over his daily activities hour by hour. Later, when his doubts about his career become known to his colleagues, an elderly man, described as a ‘Beobachter’ and ‘Späher’ [‘observer’ and ‘spy’], appears in Waldzell with the specific function of reporting on Knecht to the *Ordensleitung* [the Order]. This is the last event recorded by the narrator before the avowedly fictitious *Legende*, and provides an ominous conclusion to the verifiable portion of his account; we are entitled to speculate whether, given the political sensitivity of the organization and the vindictiveness of its ‘elite’, Knecht did not meet his end, like Bertram, in some remote mountain spot, while a fanciful but constructive *Legende* was later put about.³¹⁷

In this passage, Durrani cites convincing evidence for Castalia’s close observation of its citizens. Additionally, he argues that espionage also occurs, and he suggests that the mystery surrounding Knecht’s death may be a cover-up of a heinous crime.

I agree with Durrani, but only in part. The evidence he demonstrates for the restrictive nature of Castalia is convincing. The Order’s close observation of its citizens is an undeniably dystopian trait. From this viewpoint, it is easy to see that Castalians—and certainly the novel’s narrator is not excluded from this—are not necessarily organically socialised to be ‘good’ Castalians. As Durrani illustrates, Castalia’s careful policing of its legislation is far too evident to simplify the matter in this way. Rather, fear of deviance (or punishment for it) is the more likely motivator for Castalian behaviour. I do not, however, attest that this ‘fear’ is necessarily ‘fear of death’, nor would I argue that Castalia is secretly ‘picking off’ its social deviants. Such an attestation is far too speculative with very little textual evidence. Nonetheless, I do find Durrani’s evidence convincing enough to equally claim that Castalians are not merely automatons of the State. That is to say, Castalian ideology is not so deeply rooted that Castalians are products of its persuasion; rather, they are products of a well-established fear that deviance from this ideology is somehow punishable. Once again, though, speculation is not my intent. The novel does not make it clear what kind of punishment may ensue as a result of social deviance. This punishment could be as simple as one’s being labelled a social outcast and thus being shunned by Castalia, or it could be (speculatively) more extreme, like Durrani’s contention that one

³¹⁷ Ibid., 665

may meet his doom in an unfortunate and mysterious ‘accident’, such as Master Bertram, who mysteriously disappears after vocalising opposition to certain Castalian protocols. It is difficult to say. What is important, though, is that this obscurity, in any case, is congruent with my argument. If the novel’s narrator is a product of this fear, then he, too, must act accordingly.

We can now see why the biographer masks his narrative. He cannot directly tell a narrative of an individual’s life because, as he makes clear at the beginning of the novel, Castalia eliminates personality and individuality as historical elements. As a faithful (i.e. ‘fearful’) Castalian, he must also enact this elimination. The biographer does not mask his narrative in order to slyly expose Castalia’s crimes right under its nose (as Durrani also suggests in another article entitled *Cosmic Laughter*),³¹⁸ but instead, he masks his narrative to surreptitiously undermine Castalian ideology in direct view of the Castalian Order. His admiration for Knecht and Knecht’s conception of the Self inspire the biographer’s own interest in portraying this development, as shown throughout this chapter. We can thus discern four notable purposes for the biographer’s masked *Bildungsroman*: first, to express the significance that the biographer places on individuality; second, to express his personal interest in Knecht’s developing self-conception; third, to indicate that this interest is *personal* and *individual*; finally, and most importantly, to express all of these points of interests subtly without alerting the Castalian Order to his ‘deviance’.

It is clear that the dystopian nature of Castalia is essential to *Das Glasperlenspiel*’s function as a Mask. The biographer utilises Castalia’s strictly policed patriotism in order to shield his personal intentions with a Mask, which his more perceptive readers will be able to remove in order to interpret his intended meaning. The biographer’s idealistic promotion of Castalian ideology (i.e. his seemingly naïve perception of Castalia as a utopia) combined with his ironic indications that it is, in fact, a dystopia reveal the necessity of his Mask.

5.8 Chapter Conclusion

In section 5.2 of this chapter I provide a brief summary of *Das Glasperlenspiel* and point out that the novel begins with a fictional Latin epigraph that sets a critical tone for the novel by reflecting upon the relationship between history, narration, and fiction. As stated

³¹⁸ *Cosmic Laughter’ or The Importance of Being Ironical: Reflections on the Narrator of Hermann Hesse’s Glasperlenspiel.* “German Life and Letters.” Vol 34. 1980/81. 398-408.

in the same section, the significance of this relationship is difficult to see without first observing the novel's engagement with these themes. Now that we have seen the novel's interlacing of these three themes, we can address the epigraph and understand its value as the opening lines of the novel. The epigraph follows:

[...] for light-minded persons non-existent things can be more easily and irresponsibly represented in words than existing things, for the serious and conscientious historian it is just the reverse. Nothing is harder, yet nothing is more necessary, than to speak of certain things whose existence is neither demonstrable nor probable. The very fact that serious and conscientious men treat them as existing things brings them a step closer to existence and to the possibility of being born.

[...] für leichtfertige Menschen die nicht existierenden Dinge leichter und verantwortungsloser durch Worte darzustellen sein als die seienden, so ist es doch für den frommen und gewissenhaften Geschichtsschreiber gerade umgekehrt: nichts entzieht sich der Darstellung durch Worte so sehr und nichts ist doch notwendiger, den Menschen vor Augen zu stellen, als gewisse Dinge, deren Existenz weder beweisbar noch wahrscheinlich ist, welche aber eben dadurch, daß fromme und gewissenhafte Menschen sie gewissermaßen als seiende Dinge behandeln, dem Sein und der Möglichkeit des Geborenwerdens um einen Schritt näher geführt werden.³¹⁹

The epigraph indicates that both history and fiction are *constructed* narratives and that the two are not always distinguishable. On the one hand, it suggests fiction is easier to construct than nonfiction because it demands no 'accurate' depiction. On the other hand, it states that the historian faces a dilemma: to 'accurately' demonstrate events that are not physically demonstrable (because they occurred in the past). The epigraph implies that fiction is thus the historian's inevitable crutch. As the last line suggests, though, as long as a historical narrative is treated as an accurate depiction of 'existing things' [*seiende Dinge*], then it is 'naturally' distinguished from fiction and believed historically true.

This dilemma introduces the novel as a historical parody. The whole epigraph foreshadows the novel's complex intertwining of fiction and history. Since we have already seen the biographer's critique of Castalian historiography and the value he finds in Knecht's Lives, we can therefore now also see that, from the very outset of the novel, his Mask is present. The epigraph suggests that 'truth' is unavoidably external because external layers of fiction inevitably enshroud any nonfictional narrative (i.e. historical narratives). Thus the externality of 'truth', which we have seen Hesse increasingly represent, is at the

³¹⁹ (9; SW 5, 7)

very forefront of *Das Glasperlenspiel*. As this chapter has revealed, Hesse applies this theme of externality to many elements of the novel—most importantly, to the Self. From the novel’s opening epigraph to its conclusion with Dasa in the forest, it conveys the perpetual distance between humanity and the ‘truth’ it seeks. And in this chapter, I have highlighted the crucial role of the Mask in Hesse’s depiction of this distance.

We have seen how the Mask performs two major functions in the novel: as both a narrative device through which the novel is constructed and, second, as a thematic representation of externality within this constructed narrative. This development has been presented through a number of steps. I have shown how the novel is framed in a way that draws attention to its narrative Mask, and I have highlighted how Hesse’s use of irony to generate this frame indicate a development in his masking technique since *Der Steppenwolf*. I have also revealed the *Bildungsroman* of Knecht below the surface of the biographer’s Mask and demonstrated the biographer’s perception that fiction conveys information through a process of ‘impression’ that is often more satisfactory and effective than direct prescription. My analysis of Knecht’s Lives has shown that this perception of the biographer’s aligns with Knecht’s own, and this alignment indicates that the biographer’s adulation for Knecht inspires his masked *Bildungsroman* and informs his embrace of the externality of knowledge. Furthermore, my examination of the Lives has additionally illustrated that they function within the novel as Masks of Fiction in the same vein as Haller’s manuscript in *Der Steppenwolf*. I have finally shown how Castalia’s dystopian traits explain the biographer’s need to mask his narrative. We can thus see that the Masks *in* the novel emerge from the Mask *of* the novel; and together these Masks depict Hesse’s conclusive representation of the Self as a Nietzschean externality.

Conclusion

A Step Towards Never Defining the ‘Self’?

In the introduction and first chapter of this dissertation, I highlighted a prevailing critical approach to Hesse: using the events in his life as an interpretive guidebook to his fiction and explicating his works as self-representative. I demonstrated how his novels have commonly been viewed as sequential expositions of his own ‘search for the Self’. In Ralph Freedman’s *Hermann Hesse: Pilgrim of Crisis*, for instance, Freedman states that ‘Hesse’s struggle for a sense of self led him to write relentlessly about even the most mundane experiences of his life, as if each were unformed material waiting to be fashioned, through the power of the written word, into a work of art’.³²⁰ We have seen the lasting impact of perspectives like Freedman’s. For example, almost all of the essays compiled in Harold Bloom’s 2002 Hesse reader predominantly highlight instances in Hesse’s works that align with his life; or, even more recently, some of the essays found in Ingo Cornils’s 2009 Hesse companion (such as Osman Durrani’s critique of *Roßhalde* and Andreas Solbach’s essay on *Demian*) are products of the same critical tendency. I have identified the limitations of continuing to work within this tradition and thus located my own project outside of it. The benefits of my doing so should be evident by now. This thesis has established and illustrated a major conceptualisation in Hesse’s works that has been repeatedly taken for granted: the definition of the very notion of ‘Self’ that is consistently understood to be the central focus of his works. The term ‘Self’ within Hesse scholarship, as we have seen, is vaguely applied and often assumed to be universally understood. In Freedman’s book, for instance, the meaning of Self is never explained in detail. But, as I have shown, there is no concrete definition of Self in the western consciousness. It is shaped by a series of non-linear historical debates and theories from a variety of paradigms (e.g. sociological, philosophical, literary, etc.). Thus, considering that Freedman’s entire book chronicles Hesse’s search for a ‘sense’ of Self, his focus on such a weighted concept with no ascription to a particular meaning has inadvertent ramifications. It suggests that Hesse’s works are self-contained in their attempts to establish the meaning of Self. That is, Freedman’s vague application of ‘Self’ implies that Hesse’s works are not necessarily informed by (or part of) the historical discourse regarding the concept. However, my

³²⁰ Freedman, Ralph. *Hermann Hesse: Pilgrim of Crisis*. Jonathan Cape. London: 1978. (p. 4)

project has revealed a strong connection between Hesse's literary portrayals of the Self and the diverse historical development that informs his depictions.

A possible explanation for the frequency with which the Self is discussed so perfunctorily in Hesse scholarship is the lasting imprint of the Augustinian model. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, we can see numerous modern literary echoes of medieval self-conceptions (i.e. the fixed, stable, or, in the terms of our discussion, 'internal' Self). I provided evidence of this from Rilke's *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge* as well as from Poe's *The Masque of the Red Death*. Most significantly, though, I demonstrated how both Hesse's and Yeats's early portrayals of the Self derive from this traditional concept. The cursory and often presumptuous nature of many scholars' references to Hesse's conceptualisation of the Self (illustrated in the literature review of this thesis) suggests an unconscious yet prevalent assumption among Hesse scholars that Hesse's literary engagement with the Self is unwaveringly reflective of this deeply manifested western mentality. A contributing factor that potentially bolsters this assumption is the often overstated role of Jungian psychology in Hesse's works, as pointed out in the introduction of this thesis. The sense of 'harmony' emphasised by Jung's individuation process is yet another echo of the sense of a fixed or an internal Self that provides a template for many western understandings of identity. It is thus possible that unconscious currents in western thought can explain why no one has explored the intricate development of Hesse's literary portrayals of the Self.

This thesis, however, has explored the complexities of this development in Hesse's works and has revealed that Hesse's literary portrayals of the Self significantly change throughout his career. My analysis has shown that acute critical attention to the ways in which Hesse conceptualises and reconceptualises masks as instruments of self-understanding helps us to unveil Hesse's definition of the Self. And it is unmistakable at this point that his portrayals are not consistently modelled on the idea of an internal and fixed Self. As we have seen, they, in fact, develop into inversions of this very conception.

Synopsis

At the beginning of this thesis, I stated a case for analysing Hesse's works separately from his biography. Then, by enacting this methodology, I have thoroughly demonstrated the ways in which Hesse's literary representations of the Self develop from

traditional conceptions of an internal Self into an external Self modelled around the characteristics of the Nietzschean Mask. Through an analysis of *Peter Camenzind*, I illustrated how Hesse initially represented the Self as a fixed internality. We saw how masks in this novel are shaped by the medieval notions mentioned above: images of masks are presented as metaphorical concealments of a ‘true’ Self. Through an analysis of *Gertrud*, we then saw that Hesse preserves the same notion of Self in the novel but alters the relationship of masks to this conception. The protagonist Kuhn perceives the internal Self as vulnerable and thus ponders the necessity of shielding it with a figurative mask.

Portrayals of the stark division between the internal and external Self are not evident, however, in *Der Steppenwolf* or *Das Glasperlenspiel*. In my critique of *Der Steppenwolf*, for example, I demonstrated how Hesse constructs his narrative as a Mask of Fiction, which simultaneously exemplifies and enacts the Nietzschean Mask. That is, Hesse embeds the characteristics of the Mask into his depictions of the Self through a narrative technique that functions as a conceptual Mask. The most important of these embedded characteristics is a representational shift from the internal to the external Self. Finally, I have shown how this same narrative device further develops in *Das Glasperlenspiel*. In the final chapter of this thesis, we saw how *Das Glasperlenspiel* conveys a strictly external idea of the Self through a technique of narrative masking similar to the one seen in *Der Steppenwolf*. We additionally saw how Masks of Fiction are embedded within this narrative Mask in order to reinforce this self-conception. Crucially, I demonstrated how the novel’s concluding episode strikes a resounding note that endlessly reverberates the *process* of self-shaping consistently illustrated throughout the course of the novel.

The complexities of the development shown throughout this thesis have been teased out against a parallel illustration of Yeats’s similarly developing representations. As we have seen, Yeats’s mask symbolism is far more overt in his poetry and drama than in Hesse’s novels. In Chapter 3, I demonstrated that, between Yeats’s poem *The Two Trees* and his play *The Player Queen*, Yeats distinctly transposes the shape of his portrayals of the Self from internal to external, and I have shown that the mask is closely linked to these representations on both ends of this development. Then, through an explication of *The Player Queen*, we saw how the mask object in the play takes on the properties of the conceptual Mask, eliminating former traces of internality (seen in Yeats’s early poetry) and

redesigning Yeats's depictions of the Self as external. This concise exposition of Yeats's overt mask symbolism—which identifies the links between the different phases of his representations and demonstrates how their altered appearances are distinct alterations in Yeats's model for the Self—has given this project an illustrative background against which I have illuminated Hesse's developing use of masks for the same purpose. By demonstrating the function of the Nietzschean Mask in Yeats's *The Player Queen*, which appears in the form of a physical mask object, I have given myself an instructional guide for untangling the complexities of Hesse's employment of the Nietzschean Mask, which is not always as overt as Yeats's. Yeats's symbolism is direct, as we have seen: the mask is the Mask. But in Hesse's *Der Steppenwolf* and *Das Glasperlenspiel*, the Nietzschean Mask is designed less overtly: it emerges through narrative techniques. Nonetheless, the function is the same in both writers' works: it symbolises an external Self. Thus my analysis of Yeats's development has functioned as a kind of picture diagram for analysing Hesse's own literary employment of the mask.

The Daily Masquerade

The benefits of this project are discernible within a number of paradigms: within the field of Hesse scholarship, within the fields of comparative literature and historical studies, and it even has positive ramifications for modern day media studies. First, within Hesse studies, this project has demonstrated the positive effects of applying a new methodology to Hesse. As I have argued throughout this thesis, it is necessary to challenge and reformulate common methodological approaches to Hesse in order to fully understand how his works engage with ideas beyond his own self-reflections. This project has satisfied this criterion and illustrated its benefits. By demonstrating the characteristic shifts in Hesse's literary representations of the Self and masks, this project has exemplified the benefits of extracting Hesse's literature from a biographical frame and examining the substance of his works within its fictional domains. Importantly, I have shown how this task can only be accomplished through a new critical lens.

Second, I have highlighted a significant connection between Hesse's literary negotiations of identity through masks and other major western writers' applications of masks as conceptual instruments for understanding identity (e.g. Yeats, Rilke, Poe, Jung, Arendt, Pessoa, etc.). We have, of course, seen this explored in depth with Hesse and Yeats.

However, now that I have studied these two writers in a comparative light, we can also distinctly see a larger pattern emerge in late nineteenth/early twentieth century literary employments of masks as tools for understanding identity. As shown, both Hesse and Yeats initially portray the mask as an object/concept with traces of medieval characteristics. And we have also seen how, through the eyes of the Nietzschean Mask, both writers significantly alter their depictions of the Self and masks. They redesign their portrayals of masks as theoretical tools that not only represent their reformulated conception of the Self, but they also use this Mask as a narrative device. Given that these two writers are from very different cultural and linguistic settings, the striking similarities between their developments of the mask motif indicates a great possibility that many other writers' works can be equally identified within the same pattern. The comparative portion of this dissertation has therefore not only served a methodological function for my argument, but it has also revealed an opportunity to explore the more expansive perimeters of this pattern. For example, in the same way that A. David Napier has provided a thorough history of the roles of masks throughout civilisation, one could conduct a comparative study that expands on Chapter 2 of this thesis and focuses specifically on the *literary* employments of masks and their relations to identity. Such a project could help us identify significant turning points in western understandings of identity as well as the many genealogical factors that may have led to these distinct shifts in self-perception. We can therefore see how the model presented by this thesis and the discoveries made can contribute to both comparative literature and historical studies.

A final and perhaps more unexpected field of critical analysis that could benefit from the findings of this project is media studies, particularly media studies that examine internet relations. The inevitable undercurrents of change that have shaped the patterns identified within this project certainly do not cease at the literary development I have demonstrated. This project should make it evident that conceptions of identity remould in unison with the changing 'spirit of the times'. The spirit of the digital age is rapidly reshaping our senses of Self in ways that appear so vastly different from past conceptions that it seems they require new conceptual tools to understand their nuances. However, starting with the past can point us in the right direction. Knowledge of the historical consciousness that has consistently wrestled with an internal/external division of Self can

undoubtedly help us deconstruct identity in this digital age. The tools developed and employed in this project can therefore both guide us on which questions to ask, and they can also help us to answer them.

Essayist and novelist Sandra Newman has, in fact, recently turned to the mask as her point of departure into exploring the various nuances that distinguish modern day self-conceptions from those of the past. In a 2015 essay entitled *Possessed by a Mask*, Newman questions why people's behaviour on the internet (in social media, chat rooms, comment boards, etc.) is often markedly different from their behaviour offline. According to Newman, some observers claim that the internet alienates us from other humans and inhibits our social skills, while others attribute it to the anonymity offered by the computer screen. But Newman argues that the answers are not this simple. Developing technology has always altered human behaviour, and, additionally, internet users' behaviour is noticeably different from their offline lives even when their identity is not entirely concealed. Newman thus suggests that we might gain some insight into these changing behaviours if we look 'at another form of concealment that isn't true concealment, but that nonetheless has historically lured people into behaving in ways that are alien to their normal selves: the mask'.³²¹

In her essay, Newman draws connections between internet usage and several facets of masking that have been explored in this project. For instance, she equates the characteristics of 'social' masks with those of internet *personae*, and much like Rilke (see Chapter 2), she questions the meaning of authenticity and sincerity within these overlapping social spheres. Furthermore, she describes internet communication as a new form of self-creation through masking, which is not unlike Pessoa's description of masquerading (also in Chapter 2). While Pessoa revels in the joys of creating another *persona* from behind the visible mask, exploiting the complexities of identity, Newman ponders why internet *personae* are often noticeably different from offline social *personae* even when the identity of the online users are not concealed. We can see why Newman finds the mask helpful for answering these questions: the abilities to conceal, reveal, and transform oneself on the internet are precisely the characteristics of the mask that we have

³²¹ Newman, Sandra. *Possessed by a Mask*. Aeon.co. 11 December 2015. Web. Accessed on 16 January 2016.

seen Hesse, Yeats, Rilke, Pessoa, etc. manipulate through literature in order to shape the nature of their characters' identities.

By adopting the mask as an instructive model for exploring today's conceptions of identity, Newman has identified important aspects of the same historical pattern presented in this research project. However, as we have seen, the mask's functions do not cease at concealing, revealing, and transforming. We can therefore expand upon Newman's observations with the tools developed and employed in this project in order to fine-tune our understanding of internet relations as forms of masking. Specifically, we can turn to Hesse's *Masks of Fiction* because in the digital age, the semiotics of identity are encrypted on a new social stage that engenders careful and attentive self-cultivation like never before. Daily internet interactions occur within a symbolic masquerade that does not end at the exit door. But the internet is not only a social stage within itself; it also overlaps all other social spheres and modifies the nature of offline social interactions, and we mutually participate in the daily masquerade both consciously and unconsciously.

This symbolic plane on which we cultivate our personalities mystifies our understandings of ourselves and one another. But if we remind ourselves of the primary characteristics of the Nietzschean Mask along with Hesse's *Masks of Fiction*, we can begin to demystify these self-conceptions. While Nietzsche's Mask is a linguistic representation of the inherent externality of knowledge and the illusion of 'truth', Hesse's *Masks of Fiction*, as we have seen, are translations of this characteristic function into portrayals of Self: the Mask of Fiction represents the inherent fluidity of self-knowledge and the illusion of an internal Self. If we look at online personalities through *this* conceptual lens, we can begin to examine the symbolic masquerade of the internet and deconstruct the infinite self-fictions it daily facilitates. This lens can allow us to analyse the symbols within the fictions we create online and understand their relation to the fictions we live offline.

Almost ninety years ago, Hesse formulated a modern understanding of identity when he conveyed Harry Haller's self-understanding through a Mask of Fiction. And today, we can see its continuing relevance. The characteristics that comprise the Mask of Fiction (i.e. the symbolic imagery that replaces prescribed dictations, the ambiguity that bypasses precision, the 'impressions' it makes on its beholder, etc.) are all inherent aspects of today's self conception. But, in the same way that Hesse provides the editor's introduction in *Der*

Steppenwolf to indicate the Mask's presence and thus trigger its functions, we must approach today's intently cultivated identities with awareness of the Mask. With a keen eye on Masks of Fiction, we can then discern and interpret these Masks using the theoretical tools developed through this project.

* * *

With this thesis, I have not only thoroughly investigated a conceptual and thematic literary development, but I believe that I have additionally been able to provide a revealing case of how literary studies can stand at the epicentre of intellectual enquiry. I do not only refer to the relevance of my project as a model for examining today's conceptions of identity, but, equally, I hope that my demonstration of the interpretive value of fiction—whether it be a piece of literature or a fiction of the Self—has sharpened our understanding of the pedagogical value of fiction itself. Fiction, as I have shown, is not only a useful gateway to historical psyches, but my explanation of the Nietzschean Mask along with my demonstration of Hesse's and Yeats's literary enactments of it has also emphasised the value of fiction as a lens through which to interpret the world. By releasing our tenuous grasp on the notion of a 'true' Self, as Hesse's literature suggests, we can acknowledge the subjective nature of our self-conceptions and analyse the layers of fiction that mask us.

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