Visual Representation in the Work of Joseph Roth, 1923-1932

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Abstract

Through an examination of Joseph Roth's reportage and fiction published between 1923 and 1932, this thesis seeks to provide a systematic analysis of a particular aspect of the author's literary style, namely his use of sharply focused visual representations, which are termed Heuristic Visuals. Close textual analysis, supplemented by insights from reader-response theory, psychology, psycholinguistics and sociology illuminate the function of these visual representations. The thesis also seeks to discover whether there are significant differences and correspondences in the use of visual representations between the reportage and fiction genres. Roth believed that writers should be *engagiert*, and that the truth could only be arrived at through close observation of reality, not subordinated to theory. The research analyses the techniques by which Roth challenges his readers and encourages them to discover the truth for themselves. Three basic variants of Heuristic Visuals are identified, and their use in different contexts, including that of dialectical presentations, is explored. There is evidence of the use of different variants of Heuristic Visuals according to the respective rhetorical demands of particular thematic issues. It has also been possible to establish synchronic correspondences between the different genres, and diachronic correspondences within genres. Although there are examples within the reportage where the entire article is based on an Heuristic Visual, the use of Heuristic Visuals cannot be seen as a key organizing principle in Roth's work as a whole. As his mastery of the technique reaches its highest point in the early 1930s, Heuristic Visuals are often incorporated into the reconstruction of a complete sensory experience. Analysis of Roth's heuristic use of visual representations has led to important insights, including a reinterpretation of the endings of Roth's two most famous novels: *Hiob* and *Radetzkymarsch*.

Declarations

I, Sigrid Julia Newman, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 80,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is a record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

Date: 25th September 2006 Signature of Candidate

I was admitted as a research student in September 2000 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in May 2001; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2000 and 2006.

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I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of PhD in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

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Sigrid Newman

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Aims

The Austrian writer Joseph Roth (1894-1939) is best known for the fourteen novels that he wrote between 1923 and 1939. At the same time he produced a substantial body of literary journalism of a quality that is unsurpassed in the period. This thesis seeks to provide a systematic analysis of a particular aspect of Roth's literary style, namely his use of sharply focused visual representations. In particular, I will argue that this kind of visual representation functions as an heuristic device, and I have therefore devised the referential term 'Heuristic Visual Representations' (abbreviated to 'Heuristic Visuals') for use in the analysis. This thesis will address the significance of Roth's use of Heuristic Visuals in the context of urban modernity. In both Roth's reportage and fiction, the use of Heuristic Visuals is striking in its frequency and vividness. While a number of critics have commented on this aspect of Roth's style,[1] this study will be the first to examine it in detail.

The investigation will seek to answer the following questions:

1) To what extent can the concept of Heuristic Visuals be regarded as a key organizing principle in Roth's work?

2) In what kinds of contexts do these appear in the reportage and fiction, and are there synchronic and diachronic differences between and within the genres?

3) What are the defining features of this aspect of Roth's technique, and to what extent can they be regarded as a part of a wider dimension of

[1] See, for example, Jürgen Heizmann, *Joseph Roth und die Ästhetik der Neuen Sachlichkeit* (Heidelberg: Mattes, 1990), especially pp. 96-98, Klaus Westermann, *Joseph Roth, Journalist: Eine Karriere 1915-1939* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1987), especially p. 170 and p. 176, and Uwe Schweikert '"Der Rote Joseph": Politik und Feuilleton beim frühen Joseph Roth (1919-1926)', in *Joseph Roth*, ed. by Heinz Ludwig Arnold (Munich: Edition Text + Kritik, 1974), pp. 40-55 (p. 43).

Roth's literary style, namely strategies designed to activate sensory responses more generally?

4) How do Roth's sharply focused visual representations function as an heuristic device enabling the reader to gain a deeper understanding of the phemonena which Roth explores in his writing, and what are the advantages and limitations of Heuristic Visuals?

1.2 Review of Secondary Literature

Research into Roth's work was initally concerned with his fiction (this can be partly explained by the popularity of novels such as *Hiob* and *Radetzkymarsch*), and on questions of identity arising from his biographical and historical situation. The publication of the latest edition of Roth's *Werke* by Klaus Westermann and Fritz Hackert between 1989 and 1991, in which half the volumes contained Roth's journalism, has led to a more varied approach in Roth scholarship. This has resulted in an increase in the number of studies which examine both Roth's reportage and fiction.[2] Given that Roth's reportage constituted half of his total output as a writer, and much of his reportage is at least of equal merit to, if not of greater literary merit than his fiction, the inclusion of Roth's reportage in any broad analysis of his work is essential in order to gain a balanced view of his writing.

While earlier research tended to categorize Roth's work into two distinct periods, with *Hiob* marking a clear turning point, there has been a recent trend in Roth scholarship which has focused on showing the continuities in his writing. This trend can be seen in the work of Jürgen Heizmann, Thorsten Juergens, and Andreas Wirthensohn, among others.[3] A recent study by Cecilie

[2] See, for example, Irmgard Wirtz*, Joseph Roths Fiktionen des Faktischen: Das Feuilleton der zwanziger Jahre und 'Die Geschichte von der 1002. Nacht' im historischen Kontext* (Berlin: Schmidt, 1997), Jon Hughes, *Facing Modernity: Fragmentation, Culture and Identity in Joseph Roth's Writing in the 1920s* (Leeds: Maney, 2006) and Thomas Düllo, *Zufall und Melancholie: Untersuchungen zur Kontingenz-semantik in Texten von Joseph Roth* (Münster: Lit, 1994).

[3] See Heizmann, *Joseph Roth und die Ästhetik der Neuen Sachlichkeit* (see Heizmann above). Heizmann can be seen as a forerunner of this trend. See also, Thorsten Juergens, *Gesellschaftskritische Aspekte in Joseph Roths Romanen* (Leiden: Universitaire Pers Leiden, 1977), and Andreas Wirthensohn, 'Die "Skepsis der metaphysichen Weisheit" als Programm:

Nervik highlights the auditory and sensory nature of Roth's writing, but concentrates on the essentially musical aspects of his work.[4] The following analysis of Roth's use of Heuristic Visuals can be considered as consilient with Nervik's study, as well as with the recent trends of examining both the reportage and fiction, and of examining the continuities in Roth's work.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 Chronological Approach: Diachronic and Synchronic Analysis

The analysis will examine Roth's reportage and fiction published between 1923 and 1932. This time-span has been chosen as it was the period when Roth was simultaneously producing a significant volume of both reportage and fiction. This is important, given that this investigation is designed to discover whether there are significant differences or correspondences between the use of visual representations in the two different genres.

The thesis follows a chronological structure in order to facilitate both a diachronic analysis of the use of Heuristic Visuals during the period, and the synchronic analysis of the reportage and fiction. Within the chosen time-span, the thesis has been further divided into three chronological sections 1923-1925, 1926-1929 and 1930-1932. This subdivision into three sections was undertaken partly in order to provide a more manageable framework, but also because the sections reflect three different stages which came to light in the course of conducting the analysis. However, it is not the case that each stage is mutually exclusive, and indeed a key aspect of the thesis will be to examine whether there is in fact a substantial degree of continuity through the time periods, rather than a sudden shift in Roth's writing in 1930.

While the study is based on the full range of prose texts which Roth published during the chosen period, the decision has been taken to exclude Roth's travel

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Das Fragment *Der Stumme Prophet* im Lichte von Joseph Roths Romanpoetik', *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 72 (1998), 268-315.

[4] Cecilie Nervik, *Identität und kulturelle Vielfalt: Musikalische Bildsprache und Klangfiguren im Werk Joseph Roths* (Hamburg: Kovač, 2002).

writing (*Reisereportage*) from the investigation, given the significant differences in the specific characteristics of this genre. In addition, due to practical constraints, it seemed to be appropriate to exclude what is a relatively discrete and homogeneous body of texts. The use of visual techniques in this genre may be a subject for future research.

The thesis is based on close textual analysis of Roth's work, a relatively traditional approach which will, however, draw on insights derived from reader-response theory, psychology, psycholinguistics and sociology (see 1.3.3.2). After preliminary investigations into the frequency and nature of visual representations in each of the three periods, strong indicative examples were selected for closer analysis. These are taken from each genre in turn and from each of the three chronological subsections. This has been done in order to demonstrate and elucidate the salient characteristics of Roth's visual techniques on the basis of a representative sample.

1.3.2 Roth on seeing and writing reality

Any discussion of visual representation in Roth's work must take account of his own comments on the significance of visual phenomena and on their literary transformation. Roth did not write extensively about literary technique nor did he develop a programmatic theory of writing.[5] What he does say, we learn mainly from his reportage and letters.[6] From these it is clear that he held the view that writers should be engaged with the world around them. For example, he comments in his 1925 article 'Einbruch der Journalisten in die Nachwelt': 'Ich wüβte nicht, weshalb ein ausgeprägter Sinn für die Atmosphäre der Gegenwart die Unsterblichkeit hindern soll. […] Das Genie ist nicht weltabgewandt, sondern ihr ganz zugewandt. Es ist nicht zeitfremd, sondern

[5] Roth's 1930 article 'Schluß mit der Neuen Sachlichkeit' is an explicit rejection of a theoretical approach.
[6] Wirthensohn notes that although very few of Roth's journalistic articles explicitly focus on aspects of literary technique, Roth's opinions on the topic are scattered throughout his reportage. See Wirthensohn, p. 272.

zeitnahe.'[7] Furthermore, in a letter published in *Die Neue Bücherschau* on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Zola's death, Roth criticizes the lack of engagement on the part of German writers with the more difficult subjects of the time, and remarks: 'Er [Zola] war die literarische Form eines starken Glaubens an die Kraft der Wirklichkeit. Nur durch eine minutiöse Beobachtung der Wirklichkeit kommt man zur Wahrheit' (JRW, II, 825).

Evidence of Roth's 'minutiöse Beobachtung der Wirklichkeit' can be found throughout his writing. In both his reportage and fiction Roth not only displays his own engagement with the times and an awareness of the cultural, social and political context of the age. In particular he also demonstrates an acute awareness of the changing urban landscapes with their bombardment of visual stimuli and the increased importance of the visual in the media and entertainment industries, as well as a more generally acute eye for symptoms and the semiotics of everyday life. His acute gaze is comparable to the portraitist's eye, which scans the surface to reach, and subsequently reveal, the truth within.[8] Moreover, Roth's focus on the concrete details of everyday surfaces is in accordance with his well-known dislike of abstractions, and the fact that he did not follow any particular ideology.[9] In fact, by not subscribing to any particular theory or political ideology, Roth is able to engage with the world around him in a more open way – his writing more closely reflects an awareness of what exists rather than a preconceived notion of what ought to exist. Indeed in his 1929 article 'Selbstveriβ' he asserts that his aim is 'die banale Trostlosigkeit dieser Welt präzise widerzuspiegeln' (JRW, III, 132). In the same article he shows an awareness of people's tendency to ignore the less attractive

[7] Joseph Roth, *Werke*, ed. by Fritz Hackert and Klaus Westermann, 6 vols (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1989-1991), II, p. 519. Hereafter all references to this edition of Roth's works will appear in parentheses after quotations in the form JRW, volume and page.
Even his more oblique later novels are at some level responses to the events of the day, in which he creates counter worlds to the reality that he felt increasingly divorced from, and by which he was disappointed.

[8] In addition, it is possible to regard his insights into the psychology of perception, as displayed in his writing, as partly due to his own heightened sense of visual awareness (see 1.5.1). It is not possible, however, to determine whether Roth's engagement with the times arose out of this intense degree of visual awareness of his surroundings, or vice versa.

[9] In a 1932 letter to Hans Natonek Roth comments, 'Im Roman hat nichts Abstraktes vorzukommen. Überlassen Sie das Thomas Mann!'. Joseph Roth, *Briefe 1922-1939*, ed. by Hermann Kesten (Cologne: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1970), p. 238. Hereafter this edition will be referred to as JRB.

aspects of their world**,** 'Ich habe dem Menschen der Gegenwart sein eigenes Bild vorgehalten. Kein Wunder, daβ er es nicht ansehen will. Es graut ihm davor – und noch mehr als mir' (JRW, III, 132). This metaphor of the picture or image is an articulation of Roth's sense of the direct and forceful impact that precise visual representations can have on the reader.

While Roth often draws attention to, and comments explicitly on the impact of the visual phenomena of modernity, in his texts he uses words to reproduce these visuals, and indeed sometimes the whole range of sensory experience for the reader. He thus demonstrates the power of language to affect by creating arresting visualizations. In a 1923 article 'Wahlkampf in Berlin',[10] Roth demonstrates an awareness of what are three core aspects of visuality in his works, namely:

1) The visual environment of modernity
2) Human perception of that environment and, paradoxically,
3) The inadequacy of the written word in the face of the visual environment.

Roth indicates that this last factor need not necessarily pertain. In 'Wahlkampf in Berlin' he shows how language can have power to affect by creating arresting visual images – by creating an 'optische[n] Schrei' or optical shout.[11] The term 'optischer Schrei' indicates a deliberate and direct appeal for attention, with connotations of urgency and even anger. Just as a shout is designed to assail a person's auditory sense, so an optical shout is designed to assail a person's visual sense; moreover, one can argue that the literary transformation of it serves to 'arrest' the reader's attention by assailing their cognitive sense.

Although Roth uses the term 'optischer Schrei' in 'Wahlkampf in Berlin' to relate specifically to the visually striking type-faces used by commercial enterprises in advertisements, it is evidence not only of his understanding of the communicative power of the visual in the context of urban modernity, but it also indicates his awareness of the impact of the visual on reader-response (see

[10] JRW, II, 169-171.
[11] JRW, II, 169.

1.3.3.2). Therefore it would seem appropriate to transfer this notion of an 'optischer Schrei' to the communicative power of the visual in the literary context of Roth's Heuristic Visuals. All the more so since, as Roth observes in 'Wahlkampf in Berlin', the old forms of communication are no longer adequate to catch the attention of a modern public who are subjected to the economic, commercial and other pressures of urban life (see 1.5.1).

While it is important to be aware of the historical context and the visual landscapes and surfaces with which Roth was confronted, the main focus of the thesis is on how the observations of Roth's acute gaze are transferred onto the page, and mediated to the reader – how he transforms his observed visuals into Heuristic Visuals, and their function and effect.

1.3.3 Theoretical Considerations

The aims of the thesis are best served not by applying any one particular critical theory but by a detailed critical analysis of the text, while drawing, where appropriate, on theories from various disciplines. There are, however, several points of correspondence between the aims of reader-response theory and aspects of this investigation, in particular the two basic goals of reader-response theory: firstly to show that a work gives a reader something to do, and secondly to describe what the response of the reader is likely to be.[12] With regard to the former, this analysis is designed to show how Roth's work challenges the 'Fraglos-Gegebene' (see 1.3.3.2.3) and encourages the reader to question certain 'givens', to discover the truth for themselves. In terms of describing what the reader-response is likely to be, this most closely correlates to the fourth aim of the investigation as noted in section 1.1 – to examine how Roth's Heuristic Visuals function to enable the reader to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena.

Beyond these correspondences with general aspects of reader-response theory, the work of Stanley Fish provides a further source of theoretical concepts which

[12] See Ross Murfin, *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997).

are appropriate to this thesis. In his 1972 study *Self- Consuming Artifacts*,[13] Fish argues that there are two kinds of literary presentation: rhetorical and dialectical. Whereas the rhetorical form satisfies the needs of its readers, in that it mirrors and presents for approval the opinions its readers already hold, the dialectical form 'is disturbing for it requires of its readers a searching and rigorous scrutiny of everything they believe in and live by. It is didactic in a special sense; it does not preach the truth but asks that its readers discover the truth for themselves.'[14]

Thus, with regard to Roth, one can argue that his writing contains many elements which would correspond to what Fish would term a dialectical presentation. Through the uncompromising representation of a concrete reality which is at variance with the reader's normally unquestioning perception of reality, Roth challenges and provokes his reader (see 1.3.3.2.3 and 1.5.1). The readers' presuppositions are undermined and they are encouraged to view aspects of their assumed reality in a new light, to discover for themselves the truth that lies within the surfaces of daily life. Roth, however, does not simply challenge the reader, he also engages him/her by describing phenomena which form a part of the reader's common or everyday experience of reality. He does this by presenting the reader with the concrete rather than the abstract. In his inroduction to reader-response criticism in a critical edition of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*,[15] Ross Murfin notes that Peter Rabinowitz employs this type of reader-response strategy in his article on *Heart of Darkness*, in that he uses references to popular culture in order to 'make it virtually impossible for us not to enagage actively in the unfolding argument'.[16] This is similar to Roth's technique.

Fish further clarifies the two forms of presentation using the terms 'self-satisfying' and 'self-consuming' to describe the rhetorical and dialectical respectively. For Fish the rhetorical or self-satisfying approach to writing is based on the epistemology which assumes that you acquire knowledge by

[13] Stanley Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts* (London: University of California Press, 1972).
[14] Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts*, p. 1.
[15] Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, ed. by Ross Murfin, 2nd edn (London: Macmillan, 1996).
[16] Ross Murfin, 'What is Reader-Response Criticism?', in Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, ed. by Ross Murfin, 2nd edn (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 115-131 (p. 126).

adding new certainties to old ones, whereas the dialectical or self-consuming approach is based on the epistemology that stresses the discovery of problems and the creation of new uncertainties. However, while Fish categorizes the self-satisfying as the reader being led to a point of clarity, and the self-consuming as the reader being led away from clarity, this is not the case with Roth. Roth does not challenge his readers to question their reality by presenting them with confusing or complex uncertainties, rather he prompts them to arrive at a clearer and more focused recognition of that reality.

A further interesting concept with regard to reader-response criticism is Peter Rabinowitz's Rule of Abstract Displacement. Rabinowitz argues that literature is often treated as if it were about something beyond the surface, and that images in the text are regarded as indications of something 'more important'. He observes that this approach privileges the abstract over the concrete, and that, for example, in the case of *Heart of Darkness*, such interpretations 'turn us away from the concrete images of starvation brought by the Europeans.'[17] He argues that by ignoring the importance of such images, the readers and critics are themselves guilty of dubious moral actions. Furthermore, Rabinowitz notes that Conrad himself insisted that he had started with 'definite images' rather than an abstract concept, and was aware that he had made the character of Kurtz too symbolic.[18] An analysis which assumed that Roth's use of images in the form of Heuristic Visuals was merely representative of something 'more important', would ignore the inherent value which Roth himself placed on the concrete, and would be at odds with his proclaimed dislike of abstractions.

One of the most problematic aspects of reader-response theory is how to define who the reader is. While this question is beyond the scope of this analysis, it is nevertheless useful to bear in mind Fish's argument in 'Interpreting the *Variorum*'[19] that one should not think about one 'abstract' reader, but rather

[17] Peter Rabinowitz, 'Reader Response, Reader Responsibility: *Heart of Darkness* and the Politics of Displacement', in Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, ed. by Ross Murfin, 2nd edn (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 131-147 (p. 142).
[18] Rabinowitz, p. 144.
[19] Stanley Fish, 'Interpreting the *Variorum*', in Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 147-173.

groups of readers sharing a common cultural identity. This is particularly relevant with regard to the cultural and historical context of Roth's readers in Weimar Germany, and their common sensory experience of the modern urban environment. It is, of course, necessary to make certain assumptions and generalizations about Roth's readers, and it is not possible to take into account the characteristics of all of Roth's readerships, whether contemporary or modern-day. Not all of Roth's contemporary readers would have been city-dwellers, nor would they all have lived in the Weimar Republic, given that he published in newspapers in Czechoslovakia and Austria, and that some of his novels appeared in translation shortly after they were first published.

Furthermore, with respect to the differences between Roth's contemporary readership and later ones, it is important to note a tenet of New Historicism that all reading is culturally situated. For example, 'Wahlkampf in Berlin', where Roth highlights the ineffective use of written propaganda by the right-wing could be seen as tragically ironic by present-day readers, given the National Socialists' all-too-effective mastering of propaganda techniques in the years that followed.

In a sense the key aspects of reader-response criticism which are relevant to this analysis are the imputing of intentions to the author, and responses to the reader, both of which need to be informed by an awareness of cultural and historical contexts.

1.3.3.1 Defining Observed and Heuristic Visuals

1.3.3.1.1 Observed Visuals

This term is used to refer to the concrete phenomena which Roth himself would have observed; either through first hand experience, or as a second order construct through other media such as film and photography. Thus, while he may not necessarily have witnessed or observed the visual phenomena himself, the key concept is nonetheless one of transference of the concrete from the observed to the written. Furthermore, the term Observed Visuals incorporates the implicit subjectivity which is present – Roth is analysing and filtering the

reality which he perceives. (It can of course be argued that there can never be a single objective reality but only different subjective ones.) Roth himself was well aware of the tension between the objective and the subjective. While on the one hand he says in a 1925 letter to Benno Reifenberg that 'meine 'Subjektivität' ist objektiv im höchsten Grade',[20] in a 1930 letter to Stefan Zweig he argues that all objectivity is a lie, '[…] alle Objektivität ist Schweinerei, aber man darf es nicht erkennen lassen'.[21] However, one could argue that Roth's position as a marginal man facilitates a more objective reading of his environment and the phenomena of modernity (see 1.3.3.2.3 and 1.5.1).

1.3.3.1.2 Heuristic Visuals

In order to define the term Heuristic Visuals, it is perhaps useful to first explain what they are not. They are not painting with words, in the sense that they are not an attempt at a documentary or quasi-photographic reproduction, where the emphasis is on trying to reproduce the visual surfaces as accurately as possible. Furthermore, they are not primarily symbols in the conventional sense, with a constant meaning.

Some critics, such as Düllo[22] and Prümm[23], have treated Roth's visuals as *Denkbilder* in the style of modernists such as Benjamin. However, the part played by Heuristic Visuals in Roth's writing displays crucial differences from that of *Denkbilder*. *Denkbilder* are conceptual, in the sense that they are intended to serve as models to decode reality within theories of modernity. Heuristic Visuals are more akin to conceits: they provoke thought, often unsettle the reader, but are created with an imaginative freedom unconstrained by the need to serve as a conceptual model.

[20] JRB, 45.
[21] JRB, 189.
[22] Düllo, see especially pp. 100-112.
[23] Karl Prümm, 'Die Stadt der Reporter und Kinogänger bei Roth, Brentano und Kracauer: Das Berlin der zwanziger Jahre im Feuilleton der *Frankfurter Zeitung*', in *Die Unwirklichkeit der Städte: Großstadtdarstellungen zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne*, ed. by Klaus R. Scherpe (Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, 1988), pp. 80-105 (p. 84).

The first, most important feature of Heuristic Visuals is that they form a discrete category in themselves. Therefore, they are not readily defined into further distinct categories of form. However, it is possible to identify some core characteristics which Roth's Heuristic Visuals share:

- They are focused on the concrete and the specific.
- They often involve minute detail.
- They often focus on very banal objects or surfaces but in such a way as to prompt the reader to see them in a new light, or see them in greater detail.
- They have a sensory impact, often startling, and at times shocking – they disrupt the 'taken for grantedness' in everyday life (see 1.3.3.2.3).
- In many cases they are real images, that is they are the literary inscription of Roth's Observed Visuals.
- They are also employed in the construction of surreal or imagined images, although even here they still tend to be based on concrete phenomena. For example, the flames which Lohse 'sees' in *Das Spinnennetz* (see 2.3.1.3), or the metaphor of the 'faschiertes Fleisch' which is discussed below. (In the former it is not clear whether the flames are entirely a metaphor, or whether Roth is suggesting that Lohse visualizes the flames in his mind's eye.)

Roth often constructs visual images of phenomena which people would be accustomed to seeing but highlights hidden aspects of them – often by juxtaposing them with something unexpected, or sometimes by creating a surreal image which is a combination of the observable and the imagined. An example of the latter can be seen in his first piece of reportage for the 1924 'Berliner Bilderbuch' series in *Der Drache*.[24] Here Roth's vision of the 'melting' of the parliamentary chamber with the restaurant in the Reichstag reflects the increasing erosion of civilized values in the politics of the time. He then extends this image to the possible fate of the German people: 'Da sah ich, rings um die Siegessäule, zu faschiertem Fleisch gewandelt, das deutsche Volk,

[24] JRW, II, 92-94.

dessen Vertreter drinnen "berieten"' (JRW, II, 94). This image is all the more shocking because Roth combines the mundane – minced meat – with the extreme, i.e. that this meat represents the German people. Moreover, the juxtaposition of the manifestation of noble ideas (in the form of the 'Siegessäule' and 'das deutsche Volk') with the fodder of 'faschiertes Fleisch' creates an image which, although surreal, is not absurd but disturbing. One can argue that such images are calculated to provoke the reader into a reassessment of the condition of such noble ideas and civilized values in the Germany of the time.

This example serves to demonstrate how Heuristic Visuals are not merely innocent or picturesque reproductions of Observed Visuals but devices which Roth uses to draw out the inner truth. In his 1923 article 'Philosophie des Panoptikums' (JRW, I, 939-941),[25] Roth comments on the inability of waxworks to convey a sense of inner truth:

> Ein Goethe aus Wachs besaß naturgemäß nicht die majestätische Gewichtigkeit eines marmoren. Die billige Materie konnte nur lebensechte Gesichtsfarbe vortäuschen, nicht der Bedeutung des Genius gerecht werden. […] Denn die Tendenz des Panoptikums: Lebensähnlichkeit bis zum Erschrecken, *muss* zur Lächerlichkeit führen. Es ist die kunstfeindliche Tendenz, äußere Wahrscheinlichkeit statt innerer Wahrheit darzustellen: die Tendenz der naturalistischen Photographie und der "Kopie." (JRW, I, 939)

From this it is clear that Roth understood the limitations of mere reproductions, and although in this example he is not applying this to writing, one could nevertheless argue that his writing, rather than focusing on constructing a documentary copy which achieves only a superficial resemblance, can be compared to the marble Goethe which conveys the inner truth.

1.3.3.1.2.1 Basic Variants of Heuristic Visuals

Although it is not possible to categorize them exhaustively into different, discrete types, it is, however, possible to differentiate the three basic variants which occur most frequently:

[25] First published in *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 25 February 1923.

- Close-ups – an intense focus on a single person or object, incorporating minute detail, and mainly static.
- Snapshots/Montages – these are short, static visuals, yet moving from one image to another in quick succession, normally focusing on one particular aspect of the object or surface.
- Scenes – passages with a real time, filmic quality.

The use of terminology from the fields of photography and film is not intended to suggest that Roth was consciously copying these media. It goes beyond the scope of this study to attempt to ascertain to what extent Roth may have been influenced by these media in his writing.

1.3.3.2 Non-Literary Theoretical Approaches

In an attempt to better understand the effects Roth achieves by his linguistic visualizations, theoretical work from non-literary fields has been drawn on.

1.3.3.2.1 Psychology of Perception

It is a necessary function of human sensory perception that our brains filter the various retinal images which are produced in our eyes. If this were not the case we would suffer from visual overload. Thus when walking down the street we perceive only a fragment of what we actually see – the process which psychologists refer to as sensory accommodation. However, when something out of the ordinary occurs within our field of vision, our visual sense is involuntarily arrested by it and it becomes the focus of our attention. Our visual sense is also heightened when we are in an unfamiliar place – we then see with the active eyes of the stranger, rather than with the passive eyes of a native.[26]

These concepts from the psychology of perception are important in terms of understanding the urban perceptual environment of 1920s Europe, and Roth's

[26] See M.W. Eysenck and M. Keane, *Cognitive Psychology: A Student's Handbook* (Hove: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2000).

insights into this environment. Furthermore, the fact that the visual sense is heightened when one is in an unfamiliar place may also go some way in explaining Roth's own acute perception (see 1.3.3.2.3 and 1.5.1). In addition, with respect to the function of shocking and provoking the reader, Roth's Heuristic Visuals can sometimes be seen as analogous to the process where the visual and auditory senses are arrested when something out of the ordinary occurs.

Psychologists have also distinguished between mental imagery and perceptual experience. Hoffman and Honeck define mental imagery as 'mental pictures that can be viewed by an inner eye in the same way that real pictures are viewed by the real eye'.[27] This is distinct from perception in that perception involves our real eyes, whereas mental imagery makes use of our mind's eye.[28]

1.3.3.2.2 Psycholinguistics

Allan Paivio's Dual Coding Theory (DCT) is based on the differences between the right and left hemispheres of the brain, namely that the right hemisphere of the brain performs creative, intuitive, imaginative thinking and processes pictorial information, whereas the left hemisphere performs logical, abstract, conceptual thinking and processes verbal information.[29] In his article on the relevance of DCT for reading literary texts, Mark Sadoski explains that there are two cognitive subsystems or codes – the verbal and the non-verbal, and that all cognition involves interplay between these two codes. Whereas the verbal code is a mental code which deals with verbal language, the non-verbal code deals with non-linguistic knowledge of the world, and it is commonly known as the imagery code, since the generation of mental images is its chief function.[30]

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[27] Robert R. Hoffman and R.P. Honeck, 'A Peacock Looks at its Legs: Cognitive Science and Figurative Language', in *Cognition and Figurative Language*, ed. by Robert R Hoffman and R.P. Honeck (Hillsdale NJ: Erlbaum, 1980), pp. 3-24 (p. 23).
[28] See George Lakoff, *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About The Mind* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987), pp. 444-445.
[29] See Allan Paivio, *Mental Representations: A Dual Coding Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).
[30] See Mark Sadoski, 'Dual Coding Theory and Reading Poetic Text', *The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning and Teaching,* 7 (2002-2003), <http://www.njcu.edu/cill/vol7/sadoski.html> [accessed 23 January 2005].

Moreover, DCT provides an explanation as to why concrete language in words, phrases, sentences and texts is comprehended and remembered better than abstract language – because concrete language can be encoded verbally and as non-verbal mental imagery. As Annelies Häcki-Buhofer explains:

> Konkrete Wörter, die leicht ein Vorstellungsbild hervorrufen, werden nach dieser dualen Kodierungstheorie auf zwei Spuren verarbeitet, währenddem abstraktes Sprachmaterial nur im verbalen System verarbeitet wird.
> Die empirisch fassbare Auswirkung der dualen Kodierung ist nun die, daß Wörter, die Bilder hervorrufen und deshalb auch imaginal verarbeitet werden, anders, schneller, und besser verarbeitet werden, und auch anders, schneller und besser wieder verfügbar sind.[31]

Since Roth's Heuristic Visuals use overwhelming concrete language which readily evokes mental imagery, rather than abstract language, they would therefore be more easily comprehended and retained by the reader. It is worth noting here that Häcki-Buhofer argues that in language 'Bildhaftigkeit' or pictoriality and concreteness are not identical but have a relatively high correlation. Moreover, she points out that concreteness does not only relate to the visual sense, but also to tactile, olfactory and auditory senses. Sadoski also notes that the imagery code can evoke multiple senses, and suggests that, 'sometimes imagery is multimodal and approaches actual experience, if vicariously'.[32]

In applying DCT to reading poetic and literary text, Sadoski states that concrete language also evokes images formed from one's personal experiences, and that our 'fund of experience limits the images that we might form in response to a text […]'.[33] Therefore with respect to Roth's Heuristic Visuals, the fact that they often incorporate familiar and everyday images supports the argument that his writing style is particularly effective in engaging the reader. Furthermore, Sadoski cites T.S. Eliot's argument that emotion in poetry can only be

[31] Annelies Häcki-Buhofer, 'Psycholinguistische Aspekte in der Bildhaftigkeit von Phraseologismen', in *EUROPHRAS 88, Phraseologie Contrastive, Actes du Colloque International,* Klingenthal, Strasbourg*, 12-16 May 1988*, ed. by Gertrud Greciano (Collection Recherches Germaniques, no. 2, 1989), 165-175 (p. 167).
[32] Sadoski, para. 6 of 22.
[33] Sadoski, para. 8.

expressed by an 'objective correlative',[34] that is 'a set of concrete objects or events that [evoke] an emotion in the reader without actually stating that emotion (i.e., show us don't tell us).'[35] This corresponds to what Roth does through his use of Heuristic Visuals. He does not tell the reader what to think or feel but rather he prompts and provokes them to think by what he shows them.

Other research from linguistics on the language of advertising also sheds light on how Roth's Heuristic Visuals function. Given that mental imagery facilitates the acquisition and retention of verbal material, it is not surprising that in the field of advertising, concrete language which evokes mental images is often used, particularly in the form of idioms. Advertisers create an atmosphere of familiarity and informality by using concrete language which is understood by everyone and will thereby alienate fewer potential customers. [36] They also frequently employ metaphors which evoke what George Lakoff terms 'conventional rich images' – they are rich in detail and conventional in the sense that 'they appear to be pretty much the same from person to person in the same culture.'[37] This idea of an image which is rich in detail but nevertheless common to many can readily be applied to many instances of Roth's use of Heuristic Visuals.

By using concrete language which directly appeals to people's sense of the familiar and also evokes mental images, Roth is engaging his reader and facilitating their understanding and retention of his texts. Moreover, in the context of an urban modernity in which visual stimuli (often in the form of advertisements) were ubiquitous, Roth's Heuristic Visuals can be seen as more effective competition for the visual stimuli than abstract or theoretical writing.

[34] See T.S. Eliot, 'Hamlet and His Problems', in *The Sacred Wood* (London: Faber & Faber, 1997), pp. 81-87.
[35] Sadoski, para. 13.
[36] See Jennifer McKenna, 'Idioms with a Viable Literal Interpretation in German Advertisements' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St Andrews, 2004).
[37] Lakoff, p. 446.

1.3.3.2.3 Sociology

Sociological theory from the work of Georg Simmel and Alfred Schütz has been drawn on to provide further insights into the social and cultural context of the early part of the twentieth century, and also Roth's 'social' role as the stranger or marginal man. Simmel's 1903 essay 'Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben'[38] discusses the impact of urban modernity on the perceptive senses and highlights how the cultural background of individuals influences their perception (see 1.5.1). Both Simmel's essay 'Exkurs über den Fremden',[39] and Schütz's 1944 essay 'The Stranger'[40] analyse the social role of the 'outsider', whom they both consider to be more capable of being objective. In this section Schütz's work will be examined in more detail, while a more detailed account of Simmel's argument is given below (see 1.5.1.), in the context of historical and biographical factors.

Schütz argues that daily life functions for people as 'an unquestioned scheme of reference'[41] and that their everyday knowledge is a 'knowledge of trustworthy *recipes* for interpreting the social world' and acting effectively within it.[42] Their knowledge may be incoherent but it is 'good enough' for people to get along, and within the in-group it takes on the appearance of consistency. However, this is not the case for the stranger [43] – they do not share the basic assumptions of the in-group and can therefore place in question what seems unquestionable to the group members: 'The cultural pattern of the approached group is to the stranger not a shelter but a field of adventure, not a matter of course but a questionable topic of investigation, not an instrument for disentangling problematic situations but a problematic situation itself and one that is hard to

[38] Georg Simmel, 'Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben', in Georg Simmel, *Gesamtausgabe*, ed. by Otthein Rammstedt and others, 22 vols (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1989-2005), VII (1995) ed. by Rüdiger Kramme, 116-131.
[39] Georg Simmel, 'Exkurs über den Fremden', in Georg Simmel, *Gesamtausgabe*, XI (1992) ed. by Otthein Rammstedt, 764-771.
[40] Alfred Schütz, 'The Stranger: An Essay in Social Psychology', *The American Journal of Sociology*, 49 (1944), 499-507.
[41] Schütz, 'The Stranger', p. 502.
[42] Schütz, 'The Stranger', p. 501.
[43] Schütz notes that the most common example of the social situation where a stranger has to interpret the cultural patterns of another social group is that of the immigrant, but points out that the concept of the stranger is not confined to this one typical case.

master.'[44] Thus according to this theory, Roth's social position as an outsider can be seen as contributing to his constant questioning and analysis of the culture of urban modernity.

Furthermore, Schütz's earlier work *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt*[45] also refers to the fact that in their daily lives people do not question their experiences, and accept them as 'das Fraglos-Gegebene': '*Fraglos gegeben ist jeweils diejenige Tiefenschichte, welche sich* in einem bestimmten Jetzt und So *der reflexiven Blickwendung* (infolge deren pragmatischer Bedingtheit) *als nicht weiter auflösungsbedürftig darbietet*.'[46] Therefore, the very phenomena which others would have taken for granted, engaged and challenged Roth because his 'pragmatic interest' was one of investigating and inquiring. Moreover, Schütz goes on to say that 'durch einen Wandel der attention à la vie das Fraglos-Gegebene zum Objeckt besonderer Zuwendung, zu einem "Problematischen" werden kann'.[47] If one applies this to Roth's work and reader-response, one could regard his writing as a sustained attempt to force a change of attention and thereby expose the 'taken for granted'. By disrupting the reader's normally unquestioning experience of the everyday, Roth transforms it from the taken-for-granted into the problematical so that the reader is encouraged to arrive at a deeper understanding of their experienced reality.

1.4 Cultural Context: Roth's work in relation to that of other writers and visual artists

It goes beyond the scope of this thesis to enter into a detailed comparative discussion of Roth and other contemporary artists whose work involves similar strongly visual dimensions. It may suffice to note here correspondences in theme and style between Roth and the visual artists Otto Dix and George Grosz, whose highly coloured grotesque images of war cripples in the post-war period

[44] Schütz, 'The Stranger', p. 506.
[45] Alfred Schütz, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt* (Vienna: Springer, 1932).
[46] Schütz, ibid., p. 78.
[47] Schütz, ibid., p. 78.

emphasized the long term effects of the brutality of war.[48] Käthe Kollwitz's monochrome images of the socially disenfranchised is another contemporary artist with whom Joseph Roth's work has affinities. Her monochrome images are reminiscent of some of Roth's representations of workers, the poor and the marginalized.

A detailed contrastive comparison of the different approaches to the cultural phenomenon of the Tiller Girls by Roth, Siegfried Kracauer and Stefan Zweig will serve to highlight the particular aspects of Roth's visual style. Whereas Kracauer and Zweig engage in theoretical discourses to explain the perceived problems of Americanization, Roth eschews such an approach, and instead focuses visually on the concrete condition of the cultural phenomena of modernity.

1.5. Context

1.5.1 Historical and Biographical Factors

In her recent study of visual culture in Weimar Germany, Janet Ward argues that 'only in Weimar Germany did modernity's cult of surface extend uniformly into *all* visual fields and come to dominate cultural and business production so simultaneously and so distinctively'.[49] She notes that after the introduction of the Dawes Plan in 1924, there was a sharp increase in visually oriented modernization, with the urban landscapes of Weimar Germany changing and developing at an unprecedented pace. Thus one might have expected that within the rapidly changing urban landscapes of Europe in the early twentieth century, people's visual sense would have been in a constantly heightened state of stimulation, as Anke Gleber asserts:

> Faced with an enormous number of rapidly changing images, the inhabitant of modernity experiences the visual domain as a

[48] See, for example, Brigid Barton, *Otto Dix and Die Neue Sachlichkeit 1918-1925* (Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981) on Dix's engagement with the grim social realities of the post-war period, and Ivo Kranzfelder, *George Grosz 1983-1959* (Cologne: Taschen, 1994).
[49] Janet Ward, *Weimar Surfaces: Urban Visual Culture in 1920s Germany* (London: University of California Press, 2001), p. 10.

> primary factor in the quality of his urban life. […] As the primary source of images, streets name the site of an ever increasing, mutually reinforcing kaleidoscope of the city. This dynamics multiplies the expanding visual aspects of modern reality as they begin to manifest themselves not only in advertisements, billboards, posters, placards, store signs, shop fronts and display windows but also in the multitude of commodity forms and shapes, fashions and architectures that the city offers in its sights and its traffic.[50]

However, in his 1922 article 'Wunder'[51] Roth observes that instead of being astonished by the changes that new technologies have made in everyday urban life, people seem to be oblivious to their surrounding environment. Their senses are no longer arrested by the manifestations of modernity. Instead, these new phenomena have quickly become asborbed into the familiar landscapes of perception. Not only are people responding mechanically in terms of their visual sense perceptions but their entire bodies are portrayed as functioning machines:

> Viele Menschen, die soeben noch hielten, rattern, vom lieben Gott angekurbelt, ihren Zielen entgegen. Ihre Motoren surren. Wer sie näher anschaut, sieht ihre Augen wie Miniaturscheinwerfer Strahlen in die Luft speien. Wer näher hinhorcht, hört ihre aufgezogenen Gehirnräder abschnurren. (JRW, I, 788)

Significantly people's eyes are not portrayed as organs which visually perceive and absorb their enivronment but as mechanical projectors of light, similar to car headlights. Their eyes are like narrow beams which focus on forging a path through the urban crowds to their final destination. This simile emphasizes not only people's lack of awareness of their surrounding environment but also their alienation from it – they observe neither their fellow humans nor the features of the landscape. However, the exception to this is Roth himself. He asserts that he is actively observing his environment rather than passively absorbing it: 'Ich schäle aus den Hüllen des Wissens und der Kultur das Staunen heraus. Ich schlage gleichsam meine offenen Augen noch einmal auf' (JRW, I , 788).

[50] Anke Gleber, *The Art of taking a Walk: Flanerie, Literature and Film in Weimar Culture* (Princeton N. J.: Princeton U. P., 1999), p. 24.
[51] JRW, I, 787-789. First published in *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 6 April 1922.

Thus Roth highlights both the mechanization and alienation of humanity in this fast-paced modern urban context of enclosed spaces and sensory bombardment. The enormity of the changes which had occurred in the cities is also underlined by Roth in his 1923 article 'Der Auferstandene Mensch',[52] in which the city of Berlin is portrayed through the eyes of Georg B, a man who has spent the past fifty-one years in prison. The key factor noted here is the variety of new modes of transportation and the speed with which people and vehicles are moving around: 'Ein Zugtier bedeutete ihm Schnelligkeit – nie hatte er gesehen, daβ Menschen behender sein könnten als Hasen, Hirsche und Gazellen' (JRW, I, 937). Georg views the world with the sense of wonder that Roth recognizes as missing in the majority of people. Georg is able to view this 'new' Berlin through fresh, alert eyes, because his physical confinement has resulted in his being psychologically and socially distanced from the rest of the city. He is not yet part of the modern masses and is to still to some extent the stranger.

The senses of the modern urban masses had become accustomed to the various visual and aural stimuli around them – a necessary defence mechanism against an overload of stimuli (see 1.3.3.2). Georg Simmel writing at the turn of the century was already aware of the effects of the increasing exposure to stimuli on city-dwellers and he uses the term 'Blasiertheit' to refer to what we now understand as sensory accommodation:

> Es gibt vielleicht keine seelische Erscheinung, die so unbedingt der Großstadt vorbehalten wäre, wie die Blasiertheit. Sie ist zunächst die Folge jener rasch wechselnden und ihren Gegensätzen eng zusammengedrängten Nervenreize […]. Das Wesen der Blasiertheit ist die Abstumpfung gegen die Unterschiede der Dinge, nicht in dem Sinne, daß sie nicht wahrgenommen würden, wie von den Stumpfsinnigen, sondern so, daß die Bedeutung und der Wert der Unterschiede der Dinge und damit der Dinge selbst als richtig empfunden wird. Sie erscheinen dem Blasierten in einer gleichmäßig matten und grauen Tönung, keines wert, dem anderen vorgezogen zu werden.[53]

[52] JRW, I, 936-939. First published in *Neue Berliner Zeitung – 12 Uhr Blatt*, 24 February 1923.
[53] Simmel, *Gesamtausgabe*, VII, p. 121.

In his confinement Georg B has had no chance to develop such a defence mechanism and instead has the ability to perceive the surrounding environment in a similar way to that of a child or a young man, for whom the world seems a neverending source of strange and incredible things: 'Georg B, der Siebzigjährige, geht wie ein Jüngling durch die Welt' (JRW, I, 938). However, Georg's detachment from modernity is short-lived, and his desire to work again ensures that he too will become ensnared in the alienating web of modernity: 'Der Mensch, zwischen Maschinen gestellt, muß Maschine werden. Die galvanisierten siebzig Jahre zappeln, trommeln, schüttern, B muß arbeiten' (JRW, I, 939).

The fast pace of modern life in the cities or 'Tempo' as it was referred to, is a familiar topos in Weimar Germany.[54] However, in 1903 Simmel was already aware of the increasing differentiation between the hectic nature of city life and the slower pace of life in rural areas:

> In dem die Großstadt gerade diese psychologischen Bedingungen schafft – mit jedem Gang über die Straße, mit dem Tempo und den Mannigfaltigkeiten des wirtschaftlichen, beruflichen, gesellschaftlichen Lebens – stiftet sie schon in den sinnlichen Fundamenten des Seelenlebens, in dem Bewußtseinsquantum, das sie uns wegen unserer Organisation als Unterschiedswesen abfordert, einen tiefen Gegensatz gegen die Kleinstadt und das Landleben, mit dem langsameren, gewohnteren, gleichmäßiger fließenden Rhythmus ihres sinnlich-geistigen Lebensbildes.[55]

Simmel recognised that the environment both within the small town and in the countryside did not contain the same levels of sensory stimuli as were found in the rapidly developing cities of modernity. Thus the 'Geistesleben' of those people who live in pre-modern, more traditional environments is significantly different from the urban masses – they are more aware of their environment and are more closely connected to it. Unlike their urban counterparts, who are alienated from their environment and also their own humanity, those living in rural areas maintain a strong connection to the land, and a sense of their own humanity as being a part of nature and not detached from it. This close

[54] See Chapter Three, 'Topos Tempo' in Michael Bienert, *Die Eingebildete Metropole: Berlin im Feuilleton der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1992), pp. 64-92.
[55] Simmel, *Gesamtausgabe*, VII, p. 117.

connection to and understanding of the environment reflects a more primitive or 'natural' relationship with the environment: 'The environment is an integral part of primitive cultures; the people work, create, and play in harmony with their landscape. Most often, they feel completely identified with it, are loath to leave it; it stands for continuity and stability in an uncertain world.'[56]

How the individual responds to the city will vary depending on the environment he/she has come from, as Bienert notes:

> Einem Menschen mit einer starken affektiven Bindung ans Land, mit einer an traditionelle Lebensformen gebundenen Ich-Identität, muss das Großstadtleben als Vergewaltigung erscheinen; ist das Verhältnis zur Herkunft schon gebrochen (wie oft bei Zugereisten aus Provinzstädten), wird der Zuwachs an Lebensmöglichkeiten in der Großstadt als Befreiung erfahren.[57]

While Roth's experience of the city was certainly not the former, nevertheless his childhood in Galicia was far-removed from the modern cities of his adulthood.[58] Thus, one might argue that he was able to keep the active eyes of a stranger in the midst of all the sensory bombardment. Indeed, Roth may be regarded as a stranger in the sense in which Simmel employs the term in his article, 'Exkurs über den Fremden': as 'der Wandernde, [...] der heute kommt und morgen bleibt.'[59] According to Simmel, the stranger's position as outsider enables him to approach the 'group' with a more objective attitude. Simmel regards this objectivity not as non-participation but as 'eine positiv-besondre Art der Teilnahme', which is not distorted by habit or precedent.[60] Thus the stranger does not remain detached from the group but engages with it and becomes 'the outsider as insider.'

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[56] Kevin Lynch, 'Some references to Orientation', in *Image and Environment: Cognitive Mapping and Spatial Behaviour*, ed. by Roger M. Downs and David Stea (Chicago: Adien, 1973), pp. 300-315 (p.300).
[57] Bienert, p. 74.
[58] Although Roth grew up in the 'Provinzstadt' of Brody, his memorable evocations of the Galician countryside in *Radetzkymarsch* indicate a strong and lasting connection to the rural landscapes of his childhood. See Maria Klańska, 'Die galizische Heimat im Werk Joseph Roths', in *Joseph Roth: Interpretationen-Kritik-Rezeption: Akten des internationalen, interdisziplinären Symposions 1989, Akademie der Diözese Rottenburg-Stuttgart*, ed. by Michael Kessler and Fritz Hackert (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1990), pp. 143-156.
[59] Simmel, *Gesamtausgabe*, XI, p. 764.
[60] Simmel, *Gesamtausgabe*, XI, p. 767.

Moreover, Roth's professional activity writing for newspapers involved him distancing himself to a degree from the urban masses and landscapes around him. As David Spurr comments,

> Reporting begins with looking. Visual observation is the essence of the reporter's function as witness. But the gaze upon which the journalist so faithfully relies for knowledge marks an exclusion as well as a privilege: the privilege of inspecting, of examining, of looking at, by its nature excludes the journalist from the human reality constituted as the object of observation.[61]

Therefore one could argue that Roth's position as an outsider in the urban landscapes of Weimar modernity was not only conditioned by his cultural and social background, but also by his profession. While Roth may be regarded to some extent as the marginal stranger, his engagement with the phenomena of the emerging urban modernity is by no means marginal, and in the reportage he often places himself within the human reality that he is observing, by presenting his cultural critique as direct observations of his own critical gaze. Thus, somewhat paradoxically, Roth's marginal position actually facilitated his engagement with the world around him, and as an inhabitant of the modern city Roth reacts sensually and aesthetically, but also critically and intellectually to the world around him.

1.5.2 Publication Context in the Press

One of the most striking characteristics of the press in the Weimar Republic was the sheer number of newspapers and magazines which were published: in 1930 there were 3700 different titles in the whole of Germany, with many of the larger newspapers having two or three daily editions. As Bienert notes: 'Die Zeitungen und Zeitschriften der zwanziger Jahre waren Produkte einer Informationsindustrie, die sich den Absatz ihrer Ware täglich, ja stündlich neu auf einem hart umkämpften Markt sichern muβte.'[62] Moreover, the newspaper

[61] David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 13.
[62] Bienert, p. 7.

industry had adopted similar rationalization techniques to those used in manufacturing industry, with the larger firms dominating the market with 'modernstem Marketing und rationalisierten, industrieförmigen Produktionsmethoden'.[63]

This rationalization of the print media, with its emphasis on commercial enterprise, in fact saw the undermining of 'rational' communication, with an increasing superficiality and entertainment focus entering the media.[64] This was particularly the case with respect to the illustrated newspapers, as Roth comments in his 1923 article 'Das Lächeln der Welt': 'In die Illustrierte Zeitung gelangt nur Weltgeschehen in gesiebtem Zustand. Die Ereignisse laufen durch einen Heiterkeitsfilter in ihre Spalten. Trübe Erdenreste fängt ein Sieb auf und hält sie zurück' (JRW, I, 972). Furthermore, Roth's observation in the same article that 'die Welt eine Illustrationsobjekt [ist]' (JRW, I, 972) encapsulates the trend of passivity on the part of the reading public – they do not want to think critically about the world, they simply want to look at it. While the press had never been in the business of presenting a purely objective view of the world, it would not be unreasonable to assume that the increasingly market-driven focus of many of the newspapers at the time gave rise to an even more manipulated and socially constructed view of the world.

In the two decades between the World Wars Roth published more than 1300 articles, and as Klaus Westermann asserts, Roth's journalistic writing should not be regarded as 'Fingerübungen und Stilschule für die groβen erzählenden Schriften […] oder […] als zweitklassig'.[65] Most of Roth's journalistic writings appeared in the feuilleton sections of newspapers, 'unter dem Strich', as did those novels which were first published in instalments. The fact that the feuilleton section was demarcated from the rest of the newspaper symbolized the thematic separation of news-based 'objective' journalism from more 'subjective' literary journalism. However, as Roth himself was aware, while the

[63] Bienert, p. 7.
[64] Jürgen Habermas understands rational communication as requiring a depth of discussion, interactive anaylsis and involvement on the part of the reader. See Stephen K. White, *The Recent Work of Jürgen Habermas: Reason, Justice and Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 50-58.
[65] Westermann, p. 7.

lines of demarcation between the two sections may have been physically clear in the minds of the newspaper editors, in practice they were much more blurred and porous. As David Spurr points out, literary journalism can in fact be regarded as authoritative precisely because of its subjectivity:

> Literary journalism, however, combines an immediate historical interest with the complex layering of figurative language that conventionally belongs to imaginative literature. It often has a symbolic character that, in comparison with journalism as information, tends to multiply in its possible levels of meaning. […] The writer implicitly claims a 'subjective and independent status' free from the larger patterns of interpretation deriving authority from the direct encounter with real events.[66]

Furthermore, in his 1929 article 'Die Tagespresse als Erlebnis'[67] Roth argues that what is presented in the newspaper is a 'mangelhaft geformte [Realität]', and that 'es keine andere Objektivität als eine künstlerische [gibt]. Sie allein vermag einen Sachverhalt wahrheitsgemäβ darzustellen' (JRW, III, 101). Although Roth does not make a specific claim here for the superiority of the feuilleton over the rest of the newspaper, one could regard this as implicit in his argument. Indeed, as Dieter Schlenstedt indicates, contrary to Karl Kraus' view of the feuilleton section as light entertainment,

> '[…] aus dem Feuilleton [stieg] eine Literatur, die sich ganz anders im 'Zeitalter' bewegte, als es die medialen Industrien nahelegten; die sich den Verführungen zu verhüllendem Putz und ablenkender Unterhaltung widersetzten, deren eingeschriebenes Betreiben es gerade war, die Augen zu öffnen und hinter den Harmlosigkeiten das Unangenehmere zu zeigen.'[68]

Thus, while one can regard the feuilleton as a counterpart to the popular sensationalism of the supposedly 'objective' news-based sections of the paper, one can also argue that it was also to a certain extent competing with the other sections of the newspaper for the reader's attention.

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[66] Spurr, p. 9.
[67] 'Die Tagespresse als Erlebnis' JRW, III, 101-102. First published in *Die Literarische Welt*, 4 October 1929.
[68] Dieter Schlenstedt, 'Feuilletons: Annäherungen an eine poetische Prosa. Roth, Kracauer, Kisch und andere', *Weimarer Beiträge: Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft, Ästhetik und Kultur-wissenschaften*, 48 (2002), 420-433 (p. 421).

The demarcation between the two sections of the newspaper is also significant in terms of its form – the black line functions not only as a symbolic separation, but also as a spatial and visual one. Spurr argues that newspapers have their own aesthetic, in which the visual presentation of the newspaper (in terms of typeface, photographs, columns, boxes and pictures) plays a crucial part. He observes that the visual aspect of the newspaper helps the media audience to maintain a sense of detachment:

> This detachment is related to the traditional disinterestedness of aesthetic judgement; we must observe the separation between stage and audience if we are to appreciate the drama. The mosaic form of the newspaper, like the rapid succession of images in television news, helps to maintain this aesthetic distance.[69]

This concurs with Roth's strong sense of the significance of the impact of the formal appearance of words on the page. It is not possible to ascertain to what extent this visual demarcation affected the reader's sensory perception. However, if one regards the page as functioning as a frame for the reader's visual perception, the visual demaraction may have further focused the reader's sensory gaze, while Roth's Heuristic Visuals functioned as a framework for their cognitive gaze.

Another significant aspect of visual presentation which Roth was also aware of is the use of different fonts (see 3.2.2). The choice of a particular font tells the reader how to react, even before they have read the material – there is a synergy between the visual form and what is written, with the font functioning as an invisible level of communication.[70] Roth comments in several articles on the use of fonts to indicate to the reader the relative importance of various news items. However, the key factor here is that the level of importance is decided by the newspaper editors, who base their decisions on what will sell more copies, rather than the inherent importance of a story. Thus while Roth is critical of the presentation of such manipulated and constructed views of the world, he

[69] Spurr, p. 44.
[70] 'From Arial to Wide Latin: The Secret Language of Fonts' BBC Radio Four, 11 February 2005, 11-11.30 am.

nevertheless recognizes that the editors are in fact providing their readers with the kind of superficial unreflective journalism that many desire. He demonstrates his awareness of the reciprocral dynamic between media and target audience. This remains a current issue. There is no clear-cut answer as to where the balance of power lies. Are the editors manipulating and unduly influencing popular taste, or does popular taste have an undue influence on the nature and quality of the media? This is a conundrum to which politicians and marketing executives will continue to seek answers.

Chapter Two: Reportage and Fiction 1923-1925

2.1 Introduction

Joseph Roth began his journalistic career in Vienna, and he took up his first waged position writing for the left-of-centre *Der neue Tag* in April 1919. In 1920 his journalistic career took him to Berlin, where he began to establish himself as one of the leading feuilleton writers of the time. He was, however, by no means settled in Berlin, moving also back and forth to Vienna and Prague. He was to continue this perpipatetic lifestyle until his death in Paris in 1939.

In 1923 Roth began his career as a novelist, and between 1923 and 1925 he produced three novels: *Das Spinnennetz*, *Hotel Savoy* and *Die Rebellion*, which were all first published as *Fortsetzungsromane* in newspapers.[71] While *Hotel Savoy* and *Die Rebellion* were published in book form shortly after their newspaper publication, *Das Spinnennetz* was not published in book form until the 1960s, and Roth himself did not regard it as worthy of being described as his first novel. Although his early fiction was well-received by the critical press, in the early twenties he continued to be best known for his journalism.

Between 1923 and 1925 Roth was publishing articles in various organs, ranging from the popular press of the *Neue Berliner Zeitung-12 Uhr Blatt,* to the left wing press of *Vorwärts*, the paper of the German Social Democratic Party, and the Viennese *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, the paper of the Austrian Socialist Party. He also wrote for the more conservative *Berliner Börsen-Courier* and satirical organs such as *Der Drache* and *Lachen Links*, as well as liberal organs such as the *Prager Tagblatt* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Towards the end of 1923 he became the Berlin correspondent for the latter. His articles ranged from film reviews, light-hearted vignettes, critical commentaries on society and culture,

[71] *Das Spinnennetz*, JRW, IV, 65-146. First published in *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 7 October to 6 November 1923. First published in book form, Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1967. *Hotel Savoy*, JRW, IV, 149-242. First published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 9 February to 16 March 1924. First published in book form, Berlin: Die Schmiede, 1924. *Die Rebellion*, JRW, IV, 245-332. First published in *Vorwärts*, 27 July to 29 August 1924. First published in book form, Berlin: Die Schmiede, 1924.

and astute articles on the political situation of the times. As well as articles on aspects of modernity and cultural production, a distinctive feature of Roth's journalism at this time was what Westermann terms his *Gefühlssozialismus*. Although Roth contributed articles to the party-political papers of the German and Austrian press in his early years, as Westermann asserts, it was '[...] ein starkes sozial-humanes Engagement, das ihn zur Parteinahme für gesellschaftliche Benachteiligte herausforderte [...]'.[72]

Roth uses Heuristic Visuals widely in both his reportage and fiction at this time, although there are varying degrees of frequency, and there are differences in the variants of Heuristic Visuals which most often occur. The articles which have been selected for closer analysis reflect Roth's use of Heuristic Visuals with respect to three key themes in his journalism; social justice, the politics of the time, and the cultural phenomena of modernity: 'Die Abseits-Menschen' (JRW, I, 907-909), 'Der Mann in der Toilette' (JRW, I, 916-918), 'Die Toten ohne Namen' (JRW, I, 914-916), 'Reisende mit Traglasten' (JRW, I, 941-944), 'Die Krüppel' (JRW, II, 289-292), 'Wahlkampf in Berlin' (JRW, II, 169-171), 'Die Girls', (JRW, II, 393-394), and 'Mütter in der Revue' JRW, II, 273-275).[73]

2.2 Reportage 1923-1925

2.2.1 People on the Margins

In the four articles selected for analysis Roth uses visual techniques to varying degrees and employs different variants of Heuristic Visuals to convey the suffering of the poor and marginalized. In 'Die Abseits-Menschen' Roth draws attention to the existence of social stratification, the arbitrariness of fate which has led to this stratification, and the dehumanization and commodification of

[72] Westermann, p. 108.
[73] 'Die Abseits-Menschen', first published in *Vorwärts,* 7 January 1923, 'Der Mann in der Toilette', first published in *Vorwärts*, 20 January 1923, 'Die Toten ohne Namen', first published in *Neue Berliner Zeitung – 12 Uhr Blatt*, 17 January 1923, Reisende mit Traglasten', first published in *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 4 March 1923, 'Wahlkampf in Berlin', first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung,* 29 April 1924, 'Die Krüppel', first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 23 November 1924, 'Die Girls', first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 28 April 1925, 'Mütter in der Revue', first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 27 October 1924.

those who are socially on the margins. There is no 'optischer Schrei', rather the Heuristic Visuals are subtle, imbuing the article with a filmic quality. Roth focuses on one particular type of *Abseitsmench* in 'Der Mann in der Toilette'. Here the Heuristic Visuals take the form of a close-up, and this intense visual focus on the old-man and his workplace serves to highlight his humanity. Roth is also concerned with the sanitization of modern life and what this conceals. In 'Die Toten ohne Namen' Roth uses a visual close-up of faces of the nameless dead to reconstruct the forbidden images of death and suffering, and so disturb the reader from the safety of the sanitized modern context. In 'Reisende mit Traglasten' he again employs a visual close-up to highlight the misery of the poor. Here he juxtaposes the reality or truth of their endured suffering with the artificiality of the dramatic convention in its portrayal of human affliction.

2.2.1.1 'Die Abseits-Menschen'

In 'Die Abseits-Menschen', Roth presents the reader with a microcosm of the social stratification of society. In his depiction of a scene outside a building in which a high-society ball is taking place, the *Abseitsmenschen* (marginal individuals) are both physically and symbolically segregated from the world of the higher classes. The revolving door represents the arbitrary nature of the determination of one's place in society:

> Die Drehtür kreist ewiglich um ihre Achse, und aus ihren Fächern fallen Menschen heraus wie Kohlenstücke aus einem Kran. Die einen fallen in die Straße, andere in die Diele. Die Drehtür ist eine philosophische Einrichtung, und manche erblicken in ihr ein Symbol des Lebens. (JRW, I, 907)

Here, Roth does not let the visual image alone impart the meaning but makes the symbolism explicit. One could argue that this additional explanation of the symbolism is not necessary, and that it would have been more effective to let the visuals speak for themselves, as he does in the rest of the piece. The whole article has a 'real-time' filmic quality, which is partly achieved by Roth's use of the present tense – the reader observes the 'action' as it takes place. In addition, the changing perspectives of the visual focus from one *Abseitsmensch* to another, or from outside the ballroom to inside, echo the various angles of a

film camera, and the article resembles a scene constructed from a montage of different shots. Roth himself associates the scene with the cinema through his assertion that the reflection of the red glow of the lights in the ballroom is 'wie bei einem Zirkusbrand im Film' (JRW, I, 907).

The initial visual focus is on a carriage waiting outside the ballroom in the rain. By visually deconstructing the carriage into its various parts: 'Die Droschke, die im Regen wartet, besteht aus einem Gefährt, einem Kutscher und einem Pferd' (JRW, I, 907), Roth reflects how the coachman will be regarded as merely another part of the whole vehicle by his social superiors. They are not interested in him as an individual and for them his existence is purely functional. Moreover, Roth's intense speculation as to the position of the carriage driver's legs functions as a direct contrast to the way in which the carriage driver will be taken for granted by his rich customers:

> Der Kutscher sitzt auf dem Bock, in einem Kittel, mit einer Kapuze, wie ein Mann ohne Unterleib. Die Beine hat er hochgezogen, und er sitzt vielleicht auf ihnen. Oder er hält sie unter der Decke. Oder er hat gar keine. (JRW, I, 907)

The seemingly absurd visual image of the coachman without any legs also serves to underline his functionality and dehumanization. Indeed, Roth uses several similar visual techniques to convey how these *Abseitsmenschen* are regarded as marginal beings by the higher classes. Through the use of visual metaphors they are defined as objects within the landscape: the policeman 'entsprießt einer Mauernische und wandert gemessen der Diele entgegen' (JRW, I, 907), the porter 'hockt auf einem Schemel, an die Wand gerückt, eine rot- und dunkelangestrichene Verzierung; eine verkleidete Freske mit einer Pfeife im Mund. Plötzlich bläst er eine Rauchwolke als Lebensbeweis in die Luft und bröckelt von der Mauer ab' (JRW, I, 908), the doorman, despite all his fine livery is ultimately subservient to those going into the ball: 'Vor der Drehtür der Diele wacht, goldbetreßt und imposant, ein Portier. Sein Schnurrbart mitten im Gesicht ist ein blonder Draht und läuft in zwei feine, aufwärtsgereckte Spießhaken aus, an denen man, wenn alle Kleiderrechen schon benützt sind, je einen Stadtpelz aufhängen könnte' (JRW, I, 907), and the toilet attendant 'lehnt wie ein zufriedener Besen an seiner Tür und lächelt' (JRW, I, 908).

Like the coachman, the other men portrayed in the scene are all referred to by their job title. This signals their place on the social ladder and also emphasizes their functionality. Only the toilet attendant is not given a job title – he is simply referred to as 'ein grauhaariger Mann aus der Toilette' (JRW, I, 908).[74] Ironically, although the toilet attendant is at the bottom of the social ladder, his job in the intimate sphere of the toilets brings him into closer contact with the higher classes than is the case for the other *Abseitsmenschen*. In fact, he not only feels confident enough to leave his workplace and venture upstairs but even 'fühlt sich etwas heimischer in fremdem Glanz, als hätte er in dieser Gesellschaft zahlreiche gute Freunde' (JRW, I, 908). However, it becomes clear that the toilet attendant's identification with his social superiors can only be superficial and he remains isolated and remote from the rest of society. Roth highlights this isolation by contrasting the toilet attendant's different aural perceptions of the ball music, from within the toilet and without: 'Die Klänge des Shimmys kamen zu ihm immer leise und wie in Watte gewickelt; es waren isolierte Klänge. Von der schmetternden Pracht ihrer Nacktheit ist er nun ein wenig verwirrt' (JRW, I, 908). Just as the music does not belong in the realm of the toilets, so does the toilet attendant not belong in the realm of the dance hall. By giving the reader an insight into his feelings, Roth presents the toilet attendant in more human terms than the other *Abseitsmenschen*, although ultimately he too is commodified as the 'zufriedener Besen'. Perhaps it is due to the fact that the toilet attendant belongs to the lowest social stratum that Roth chooses to emphasize his humanity. He shows that those who carry out the most menial and unskilled tasks are no less human or sensitive than those of a higher social standing.

Roth is also aware of the existence of hierarchical divisions and social parameters of behaviour within social classes as well as between them.[75] The doorman, policeman and carriage driver are aware that they are of higher status

[74] Roth uses the term 'Toilettenverwalter' in his 1925 review of 'Der Letzte Mann', JRW, II, 324-327.

[75] In his *Grundrisse* 1857, Marx drew attention to the divisions within the working class, ranging from the 'aristocracy' of skilled workers at the top of the class, to the Lumpenproletariat at the bottom.

than the porter : 'Alle drei merken den Standesunterschied und bestätigen ihn durch Schweigen' (JRW, I, 908). A further example of internal hierarchical divisions is conveyed by visual means, as Roth describes how the group of men all look at their watches to check the time. All the men have pocket watches apart from the cellist who has a wrist watch, thus reflecting his higher status. While the cellist is not portrayed as part of the landscape, his functionality is nevertheless apparent in the physical description of him as an artificial doll: 'Sein Scheitel ist glatt und sicher, als wären die einzelnen Haare an den Enden künstlich wieder in die Kopfhaut eingefügt' (JRW, I, 908).[76]

Although the main focus of the article is on the *Abseitsmenschen* outside the ball, Roth's gaze moves inside the ballroom for a short time. Here the Herr Direktor is swiftly moving from table to table: 'Der Herr Direktor wandelt zwischen den Tischen umher und umsegelt mit den Frackschößen die Menschengruppen in der Mitte' (JRW, I, 909). While the portrayal of his constant movement from table to table conveys a greater sense of freedom, it also reflects how his behaviour complies with given social parameters – he is expected to be sociable with all the guests and do the rounds of the tables. Thus he too is defined by his social position and not as an individual. The only person whose behaviour is not bound by social convention is the drunk man from the ball. His intoxicated state means that his perception of social distinctions has become blurred: 'Er [kann] die Menschen nicht mehr einschätzen' (JRW, I, 909). The comedy provided by the drunk man acts as a welcome distraction for the *Abseitsmenschen* but it is not long before they are once again slotted back into their fixed positions:

> Der Dienstmann schlurft zur gegenüberliegenden Ecke und fügt sich wieder in die Mauer ein.
> Nur der Portier bleibt, strahlend und golden, an seinem Platz neben der kreisenden Drehtür. (JRW, I, 909)

In this final image, the dehumanization of the doorman is emphasized by the fact that he is more immobile than the inanimate revolving door. However, the symbolism of the revolving door, which Roth referred to at the beginning of the

[76] See the description in *Die Flucht ohne Ende* of Tunda's sister-in-law, JRW, IV, 436.

article, is invoked once again – fate keeps on turning, randomly determining whether a person will be embraced by society or excluded from it.

In 'Die Abseits-Menschen' Roth appeals to the readers' tacit knowledge, and presents them with a scene which anyone walking along the street could witness. The title of the article, however, makes clear where Roth's own sympathies lie. The whole article functions as a 'conventional rich image' in Lakoff's terms (see 1.3.3.2.2), in that it is rich in detail but conventional in the sense that it is common to many.

2.2.1.2 'Der Mann in der Toilette'

In 'Der Mann in der Toilette', Roth presents the reader with a close-up of one type of *Abseitsmensch* in his workplace environment. This article can be regarded as an expansion of Roth's observations on the toilet attendant in 'Die Abseits-Menschen'. The initial visual focus is on the physical appearance of the toilet attendant: 'Der Mann in der 'Herrentoilette' ist uralt und graubärtig. Moos wächst in seinen Ohrmuscheln, und in seinem Bart könnte ein Schwalbenpaar nisten und Junge bekommen und einen ansehnlichen Hausstand gründen' (JRW, I, 916). Although this description of the old man emphasizes his humanity and fraility, it also conveys the sense that he is bound to his fate, and that change for him is an impossibility. Indeed, while the surreal visual image of the swallows nesting in his beard has a certain fairytale quality, it equally serves to highlight his lack of social mobility – for him there will be no magical reversal of fortune.

Just as the revolving door had a universal symbolism in 'Die Abseits-Menschen', here the 'halbe Treppe tiefer' functions as a symbol of the exclusion of the toilet attendant from society. As in 'Die Abseits-Menschen', the music is distorted as it makes its way down the steps to the toilet, and here the sounds themselves are personified as they force their way through the cloakroom: 'Die Klänge der Jazzbands [sic] müssen sich durch die gutgenährten Herrenpelze zwängen, ehe sie die Treppe hinunterrollen können' (JRW, I, 916). The old man is not even able to enjoy a small part of the entertainment which those more privileged than himself are experiencing in the rooms above. He is left only with

the ‘Klangfetzen’ and is consigned to remain below the stairs, physically and socially isolated from his social superiors: ‘Der alte Mann bleibt unten, eine halbe Treppe tiefer als die anderen, im Reich des Wassers, des Unterleibs und der Maniküre’ (JRW, I, 917).

As a social space the toilet area could not be more removed from the splendour and gaiety of the dance hall upstairs: ‘Die Wände der ‘Toilette’ sind weißlackiert und ewig berieselt von Wasser und Hygiene. Plink plink plink tropft es aus der Wasserleitung’ (JRW, I, 917). Here Roth makes an appeal to the reader’s auditory sense – the slow dripping of the tap contrasts with the fast and lively music of the ballroom, and highlights the huge disparity between the two spaces. Whereas the ballroom’s sole purpose is entertainment, the toilet is a utility, where men can carry out the primitive functions of urinating and defecating, regarded as taboo subjects by society. However, despite occupying this space at the bottom of the social ladder, the toilet attendant carries out his tasks with care and attention: ‘Der alte Mann wacht über einem pseudomarmornen Waschbecken und reinigt es mit einem großen gelben Schwamm. Er hat die sorgsamen Bewegungen eines Krankenwärters, er ist sozusagen ein Toilettenpfleger’ (JRW, I, 917).

This visual focus on the movements of the old man as he goes about his work not only serves to highlight his humanity but also reveals the old man’s diligence even when undertaking such a lowly task as cleaning the basins. Such diligence and pride reflects the dignity which the old man has, despite his lowly role within society. Indeed, Roth’s observation that the toilet attendant is a ‘Priester der Reinlichkeit’ (JRW, I, 917) encapsulates this incongruity. Moreover, his dignity contrasts with the lack of dignity to be found in the behaviour of the young men who come to use the toilets – they are only interested in dancing and enjoying themselves. Roth’s visual focus on the differing physical appearances of the old man and his customers also serves to emphasize the old man’s humility: ‘Der Mann in der Toilette hat einen gebeugten Rücken und zitternde Knie. Die Gäste aber, die ihn besuchen, sind tannenschlank, mit einer Taille begabt und mit wattierten Schultern’ (JRW, I, 917). Roth’s description of the young men as guests who have come to visit the

old man is of course ironic, for they come down to the toilet to relieve themselves and have no interest in the man as an individual. The social interaction between them occurs within a rigid social framework, where the old man has a permanently subservient status. Unlike other cultures, where age plays a large part in determining status, in this capitalist society the man's age affords him no particular respect from those younger than himself.

The old man carries out his work carefully and diligently, smartening up the young men: 'Der alte Mann streicht mit behutsamer Bürste an den Jünglingen herum, wie man Staub wischt von kostbarem Porzellan' (JRW, I, 917). However, they do not return the respect which he affords them and are simply eager to return to the dance: 'Sieghaft strahlend, aufgefrischte Salonlöwen, steigen sie aus der Tiefe empor zu Shimmy und Prünell' (JRW, I, 917). Here the alliteration of the 's' emphasizes the youthful dynamism of the men, in contrast to the slow movements of the old man. One might argue that for the old man these high class young men are also merely objects and not individual beings, and his respectful attitude towards them is more a reflection of his work ethic. However, Roth indicates that the old man is at least aware of the world which these young men inhabit, even if he himself is not a part of it: he recognizes the connection between the economic situation and those of his customers: 'Er kennt den jeweils gestrigen Dollarkurs, und er wundert sich nur, daß die Trinkgelder der einknöpfigen Herren nicht steigen' (JRW, I, 918).

The fact that Roth does not extend his focus beyond the old man's workplace, emphasizes how from a societal perspective he exists only within this particular social space.[77] His isolation from society is not only reflected in the fact that he is a 'halbe Treppe tiefer' but also by the fact that even within his own realm he is constricted by class barriers:

> Er hat Bürsten ohne Zahl, aber er bürstet andere. Er hat glänzende Nagelfeilen, Seifen und Handbürstchen, aber seine Hände sind rauh, runzlig und die Nägel matt und ohne die elegant geschliffene Kralle des modernen Lebemännchens. Er

[77] In 'Die Toten ohne Namen' Roth comments on the isolation of the underclass more explicitly: 'Sie saßen nicht fest im Gefüge einer Gemeinschaft – so viele Einsame gibt es in der großen Stadt' (JRW, I, 916).

> hat Wasser, Seife, Kachelwände, Kabinen, Hygiene für andere. Er hat alles 'in Kommission'…
> (JRW, I, 917)

The juxtaposition of the detailed focus on the old man's work-worn hands in the setting of the cosmetic implements which surround him, is a startling and effective visual contrast. One can argue that this draws the reader's attention to the disparity between rich and poor more effectively than any theoretical analysis. For Roth the poor are not abstractions.

The toilet attendant's isolation and exclusion from the rest of society is not only physical. He is only able to read the newspapers once they are old news, 'Eine halbe Treppe hinter dem Lauf der Zeit bleibt er' (JRW, I, 918). Thus Roth combines the visual symbolism of the 'halbe Treppe tiefer' with the abstract concept of time to emphasize the physical and social marginality of the old man. Life goes on for the urban masses in their 'Lichterwelt' but all the old man will experience of this sphere are the 'Klangfetzen' of the music and the young men who come to use the toilets.

In the last section of the article Roth extends the time and space symbolism further. An appeal to the reader's auditory sense is made again as Roth highlights the barrenness of the old man's life: 'Sein Ohr zählt die gleitenden Tropfen der Wasserleitung, die beharrlich Sekunden totschlagen. An ihnen mißt er die verrinnende Zeit' (JRW, I, 918). The reader is left in no doubt that the old man's existence in the toilet is closer to a living death than a life. For Roth the one consolation for the old man is that death will be the leveller and one day those bright young men whom he groomed will also lie in the earth: 'Gute anderthalb Treppen tiefer wird er liegen, und die Herren mit einem Knopf werden auch einmal heimkommen, und er wird sie nicht einmal zu bürsten brauchen…' (JRW, I, 918). Thus while the social stratification of a money-oriented capitalist society ensures the perpetuation of social inequality among the living, death remains the one equality among all humans.

One of the frequent criticisms of Roth's fiction is that his characters are little more than one-dimensional types. In this article the toilet attendant may be a

type but the visual focus is nevertheless on his humanity and vulnerability. In fact, Roth's portrayal is all the more powerful because this is not a one-off instance. It is not the fate of one individual old man or *Abseitsmensch* but the fate of many. By singling out a particular role, Roth draws attention to the person as a representative of a whole social stratum of people who live in such conditions, although their immediate contexts may be different. Roth thus presents the reader with the social reality of existence rather than a polemic based on theoretical and abstract categories of social stratification.

2.2.1.3 'Die Toten ohne Namen'

While death for the old man in 'Der Mann in der Toilette' is portrayed in a positive light, in 'Die Toten ohne Namen', Roth focuses on the uglier side of death which befalls so many *Abseitsmenschen*. In this article he draws attention to those nameless dead whose photographs are on display in the Police Headquarters – the photographs are of the corpses, and have been taken at the scene of death. As Roth asserts, these ugly and brutal deaths often followed an ugly and brutal life: 'Das ist sozusagen die anonyme Seite der Großstadt, ihr Elend, das keinen Namen hat. Das sind ihre unbekannten Kinder, deren Leben Unrast, Kneipe und Verborgenheit heißt, deren Ende blutig ist und gewaltsam, ein mörderisches Finale' (JRW, I, 914).

Although these nameless people belonged to the anonymous aspect of city life, Roth recognizes that they were still a part of society, albeit one which most people would rather ignore. The safer, sanitized version of life is reflected in the visual reconstruction of the display window of a photographer's shop: '[…] die Bilder der Lebenden, der Brautleute, der Konfirmationskinder, die lächelnden Gesichter, die weißen Schleier, den papierenen Blumenschmuck, die Orden eines Exzellenzporträts, deren Anblick allein schon Geräusche des Klimpers hervorruft […]' (JRW, I, 914). Roth recognizes that just as these *Abseitsmenschen* were marginalized and ignored by society in life, so too in death. However, Roth argues that these photographs should be put on display in the most public of places in the city. This echoes a similar suggestion concerning the photographs of the war-wounded in 'Lebende Kriegsdenkmäler'

(JRW, 1, 347-352), where Roth argues that instead of it being forbidden to publish photographs of the deformed faces of the wounded, such photographs should be put on public display. Although in this case the victims are those of war and not of poverty, Roth's conviction of the power of the image to make a direct appeal is the same. In both cases he argues that the reality of man's inhumanity to man should be exposed, and not hidden away. He recognizes all too clearly the tendency of society to ignore and indeed sanitize those less acceptable aspects of life and human nature.

In 'Die Toten ohne Namen' Roth emphasizes his own engagement with the phenomenon of the nameless dead through the use of the first person. He is the only person who stops to look at the photographs and, engaging the reader asks 'Wer sollte sich um die Toten kümmern?' (JRW, I, 915). In answer to this question Roth then presents the reader with an unrelenting close-up of the corpses. If these photographs are not to be put on display around the city and if the reader will not go and look at them, then Roth, through the use of Heuristic Visuals will bring the content of the photographs to the reader:

> Die Wasserleichen sind aufgedunsen, von Schlammkrusten bedeckt, sie sehen aus wie schlecht mumifizierte ägyptische Könige. Die Kruste auf ihren Gesichtern hat Rißе und Sprünge wie eine schlecht verwahrte Gipsmaske. Die Brüste der Frauen sind schauderhaft geschwollen, die Züge verzerrt, die Haare wie ein Häufchen Kehricht auf gedunsenem Kopf. (JRW, I, 915)

These faces have not been altered or enhanced by make-up or soft lighting – the brutality and suffering contained in the deaths of these people is presented in all its stark reality. However, the analogy with Egyptian kings has a timeless and poetic quality, which confers a certain dignity on these nameless corpses. Rather than aestheticizing their plight and rendering it harmless and inoffensive to the reader, Roth points to the discrepancy between society's perception of them and their human worth. Furthermore, the fact that these people are the nameless dead is also a reflection on how they have been excluded from society. As Roth comments, 'Wenn diese Toten Namen hätten, sie wären nicht so vorwurfsvoll' (JRW, I, 915). Their silent accusation is that just as society ignored the brutality and misery of their lives, so too did it ignore the brutality and misery of their

deaths. These deaths will not make the newspaper headlines, for they are the deaths of the nameless. The masses are only interested in the deaths of real people, that is people known to them, and in particular famous people. Those who have no name cannot be real.

2.2.1.4 'Reisende mit Traglasten'

In 'Reisende mit Traglasten', Roth reflects on how the dehumanizing categoriziation of people by the railway bureaucracy has unwittingly resulted in the articulation of a deeper truth. Just as he highlighted the deeper symbolism of the revolving door in 'Die Abseits-Menschen', so too does he highlight here how this bureaucratic formulation has encapsulated the tragedy of the suffering of the poor in concrete visual terms. While the heavy burden of the luggage that they carry relegates these poor people to the last carriage in the train, the heavy burden of their fate relegates them to a life of poverty. As Roth observes, '[…] jene Inschrift am Abteilfenster des letzten Wagens ist keine bahnamtliche Bestimmung, sondern eine philosophische Definition' (JRW, I, 942).

Once again Roth presents the reader with a visual close-up of the people who are the subject of the article. However, he begins his description with an appeal to the reader's olfactory sense. The heavy atmosphere inside the carriages is described as an 'Atmosphäre in festem Aggregatzustand', which not only conveys the unpleasant conditions in a confined space but is also suggestive of the heavy and inflexible burden of these people's fate. The smells of damp wood and dead leaves arise from the bundles of wood that they are carrying. For these people the woods are not a place which affords opportunities for leisure activities but a place of hard work, as they try to ensure their survival within the dire economic situation of the times.[78] Their experience of the woods, and their relationship to them is determined by their poverty, 'die feuchte Kälte der Erde [bleibt] in Knochen und Stiefelsohlen' (JRW, I, 942).

[78] The Dawes Plan of aid was not implemented until the spring of 1924.

In his close-up of the passengers there is the same almost fairytale-like quality as in the description of the old toilet attendant in 'Der Mann in der Toilette'.[79] In another context the images of the pieces of moss stuck to the clothes, and the dried leaves in the hair of the old woman might be suggestive of the romance of nature. However, Roth explains that this is how 'ein armer Tod' crowns his victims. Furthermore, Roth's focus on the hands of the old woman is all the more powerful for the reader knows that these hands do not belong in a fairytale but to an old woman who has been labouring away collecting wood: 'Rissig sind ihre Hände, der Alten Finger gichtisch und absonderlich gekrümmt und eigenwilligen Wurzelformen ähnlich' (JRW, I, 942).

The visual focus on the railway passengers in this article is not, however, as consistent as in 'Der Mann in der Toilette'or 'Die Abseits-Menschen'. After the description of the *Reisende* in the carriage, Roth's style becomes more discursive. Roth then turns his attention to the speech, or rather lack of speech which characterizes these poor people. He recognizes that the few words that they do say can convey more meaning than simply the words themselves, and uses surreal visuals to emphasize this: 'Sie sagen nur die Butter – und schon weiß man, daß Butter etwas Fernes, Unerreichbares ist – kein Nahrungsmittel, mit Messer auf Brot zu streichen, sondern ein Geschenk des Himmels, in dem die Delikatessen der Welt wachsen wie in einem Schaufenster' (JRW, I, 943). Thus Roth emphasizes that for these people, even something as apparently mundane and ordinary as butter belongs to the realms of miracle and wonder, so abject is their poverty.

Roth then goes on to explicitly assert his belief in the power of the visual to convey suffering in a way which words cannot. He juxtaposes the travellers with theatrical attempts to convey suffering. For Roth the visible poverty of these people, combined with their poverty of speech can express the misery of their lives much better than the artificially constructed histrionics in a play: '[…] eine leise gekrümmte Hand [kann] das ganze Elend aller Zeit fassen und das Zucken eine [sic] Augenwimper stärker erschüttern als ein Abend mit

[79] Here Roth again uses the image of swallows nesting in the beards of the old men, as in 'Der Mann in der Toilette'.

Tränenbächen' (JRW, I, 943). Furthermore, he points out the irony that people on the trains going to the theatre to see great drama and tragedy are oblivious of the fact that in the same trains the great tragedy of fate is represented by this group of travellers. Society does not wish to see the reality of suffering but only its artificial reconstruction within the theatre, the suggestion being that only this reconstruction is palatable for that section of modern society whose world is an artificial sanitized version of life: 'Man fährt an leuchtenden Reklamen vorbei, an einer Welt ohne Traglasten, kommerzielle Hymnen auf Waschseife, Zigarren, Schuhpasta und Schnürsenkel brennen plötzlich hell am dunklen Firmament' (JRW, I, 943).

Not only are these products superfluous and trivial when compared with the abject poverty of the passengers, Roth also draws attention to the way in which the power of the visual is being harnessed by advertising firms to manipulate the desires of the population within a modern consumer society. The fact that Roth describes these advertisements as commercial hymns, reflects the way in which consumerism was taking on the importance of a new religion in people's lives. Moreover, this artificial heaven of constructed needs and desires within consumer society provides a direct contrast with what would constitute heaven for the passengers, a heaven which would contain something as mundane and basic as butter (JRW, I, 943).

Thus Roth shows not only how society allows itself to be manipulated by business interests but also how it allows itself to be distracted from the less pleasant aspects of reality and human suffering. Unlike in 'Die Toten ohne Namen' where the photographs were not in a particularly public place, the suffering of these travellers is there for all to witness, albeit that society is blind to this reality. Roth not only reconstructs this reality for the reader but also uses Heuristic Visuals to make sense of the reality, and to highlight the ironies and discrepancies found within modern society. It is precisely because Roth himself recognizes how an image can be much more powerful than words that he uses words to recreate the visual reality for the reader. Moreover, by the particular selection of real and imagined visuals, these images are placed in a modern

critical context, highlighting significant aspects of societal behaviour, which would not be conveyed by a straightforward reproduction of images.

2.2.2 Politics Past and Present

2.2.2.1 'Wahlkampf in Berlin'

In 'Wahlkampf in Berlin', Roth contrasts the effectiveness of commercial advertisements with the ineffectual attempts of the political campaigners to grab the public's attention. The election fliers are simply thrown away by a public which has little interest in anything that does not fall within the realms of work and leisure. The modern urban masses have become used to the visual impact made by the sophisticated techniques of the professional advertisers, and Roth asserts that none of the political parties has even come close to incorporating the sorts of imaginative propaganda techniques which are used by the advertising departments of various businesses. In particular, the failure of the right-wing political parties to recognize these cultural changes is ironic, given that they regarded themselves as harbingers of a new order. Only a few years later, Germany was to see the rejection by the National Socialists of the cerebral tradition, and their potent visual propaganda successfully assaulted the senses of the masses. The National Socialists were to come to recognize, as Roth did, that in order to shake the public out of its apathy one needs to use an assault on their visual sense: 'Vielleicht dringt nur ein sehr suggestives Bild von starker Plötzlichkeit in die Netzhaut dieses Menschentypus, der nur Arbeit kennt und Amüsement' (JRW, II, 169).

Roth points out that the election fliers fail to attract people's attention because their form (dull lines printed in Gothic script) has little appeal. Rather than copying or using visual techniques from the new age of advertising, the party propagandists rely on the old and ineffectual methods which are based on the cerebral German tradition. Roth emphasizes how German they all are in their reliance on the written word, regardless of what party they belong to. They have failed to recognize the shifts in the world around them, and the influence which

American modernity has had on their culture.[80] They have not harnessed the power of the visual in the manipulation of the modern masses. The propaganda which they have produced has amounted to mere lines of ineffectual words: 'Aber nicht ein einziges dieser vielen vergeblich verschleuderten Worte springt aus den schwindelerregenden Zeilen als bannender, gellender, erschüttender optischer Schrei' (JRW, II, 169).

Instead of using the visual domain to make a direct and effective appeal to the public's visual sense, the propagandists get bogged down in the detailed exposition of their policies and ethics and only succeed in boring people. They cannot compete with the huge variety of visual stimuli in the modern capitalist city. The masses are bombarded with images produced by the professional communicators and these images 'ersticken, betäuben jeden politischen Schlachtruf in einer Flut von Licht und Schrei und Farbe' (JRW, II, 170). Roth compares the precise and calculated nature of these mechanisms of advertising and consumer culture with the machinery in a factory. Thus he emphasizes the disparity between the old-fashioned methods of the electioneers and the reality of industrialized modern mass communication. As E.H. Carr observes: 'In all political systems policy must be explained in one form or another, the public must be convinced of the efficacy of government decisions; and rational discussion is not always the most useful means of achieving this, particularly in the age of "mass man".'[81]

However, it is not only the electioneers who fail to understand the reality of the situation. Roth goes on to mock the contrived attempts in the popular press to portray the election campaign. He exposes the ludicrousness of their endeavours to invest the campaign with greater importance than it has in reality, and comments: 'Es ist als beobachten sie die Phasen und Symptome der Wahlzeit durch ein stark vergrößerndes Teleskop und alles andere durch ein verkleinerndes Glas' (JRW, II, 170). This observation highlights the fact that what appears in the newspapers is often a result of selective perception on the part of the journalists, and not a reflection of the reality of the situation. Thus

[80] In this article Roth refers to Berlin as a 'halbamerikanische Stadt' (JRW, II, 170).
[81] E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939* (New York: Harper Torch, 1964), p. 132.

the reader's perception of the situation in Berlin would be a distorted one if they were to rely on the press reports, for in reality the majority of the populace is indifferent to the election – the Berlin nightlife 'absorbiert alle Kräfte des Wählers' (JRW, II, 170). Roth comments that the few incidents that there are related to the elections are not observed by the majority of the populace, and are only apparent to the 'suchenden Auge', which one might regard as Roth himself.

Indeed, in this article Roth not only presents the reader with the direct observations of his critical gaze. In his use of an extended natural metphor, he does precisely what the party propagandists fail to do – he uses language to create visually arresting images and through these Heuristic Visuals creates his own 'optischer Schrei'. Roth employs a forest metaphor to highlight both the right wing's appropriation of nature for political ends, and ironically and precisely conveys the failure of their language to communicate directly and successfully with their target audience. The right-wingers' electioneering has turned Potsdamer Platz into a 'deutsches Blätterwäldchen', their various pamphlets are the 'junge Stämme', the barks of which have been carved with the swastika, and the lines of writing are branches upon which twitter the empty phrases of their propaganda. Roth draws attention to the right-wingers' reliance on cheap appeals to 'Vereinsromantik', and the lack of reasoned argument in the propaganda that they are producing: 'Hier sucht das wandernde Auge vergeblich nach einer Lichtung der Vernunft' (JRW, II, 170). This reference to the 'wanderndes Auge' echoes that of the 'suchendes Auge'. Both suggest the standpoint of someone who is critically and objectively observing what is going on – in this case it is Roth himself. He later asserts that he is the only person who buys any of the right-wing pamphlets, thus emphasizing the apathy of the general public. Roth ends the extended metaphor with an appeal to the reader's auditory and visual senses. He asserts that in this forest one hears only the monotonous hammering of the 'nationalistischer Buntspecht' – their language contains no arresting 'optischer Schrei', only dull repetitious thuds. In addition, he appeals to the reader's tacit knowledge that the red, black and white plumage of the *Buntspecht* corresponds to the party colours of the National Socialists.

Thus Roth encapsulates the National Socialists' appropriation of nature for political purposes – nature has been contaminated by the *Hakenkreuz*.

Although Roth emphasizes the ineffectiveness of the right-wing propaganda in the election campaign, in the last section of the article he reflects on the success which the National Socialists have had in exploiting the German tradition of being close to nature within their various youth movements. Here what is being distorted is not natural landscapes but humanity itself. Roth depicts the unnatural appearance of the young girls who have transformed themselves into 'political Furies', with short hair and an unnaturally extended marching stride. He underlines the fact that the National Socialists have merely extracted the aspects of German Heroism which suited their ideology. The young people are harsh and brutal and do not possess the 'Natur- und Herzensfrömmigkeit' which is also part of the German Heroic Tradition. Roth brings out the discrepancies between the National Socialists' claim to respect and love nature, and the reality – their respect for nature is superficial and does not extend to respect for humanity itself. He also connects the appropriation of nature to the militarism of the National Socialists. In *Crowds and Power* Elias Canetti makes the connection between the traditions of German militarism and love of nature, and sets it within the totality of the German cultural tradition:

> The crowd symbol of the Germans was the army. But the army was more than just the army; it was the *marching forest*. In no other modern country has the forest-feeling remained so alive as it has in Germany. The parallel rigidity of the upright trees and their density and number fill the heart of the German with a deep and mysterious delight. To this day he loves to go deep into the forest where his forefathers lived; he feels at one with the trees.[…] For the German, without his being clearly aware of it, army and forest transfused each other in every possible way.[82]

This may to some extent explain why the National Socialists were eventually able to successfully combine the two aspects in their ideology in such a way that appealed to the mass of the German people.

[82] Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1973), p. 202.

In ‘Wahlkampf in Berlin’, Roth focuses on the discrepancies between image and reality in the context of the election campaign, both in terms of how right-wing politics is portraying itself, and in terms of how the whole election campaign is portrayed in the press. Moreover, the article is both an exploration and a demonstration of the relationship between language and power. Roth demonstrates the ability of language to affect by creating a visual impact. He illustrates how words can have more than a verbal and auditory impact, they too can be formed into an ‘optischer Schrei’ which can compete with the visual stimuli of the modern urban city. Whereas the visual domain of advertising seeks to control and manipulate the masses, Roth’s ‘optischer Schrei’ is designed to provoke critical thought. Roth’s use of visual techniques may thus be regarded as a synthesis of the dialectical cultural strands of German cerebrality and American visuality.

2.2.2.2 ‘Die Krüppel’

‘Die Krüppel’ was first published as part of Roth’s travel reportage ‘Reise durch Galizien’. Although the bulk of Roth’s travel writing has been excluded from the analysis, this article has been included because it contains one of the clearest examples in Roth’s journalistic writing of the use Heuristic Visuals to create an arresting ‘optischer Schrei’. The focus of the article is not travel or place, but is essentially a reconstruction of the funeral procession for a Polish war invalid who had committed suicide in public in order to draw attention to the plight of war invalids. The cripples of the title are the fellow war invalids who have come to pay their respects to their comrade. Roth briefly mentions the circumstances of the suicide and the fact that it was reported in the newspapers worldwide, and then describes the funeral procession.

Initially he presents the reader with a list of the types of wounded veterans who make up the funeral procession. The categories which Roth uses here are not derived from technical medical terms but refer to maimed or missing body parts,

and to the distorted physical movements resulting from the injuries.[83] This is an example of Roth's use of synecdoche, which is particularly effective here, since the physical and mental deformities of these men have become the labels by which they are categorizied by the rest of society. They are 'Fragmente' and 'gewesene Menschen' (JRW, II, 289). Their deformities now define their identities. These identities have no social acceptance, and thus these men are alienated from the society for which they were willing to sacrifice their lives.

Echoing the calls for greater public awareness of the suffering of socially excluded groups in 'Die Toten ohne Namen' and 'Lebende Kriegsdenkmäler', Roth expresses the wish that the funeral had taken place somewhere in the middle of Europe, and that diplomats and generals had been made to witness this unique procession.[84] Roth explicitly states that this procession has a much wider significance for humanity, and that these war invalids represent all those who have been maimed by war all over the world.[85] They represent man's inhumanity to man in a double sense – the inhumanity of war and the inhumanity of society's treatment of them on their return from war. It is arguably precisely because these men are reminders of man's inhumanity to man that society wishes to ignore them. Whereas society treats these men as if they were invisible, Roth makes them and their suffering literally and metaphorically visible to the reader – he gives them subject status, by making them the grammatical subjects of the sentences. As in 'Die Toten ohne Namen' where Roth reconstructed the photographs of the dead through Heuristic Visuals, so here Roth reconstructs the sensory experience of witnessing the funeral procession for the reader, using appeals to both the visual and auditory senses.[86] By making these invalids the focus of his critical gaze, Roth releases

[83] Roth refers to the medical categorization of the invalids, remarking that medicine has not yet found a term for many of the ailments from which these men are suffering. Thus science is inadequate to the task created by man's self-inflicted ills.
[84] Roth's suggestion of Geneva as a more appropriate place for the funeral, points to the failure of the League of Nations to prevent war.
[85] Roth uses the term 'internationale Krüppelnation'. This paradoxical formulation encapsulates the paradox that these men, who are former enemies, now have more in common with each other than with their own countrymen. By contrast, the people for whom these men sacrificed their health and mobility have now turned their backs on them.
[86] Roth's use of the first person to make a brief reference to his presence there watching the procession go by emphasizes the personal aspect of the sensory experience which Roth then proceeds to reconstruct for the reader.

them from their marginal position within society. The fact that he concentrates on their distorted appearance, movement and sound, and does not discuss their plight in abstract or medical terms results in a much more powerful representation of their suffering.

Moreover, Roth engages with his readership in what Fish would term a dialectical representation (see 1.3.3), and prompts them to draw on their existing knowledge of the visual aspects of the horrors of war. His comment that most people will have seen images of dead bodies and mass graves from the war takes the form of a direct address to the reader using the first person plural. Thus Roth evokes the latent self-satisfying response in the reader. However, he then challenges this by asking the rhetorical question: 'Wer aber weiß, wie Ruinen aussehen, die sich bewegen; Schutt, der sich rührt; Trümmer, die sich krümmen? Wer hat schon gehende Krankenhäuser gesehen, eine Völkerwanderung der Stümpfe, eine Prozession der Überreste!' (JRW, II, 290). In this short succession of surreal and paradoxical images, Roth highlights the destruction of the men's physical humanity by comparing them firstly with inanimate objects such as rubble, and then with dead human remains. Thus Roth emphasizes their metamorphosis into non-human forms which none the less retain vestiges of human behaviour patterns. It is this metamorphosis which has resulted in their exclusion from society and humanity itself. They have become the living dead both literally and metaphorically. Roth reflects the surreal quality of the procession itself – for the majority of people the disturbing sight of such grotesque phenomena is something that they would experience in the fiction of the cinema (or the chamber of horrors), and not in reality. Yet, as Roth makes clear, the reality of war is what has led to this 'Prozession der Überreste', and reality itself is represented in the references to the familiar sights of war – parts of skulls lying in latrines, putrefied hands striking out of mass graves, and limbs caught on barbed wire.

The surreal quality of the procession is explicitly mentioned by Roth, when he refers to the lame men who make up the first section of these thousands of marching cripples as being a 'groteske Truppe', and a 'entstellter Militarismus'. These men are no longer marching briskly with a steady rhythm but are limping

unsteadily along. Here Roth then conveys the physical deformities of the men not through Heuristic Visuals but by an appeal to the reader's auditory sense. He describes the sounds of the irregular knocking of the crutches on the bumpy road surface, the squeaking of prostheses, and the distorted noises which emanate from the men's throats, using both onomatopoeia and alliteration to convey the impact of the sounds. By comparing the distorted movements of the cripples to the marching of healthy soldiers, Roth by implication draws attention to the fact that these men who are now categorized as cripples were once physically complete human beings. This description is a grotesque version of conventional accounts of parades of troops, whom the public gladly watched marching off to battle. Now that the sight of their deformed and broken bodies is abhorrent to society, they are excluded by it.[87]

In the following section Roth highlights the vulnerability of the blind invalids as they take their faltering steps through a 'Welt aus schwarzem Samt' (JRW, II, 290). Once again, the focus on the frail and unsteady movements of these men provides a stark contrast to the strident marching of soldiers before they go off to battle. Roth also conveys the different type of comradeship which exists among these former soldiers. Whereas once the comradeship took the form of emotional support, now the men's reliance on each other is obvious and visible – they are physically dependent on each other as they walk along in rows of four. This sense of frailty and interdependence is further reinforced by the reference to the sounds of their walking sticks as they shuffle along.

The focus then shifts to the visible disfiguration of the men's eyes, the irony being that the men themselves cannot see their own injuries: 'Sie hatten ihre Brillen und Binden abgenommen, man sah die ausgeronnenen Augen unter den vorgewölbten Stirnknochen, wie hohe Torbögen überschatteten die unteren Stirnränder die tiefen Augenhöhlen, die unbewohnten, grauenhaft leeren' (JRW, II, 291). Here Roth points to the fact that by removing the usual coverings from their eyes, the men are forcing the spectators to confront the generally concealed

[87] Roth comments on how the crowds who are watching the procession are dumbstruck by the sight of this cortege of maimed and disfigured men.

truth of their physical deformation. It is this truth which Roth reconstructs and in so doing also forces the reader to confront. The reference to 'ausgeronnenen Augen' suggests both the gradual decomposition of the eyes from infection and disease, and a seeping discharge from the sockets, while the final adjectives underline the mutilation of the human body, which the eye masks normally hide. The Heuristic Visuals force the readers to look when their normal response would be to turn away, and so are effective in counteracting behaviour which perpetuates ignorance.

The physical injuries of these blind invalids are, however, mild in comparison to some of the other groups. Indeed Roth comments on the fact that the men are ordered according to their fate, the extent of the physical deformities increasing as the men go by. The penultimate group of the cortege are all so badly injured that they cannot walk, and instead are transported on a truck: 'Dann kam ein großes Lastauto, von dem ein solcher Schrecken ausging, das man sein Rattern nicht hörte, denn stärker als das Hörbare wurde das Gesehene, und ein lautloser Jammer schrie so betäubend, daß er jedes Gepolter der Räder übertönte' (JRW, II, 291). Thus Roth leaves one in no doubt of the power of the visual to make an impact and to arrest the senses – the sounds of the truck itself are drowned out by the 'optischer Schrei' which emanates from the invalids inside it. (He again uses paradoxical formulations here to emphasize the effect of the visual, such as 'ein lautloser Jammer' and 'schrie so betäubend' (JRW, II, 291)). It is this 'optischer Schrei' which Roth then replicates for the reader. He produces a sensory experience which is not only arresting but also deeply disturbing, as he portrays the horrific mutilation of the bodies of these former soldiers.

The nightmarish quality of the sight of these invalids is accentuated as Roth comments that the truck looked as if it had come straight out of a 'Höllenphantasie'. This is continued in the reference to some of the invalids' fingers as 'tote Kochenbündel an Bindfäden',[88] and the sight of others as '[…]eine traumhafte Mischvision von Rot und faulendem Fleisch und

[88] This image of the men as skeletons on strings is suggestive both of the present physical helplessness of the invalids, and the fact that as serving soldiers they were controlled by their superior officers, and often suffered due to their incompetence.

rinnendem Rückenmark und gebrochenen Halswirbel' (JRW, II, 291). However, Roth varies these surreal elements with more precise factual descriptions, thus ensuring that the reader does not lose sight of the fact that these horrific mutilations are real, and are not part of a horror film or a nightmare. Moreover, Roth makes explicit reference to the men as soldiers: 'Soldaten ohne Gliedmaßen, Rümpfe in Uniform' (JRW, II, 291), and to their experiences on the battle field: 'das erlebte Grausen' (JRW, II, 291), thus emphasizing both their own humanity, and the inhumanity which resulted in their being maimed.

This section of the article reaches a visual climax in the description of the invalid whom Roth terms 'die Elite des schrecklichsten Schreckens'. Here Roth compares the damaged neck of the man to a stretched-out concertina, and describes how his head wobbles with the movement of the truck: 'Ganz lose saß der Kopf, ein schwerer Kürbis an dünner Kette aus welken Hautlappen' (JRW, II, 291). Roth does not use any surreal elements in this last description but instead provides the reader with a stark and precise visual close-up of the man's deformities. This in fact makes the description all the more powerful, as the mundaneness of the terms of the simile serves as a contrast to the gruesome and shocking nature of the man's mutilated body.

After this visual climax, Roth then portrays the last group of invalids who make up the cortege – these are the invalids who have been mentally damaged by their experiences of war. Although their injuries are not externally visible, Roth still manages to convey their suffering in visual terms, referring to their vacant and inane expressions: '[…] wie gelbe Nullen waren ihre Gesichter, und ihre Münder standen halb geöffnet in reglosem Lächeln' (JRW, II, 291). While all their physical senses may be intact, this is of little consequence if the brain which processes the information from these senses has been destroyed: '[…] sie erlebten alle dasselbe große, vernichtende Nichts' (JRW, II, 291). For these men nothing remains of life, and along with all the other invalids, they are marching literally and metaphorically towards death: '[…] eine dunkelblaue Wolke, zackig, wuchtig und schwer [segelte], und streckte vorne einen Zipfel aus wie einen zerfetzten Zeigefinger, um den Krüppeln den Weg zum Friedhof zu weisen' (JRW, II, 292). This final visual description not only ironically

continues the theme of the physical deformity of the veterans in the alliterative formulation 'zerfetzte Zeigefinger', but also echoes the description of the overcast sky at the beginning of the article, where Roth explicitly suggests the remoteness, if not absence of God from this world of pain and human suffering. This imagined divine gesture at the end of the article reaffirms the absence of divine grace as the finger from heaven points down to the graveyard, with no promise of life hereafter.

In 'Die Krüppel' Roth's use of the 'optischer Schrei' within a dialectical structure is totally unsparing. No hint of consolation is advanced. Roth leaves the reader with a deep pessimism in relation to the war invalids and carries the reader beyond abstract conventional notions of the futility of war.

2.2.3 Popular Culture and the rise of Americanization through the eyes of Roth and his Contemporaries: 'Die Girls' and 'Mütter in der Revue'

Many of Roth's articles in the first half of the 1920s dealt with popular culture, much of which was influenced by American culture, which appeared to many to be the very embodiment of modernity and technology. This Americanization increased with the introduction of the Dawes Plan of Aid in 1924. As Andrew Higson asserts:

> What many Europeans saw as their cultural colonisation came in the wake of American commercial investment, but the trade in cultural commodities – and the effects that could be attributed to that trade – were almost always in the same direction and were far more visible than the flow of stocks and loans.[89]

Many commentators of the day viewed this process of Americanization with scepticism and a degree of despair. Stefan Zweig, for example, regarded Americanization and its mechanization of humanity as 'wahrscheinlich das

[89] Andrew Higson and Richard Maltby, 'Introduction', in *'Film Europe' and 'Film America' : Cinema, Commerce and Cultural Exchange 1920-1960*, ed. by Andrew Higson and Richard Maltby (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1999), p. 13.

brennendste, das entscheidendste Phänomen unserer Zeit'.[90] Indeed, many would argue that this still holds true for the present day.

The visual writing style of Joseph Roth can be viewed as a particularly effective means of assessing certain cultural aspects of Americanization in 1920s Weimar Germany. This can be demonstrated by juxtaposing two pieces of Roth's reportage with articles by Stefan Zweig and Siegfried Kracauer on similar topics.

Although writers and intellectuals shared, on the whole, a somewhat negative response to the phenomenon of Americanization, reactions were by no means uniform as can be seen in the various approaches to one of the most widely written about aspects of Americanization, namely its influence on popular entertainment. Siegfried Kracauer, in his famous essay on the rationalization of modern life through the capitalist mode of production, 'Das Ornament der Masse',[91] uses the cultural phenomenon of the Tiller Girls (appropriated by America, although originating in Manchester) to examine the widespread effect on society of American capitalism. He regards the Tiller Girls as both an emanation from, and a metaphor for, the Capitalist Production Process: 'Den Beinen der Tillergirls entsprechen die Hände der Fabrik. […] Das Massenornament ist der ästhetische Reflex der von dem herrschenden Wirtschaftssystem erstrebten Rationalität.'[92] Kracauer's essay was published in 1927 in two instalments in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Analysis here will focus on the first of these instalments. In this section of the essay Kracauer's attack on the capitalist production process forms the main thrust of his argument, and he uses the popular phenomenon of the Tiller Girls to contextualize his political views. He is not primarily concerned with the Tiller Girls themselves but with their symbolic importance for society in general and how the organization of their production encapsulates the formal rationality of industrial capitalism.

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[90] Stefan Zweig, 'Die Monotonisierung der Welt', in Stefan Zweig, *Begegnungen mit Menschen, Büchern, Städten* (Berlin: Fischer, 1955), pp. 155-162 (p. 157). First published in, *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 1 February 1925.
[91] Siegfried Kracauer, 'Das Ornament der Masse', in Siegfried Kracauer, *Der Verbotene Blick*, ed. by Johanna Rosenberg (Leipzig: Reclam, 1992), pp. 172-185. First published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 9-10 June 1927.
[92] Kracauer, 'Das Ornament', p. 176.

Stefan Zweig's 1925 article 'Die Monotonisierung der Welt', is also concerned with the dehumanizing effects of Americanization. Like Kracauer, Zweig fears the blurring of national characteristics and the destruction of individuality. However, whereas Kracauer's concerns about the globalization of the workforce are centred on the political and abstract framework of the capitalist production process, Zweig's concerns are on a broader cultural and societal level. Zweig fears not so much the globalization of the workforce but the globalization of society and humanity itself, 'ein Absterben des Individuellen zugunsten des Typus'.[93] Indeed, contrary to Kracauer, Zweig sees America's economic influence as a minor danger compared to its cultural homogenization: 'Die wahre Gefahr für Europa scheint mir im Geistigen zu liegen, im Herüberdringen der amerikanischen Langeweile […].'[94] He despairs of the resulting uniformity of culture but can offer no solution: 'Was immer man auch schriebe, es bliebe ein Blatt Papier, gegen einen Orkan geworfen.'[95] Moreover, he is aware of the manipulation of 'mass boredom' by business, and the overriding profit motive: '[Amerikanische Langeweile] verwandelt die Interessengemeinschaft des Vergnügens zu so riesenhaften Konzernen wie ihre Banken und Trusts.'[96]

If one compares these examinations of the cultural manifestations of Americanization by Zweig and Kracauer with Roth's articles 'Die Girls' and 'Mütter in der Revue' the key differences are to an extent reflected in the titles of the pieces. All the articles were first published in German national newspapers in the 1920s – in fact the two Roth articles and Kracauer's article all appeared in the feuilleton section of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and the titles would have served the crucial purpose of catching the readers' attention and encapsulating the essence of the article. Both Kracauer's 'Das Ornament der Masse' and Zweig's 'Die Monotonisierung der Welt' reflect the critical stance of the writer to the subject, and are indicative of the political and polemical tone of the articles. Furthermore, the use of the terms 'Masse' and 'Welt' in these titles indicates the wider perspective which the writers take – they are not

[93] Zweig, p. 157.
[94] Zweig, p. 158.
[95] Zweig, p. 159.
[96] Zweig, p. 158.

discussing a particular occurrence or even a particular country, they are taking a global view.

This is in direct contrast to Roth's two pieces of reportage, the titles of which indicate a narrower focus on the actual shows and their content, rather than an extrapolation of them as a phenomenon of global significance. This narrow focus on the spectacle reflects Roth's particular concern, namely their aesthetic incongruity. The title 'Mütter in der Revue' succinctly expresses this incongruity, since mothers are not associated with popular entertainment but with domesticity. In addition, the polemical and explicitly political tone of the Zweig and Kracauer titles is absent, reflecting Roth's typically more open approach of guiding the reader, rather than seeking to impose his own values. However, it could be argued that by the very subject matter which Roth chooses to discuss, he creates a particular narrative incorporating its own implied value judgements.

Aside from these general differences in approach, the aspect which most clearly differentiates Roth from Zweig and Kracauer is style. Roth's concern with the aesthetic incongruity is reflected in the visual style of his writing. This is enhanced by the subjective dimension in his reportage. He does not relate to the Tiller Girls or the revues as general phenomena but as shows which he himself went to see.[97] The reader is thus presented with an apparently personal response, which is emphasized by the use of the first person and his direct reference to himself as an audience member in both articles.

In 'Die Girls' the observations of Roth's critical eye are apparent from the outset. The dancing girls perform on 'trockene Strandbäder'. This is the first of a series of absurd paradoxical images which he uses to highlight the unnaturalness and incongruity of the phenomenon. The reader is bombarded by a series of paradoxical and provocatively incongruous visually-based formulations: 'ihre Nudität ist prüde', 'Ihre Nacktheit dient nicht der Lust,

[97] Although Roth frequently adopts a subjective, anecdotal mode in his reportage, without external corroborative evidence one can never be certain whether these ostensibly eye-witness reports are actually accounts of directly observed phenomena.

sondern der Anatomie', 'ihre Schwimmkostüme sind weniger lockend als Nonnengewänder' (JRW, II, 393). By contrast, Kracauer refers simply to the 'Stadion' in which the girls perform, and although he does point to the soulless style of the performances and the lack of eroticism, 'Körpern in Badehosen ohne Geschlecht'[98], his use of language with regard to the Tiller Girls reflects his concern with their metaphorical significance for the capitalist process. In Kracauer's essay one has little sense of the girls as human beings, and indeed he ensures that they remain nothing more than cogs in the machinery of his ideological argument.

Roth's visual focus, instead, emphasizes the very humanity of the girls, albeit in primarily physical terms – these 'anmutig gebauten Geschöpfe' do not flow with grace and ease but are contorted to produce 'Experimente des Anschauungsunterrichts von der Entwicklung der weiblichen Muskulatur' (JRW, II, 393). This comparison of the dancing to medical demonstration models highlights the dehumanization and exploitation of the girls. The movement of their limbs is prescribed. There is no room for individuality or improvization. It is as if the brain, the key organ of individuality and humanity, is detached from the movement of their limbs. Furthermore, Roth goes beyond the real visual experience of the stage performance and presents the reader with an imagined visual image of the girls returning after work to their rooms, where they slip into 'ihre engelreinen Bettchen und falten die Händchen' (JRW, II, 394). One is reminded thus of their existence as living human beings, albeit in a parodistic way.

He sets the girls in a real world context through his imagined scenario of marriage to one of their male fans and the ensuing mundane domesticity. However, even this domesticity is tainted by the same distortion as the dancing – it is not a cosy domesticity but a regulated and disciplined one. As a wife the 'ex-girl' will perform gymnastics while making the morning coffee, bring up the children 'hygienically'[99] and raise them to be soldiers. Just as the girls are

[98] Kracauer, 'Das Ornament', p. 173.
[99] Roth's use of the word 'hygienisch' is widespread in his writing. He uses the word consistently as a negative attribute, often with reference to women. It suggests the perversion of

expected to perform their prescribed roles within the dance troupe, so too are they expected to fulfil their roles within a domestic context. A key factor here is that the girls all come from '"besseren Familien"', they are from the same type of background as the audience who come to see them – the urban petit-bourgeoisie. Roth's domestic scenario reflects the behaviour that is expected and valued by their class. The regulation and discipline, which lie at the core of militarism, were key elements in the petit-bourgeois values of Weimar Germany, evidenced explicitly in the military careers of the men, or implicitly in the forms of entertainment or the domestic routine.[100]

Roth, however, is not merely concerned with aesthetic incongruities in their own right. It is what lies behind the perversion or distortion of natural eroticism which troubles him. The aesthetic incongruity is a result of the sanitization of the erotic, in which the appropriation of the militaristic plays a key part. He recognizes that the aim of combining the lewd with the concept of discipline is to legitimize the former. The result is a mechanized eroticism which is designed to pander to the ostensible moral sensibilities of the petit-bourgeois masses.[101] The hypocrisy lies in the fact that its function is to appeal to the baser instincts while its form maintains a superficial respectability.

Roth finds it difficult to understand how anyone could find such a display arousing. The cordon of dancers is compared to a 'menschlich-weibliche Tausendfüssler'. Moreover, he is not only disturbed by the form of the show but also by its audience, and the fact that they *do* find the shows alluring, and apparently do not share his unease. The questioning of what is normal or natural behaviour is perhaps best demonstrated in the ironic observation that the

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the natural, the instinctive, hinting at dehumanization or sterilization of human nature. See, for example, *Flucht ohne Ende*, JRW, IV, 455.

[100] As Michael Wildt points out in his essay on the rationalization of the kitchen, the concept of 'rationalized domesticity' in fact had a long tradition in Germany and was not exclusively or primarily influenced by America. See Michael Wildt, 'Technik, Kompetenz, Modernität: Amerika als zwiespältiges Vorbild für die Arbeit in der Küche, 1920-1960', in *Amerikanisierung: Traum und Alptraum im Deutschland des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Alf Lüdtke, Inge Marßolek and Adelheid von Saldern (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1996), pp. 78-95.

[101] According to Kracauer the idea of the communal 'Volk' had been replaced by the urban petit-bourgeoisie. See 'Revolt of the Middle Classes' in Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: The Weimar Essays*, ed.Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 107-140.

'Normalmenschen' who go and see the shows are the same 'Normalmenschen, deren ewiger Pubertät auch ein anatomischer Bilderbogen noch Nahrung gibt' (JRW, II, 293). The implicaion is that this should not be regarded as normal adult behaviour but is accepted as such.

Unease and dismay at what constitutes average or normal human behaviour is also a key theme in Zweig's polemic. His despair at the homogenization and sterilization of culture is compounded by the fact that this appears to be what the masses all over the world desire. Moreover, he recognizes that the immense power of Americanization lies in its ability to fulfil 'das höchste Ideal des Durchschnittes; Vergnügen zu bieten, ohne Anstrengungen zu fordern'.[102] Indeed, the passivity engendered by modernization and the new forms of entertainment is regarded by both Kracauer and Zweig as a dangerous seduction. As Zweig asserts: 'Es ist eine Trunkenheit, ein Stimulans für die Masse und zugleich in allen diesen neuen technischen Wundern eine ungeheure Ernüchterung des Seelischen, eine gefährliche Verführung zur Passivität für den einzelnen.'[103]

In 'Mütter in der Revue', Roth also recognizes the increase in the desire for instant gratification and passivity. However, whereas Zweig and Kracauer intellectualize the passivity within their respective analytical frameworks (Kracauer more so than Zweig), Roth's critical eye is again centred on the actual performance. He highlights how the desire for passivity is reflected in the fragmentary form of the revue: 'Da saß ich nun und sah dreiundzwanzig ausgewachsene Szenen, in einer unheimlich schnellen Folge und ohne den Zusammenhang zu begreifen, den sie gar nicht hatten' (JRW, II, 273).

Roth emphasizes the incoherence of this modern show by using a play on words to create a comparison with painting: 'Der einzige Rahmen, der die Bilder zusammenhielt, war der Abend an dem sie gezeigt wurden.'[104] The visual image of a picture within a frame reflects the ideas of order, harmony and continuity;

[102] Zweig, p. 159.
[103] Zweig, p. 157.
[104] Zweig, p. 157.

the picture-frame is a tangible boundary within which the art is presented. By contrast, the only framework within which the revue exists is that of time – abstract and intangible but constant. However, Roth then moves into the visually surreal, and suggests that if abysses formed in time it would destroy the only framework, and therefore the only unifying factor in the show. This suggested perversion of the natural laws of time may be seen as paralleling to some extent the perversion of traditional theatre by the revue. Although theatre itself cannot be described as a natural phenomenon, it is generally based on the premise of a coherent dramatic development (in terms of themes and characters) which reflects reality and tries to make sense of it. It is this attempt to contextualize and analyse reality which gives theatre its intrinsic value. The revue, however, makes no attempt to pursue the development of any one theme but is a collection of fragments of all types of culture and concepts.

Roth directly reflects this superficiality and lack of coherence by creating a visual parallel of the revue in the form of a montage of words. It starts with different types of art forms, 'Ballett, Oper', progresses to the more descriptive, 'Kitsch, Klang, Erotik', then switches to objects and concepts which one would not normally associate with the theatre, 'Sport, Militarismus, Schiff, Eisenbahn', then the elements of 'Feuer' and 'Wasser' and finally ends with the abstract, 'Rococo, Gegenwart, Humanismus und Technik' (JRW, II, 273). This verbal montage echoes the unsatisfactory nature of the revue as nothing is examined in depth, and only a superficial disconnected succession of images is offered. It does not require concentration, it is 'das Theater der Gegenwartsmenschen […], die sich zerstreuen müssen, weil sie keine Sammlung haben, und die sich die "Zeit vertreiben", weil sie die Zeit nicht festhalten können'(JRW, II, 274). Although Roth recognizes the ingenuity of those who develop the show's spectacular effects with sound and colour, he asserts that they are little more than travellers in sensation. (One is reminded of those famous lines from Macbeth, 'it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.'[105])

[105] William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V. 5.

While Zweig sees such superficial entertainment as that which '[die Menschheit] im Innersten will'[106], Roth recognizes that the manufacturing of such desires also plays a vital role in the popularity of the phenomeon. In 'Mütter in der Revue' Roth refers to the role of the press in 'hyping up' the show regardless of any intrinsic value (or lack of it): '[…] jene Revue, von der die Blätter schrieben, noch ehe sie stattgefunden hatte, die ein Ereignis war, bevor sie sich ereignete […]' (JRW, II, 273). The popularity of the show is orchestrated by means of press manipulation with the public whipped up into an irrational frenzy of excitement. Before the public has even entered the theatre they have abandoned any recourse to a detached critical position. Thus their desire to see the show is to a large extent a manufactured desire, which parallels the manufactured spectacle which they will witness.

In contrast to 'Die Girls', where he is incredulous that people should find the show alluring, Roth understands the appeal of the revue in terms of its immediacy, accessibility, and instant gratification – aspects which he directly associates with American culture: '[Die Revue] kommt aus Amerika. Sie ist amerikanisch. Sie ist der Ausdruck einer Zivilisation, die den Ehrgeiz hatte, alles durchzumachen, und keine Zeit, alles zu verdauen' (JRW, II, 273). However, despite his acceptance of the obvious attractions of the show, he is again concerned with aspects of aesthetic incongruity. The Tiller Girls are one of the acts in the revue; however it is not their appearance which disturbs him. In fact in this piece, which predates 'Die Girls', Roth is quite positive about the girls, referring to their 'spielerischer Militarismus, der mit dem Dienstreglement versöhnt, weil man sieht, wie heiter es wird, wenn man es nicht ernst nimmt' (JRW, II, 274). What he cannot reconcile himself to is the inclusion of a quasi-religious scene in the Revue: 'Wie aber, warum und wozu in aller Welt ein Orgelklang in diesem parfümierten Paradies des Lebemannes?' (JRW, II, 274). He finds this aesthetic incongruity disturbing and regards it as cheap sentimentality – a 'tear-jerker' appealing to the petit-bourgeoisie.

[106] Zweig, p. 160.

The audience is presented with a group of mothers of different races lulling their children to sleep, whereupon singing angels appear, and the mothers join in the heavenly chorus. In the revue the aesthetic incongruity is not contained in the superficial form of one particular performance, as in 'Die Girls', but results from the inclusion of the whole 'Mütter' scene among the other acts. This is reflected in the fact that Roth focuses on the inclusion of the scene in the revue, rather than visual elements of its style and production.

It may seem paradoxical that in a show which has no common theme and only the abstract concept of time for a framework, that Roth should nevertheless regard a part of the show as inappropriate or disharmonious. However, what concerns him is not merely the fact that this sort of false religiosity is not appropriate in the context of the revue, it is the fact that the show is pandering to the moral sensibilities of the petit-bourgeoisie. The 'guter Bürger' is at first edified by the 'Mütter' scene, and then teased by the following acts of the Tiller Girls and the naked dancers. The 'Mütter' scene gives an acceptable face to the revue and legitimizes the erotic, not by its sanitization but by the inclusion of the domestic.

In 'Mütter in der Revue' Roth is more explicit in his unease and describes the scene as 'peinlich' and 'demütigend'. He despairs that the audience finds it all quite charming. Roth is alone in his criticism – even a fellow critic 'sah nur den Genuß und fühlte nicht die Ohrfeige' (JRW, II, 275). One could regard Roth as the marginal man with a critical eye who sees beyond the superficiality and gloss into the more disturbing mechanisms operating literally and figuratively 'behind the scenes'. Of course one might argue that this is harmless escapism, a distraction from the drudgery of life. For Roth the ability to seduce and to distract is precisely not harmless, but a manipulative controlling of cultural consumption. He recognizes the danger of people being turned into social and cultural, as well as economic automata, with profit remaining the prime motivation of the entertainment industry, and escapism the prime motivation of the audience.

It is interesting that Roth recognizes the inclusion of this type of scene in the revue as being a particularly German phenomenon. This belies Zweig's gloomy scenario of total homogenization, and is an example of cultural adaptation rather than a linear transfer of American culture. As Alf Lüdtke, Inge Marßolek and Adelheid von Saldern comment: 'Vor allem beim 'Eindeutschen' ging es darum, Verfahren, Konzepte oder Vorstellungen, die in Amerika Furore machten, den deutschen Verhältnissen anzupassen, sie umzuformen, zu 'veredeln', jedenfalls in hiesige Kontexte einzubauen.'[107] However, for Roth this particular instance of cultural adaptation is not one which is to be welcomed.

Whereas Kracauer and Zweig provide answers to the perceived problems of Americanization within their theoretical positions,[108] Roth does not use theoretical discourses. He explicitly rejected abstractions (see 1.3.2), and he would certainly not have condoned leaving matters in the hands of intellectuals. Roth regarded it as the duty of writers to engage with the world around them, even if, or perhaps especially if, that world was not to their liking. Indeed he was highly critical of writers such as Thomas Mann, who as he put it 'in die Gefilde der Poesie [flüchten]'.[109]

Roth sets out to promote critical thought rather than to present a conclusive argument. The visual focus with its alternation of real and imagined is like an assault course for our visual and cognitive senses.[110] Although Roth is not using

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[107] Alf Lüdtke, Inge Marßolek and Adelheid von Saldern, *Amerikanisierung: Traum und Alptraum im Deutschland des 20. Jahrhunderts,* ed. by Alf Lüdtke, Inge Marßolek and Adelheid von Saldern (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1996), pp. 7-33 (p. 15).

[108] Kracauer regards the capitalist epoch as a necessary stage in the process of demythologization and regards its supposed conformity to reason as an illusion. For him the rationality of capitalism is formal or scientific. He believes that the historical process will result in the prevailing of real reason or substantive rationality, which is connected with truth, justice, human needs and ethical concerns. For Zweig the solution rests with the intellectuals. He puts forward a rather romantic notion that since the intellectuals cannot counteract the strong pull of Americanization, the only solution is for them to concentrate on themselves and ensure that they retain their freedom of thought and individuality.

[109] See 'Schweigen im Dichterwald', JRW, I , 1068-1069.

[110] The appeal to our visual sense in 'Die Girls' is supplemented by the allusion to the smell of cleanliness emanating from the dancers: 'Von ihren Tänzen geht ein frischer morgenkühler Hauch von Schichts Kernseife, von Schwüle tötender Sauberkeit und kalten Abreibungen aus' (JRW, II, 393). This humorously emphasizes the sterilization of the erotic in the dancing, the lack of warmth and passion.

the discourse of serious argument as employed by Kracauer and Zweig, there is no superficiality here, no prospect of minimal effort, no danger that we will be lulled into an uncritical apathetic stance. Roth not only engages with the world around him but also with his own readership. By using visual imagery he appeals to people's tacit knowledge and implicit understanding. His is a more subjective approach than that of Kracauer or Zweig but one which is less alienating. Roth's visual style produces a richer text where the attraction of Heuristic Visuals has some chance of competing with the bright lights and neon signs of the American 'Zerstreuungsfabriken'.[111]

2.2.4 Reportage 1923-1925: Summary

Roth's reportage reflecting his concern with the poor and dispossessed employs different variants of Heuristic Visuals to highlight the essential humanity of these marginalized people, and challenges the implicit treatment of the poor as an abstraction. In the two articles dealing with political themes, Roth uses the technique of the 'optischer Schrei'. In 'Die Krüppel' the 'optischer Schrei' is used within a dialectical representation. 'Wahlkampf in Berlin' shows Roth's awareness of the power of the visual in advertising, and contrasts this with the ineffectiveness of the election campaigners, whose focus on the cerebral is out of place in the modern context. Roth demonstrates how words do not have to be ineffective. Both 'Wahlkampf in Berlin' and 'Die Krüppel' are examples of how words have the power to affect by creating a visual impact and so can compete with the visual stimuli of the modern urban city. The articles on popular culture present the reader with a detailed close-up of familiar cultural phenomena. However, by creating an assault course for the visual and cognitive senses Roth encourages the reader to see beyond the seemingly harmless surfaces, behind which lie the distortion of the erotic and the appropriation of the militaristic.

[111] Kracauer, 'Das Ornament', p. 172.

2.3 Fiction 1923-1925

2.3.1 *Das Spinnennetz*

In Roth's first novel *Das Spinnennetz*, serialized in the Viennese *Arbeiter-Zeitung* in 1923, the protagonist Theodor Lohse rises through the ranks of various underground fascist organizations to eventually become a Minister in a democratic government. One of the most remarkable features of this novel is its prescience, given the chilling similarity between Lohse's rise to power, and the subsequent rise of Hitler and his entry into the democratic arena.[112] However, Roth's foresight in terms of the threat from the right-wing in general, and men such as Lohse in particular, is equally matched by the psychological insight he displays in the construction of his protagonist.

In the character of Lohse, Roth represents, albeit in an extreme form, what has since been diagnosed as the crisis of male identity in the aftermath of the First World War.[113] Furthermore, in his portrayal of the dynamics of the underground right-wing organizations, Roth casts a critical eye not only on the individual fascists, but also the social context in which they are operating. It is in relation to the themes of individual and social psychology that Roth's use of visual techniques is most prevalent in *Das Spinnennetz* – through them Roth provides the reader with a greater insight into both types of psychology, and aspects of the interplay between them.

2.3.1.2 The Crisis of Male Identity: Lohse's Psychology

Theodor Lohse, on his return from the First World War, finds it difficult to adjust to civilian life. In particular he misses the regimented lifestyle in which clearly set-out rules and regulations are the norm: 'in der Armee nur war er glücklich. Was man ihm sagte, mußte er glauben, und die anderen mußten es,

[112] Not only is Hitler mentioned in the novel, (JRW, I, 103), but the description of Lohse's portrait has many similarities to Hitler's physiognomy (JRW, I, 81). Furthermore, the Munich Putsch took place two days after the last instalment of the novel was published.
[113] See Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, trans. by Stephen Conway, 2 vols (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), I, and Bernd Widdig, *Männerbünde und Massen: zur Krise männlicher Identität in der Literatur der Moderne* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1992).

wenn er selbst sprach. Theodor wäre gern sein Leben lang in der Armee geblieben' (JRW, IV, 66). This dependence on external forms of authority and structures parallels his experience at school when he only felt comfortable reiterating 'das auswendig Gelernte' (JRW, IV, 66). He lacks original intelligence and prefers to conform to clearly delineated patterns of interaction, where outcomes are known; Lohse finds civilian life too full of uncertainties. As Jon Hughes notes, for Lohse (as for other characters in Roth's later novels) the army '[…] provided a sense of wholeness and belonging they lack in civilian life'.[114]

However, for Lohse return to civilian life is characterized not only by a return to an alien normality, but also by a return to insignificance. Now that he is no longer a lieutenant but a law student and house tutor to a Jewish family,[115] he experiences feelings of inferiority and worthlessness: 'Alle waren Vorgesetzte; alle Menschen in den Straßen, die Kollegen im Hörsaal, die Mütter [sic] sogar und die Schwestern auch' (JRW, IV, 67). While the army had provided Lohse with the security of a uniform life and a uniformed identity, the social role associated with this uniformed identity had endowed him with a type of exclusivity. His position as a lieutenant had not only given him a place within the military hierarchy (albeit junior), it also afforded him a certain status within society in general.[116]

These seemingly contradictory desires for the security of sameness and the distinction of difference are embodied in the lieutenant's uniform.[117] While the wearing of a uniform granted Lohse a common identity with other soldiers (although differentiated from the civilian population) the fact that it was a

[114] Jon Hughes, 'Violence, Masculinity and Self: Killing in Joseph Roth's 1920's Fiction', *German Life and Letters*, 53 (2000), 216-230 (p. 218).
[115] There is a close correspondence between Lohse and the description of one of the accused students in 'Jawoll Herr Präsident!', one of the articles in Roth's Leipziger Prozess series about the trial of the Rathenau murderers. See JRW, I, 876-77.
[116] This exclusivity is not only gained by the army being a solely male domain but also by virtue of the fact that Jews were rarely given commissions in the army. See JRW, IV, 67.
[117] Jon Hughes alludes to Simmel's argument that fashion results from the paradoxical desire for uniformity and individuation. See Jon Hughes, '"Zivil ist allemal schädlich": Clothing in German-Language Culture of the 1920s', in *Neophilologus*, 88 (2004), 429-445.
Lohse's desires echo this, although in his case it is the uniformity itself which differentiates him from the civilian mass.

lieutenant's uniform distinguished him from the lower ranks, and functioned as an essential indicator of status within the army and society in general. By wearing his lieutenant's uniform, Lohse put on, as it were, a different identity: 'To change one's clothing – to remove a uniform, or a white collar, or a fur stole – is to indicate a shift in one's identity, to step into or out of a prescribed social, economic or political role.'[118] Lohse is all too aware of the fact that the kind of civilian clothes he can afford would in no way positively differentiate him from the masses.[119] The uniform, however, distinguished him, both literally and metaphorically – it not only conferred status upon him but also moulded and formed his body, the jacket giving definition to the shoulders, and the trousers definition to the legs. Whereas in *Radetzkymarsch* the young Trotta finds the military uniform oppressive and restricting, Lohse feels lost without it.

The extent of his identification with the uniform as the essential indicator of his status, and his reliance on it for self-confidence is reflected in his comments on his desire for Frau Efrussi, the young wife of his Jewish employer: 'In der Uniform eines Leutnants hätte ich sie entgegentreten müssen, nicht im Zivil des Hauslehrers' (JRW, IV, 68). For Lohse the uniform functioned as social armour, its very visibility offering him protection from social anonymity and insignificance. Crucially Lohse did not choose to give up his commission in the army. Moreover, he was then forced to adopt a different identity and a set of corresponding social roles which offered him no chance to distinguish himself from the masses.[120]

The social roles of student and tutor consign Lohse to being one of an anonymous mass of students in the first instance, and a type of servant in the second instance. Lohse's awareness of the Efrussis' exclusivity, and the gulf in

[118] Jon Hughes, '"Zivil ist allemal schädlich"', p. 444.
[119] The contrast of Herr Efrussi's plain black clothes, and the gold and green livery of his servant, reflects not only the simplicity of Jewish dress but also suggests that Herr Efrussi is confident enough of his status that there is no need for him to reaffirm it with external visual decoration.
[120] According to Dahrendorf, the area where the individual and society interact, is where the individual is a bearer of a social role: 'From the sociological point of view, the idea that relates the individual meaningfully to society is the idea of the individual as a bearer of socially predetermined attributes and modes of behaviour.' Ralf Dahrendorf, *Essays on the Theory of Society* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), p. 30. However, as Lohse himself suspects, some social roles are judged to be more meaningful than others by society.

status and class which separate him from them, is evident in the contrasting descriptions of the Efrussis's villa and Lohse's flat. This section of the text is focalized through Lohse and is presented in the form of *erlebte Rede*. In fact, the ordering of the description, starting with the shimmering silver-coloured railings and the expanse of lawn which surrounds the house, progressing along the path and up the steps to the entrance hall, mirrors Lohse's visual experience when approaching the house. However, the initial emphasis is on the exclusivity of the villa (and by association its inhabitants) and its separation from 'der gemeinsamen Straße' (JRW, IV, 68). This reaffirms Lohse's lack of exclusivity – he is a part of the 'gemeinsamen Straße', and as such his perspective is that of an outsider.

By contrast Lohse lives in sparsely furnished rooms, and the fact that Roth specifically recalls the fencing around the Efrussis' villa, emphasizes Lohse's lack of status in all aspects of his life: 'Theodor lebte nicht in einer Villa hinter silbrig glänzendem Drahtgitter. Und kein Rang tröstete ihn über die Not seines Lebens' (JRW, IV, 68). One could argue that for Theodor Lohse, the loss of the personal 'Drahtgitter' of his lieutenant's uniform has now left him exposed. However, it is important to recognize that by setting such store on the surface semiotics of social stratification, Lohse is in part responding to the social systems of recognition and value which were prevalent at the time. Perhaps more so than today, European society's evaluation of people and their status was based on well-defined visual signifiers, whether in the form of personal clothing, or the exterior of their residences.

2.3.1.3 Brutalization

A contributory factor to the crisis of male identity was the lack of a legitimate outlet for the brutality which men had been exposed to throughout the war years, and in which they had been systematically trained. Whereas Roth's 1924 article 'Die Krüppel' exemplifies the extent of the continued physical and mental suffering of those soldiers who had survived the war, in the character of Lohse, the reader is presented with the effects of the First World War on those who fought on the front lines – that of psychological brutalization. As Jon

Hughes observes, Roth does not simply criticize his fascist character but demonstrates an awareness of 'the continuum of male psychology'.[121] Indeed, Emil Gumbel writing in 1922, argued that the great number of individual murders by right wingers in the early years of the Weimar Republic was directly related to their experiences during the war:

> That this method [killing the leaders of the left] has become so widespread in the military (all of the murders by the right have been committed by officers or soldiers) naturally lies in the psychological brutalization of the war, in which the life of the individual was no longer allowed to count. In this regard the frequently spoken and unspoken order not to take prisoners has had a special significant influence.[122]

The connection between Lohse's experiences on the battlefield during the First World War and his brutality, is made explicit in the scene where he kills Klitsche, his superior in the fascist organisation. (It is insightful of Roth to recognize that the brutality would be unleashed not only against the left, but also against rivals within the right-wing organizations.) Prior to his murder by Lohse, Klitsche also kills in this scene – he murders Günther, a member of the secret organization, who has been set up by Lohse. The double murder scene forms a chapter in itself, and after a brief introductory paragraph, Roth uses a variety of visual techniques. The killings take place in a wood, against the backdrop of a seemingly benign nature, and they are literally framed by the description of a romantic and harmonious woodland setting at the beginning and end of the section.[123] This highlights the fact that these brutal murders are not taking place in the midst of war, where such brutality is sanctioned by society but in a physical and moral context far removed from the battlefield.

Roth reconstructs Lohse's visual perception of the forest for the reader – he regards it as a 'Kulisse aus dünnem Schleierstoff, von einem ganz sanften Wind bewegt' (JRW, IV, 90). Thus Roth not only highlights Lohse's detachment from

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[121] Jon Hughes, 'Violence, Masculinity and Self', p. 216.
[122] Emil Gumbel, 'Four Years of Political Murder', in *The Weimar Republic Source Book*, ed. by Anton Kaes, Martin Jay and Edward Dimendberg (Berkley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 100-104 (p.102).
[123] Roth also uses appeals to the reader's auditory and olfactory senses in the description of the forest scene, referring to the hammering of a woodpecker, the whistling of a bird, and the smell of damp rising from the forest floor.

benign nature – for him it is nothing more than a backdrop, artificial scenery to which he feels no conscious connection – but through these visuals he also reflects Lohse's pathological detachment. In contrast to his inability to perceive clearly the trees in front of him, he can quite clearly 'see' Klitsche behind him preparing to murder Günther.[124] This is the event on which Lohse's mind is focused, although Lohse closes his eyes just when Klitsche is about to bring down the axe on Günther, and thus does not visually witness the actual act of murder. Lohse does, however, look at Günther in his final death throes, and Roth uses a detailed close-up here, similar to the close-ups of the corpses in 'Die Toten ohne Namen':

> Zwischen den Brauen Günthers, an der Nasenwurzel, steckte die Spitze der Beilpicke. Sein Angesicht war weiß, violett schimmernd unter den Augen. Noch atmete er. Der Daumen seiner linken, auf der Brust liegenden Hand bewegte sich wie ein kleines, fleischiges, sterbendes Pendel. Mit einem letzten Röcheln verzog er die Oberlippe, man sah seine Zähne und ein Stuck weißlichgrauen Zahnfleisches. (JRW, IV, 90)

It is particularly significant that Roth provides the reader with such a detailed and uncompromising description of the dying man's face and head. Generally the first thing that is done immediately after death or when a corpse is found, is that the face is covered, thus obscuring the person's identity and rendering them an anonymous corpse. As Susan Sontag notes with reference to photographs of war dead, 'With our [American] dead, there has always been a powerful interdiction against showing the naked face'.[125] Faces of the dead are taboo in photographs, and are either covered or turned to the ground. Roth, however, deliberately challenges the standard convention here, as he does in 'Die Toten ohne Namen'.[126] Not only does this serve to convey the gruesome reality of violence and death, it also emphasizes the humanity of the murder victim, given that the human face is the most visible signifier of identity and individuality.

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[124] The text does not make clear whether Lohse can literally see Klitsche, or whether he sees him in his mind's eye.

[125] Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), p. 70.

[126] In 'Die Toten ohne Namen' the faces of the dead have been photographed by the police for bureaucratic purposes. However, Roth's reconstruction of the photographs through Heuristic Visuals highlights the fact that these 'dead faces' are the only traces of identity which these people had. Since their names are not known, this is the only aspect of their individual humanity which is left for the rest of the world to see.

Roth continues to assault the reader's senses and sensibilities in his detailed representation of the blood spurting out from Günther's skull once Klitsche has removed the axe. This is clearly not sanitized violence, as is often the case in many depictions of killing in twentieth century film and television. The focus on the trajectory of the blood and its consistency and texture, provides the reader with greater detail than would be the case if they were simply watching such a scene on a screen. Thus Roth reproduces the visual reality of violence and violent death, and forces the reader to confront this reality. However it is significant that Roth's use of visual techniques moves from the brutal real to the disturbingly surreal when he portrays the effect on Lohse of witnessing Günther's murder:

> Rot und steil, mit unendlich feinem Prasseln, schoß das lang gehemmte Blut aus Günthers Stirn hinauf in die Baumkronen, eine rote Schnur, und tropfte von den Tannen.
> Es waren klebrige, zähe Tropfen, sie erstarrten sofort, im Niederfallen noch. Verkrusteten sich wie roter Siegellack. Unendliches rauschendes Rot umgab Theodor. Im Felde hatte er dieses Rot gesehen und gehört, es schrie, es brüllte wie aus tausend Kehlen, es flackerte, flammte wie tausend Feuerbrünnste, rot waren die Bäume, rot war der gelbe Sand, rot die braunen Nadeln auf dem Boden, rot der scharfgezackte Himmel zwischen den Stämmen, in grellgelbem Rot spielte der Sonnenschein zwischen den Stämmen. (JRW, IV, 91)

The description of the blood spurting out from Günther's headwound, albeit gory, is still anchored in reality, whereas the violent ecstatic frenzy which is triggered in Lohse is represented by a personified 'unendliches rauschendes Rot'. It is here in this section of surreal visuals that Roth makes explicit the connection between Lohse's brutalization and his experiences in the war: 'Im Felde hat er dieses Rot gesehen und gehört. Es schrie, es brüllte wie aus tausend Kehlen, es flackerte, flammte wie tausend Feuersbrünste […]' (JRW, IV, 91). The suggestion is that Lohse has been psychologically damaged by the violence which he both witnessed and partook in during his time at the front. Furthermore, in contrast to the factual nature of the description of Klitsche preparing to swing the axe down on Günther, Roth concentrates not on Lohse's physical actions as he kills Klitsche, but on his psychological and emotional

state, namely one of frenzied exultation. The reader is given the impression that Lohse is completely overcome by this 'Rot' – his whole visual sense is overwhelmed by it. Not only does it contaminate his view of the trees, the sand, the sky, he also 'sees' purple wheels spinning before his eyes. Thus Roth emphasizes that this murder is not committed by Lohse in a cool, calculating or rational manner but rather that his emotions border on ecstasy as he unleashes his primitive side.

Indeed, towards the end of the section of surreal visuals, Roth points to the act of violence as releasing pent-up tension within Lohse. Whereas at the beginning of the scene he had felt a sense of oppression in the woods, which was still there after Günther's murder, now the 'rauschende Rot […] machte ihn leicht und sein Kopf schien zu schweben, als wäre er mit Luft gefüllt' (JRW, IV, 91). This suggests that it is the act of killing itself which brings Lohse relief as well as exultation. Roth does not refer to the fact that by killing Klitsche, Lohse has removed an obstacle to his advancement to power, instead he concentrates on the emotions and frenzied psychological state which precipitates and enables Lohse's brutality.[127]

Although violence is an integral part of the natural world, the emphasis here is on violence as a primitive aspect of man, and violence outwith socially accepted parameters. Although Klitsche kills Günther because he believes him to be a traitor, Lohse had in fact framed Günther. Thus both killings are motivated by Lohse's desire for personal power, and are in no sense perpetrated for a common good. Despite the fact that Lohse's rise to prominence takes place within the framework of secret fascist organizations, Roth makes it clear that Lohse's commitment is not to any particular political cause but to the advancement of his own power.[128] There may be a rationale behind his brutality, in terms of positive outcomes for his career but the means for attaining his goal

[127] With reference to Theweleit, Hughes relates Lohse's sense of exultation more specifically to the affirmation of 'the solidity of his own externalized ego'. Hughes also comments that Lohse's act of killing is a 'reluctantly executed step'. However, this is misleading as nowhere does Lohse appear to be reluctant about killing. On the contrary he delights in it.
[128] See JRW, IV , 93 : 'Er sah, daß jeder nur für sich arbeitete […] Er wollte Führer sein, Abgeordneter, Minister, Diktator'.

includes the use of primitive violence and giving in to humanity's baser instincts.

2.3.1.4 Systems of Social Recognition and Value

There are two key sections in *Das Spinnennetz* where Roth focuses on the lower classes and uses visual techniques to highlight their deformation and the destruction of their individuality.

2.3.1.4.1 The Visuality of Poverty

In Chapter Seventeen Benjamin Lenz, the double agent, takes Lohse to working class gatherings. Lohse's experience of these meetings is presented to the reader in the form of a series of visual snapshots, contained within one paragraph. These snapshots not only reproduce Lohse's own sensory experience of the meetings (including his feeling of being overwhelmed) but also function as a sustained attack on the reader's visual and cognitive senses.[129] This can be compared to the montage technique in film, where a number of short shots are linked together in order to convey a large amount of information in a short time, often leaving the spectator 'visually overwhelmed'.

Here, Roth does not focus on any particular subsection of the poor but depicts the general visuality of poverty, in particular the physical deformation of the poor. Most of the snapshots focus on parts of people's bodies, with Roth once again using synecdoche: '[Lohse] sah dürre Gesichter auf knochigen Hälsen, eckige Fäuste an dünnen, wie ausgesogenen Handgelenken […]' (JRW, IV, 114). The use of carefully chosen adjectives serves to make the images all the more powerful, as they focus the reader's attention on the exact form of the physical deformation. Furthermore, the minute details go beyond the level of focus that one would ordinarily find in a film close-up: '[Lohse sah] ihren gedörrten Hals, sah durchsichtige, dünne gelbliche Haut, in schlaffen Fetzen

[129] The emphasis is on Lohse's visual experience but there are also references to other sensory stimuli: smells and sounds. For example, Roth refers to the 'tausendfache Rufen der Zuhörer' and the fact that Lohse 'roch ihren Schweiß und Armut' (JRW, IV, 114).

hängend' (JRW, IV, 114).[130] These detailed images highlight how the very smallest visual details can function as markers of social stratification.

The fact that Roth concentrates on bodies and not on clothes is significant, as this emphasizes the deformation of actual physical humanity. Poverty has not only reduced these people to wearing rags or worn-out shoes, it has left its mark on their bodies – clothes may be indicators of social stratification but they form visual surfaces which are easily detachable. Roth, however, makes the suffering and hardship of the poor visible through images which focus on the undetachable surfaces – surfaces which represent deeper, unseen, physical and psychological suffering. Roth does not need to go into details about the aspects of these people's lives, or launch a polemical tirade against social injustice – he shows us that all the information is there to be found in the surface visuals. As Klaus Westermann observes with respect to Roth's 1924 article 'Der Korpsstudent':[131] 'Bei einer derart plastischen Schilderung des Äußeren konnte Roth tatsächlich auf eine Darstellung der Aktivitäten und Ziele von Corps und Burschenschaften verzichten – das eindeutige Bild aus der scheinbar naiven Sicht wäre nur unscharf geworden.'[132] The 'eindeutige Bild' with which the reader is presented retains its clarity precisely because Roth does not muddy it with political ideology or abstract discourse. Rather, he presents the poor in concrete, three-dimensional visual terms. He sets the parameters of vision, and controls what the reader sees – channeling their attention on the physical deformation which is a direct result of these people's poverty. Furthermore, he is limiting the scope for individual subjective interpretation which is present in the case of photographs or films – the reader is steered away from a primarily aesthetic reading of the image to a more critical one.

The end of this section of visual snapshots portrays the poor eating bread, once again focalized through Lohse's experience: 'Er sah, wie sie aßen, Brot, das in den Rocktaschen lag, rissen sie mit Daumen und Zeigefinger heraus,

[130] Here Roth is referring to women, and it is interesting to note that he emphasizes here that age and gender are no protection against the ravages of poverty, whereas in the reportage pieces of this period, he has focused more on male subjects, for example in 'Die Abseits-Menschen'.
[131] JRW, II, 63-64.
[132] Westermann, p. 111.

zerpflückten es gleichsam und stopften es mit vorgehaltener Hand in den lechzenden Mund. Aber wie waren ihre Zungen beschaffen, ihre Gaumen? Wie schmeckten sie?' (JRW, IV, 115). When the poor eat bread, they do so in order to fulfil a basic need, they are not influenced by codes of etiquette imposed by society or the artificial practice of a religious orthodoxy. Whether at the dinner table, or as part of holy communion, the civility of the delicate consumption of bread is as alien to the poor, as the poor's desperate hunger is to the rich. Even more telling is Lohse's questioning of how their tongues and gums are formed. This reduces the poor to the level of scientific curiosity – it is as if Lohse is analysing a strange alien species, moreover a species to be feared.[133] However, as Lenz points out to Lohse, these are '"[…] das Deutsche Volk, für das Sie zu arbeiten glauben. Die Offiziere in den Kasinos sind nicht das Volk"' (JRW, IV, 115).

For Lohse, however, this reality is alien, the poor are 'nicht von seiner Welt […], nicht von dieser Welt' (JRW, IV, 115). Lohse's sense of detachment from these people, and indeed his inablility to imagine them as humans who love and cry, typifies how they are regarded by the rest of society, as something other than human, if not sub-human. Yet one could argue that it is precisely the petit-bourgeois lack of empathy with the lower classes which Roth is trying to overcome in his depiction of the reality of poverty. As Westermann also comments: 'Er vermochte fremde Schicksale dem Leser nahezubringen, plastisch vor Augen zu führen und somit nachfühlbar zu machen'.[134] Indeed, by emphasizing the humanity of the lower classes and thus facilitating empathy for them among the petit-bourgeois, Roth is directly challenging the assumption that they are less than human, and thereby tackling one of the false assumptions used to justify their physical exploitation.

[133] Hughes comments in his article on masculinity that Lohse's fear of the mass is linked to the military male psychology which fears lack of definition: 'Den einzelnen hätte er vielleicht verstanden, in der Menge aber gab es keine Kontur' (JRW, IV, 115).
[134] Westermann, p. 112.

2.3.1.4.2 Branding and the Mass

In Chapter Twenty Two of the novel in which Roth depicts the violent clash between a workers' demonstration and various right-wing groups,[135] he highlights how the evidence of this physical exploitation is to be found on the public surfaces of the poor. The section begins with the mass of workers compared to the grey morning rain: 'Sie waren wie ein Herbstregen. Unaufhörlich, unerbittlich, leise' (JRW, IV,124). The workers are thus initially 'seen' from a distance (the effect being similar to a long distance camera shot), and they appear to be an homogenous, anonymous mass. However, Roth then proceeds to sharpen the visual focus on this mass of people, and demonstrates that the workers are by no means indistinguishable from one another. As we have seen, Roth often used representative types in his reportage of the time to depict the suffering of the lower classes, regularly focusing on aspects of individual humanity. Here, however, he does not focus on people's private individuality but on their public surface. Moreover, he goes beyond the general visuality of poverty, of the previous section, and reveals a range of categories of public surfaces which exist within the mass.

Roth produces a visual classification of the workers, and makes the direct link between their physical deformation and the nature of their employment. The effect of Roth's categorization of the workers in this way is to highlight how the workers are both physically and metaphorically branded by society. Society does not 'see' these people as individuals but sees only their identifying work function. As August Sander commented in 1931: '[…] we recognize people and distinguish one from another by their appearance. We can tell from appearance the work someone does or does not do; we can read in his face whether he is happy or troubled, for life unavoidably leaves its trace there'.[136]

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[135] The violent clash between the workers and the right wing is very much rooted in the reality of the time, albeit that it has symbolic significance, mirroring the abstract societal clash between the two groups, with the workers literally fighting for their lives. It is also important to note that Roth presents the workers as innocents whose peaceful demonstration has been ambushed by right-wing elements.

[136] August Sander, 'The Nature and Development of Photography', lecture 5, 1931, quoted in, Graham Clarke, 'Public faces, Private Lives: August Sander and the Social Typology of the Portrait Photograph', in *The Portrait in Photography*, ed. by Graham Clarke (London: Reaktion Books, 1992), pp. 71-93 (p. 71).

Various categories of worker are listed, and in each case Roth qualifies it with a snapshot focusing on the part/s of the body which have been distorted or deformed as a direct result of their work. For example, the bakers have 'blutlose Gesichter', the glassblowers 'kostbare[n], tödliche[n], glitzende[n] Glasstaub […] in ihren Lungen', and the newspaper type-setters 'gerötete Augen und blasse Wangen' (JRW, IV, 124). Roth mainly focuses on hands and faces, which are the key parts of the public presentation of the body. For the most part, the details of deformity are public – they are there for all to see if one focuses one's gaze. In the case of the railway workers, mention is also made of work penetrating their brains: 'Noch rollen in ihrem Bewußtsein schwarze Züge, wechseln Signale ihre Farben, schrillen Pfeifen, schlagen erzene Glocken' (JRW, IV, 124). This suggestion that the railway workers' minds are still occupied by work, even when they are not working, shows that Roth was aware that work could have an adverse effect on people's mental as well as physical health.[137]

The use of metaphors to compare the workers to objects with which they work, emphasizes the dehumanizing aspect of their work, and the fact that society regards them as part of the machinery of the production process. These people have had their individual humanity deformed or erased by work and poverty, and it has been replaced with a label. However, this label does not even have the benefit of carrying a status worthy of note by society. An army officer in uniform may also have his individuality erased but society will still recognize his status, whether he is on the battle field or not. For many of the lower classes, any recognition which they might gain from society remains firmly within the context of their work; outside it, they struggle to be seen as human.

2.3.2 *Hotel Savoy*

Roth's second novel *Hotel Savoy*, which is also a *Zeitroman*, centres on the character of Gabriel Dan – a soldier making his way home to Vienna from a

[137] Work-induced stress, and the detrimental effects of work on mental health are generally considered to be a late twentieth-century phenomenon. Here Roth demonstrates an early awareness of the condition.

Russian prisoner of war camp after the end of the First World War.[138] Dan decides to break his journey in a town where he has relatives, in the hope that they will provide him with funds for his onward passage. The novel begins with Dan's arrival at the Hotel Savoy after his long and difficult journey through Russia.[139] At the start of the novel the reader is presented with the contrasting images of the luxury of the Hotel Savoy which stands at the 'Toren Europas', and the horror and brutality of the war. The juxtaposing of two different worlds, or ways of life continues throughout the novel, the main contrast being between the rich and poor in society, to which a further dimension is added in the form of the *Heimkehrer*. There is no polemical discussion of the injustices of the class system or the horrors of war, rather their visual manifestations are presented to the reader through the reality which Dan witnesses.

Unlike *Das Spinnennetz*, *Hotel Savoy* has no long passages of intense visual focus, rather the visual elements are more evenly distributed throughout the text. This may be largely explained by Roth's use of a first person narrator, and the fact that there is significantly more dialogue in this text. The novel conveys Dan's own personal experience of the hotel and the town, and the use of the visual very much reflects this – the gaze is from the inside out, as Dan looks outwards and observes what is going on around him. Moreover, the fact that Dan is an 'Außenseiter ohne Anhang'[140] means that he sees with the active, and arguably more objective, eyes of a stranger:

> Lange war ich einsam unter Tausenden gewesen. Jetzt gibt es tausend Dinge, die ich teilen kann: den Anblick eines krummen Giebels, ein Schwalbennest im Klosett des Hotels Savoy, das irritierende, biergelbe Aug' des alten Liftknaben, die Bitterkeit des siebenten Stockwerks, die Unheimlichkeit eines griechischen Namens, eines plötzlich lebendigen grammatikalischen Begriffs, die traurige Erinnerung an einen boshaften Aorist, an die Enge des elterlichen Hauses, die plumpe Lächerlichkeit Phöbus Böhlaugs und Alexanderls Lebensrettung durch den Train. Lebendiger wurden die lebendigen Dinge, häßlicher die gemeinsam verurteilten, näher der Himmel, untertan die Welt. (JRW, IV,160)

[138] In all Roth's novels from 1923-1929 the protagonists are *Heimkehrer* from the war.
[139] Roth does not name the town, but it is widely taken to be modelled on Lodz, (now in Poland).
[140] See Rudolf Koester, *Joseph Roth* (Berlin: Colloquium, 1982), p. 36.

This suggests a sense of reawakening in Dan – his senses are again engaged with the world around him. Moreover, he can now share in all these things in life, and can share his experience of them with other people. While Dan's observations in the novel primarily highlight the visibility of social stratification, the visual is also used (albeit to a lesser extent), in relation to issues of identity.

2.3.2.1 Displaced Identities: Gabriel Dan and the *Heimkehrer*

Although there is not the same use of Heuristic Visuals to provide insights into individual psychology as there was in *Das Spinnennetz*, visual elements are nevertheless used to focus on Dan's personality and attitudes. At the beginning of the novel Dan's journey westwards from the Siberian prisoner of war camp is conveyed to the reader through a montage of snapshots. Once again Roth uses the present tense to produce a real time, filmic quality, and the snapshots reflect various aspects of Dan's journey through his sensory experience – they not only reflect what he saw but also what he heard, tasted and felt. Such a depiction is not only more vivid than a factual recounting of events but also enables the reader to identify more easily with Dan, as it focuses on sensory experiences which are common to all. Thus by using 'conventional rich images' (see 1.3.3.2.2), a more sympathetic reading of his experiences is facilitated.

Although Dan asserts on his arrival at the hotel that he is glad 'wieder ein altes Leben abzustreifen […]' (JRW, IV, 149), he does not regard the various 'lives' which he has lived over the past years as fixed identities. They are detachable identities or roles which can be inhabited for a time and then discarded. Dan argues that the core of one's identity goes much deeper: 'So vieles kann man in sich saugen und dennoch unverändert an Körper, Gang und Gehaben bleiben' (JRW, IV, 150). Dan, unlike Lohse, seems to be secure enough in his own identity to not feel bound by the standard social classification. For Dan, true identity is not formed by social roles or the visual indicators of social

definition.[141] He believes that these are both inherently detachable – one can just as easily strip off a role as one can a shirt, and the essential self is the same irrespective of how many shirts one possesses: '[…] Im Hotel Savoy konnte ich mit einem Hemd anlangen und es verlassen als der Gebieter von zwanzig Koffern – und immer noch der Gabriel Dan sein' (JRW, IV, 150). This observation is used as a refrain throughout the novel, arguably focusing the reader's attention on the possibility of a degree of social mobility.

However, Roth makes it clear that society will continue to judge the individual by their external appearance and status, regardless of how secure in their own identity they are. Later in the novel, Zwonimir Pansin, Dan's somewhat eccentric revolutionary friend, finds them labouring work at the train station. When Pansin asks a table of train conductors to make room for the labourers, the officials refuse to move. Aware of their own higher status, they regard moving to accommodate the labourers as beneath them. In response, Zwonimir turns the table over and then knocks the caps off the conductors' heads. Dan observes, 'es sieht aus, als hätte er sie geköpft' and 'ohne Adler kamen sie sich jämmerlich vor' (JRW, IV, 201). Thus Roth highlights the fact that these officials, like Lohse, derive a large part of their identity and authority from their uniforms. Moreover, the suggestion is that their uniforms have not merely become an extension of their physical selves, but a substitute for them. Thus, by knocking their caps off Pansin is deforming the physical self and robbing it of its identity. At this point in the novel Dan no longer sees himself as an egoist – working with the other labourers as a single unit has changed his self-centred outlook. As Rudolf Koester observes: 'Der Umgang mit Pansin vertieft Dan's Einsicht in die sozialökonomischen Zusammenhänge und bewirkt bei ihm eine zunehmende Sympathie für die Armen und Unterpriviligierten.'[142] However, Dan does not yet fully identify himself with the streams of *Heimkehrer* who have begun arriving in the town.

There are two key sections in the novel which focus on the *Heimkehrer*. In the first section in Chapter Seventeen Roth compares the streams of *Heimkehrer* to

[141] This is unusual given that, as Dahrendorf notes, the social role generally defines the person, (see 2.3.1.2), and it is a very strong individual who can escape categorization by role.
[142] Koester, p. 34.

fish: ‘Sie werden herangespült wie bestimmte Fische zu bestimmten Jahreszeiten. Vom Schicksal westwärts gespült werden die Heimkehrer’ (JRW, IV, 202). This striking comparison emphasizes the visual impact of the men as an homogenous flowing mass, which is propelled by an unseen force – it is as if they are carrying out another command rather than acting of their own free will. The simile of the fish is continued when Dan observes that he cannot differentiate between their faces, ‘Sie sehen einander gleich wie Fische’ (JRW, IV, 202). Thus the war has erased their individuality – their common suffering has led to a common appearance. Dan’s comment that ‘der Staub zerwanderter Jahre auf ihren Stiefeln [liegt], auf ihren Gesichtern’ (JRW, IV, 202), draws attention to the direct connection between experience and appearance – both literally and metaphorically the dust of many years covers their boots and their faces. While this initial description portrays the *Heimkehrer* as broken men, the later observation that ‘sie den Atem der großen Revolution [mitbrachten], es war, als hätte sie die Revolution nach Westen gespuckt wie ein brennender Krater seine Lava’ (JRW, IV, 203), confirms that there is a revolutionary spark lying beneath the worn-down surface.

In the second section which focuses on the returning soldiers, Dan witnesses a new influx of *Heimkehrer* entering the town. Here, the visual comparison is to the grey rain which has been pouring down for a week. Instead of presenting it as pathetic fallacy, with the falling rain mirroring the mood of the *Heimkehrer*, Roth reverses the image: ‘Es paßt so zum Regen, daß in diesen Tagen die Flut der Heimkehrer sich mit frischer Gewalt heranwälzt’ (JRW, IV, 234). As before in the crowd scene in *Das Spinnennetz,* the comparison to the rain reflects the apparent homogeneity of the mass. However, whereas in *Das Spinnennetz* Roth proceeded to highlight the differences within the mass, here he reaffirms its homogeneity. He repeats the observation that ‘den Staub zerwanderter Jahre auf Gesichtern und Füßen [liegt]’ (JRW, IV, 234). Moreover, the comparison of the *Heimkehrer* to the non-dimensional rain reinforces the image of a mass with no defining contours or features. The monotony of both the rain and the *Heimkehrer* is further underlined by their uniformity of colour (or rather lack of colour) and sound:

> Es ist als hingen sie mit dem Regen zusammen. Grau wie er sind sie und beständig wie er.
> Sie strömen Grau aus, unendliches Grau über diese graue Stadt. Ihre Blechgeschirre klappern wie der Regen in den Blechrinnen. (JRW, IV, 234)

The appeal to the reader's auditory as well as visual sense is significant as it creates a more precise reconstruction of Dan's sensory environment, and draws on a commonplace experience. The merging of sounds draws attention to the fact that the *Hemikehrer* themselves have become commonplace – they are indistinguishable from the rain.

It is at this point in the novel that Dan expressly identifies himself with the *Heimkehrer*: 'Die Heimkehrer sind meine Brüder, sie sind hungrig. Nie sind sie meine Brüder gewesen […]. Heute aber bin ich nicht mehr allein in der Welt, heute bin ich ein Teil der Heimkehrer' (JRW, IV, 235). Now Dan feels a common identity with these men, a bond which he could not feel while in the midst of the horror of war – it is the sense of displacement which unites them. Here, as in 'Die Krüppel' Roth focuses on depicting the aftermath of the war rather than the events of the war itself. He shows how much there is to be decoded in the surfaces which remain, and given that it is only the aftermath which the majority of people will witness, it is arguably a more effective technique for engaging the reader.

2.3.2.2 The Hotel

The initial description of the hotel takes the form of a series of visual snapshots detailing various features such as the liveried doorman and the electric lights. After the brutality of the prisoner of war camp, and his arduous journey westwards, for Dan the hotel represents the ideal of European civilization – full of homely comforts and lacking any remnants of the institutionalized life of the military. He sees the hotel as an escape from the hunger, poverty and hardships of the past: '[Ich] werfe Bitterkeit, Armut, Wanderung, Heimatlosigkeit, Hunger, Vergangenheit des Bettlers hinunter, woher es mich, den Emporschwebenen, nimmermehr erreichen kann' (JRW, IV, 150). However, Dan's overwhelmingly positive view of the hotel is soon exposed as naïve, and

he realizes that while he personally may have left poverty and suffering behind, this is by no means the case for those who live in the top floor of the hotel.

Dan's realization of the social inequalities which exist within the hotel begins when he walks down the stairs for the first time. Now that he is no longer in the enclosed space of the lift, he is able to observe the increasing luxury of the corridors and the rooms on each floor as he descends. The increasingly superior materials of the floor surfaces and number plaques on the doors signify the increasing social superiority of the guests. In addition to these physical outward signs of wealth, Roth conveys a further dimension symbolized by the clocks becoming slower on each floor of the hotel – the intangible commodity of time is also a luxury only afforded by the rich. Whereas in *Das Spinnennetz* Roth mainly highlights the indicators of social definition and difference with respect to people, here he focuses on the visual evidence of social stratification to be found in inanimate surfaces. The hotel itself is presented as a microcosm of society, where social status is the overriding factor in determining not only one's surroundings but also how one is treated; the rich guests do not have a notice from the owner pinned on their door informing them that there should be no noise after ten o'clock, and that the management accepts no liability for any lost valuables.

However, it is not simply the case that the poorer guests are excluded from the luxuries of the rich. For Dan, the most disturbing aspect of the hotel is that the poorest guests suffer directly from the requirements of the rich. In the top floor of the hotel the grey steam from the rich guests' laundry pervades the corridors and distorts even further the already cramped dimensions. The steam not only distorts people's senses and their perception of the visual dimensions of reality, it also physically deforms the human beings who are forced to breathe it: 'Es ist schwer, sich an diese Luft zu gewöhnen, die in ständiger Wallung bleibt, Konturen verwischt, feucht und warm riecht, die Menschen in unwirkliche Knäuel verwandelt' (JRW, IV, 162). Here the focus on the various qualities of the steam, both visual and non-visual, conveys the destructive force of this miasma, endowing it with an animate life of its own. Dan soon begins to see the grim reality behind the hotel's luxurious façade:

> Wie die Welt war dieses Hotel Savoy, mächtigen Glanz strahlte es nach außen, Pracht sprühte aus sieben Stockwerken, aber Armut wohnte drin in Gottesnähe, was oben stand, lag unten, begraben in luftigen Gräbern, und die Gräber schichteten sich auf den behaglichen Zimmern der Satten, die unten saßen, in Ruhe und Wohligkeit, unbeschwert von den leichtgezimmerten Särgen. (JRW, IV, 168)

Roth makes the social stratification more striking by pointing to its inverted physical embodiment. The juxtaposition of the neologism 'leichtgezimmert' with the reference to the coffins emphasizes the indifference of the social order to the suffering of the indigent.

It is clear that Roth intended the hotel to be symbolic of wider society, as Rudolf Koester asserts, '[...] wichtiger als die geographische Lage des Hotels ist seine symbolische Bedeutung.'[143] Sidney Rosenfeld, on the other hand, argues that the intended symbolism of the hotel and its guests is not achieved by Roth: 'In their narrative composite, however, both the physical setting of the hotel and the figures who populate it are too fancifully drawn to project the symbolic picture Roth intended.'[144] One can take issue with this position, given that in the novel Roth draws attention to the symbolism which exists in everyday life. The visual manifestations of social stratification in Roth's *Hotel Savoy* have a realistic basis and were to be found in many hotels of the time, and indeed may still be found today. Dan himself highlights the typicality of the problem: 'In allen Städten der Welt gibt es kleinere oder größere Savoys, und überall in den höchsten Stockwerken wohnen die Santschins und ersticken am Dunst fremder Wäsche' (JRW, IV, 183).

2.3.2.3 The Town

In contrast to Dan's positive first impression of the hotel, his initial impression of the town is overwhelmingly negative. Once again Roth presents the reader with Dan's observations in the form of visual snapshots as he walks around the town for the first time – he notices the remains of market day, the faint light of

[143] Rudolf Koester, p. 32.
[144] Sidney Rosenfeld, *Understanding Joseph Roth* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), p. 20.

the lanterns and the poor quality of the road surfaces. One of his first observations is that the town looks more appealing at night because the darkness veils the unpleasant reality: 'Die Dunkelheit aber barg alles, Schmutz, Laster, Seuche und Armut, gütig, mütterlich, verzeihend, vertuschend' (JRW, IV, 153).[145] However, the darkness cannot erase all traces of poverty and suffering. The 'armseliges Licht' of the houses is contrasted to the 'Ströme von Licht' of the Konditorei: 'Es ist die Konditorei der reichen Welt, die in dieser Fabrikstadt Geld erwirbt und ausgibt' (JRW, IV, 153). The divide between the rich and poor in the town is not only to be found in the hotel.

Just as the steam from the laundry distorted both place and people alike, so too does the grey smoke which belches out from the factories in the town. Roth makes reference to the smoke and pollution from the factories at various points in the course of the novel, and often picks out the visual details of its effects on the town. For example: 'An grauen Tagen sah man am Rand des hölzernen Bürgersteigs, in den schmalen, unebenen Rinnen schwarze, gelbe, lehmdicke Flüssigkeit. Schlamm aus den Fabriken, der noch warm war und Dampf aushauchte' (JRW, IV, 203). The pollution and the grey rain form an integral part of the appearance of the town. Indeed Roth asserts: 'Der Regen ist ihre Uniform. Es ist eine Stadt des Regens und der Trostlosigkeit' (JRW, IV, 213).

Throughout the novel there are many stark images of the town and the people in it – the grey rain, the dust and smoke from the factories, the dirt and faeces in the gutters, the starving workers and the Jews who walk like 'stumme Schatten'. The cumulative effect of these images is to produce a sense of brutality and inhumanity which challenges the concept of a civilized Europe. Indeed, one might question whether this form of civilization is so very different from the war and the prison camps. The images of the grey rain, the grey smoke from factory and the grey steam from the laundry, symbolize the suffering and exploitation of the poor at the hands of the rich. The fact that they are all non-

[145] The juxtaposition of the words 'gütig, mütterlich, verzeihend, vertuschend', with 'Schmutz, Laster, Seuche und Armut' points to the incongruity and the inequalities which Dan discovers in both the town and the hotel.
There is another example of a pleasant façade obscuring a darker reality in the observation that 'Tausend Kohlenstäubchen birgt jeder Regentropfen, sie bleiben auf den Gesichtern und Kleidern der Menschen liegen' (JRW, IV, 213).

dimensional, intangible elements, reinforces the fact the power behind these destructive forces does not make itself visible. While Dan suggests that the town is cursed by God, 'Gott strafte diese Stadt mit Industrie. Industrie ist die härteste Strafe Gottes' (JRW, IV, 203), it is clear to the reader that industries are not run by God, but by humans who are only too happy to exploit their fellow men and women in order to secure their further advancement. Here again, through his use of Heuristic Visuals, Roth challenges any complacency the reader may have had with respect to the civilizing aspect of modern industrial society. Roth makes visible that which would otherwise remain invisible for those who occupy a more privileged stratum in society.

2.3.3 *Die Rebellion*

As was the case with his first two novels, Roth's third novel *Die Rebellion* was first published as a *Fortsetzungsroman* in a newspaper: *Die Rebellion* appeared in *Vorwärts*, the paper of the German Social Democratic Party. Despite what a present-day reader might infer from the title, the novel does not depict a rebellion of the working class against the forces of capitalism. Rather, the rebellion on the part of the protagonist, Andreas Pum, is very much a private one. As Thorsten Juergens points out, the novel as a whole focuses on the personal and private: 'Hatte sich Roth in 'Das Spinnennetz' zu nahe am Politisch-Zeitlichen orientiert und war er im 'Hotel Savoy' in die sichere Sphäre des Symbolischen ausgewichen, so verlagert er 'Die Rebellion' mehr ins Private.'[146] The early twentieth century had seen a revival of interest in Max Stirner's idea that egoistic rebellion was superior to and more effective than revolution. According to Stirner, revolution aims at new arrangements, whereas rebellion involves the transformation of the individual so that they are no longer willing to accept any external forms of control. Stirner's position had been trenchantly criticized by Marx and Engels in the *The German Ideology*: 'The difference between revolution and Stirner's rebellion is not, as Stirner thinks, that the one is a political and social act whereas the other is an egoistical act, but

[146] Juergens, p. 40.

that the former is an act whereas the latter is no act at all.'[147] By this Marx and Engels mean that a rebellion which pays no attention to the wider social context is doomed to be ineffectual. Pum's rebellion and its failure dramatizes these issues.

While the theme of individual identity was important in *Das Spinnennetz* and *Hotel Savoy*, the focus was on issues of identity arising from the impact of the First World War – in Lohse's case a crisis of male identity, and in Dan's case the problem of displaced identity. In *Die Rebellion*, however, Andreas Pum has survived the war and the loss of a leg with his identity and ideology firmly intact. Pum's problem is not one of a crisis of identity but that of an overdependent identity, derived from a personal ideology that encapsulates a supreme faith in the justice of the institution of his Fatherland.

To the present-day reader, Pum's belief system, in which the concepts of absolute justice, fairness and holiness are extended beyond God to the government and various state institutions, may appear to resemble an irrational, distorted Christian ideology. Juergens argues, however, that Pum's ideology must be analysed in the historical context of the Habsburg Empire, and that God, State and Fatherland are for Pum 'eine untrennbare Einheit des Sacrum Imperium.'[148] While Juergens is right to assert that such a belief system was not totally irrational when viewed in the context of the Habsburg Empire, one could argue that Pum's belief in the 'Sacrum Imperium' is taken to pathological extremes. Moreover, Pum's whole attitude to life is shaped by his ideology, and his identity is entirely dependent on it. He regards himself as a part of the governing system – a system which he naively believes dispenses absolute justice, and is infallible. In the course of the novel, Roth not only lays bare the absurdity of such an extreme interpretation of the 'Sacrum Imperium', but also the pathology of a dependent identity which Pum embodies.

In *Die Rebellion* Roth once again shows an awareness of the semiotics of social stratification, and how visible indicators of social status affect society's

[147] Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, (originally published 1846), Chapter 3, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch031.htm> [accessed 14 September 2006].
[148] Juergens, p. 41.

treatment of the individual. This plays a key part in the incident on the tram, which marks the beginning of Pum's downfall. However, as has been noted, society is not the focus of the novel, rather it is the individual. Roth's use of visual techniques reflects this, with the main instances of Heuristic Visuals occurring after the *Wendepunkt*, in the sections which reveal the process of Pum's self-recognition, as he is forced to confront the shortcomings of his ideology, and set out on his so-called rebellion.

2.3.3.1 The Overdependent Identity: Alienation from Societal Reality

The novel begins shortly before the end of the First World War, from which Pum has returned an invalid. He is one of many patients at a military hospital on the outskirts of Vienna. Although Roth does mention some of the types of deformation from which the men are suffering, he does not present the reader with the kind of shocking and arresting images of war-wounded invalids which were portrayed in 'Die Krüppel'.[149] He does, however, emphasize how their handicaps are a form of physical alienation as they do not allow the invalids to function and merge with the rest of society: their injuries prevent them from reaching the nearest tram stop which leads 'in die große Stadt, in das Leben' (JRW, IV, 245). Roth also points to their social alienation in his assertion that they must fight a new war: 'Sie rüsteten schon zu einem neuen Krieg; gegen die Schmerzen; gegen die Prothesen […] und gegen die Gesunden' (JRW, IV, 245). Thus Roth emphasizes the fact that the invalids as a group are not merely excluded from society but have to protect themselves from society's hostility towards them.

Andreas Pum, by contrast, cosseted in his personal ideology, does not recognize his physical and social alienation from society. Whereas the other invalids regard themselves as 'arme Teufel', Pum does not even view his invalid status as something negative. He believes that it will guarantee society's respect for him, and that his medal will ensure the respect of the government: 'Ein Invalider

[149] Later on in Chapter One Roth does, however, present the reader with a detailed visual close-up of the invalid Bossi who is a 'Zitterer'. See JRW, IV, 250. Here Roth draws attention to the tragic irony that such a physically strong man should be rendered so powerless over his own body by the invisible psychological wounds he has suffered.

durfte auf die Achtung der Welt rechnen. Ein ausgezeichneter Invalider auf die der Regierung' (JRW, IV, 245). Roth also highlights the fact that Pum's ideology has many elements of absurdity. For example, it leads him to interpret the innocuous occurrence of sunlight shining on his dinner plate as praise from God for eating all his food (JRW, IV, 247), while the other invalids grumble about the quality of the food.[150] In fact, Pum's fellow invalids are those whom he views as the enemy, and he labels them 'Heiden'. He regards himself as superior and does not see himself as belonging to the same social group.[151] In doing so he alienates himself from the social stratum into which the rest of society will classify him.

After acquiring a barrel-organ licence by pretending to be a 'Zitterer', Pum leaves the hospital more than happy with his lot, believing that his status as a decorated invalid and his licence will secure his future: 'Er besaß eine Krücke und eine Lizenz und eine Auszeichnung. Alle sahen, daß er invalid war, ein Soldat, der fürs Vaterland geblutet. Und es gab immer noch Achtung vor solchen Männern. Wehe, wenn man ihn nicht geachtet hätte!' (JRW, IV, 257-258).[152] Initially Pum's experience is in concordance with this belief. When he takes the tram from the hospital into the city, his fellow passengers do indeed respond to his invalid status and all offer him their seats. Thus Roth indicates, that at least shortly after the war had ended, the civilian population were sympathetically responsive to the visual indicators of an invalid's status. Pum views the fact that the authorities granted him a licence as evidence of his integration into the mechanism of the state. He sees himself as 'der Behörde gleichgestellt, dank [seiner] Lizenz' (JRW, IV, 253). Thus Roth highlights how Pum's belief system has divorced him from the social reality of his position. The barrel-organ, however, assumes an increasing importance for Pum, who is captivated by the fairytale pictures painted on it:

[150] Roth highlights Pum's absurdity through the comic discrepancy between his childish behaviour at table, and the elevated adult discourse with which he formulates his thoughts about it. He views clearing his plate as on a par with cleaning a gun. However, despite the obvious absurdity, Pum's need for approval from an external authority shows his inability to play an independent adult role.

[151] There is one exception to this. Pum's ingrained deference to status and authority forces him to respect engineer Lang, to whom he gives the title 'Dr'.

[152] Pum later becomes aware of the reality that the medals bestowed by society for bravery in battle are relatively meaningless in peace time.

> Wunderbarer als der Vorgang selbst waren die bunten Farben, in denen er dargestellt erschien. Andreas' Augen tranken die ölige Sattheit dieser Farben, und es berauschte sich seine Seele an der klangvollen Harmonie, mit der ein blutendes Rot in ein sehnsüchtiges Orange des Abendhimmels im Hintergrund verfloß. (JRW, IV, 255)

Here the detailed visual close-up, focalized through Pum, emphasizes the addictive effect and overwhelming emotional impact on Pum. It is also in stark contrast to Pum's apparent lack of awareness of his real-world visual environment, once again conveying Pum's detachment from reality. As Juergens observes, the barrel-organ's 'Puppentheaterbilder [sind] ihm zur Ersatz-Wirklichkeit geworden'.[153] Moreover the concrete terms of the description are suggestive of concrete physical consumption, which contrasts incongruously with the insubstantiality of what they represent. Roth conveys how Pum's psychological interaction with this fairytale scene has become more real to him than the streets in which he walks. He is even so preoccupied with the picture that he wishes he had the ability to add to the painting. This is, however, an artistic impulse which he is not equipped to realize. Thus Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to show how Pum is preoccipied with the possibility of change but only within the realms of fantasy, and not reality.

Pum's 'fairytale' soon comes to an end, and the *Wendepunkt* in the novel occurs when Pum loses his barrel-organ licence after an altercation with a rich businessman, Herr Arnold, in a tram. Although the narrator presents this as an intervention by fate, and refers to Herr Arnold as 'das Instrument in der vernichtenden Hand des Schicksals' (JRW, IV, 280), Herr Arnold's actions are in fact motivated by the semiotics of social stratification, and his preconceived perception of invalids as communists and fakers.[154] As Alan Bance argues:

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[153] Juergens, p. 43.

[154] Herr Arnold believes that Pum is a communist and a faker, refuses to make way for him in the tram and provokes Pum by challenging his invalid status. As Juergens points out, the irony is that Pum and Arnold in fact have the same social and political beliefs – bourgeois and conservative. See Juergens, p. 45.
Roth also highlights the fact that the events of the revolution and the economic crisis have led to a change in people's perceptions. Whereas directly after the end of the war, people reacted sympathetically to war invalids, they are now more cynical and wary. When Herr Arnold calls Pum a Bolschewik, Roth observes 'Es war ihnen, als hätte vorn ein Mitglied ihrer Familie um Hilfe gerufen […]' (JRW, IV, 283).

> […] Herr Arnold is the expression of class-war, not of an absolute *Schicksal,* and Andreas' defeat at his hands lies within the logic of the social system, which guarantees the victimization of the proletarian in any lone confrontation as an individual with his social 'superiors'.[155]

Moreover, the tram conductor's assumption that Pum is in the wrong is also based on an assessment of the visible attributes of the social status of Pum and Arnold, and a prejudiced interpretation of this status. However, Bance's argument disregards the key role which Pum's own behaviour plays in his downfall. Blinded by his personal ideology he thinks himself superior to the conductor, and on a level status with the policeman – an assessment which is woefully out of line with society's (and the other men's) assessment.[156] Thus, both societal prejudice and Pum's lack of awareness of the reality of his social position result in the loss of his barrel-organ licence and hence any economic standing in society.

2.3.3.2 Periods of Confinement: Physical Alienation leading to Self-recognition.

One of the first indications that Pum is beginning to be freed from his misperceptions is when he sees his wife Kathi from a different perspective, both literally and metaphorically. When Pum tells her that he has lost his licence, she reacts with anger. The reader then follows Pum's gaze as he looks up at her and discovers that 'ein menschliches Angesicht ganz anderes aussehen kann, wenn man es von unten betrachtet' (JRW, IV, 286).[157] In striking contrast to the previous physical descriptions of Kathi, which focused on her sexuality (paralleling Pum's own focus), Pum now sees an ugly creature with a wobbly chin and no mouth. Furthermore, she is portrayed as a dangerous animal, a

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[155] Alan Bance, 'In my End is My Beginning: Joseph Roth's "Die Rebellion" and "Die Legende vom heiligen Trinker"', in *Studies in Modern Austrian Literature: Eight papers*, ed. by Brian Murdoch and Mark Ward (Glasgow: Scottish Papers in Germanic Studies, 1981), pp. 33-44 (38).

[156] The policeman regards Pum as his inferior, and views it as an insult to be given orders by Pum. His subsequent treatment of Pum is also motivated by a desire to fully execute what power he has. A further example of this type of petty officialdom can be found in 'Der Schrei nach dem Fremden', (JRW, II, 65-68).

[157] The shift in perspective, from below, suggests the change in hierarchical status within the relationship. Pum has lost the power invested within him by the licence.

predator about to devour its prey, emphasizing her true ruthless nature and lack of sympathy for Pum. Thus, Roth demonstrates how a shift in physical visual perception can result in a shift in cognitive perception.

Receiving no comfort from his wife, Pum goes to spend the night in the stables with Muli, his donkey.[158] This is the first of a series of periods of confinement which facilitate Pum's process of self-recognition. Unlike the others, this one is self-imposed. Although in this section Roth does not use visual techniques such as montage or close-ups, it is once again a shift in physical visual perception that prompts a shift in cognitive perception. Here in this small enclosed space, cut-off from the outside world, Pum starts to question his own belief system. Pum's reflections are prompted by the sight of the stars in the night sky, which he can see through a small crack in the side of the shed: 'Man sah durch die Ritze ein schmales Stückchen Himmel. Aber es gab eine deutliche Vorstellung von seiner Unendlichkeit' (JRW, IV, 290). This is the first in a series of instances when Pum looks out from a confined space through a frame to the outside world. While the image here emphasizes Pum's alienation from the outside world, it also suggests that the physical activity of looking through a frame helps to focus his mental as well as visual perception, giving him access to a sense of the existence of a metaphysical order. He begins to question God's righteousness, and wonders what he has done to deserve to lose his licence (JRW, IV, 290). However, Pum still clings to the belief that there is justice in the world, and is certain that once the court hears of his sacrifice for his country, his licence will be restored.

It is not until Pum's fortunes worsen and he has been put in a temporary cell in the police station that he realizes there is no hope of a return to his former life. Significantly Pum's realization of this is conveyed in terms of his loss of vision: 'Tot war das Auge. Über alles was es gesehen und jemals gespiegelt hat, breitete sich der Vorhang. Hinter dem verblaßten die Bilder der Dinge, der Tiere, der Menschen' (JRW, IV, 299).[159] Thus Roth links the actual darkness of

[158] The donkey is portrayed as a more sympathetic creature than Pum's wife, and Pum believes that it has 'eine menschliche Seele' (JRW, IV, 295).
[159] This echoes the description of Pum's feelings when Muli is being taken away: 'Vor Andreas' Augen verfinsterte sich die Welt. Der strahlende Himmel wurde dunkelblau und schien sich

the cell, with the metaphorical darkness of Pum's realization of his loss. The image of the curtain covering the people and objects of his past emphasizes not only Pum's present physical alienation but also the fact that this past life was founded on illusions.[160] Moreover, Pum's gradual realization of his loss is conveyed through the fact that the three-dimensional description of these vital constituents of his previous life – Kathi, Anna and Muli – is then reduced to a two-dimensional image in his mind – it becomes chalk markings on a black board: 'Ausgelöscht wie mit einem großen Schwamm, als wären sie nur eine Kreidezeichnung auf matter Tafel gewesen' (JRW, IV, 299). The images then become virtually dimensionless as they are reduced to faint outlines in his memory, underlining Pum's sense of irrevocable loss.

Pum's thoughts then regress further into the past, to the time when he worked as a night watchman before he lost his leg in the war. Here Roth reconstructs how one 'sees' an image in the mind's eye (see 1.3.3.2.1), and compares the visual formation of this flashback to the process of an artist quickly painting brushstokes on a canvas. Roth conveys the fluidity of multiple images rather than one fixed image, which adds to the section's filmic quality. This filmic quality is also conveyed through the use of the present tense and appeals to the reader's visual and auditory senses – the images here are two-dimensional but Roth adds colour and sound.[161] In particular, the detailed depiction of the physical setting of the yard and the personification of the moon as it climbs 'von vorragenden Latten empor, um sich über den Platz zu ergiessen, das Sägemehl zu versilbern' give the reader a definite sense of real place, albeit a romanticized one (JRW, IV, 299). The concrete nature of the visual images in this flashback contrasts starkly with the previous vague and undefined images of the more recent past, which were 'erlöschende Umrisse' (JRW, IV, 299). Thus Roth conveys the irony that the memory of a more distant past is in fact more real to

herabsenken zu wollen wie ein Vorhang. Alle Gegenstände wurden dunkelgrün, wie durch ein Bierflaschenglas gesehen. Alles spielte sich in dieser zauberhaften Traumbeleuchtung ab' (JRW, IV, 295).

[160] In addition, by referring to the man who bought Muli as 'ein rosiger, rundlicher Tod', and asserting that the bow on Anna's head was a vampire, Roth makes clear that they are only dead within Pum's fairytale interpretation of the world.

[161] There is also an appeal to the reader's sense of smell, when Roth comments on the smell of oil paint coming from the fence (JRW, IV, 299).

Pum than his most recent past. The focus in the flashback then moves to Pum himself and his movement around the yard as he patrols it, once again in marked contrast to his present confined position as an invalid in a cell. Roth highlights the particular significance of Pum's ability to move silently if he should choose to do so – a key skill for a nightwatchman, and a skill which as a cripple he no longer has. Roth then moves out of the flashback scene to concentrate on Pum's present invalid status. This is conveyed through a list of everyday physical movements which Pum, as an invalid, can no longer perform.[162] For the first time Pum recognizes the true extent of his physical disability, and the extent to which it defines and stigmatizes him within society. He now realizes how foolish he has been to associate himself with those who are not invalids, and he now consciously declares the 'Zweibeinigen' to be his enemy.

Thus Roth uses visual techniques to convey the psychological process Pum has gone through. This process has enabled Pum to start come to terms with his present social reality. The use of inner monologue in this last section underpins the fact that Pum is at last engaging with the reality of his invalid status, while the use of the impersonal pronoun 'man' avoids a lapse into sentimentality. While Andreas was physically free he was mentally imprisoned by his mindset, and paradoxically it is during his physical confinement that he begins to achieve some freedom of thought. It is here in the physical darkness of the cell that Andreas begins to 'see' clearly in his mind's eye, and he is no longer constrained by his ideology: '[…] er hat Gott verloren […] Gott fällt aus dem Kniegelenk' (JRW, IV, 300). This bizarre but concrete visual image ironically conveys the link between Pum's loss of faith in God, and the loss of his leg – the abstract idea of faith has become something tangible, which can be destroyed just as his limb was destroyed. This echoes an earlier similar image used to convey the loss of his leg: 'Man geht auf zwei Beinen, verliert unterwegs ein halbes aus dem losen Kniegelenk, wie ein Federmesser aus der Tasche, und geht weiter' (JRW, IV, 300). Here the incongruous comparison of

[162] These simple movements form a list of visual snapshots which detail the physical limitations of Pum as a cripple, thus conveying in a concrete and visual way the extent of Pum's disability, and the consequences for his everyday life. In particular, Roth's reference here to the military drill, 'man konnte exerzieren', emphasizes how much Pum relied on deference to an external authority to provide him with his identity – while in army uniform he knew who he was without thinking.

the loss of a limb with the everyday occurrence of the loss of a possession, serves to highlight the fact that the loss of a limb, although commonplace for the soldiers during the war, is anything but an ordinary event. While most people lose objects that belong to them, they do not lose limbs. This detail emphasizes the alienation of the invalids from the majority of the population and the stigma such loss carries.

This short period of confinement in the cell has led to a transformation within Pum, indeed Roth specifically refers to Pum's 'Wiedergeburt' (JRW, IV, 303). The process of self re-examination and self-recognition has enabled Pum to strip away the illusions on which his life had been based. Moreover, when Pum leaves the temporary prison cell the next morning, his senses have been reawakened – the world appears 'neu angestrichen und renoviert' (JRW, IV, 302). This is similar to the experience of Georg B in Roth's reportage article 'Der Auferstandene Mensch' (see 1.5.1). Although Pum's period of physical confinement has only been overnight, it has enabled Pum to break from his ideology, and to psychologically distance himself from his surroundings. Like Georg, he too is viewing the world critically through fresh, new eyes. Not only does the hectic pace of city life suddenly appear strange and confusing to Pum, he also begins to respond actively to, and question, aspects of his visual environment. Roth makes clear that Pum's previous pattern of passive and unquestioning behaviour has now been broken. Moreover, through Pum's critical gaze, Roth draws attention to the absurd incongruities within this modern urban environment, such as the cigarette advertisement on the mail van:

> Ein knallgelbes Automobil schlenkerte, rasselte, wütete über den Platz. An seinen Wänden brannte lichterloh die rote Reklame: 'Raucht nur Jota.' Es war der Wagen des Wahnsinns. Der saß im Innern zwischen vier knallgelben und rotbemalten Wänden, und sein Atem wehte verderblich aus dem kleinen Gitterfenster. (JRW, IV, 303)

Here, the precise visual focus not only suggests Pum's new critical sense of vision but also indicates the negative aspects of modernity – in particular the reference to the advertisement blazing in red on the van's side, and the personification of madness within the van, have connotations of hell. Roth then reinforces the absurd incongruity of the visual image through Pum's

questioning: ‘Was hätte die Post mit roten Jotazigaretten zu tun?’ (JRW, IV, 303). Pum also questions the incongruity of a weathervane on top of an advertising column, and wonders if these are ‘Zeichen des allgemeinen Wahnsinns’ (JRW, IV, 303). Thus Roth draws attention to the visual symptoms of the perverted values of modernity, which have led to the confusion of a state institution with a commercial enterprise, and the inappropriate transfer of a rural custom to the modern urban environment, where the wind is irrelevant.

The key point here is that Pum is now seeing his actual environment, and that this has happened as a result of his confinement. Pum now perceives his environment not through his previous ideology which allowed distorted images to appear real and once gave him comfort and security against the harsh realities of his position. While Pum now discovers ‘Tausend wunderbare Dinge’ in the urban environment, the majority of his fellow citizens remain oblivious to their environment, with the mechanism of sensory accommodation protecting them. (Roth can also be seen here as challenging his readers and their passive acceptance of their modern visual environment, which in turn signals their alienation from nature.)

Although Pum has supposedly lost his faith in God, he nevertheless looks to the heavens, in the hope of escaping this madness that he finds around him. This indicates that he has still not made the transition from reliance on external to internal authority. Here, Roth uses striking visual images to indicate that Pum’s view of a benign and just God has changed. There is no ray of sunlight now, instead, ‘Wolkenfetzen [verbanden sich] zu verzerrten Gesichtern, Fratzen wehten über den Himmel, und Gott schnitt Grimassen’ (JRW, IV, 303). This description of clouds echoes that at the end of ‘Die Krüppel’, and the indication is that there will be no divine intervention. God is once again represented as remote, and uncaring in the face of human suffering.

When Pum returns to prison, this time for a period of a few weeks, the initial focus is on the confined physical environment of the prison cell and how it changes Pum’s sensory perception. Here, Roth accurately reflects the effect which the increasing darkness has on a human’s senses and the way in which

the senses respond – this is not only the case for Pum but for human beings in general:

> Er wuchs in die Finsternis der Nächte hinein, sein Auge durchbohrte ihre Undurchdringlichkeit, daß sie durchsichtig wurde wie dunkelgefärbtes Glas am Mittag. Er entlockte den wenigen Gegenständen, unter denen er lebte, ihr eigenes Licht, so daß er sie in der Nacht betrachten konnte und sie ihm selbst ihre Konturen darboten. Er lernte die Stimme der Finsternis kennen und den Gesang der lautlosen Dinge, deren Stummheit zu klingen beginnt, wenn die polternden Tage vergehn. (JRW, IV, 305)

By using a succession of active verbs , Roth highlights how this is very much an active process, in contrast to everyday visual perception which is generally passive. Furthermore, the stress here on active, rather than passive sight further highlights the change which has taken place in Pum. The reference to Pum's sharpened auditory sense, not only indicates the more active role which all of Pum's senses are now playing, but is again consistent with the experience of humans in general. Once the dominant visual sense has been impaired, humans are forced to use their other senses much more actively. The best example of this is blind people, who are well-known to have much greater sensitivity in their other senses, as these must replace the function of sight. Roth specifically highlights the way in which Pum, like a blind person, is forced to use his auditory sense to interpret the world around him: 'Er bekam die zauberhaften Gaben eines Blinden. Sein Ohr wurde sehend' (JRW, IV, 306). Thus Roth shows how the physical setting of the cell has had a fundamental role in changing Pum's literal perception of the world. However, Roth once again links a shift in physical visual perception with a shift in cognitive perception.

Despite adjusting his senses to accommodate the limitations of the cell, initially Pum does what most prisoners do, and tries to catch a glimpse of the outside world by regularly looking out of the small high window in his cell.[163] The glimpses of the outside world are comforting to Pum as they provide an

[163] To do this involves a great deal of effort on Pum's part, given his disability, and Roth details this physical effort, leaving the reader in no doubt as to the strength of compulsion on Pum's part to look out of the window. The extent of physical exertion on Pum's part also reflects his more active approach.

affirmation of his existence in the world. However, Pum's view is limited to 'den Saum des dunklen Föhrenwaldes in der Ferne und einen schmalen Streifen des Himmels' (JRW, IV, 307). It is not the outside world which Pum can see from the window but merely a very small framed section of it, and what Pum sees from his prison window is not reality but a selective and framed reality. Indeed, he soon tires of climbing up the cell and retreats into his own multi-faceted world of the senses and the pictures of the distant past in his mind. Pum gives up trying to remain connected to the outside world, and the gaze is turned inwards and backwards.

Roth presents the reader with an accumulation of short snap-shots which depict moments from Pum's childhood. For the reader, the effect is similar to looking through a photograph album. The fact that Pum is himself now recalling these moments from his childhood, and sets about ordering them, emphasizes the fact that he had lost the connection to his youth, and the sensory receptivity of youth. By returning to his childhood in his mind's eye, the newborn Pum rediscovers and reconstructs his true identity, an identity which is no longer overdependent on a misconceived ideology: 'So hatte er fünfundvierzig Jahre in Blindheit gelebt, ohne sich selbst und die Welt zu erkennen (JRW, IV, 307). As a result of Pum's second period of confinement, he emerged into the city with a heightened sense of critical awareness, now in this third period of confinement his ability to perceive and understand the world is hugely enriched. The visual memory of his childhood suggests emotional engagement. He is discovering who he is, and that he has a worth independent of his social status.

However, while in prison, Pum also begins to recognize his true place within the levels of social stratification. Only now, when he is physically excluded from the rest of society does Pum arrive at the realization that his fate is also determined by his place in society and not by his behaviour alone.[164] This recognition is prompted by Pum finding a scrap of newspaper from the births,

[164] Later on in Chapter Sixteen, Pum recognizes the extent to which his own behaviour resulted in his living a lie. He relied too much on external sources of authority, and did not think for himself. However, Pum still does not accept full responsibility for his own actions, claiming that he was 'von der Natur nicht mit scharfer Einsicht gesegnet' (JRW, IV, 316), and that others took advantage of this.

marriages and deaths section in the prison yard.[165] Roth conveys Pum's response through imagined visual images:

> Die Namen sprangen selbstständig aus den Zeilen und verbanden sich wechselweise. Da hüpfte der Sanitätsrat zum Assessor und dieser zum Rechtsanwalt. Die Namen waren lebendig. Sie nahmen menschliche Gestalten an. Andreas Pum blickte auf das bedruckte Papier wie in ein Zimmer, in dem sich alle diese Menschen befanden und herumgingen und miteinander sprachen. (JRW, IV, 309)

Thus Roth demonstrates the significance of a few seemingly innocuous words of a text on a small scrap of newspaper, and what this textual surface represents, namely the social structure of society. The surreal description of the embodied and animated names and titles conveys Pum's recognition that the mutually supportive interaction between members of the higher social groups invests them with a power and cohesiveness which he is powerless to penetrate. The fact that Pum is looking into the room also emphasizes his social alienation from the higher classes in society. Thus Roth uses the visual transformation of the scrap of paper before Pum's eyes (and in his mind) to show that these apparently lifeless titles symbolize an elaborate social structure, and that it is in the interactive interrelationship between the individuals they designate that the power of their exclusive mutuality resides.

However, Pum's reference to the workings of high society as 'das Geheimnis der Welt' (JRW, IV, 309), not only contrasts with the stiff formal discourse of the announcements, but also emphasizes his naivety – the powerful networks of the higher classes would have been no secret to most people. The narratorial voice distances itself from Pum's perspective in the second last sentence in an ironic way : 'Er glaubte zu wissen, daß er in der Zelle saß, weil er keinen von diesen Verlobten, Geborenen und Verstorbenen kannte' (JRW, IV, 310). Although Pum's own behaviour did play a large part in his downfall, this does encapsulate in terms of a pointedly expressed visual configuration the essential truth of Pum's social exclusion, and reflects the fact that the social prejudices of others also played a part in his downfall. One could argue that Pum's translation

[165] There is an ironic discrepancy between the physical appearance of the scrap of paper and the vision of elegant society which it evokes.

of his own situation into the discourse of the social and personal column demonstrates that it is one of 'die wichtigsten Abschnitte' (JRW, IV, 309) of his life. However, the incongruity of his formulation, 'Lizenzinhaber', is not one of the recognized social categories for inclusion. It therefore declares his invalidity within the given social framework, despite the fact of its truth in human terms.

Through these successive periods of confinement, Roth depicts the process of Pum's self-recognition, the stages of which are plotted in the text through a series of references to seeing and perceiving. These stages are then consolidated in Chapter Sixteen through the use of inner monologue when Pum consciously asserts that ' [er] blind gewesen war im Lichte der Freiheit, und daß [er] erst sehen lernte in der Dunkelheit des Kerkers!' (JRW, IV, 316). However, this recognition throws Pum into a sense of despair, as he mourns his lost years. Furthermore, he feels no sense of joy when he is released from prison, rather with his new insight into social reality, he is sceptical as to whether he will ever be truly free. Already there is a sense of futility in his desire for a personal rebellion, and Pum's delight at shocking the well-to-do passengers on the train by taking a place in second class is short lived when he views himself in the toilet mirror and sees that he has become an old man: 'Aus dem schmalen Spiegel gegenüber der Tür blickte ihm ein weißbärtiger Greis entgegen, mit einem gelben Gesicht. Dieser Greis erinnerte an einen bösen Zauberer aus den Märchen […]' (JRW, IV, 317). This echoes the picture on the barrel-organ. However, the irony is that unlike the witch in the barrel-organ painting, Pum does not have the power to change others, rather he is the one who has been changed. While his ideological transformation may be regarded in a positive light, the physical transformation which has accompanied it points to his powerlessness in the real world.

This is affirmed by the circumstances of his final stage of confinement within the toilet where Willi has found him a job as a toilet attendant.[166] The job of a

[166] Willi respresents a more successful model for the common man in his struggle against society. Instead of futile rebellion against the class system and social structures, Willi plays society at its own game. As a thief-turned-entrepreneur, he uses his wits, ingenuity and brass neck to make money out of the richer people. He recognizes that society judges by appearances, so he constructs a new identity for himself as a Polish aristocrat. Thus he represents a more successful way of coping with the categorization and depersonalization within society.

toilet attendant is considered to be one of the lowest on the social scale, and Pum's exclusion from society is thereby underlined. Although this last confinement is not a wholly enforced one, while Pum works he is not free to come and go as he pleases. Indeed, he can only gaze out through the window to see the birds and chestnut trees in the yard when there are no customers in the toilet. In the description of Pum as a toilet attendant there are many similarities to the article 'Der Mann in der Toilette'; for example the references to the dripping taps, the 'ragged scraps'of music which reach him from above, the old copies of the newspapers, and the pyramids of toiletries for the rich customers. The key difference between this section in the chapter, and the article published in *Vorwärts*, is that the visuals in the novel are not as concentrated. They are intermingled with Pum's reflections – reflections which show that Pum is still pondering on the injustice of his fate at the hands of God (JRW, IV, 326). As Juergens points out, it is significant that despite his fate, Pum never queries God's existence, merely his righteousness.[167] In the end, Pum may have lost his faith in God but he does not lose his belief in him, and one could argue that this is the reason why Pum ultimately fails in his rebellion. He never completely makes the transition from reliance on external to internal authority. In fact, in the courtroom scene in the final chapter of the novel he turns to the ultimate form of external authority, God.

The final chapter begins with a real-world setting – Pum has been called before the court again to explain his case. There are a number of hints, however, that this is in fact all happening in Pum's mind, and that he is still in the toilet. It is not until Roth moves the scene into the realms of the surreal that it becomes clear to the reader that Pum is in fact dead, and that the judge is God. Pum unleashes a tirade of accusations against God, berating him for his cruelty and indifference, yet God answers by offering Pum a choice of the jobs which he had dreamed of getting when he left the army hospital. This is not only ironic, given that it is now too late for Pum to live out the quiet existence that he had dreamed of; it also contrasts with the discourse of Pum's philosophical tirade, in which he criticizes God's treatment of all of humanity. One could argue that this

[167] 'Die Existenz Gottes wird jedoch nicht in Frage gestellt, Pum wendet sich gerade zu Gott hin, wenn auch anklagend.' Juergens, p. 48.

highlights Pum's previous narrow-minded focus – he did not care about the suffering of other people but believed that they got what they deserved. By blaming God for the injustice in the world, Pum still remains constrained within the parameters of an ideology based on the belief that an external form of authority, whether external to the individual or external to society itself, must bear ultimate responsibility.

Thus, in *Die Rebellion* the protagonist's rebellion is ultimately detrimental to himself, and not to the society that he is rebelling against. Whereas in *Hotel Savoy* Zwonimir achieves the physical destruction of the symbol of the capitalist society that he hates, Pum only achieves his own self destruction. Roth highlights how insignificant the ordinary man is and how the mechanisms of the state subjugate people. However, he also highlights how people's fates are determined to some extent by their own actions and the choices they make, as well as their own beliefs. Moreover, he highlights the dangers of naivety and reliance on external forms of authority when we are ultimately powerless to influence or change them.

2.3.4 Fiction 1923-1925: Summary

In *Das Spinnennetz* Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to give the reader insight into Lohse's psychology, and particularly into the link between Lohse's brutality and his experiences during the war. This function of Roth's Heuristic Visuals highlights the unintended and long term post-war consequences of the enduring brutalization of the war years. Roth also uses snapshots to convey both the suffering of the poor and Lohse's pathological detachment from them. Roth's use of Heuristic Visuals in *Hotel Savoy* is less frequent than in *Das Spinnennetz*. Although the Hotel Savoy functions as a symbol, Roth's Heuristic Visuals draw the reader's attention to the symbolic indicators of social stratification which exist within the real world. In the novel the Heuristic Visuals reveal the underlying brutality and inhumanity. In *Die Rebellion* Roth employs Heuristic Visuals primarily to convey Pum's psychological state, and in particular they reveal his process of self-recognition.

2.4 Reportage and Fiction 1923-1925: Conclusion

Roth uses Heuristic Visuals widely in his journalism of this period, in relation to a variety of themes. In the articles dealing with the poor and dispossessed, different variants of Heuristic Visuals are used to highlight the reality of their suffering. Roth inscribes the concrete visuality of poverty in a manner that does not aestheticize suffering. Moreover, he challenges modernity's sanitized version of reality, and forces the reader to confront uncomfortable and shocking truths. While in the depictions of familiar, everyday sights, Roth's Heuristic Visuals are more subtle, in 'Die Toten ohne Namen' Roth shocks by reconstructing the taboo images of the nameless dead. In the two articles dealing with political issues, Roth employs the technique of an 'optischer Schrei' – in the case of 'Die Krüppel' within a dialectical representation. Roth's brutal and uncompromising visual reconstruction of the procession of the war-wounded carries the reader of 'Die Krüppel' beyond conventional generalities about the futility of war, while 'Wahlkampf in Berlin' highlights the ineffectiveness of the German tradition of cerebrality, as exemplified by the electioneers, in the context of a modern urban environment dominated by commercial advertising. Roth then demonstrates within the article that words can compete with the visual stimuli of the modern urban city. The 'optischer Schrei' is the means whereby he does so. In the articles on the Tiller Girls and the variety revue, through the use of Heuristic Visuals, Roth encourages the reader to recognize the disturbing incongruities resulting from the sanitization of the erotic, and the appropriation of the militaristic.

In all three novels Roth demonstrates his awareness of the importance of the semiotics of social stratification and the importance of the visual in society. Roth's depiction of the poor in *Das Spinnennetz* echoes that found in the reportage, with the added dimension that its focalization through Lohse highlights the detachment of the petit-bourgeoisie from the suffering of the indigent. A further function of Heuristic Visuals in the novel is to give the reader insight into the post-war crisis of male identity. In particular Roth reveals Lohse's psychology and his brutalization, and so draws the reader's attention to this contemporary phenomenon. In *Hotel Savoy* Roth has constructed a figure,

Dan, for whom the process of seeing is both more conscious and more objective than Lohse. Dan's status as an outsider enhances his capacity for physical visual perception. In *Hotel Savoy* the focus is on the symbolism contained in the inanimate surfaces of society rather than on the people themselves. The cumulative effect of the Heuristic Visuals is to point to the hidden power behind the destructive forces that shape the lives of the powerless. In *Die Rebellion*, however, the narratorial gaze is turned away from society, and there is a key shift in focus to the individual. The Heuristic Visuals are used to reflect both literal and metaphorical sight, as Roth charts Pum's process of self-recognition, showing how changes in physical visual perception can facilitate changes in cognitive perception.

Chapter Three: Reportage and Fiction 1926-1929

3.1 Introduction

Between 1926 and 1929 Roth produced three novels and a novel fragment.[168] During this time he also continued to produce a substantial volume of reportage, although the number of articles published per year was significantly lower than in the early 1920's.[169] The majority of the reportage produced between 1926 and 1928 was travel journalism, *Reisereportage*, the product of his trips to Russia, Albania, Italy, Poland and a tour of Germany. In 1928 Roth also published *Juden auf Wanderschaft*, a collection of essays about the Eastern European Jews. These essays, along with the *Reisereportage*, have been excluded from this analysis as, with their focus on travel and place, they form a thematic sub-genre, which goes beyond the scope of this study.

Although the overall quantity of relevant reportage written between 1926 and 1929 is significantly less than that produced between 1923 and 1925, it has nevertheless still been possible to identify recurring themes. During this time Roth was continuing to write about the cultural phenomena of modernity, although with more of a focus on modernity's influence on aspects of everday life, rather than on entertainment or cultural production.[170] Articles which deal with writers, writing and the press also continued to appear in much of Roth's reportage during this period. While many of these articles are written in a more discursive or polemical style,[171] there are also pieces in which Roth continues to use Heuristic Visuals, and the four pieces of reportage which have been selected for closer analysis in this chapter are such examples.

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[168] *Flucht ohne Ende*, JRW, IV, 393-496. First published in book form, Munich: Kurt Wolff, 1927. *Zipper und sein Vater*, JRW, IV, 503-607. First published in book form, Munich: Kurt Wolff, 1928. *Rechts und Links*, JRW, IV, 609-772. First published in book form, Berlin: Kiepenheuer. *Der Stumme Prophet*, JRW, IV, 773-929. Fragment published in *Die Neue Rundschau*, vol 40, 1929. First published in book form, Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1965.

[169] See Westermann, p. 308.

[170] These include articles which focus on the new trends in architecture and interior design: 'Vernichtung eines Kaffeehauses', (JRW, II, 768-771), 'Weihnachten moderner Junggesellen', (JRW, II, 1000-1002), and 'Architektur', (JRW, III, 115), and the 1929 'Hotelwelt' series of articles, (JRW, III, 3-31).

[171] See, for example, the 1927 article 'Nur echte Erlebnisse' (JRW, II, 749-752), and the 1929 article 'Es lebe der Dichter!' (JRW, III, 44-46).

The period from the mid to late 1920's saw the rise of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* movement in Germany. This movement influenced various art forms, including literature, in which one of its main characteristics was the privileging of the documentary over the literary, whereby the idea of the author as a creator was replaced by that of the 'sachkündige[r] Beobachter, der aufschreibt, was er sieht, und nicht das, was er denkt'.[172] Although this was the literary movement which most strongly influenced Roth, he by no means completely identified with it. Indeed as Heizmann asserts, we should see *Neue Sachlichkeit* as the background against which Roth was writing during this period, rather than viewing his writing as products of the movement itself.

While the reportage written during 1929 contains many instances of the use of Heuristic Visuals, the fiction which was produced during the same year appears to have continued to be influenced by the *Neue Sachlichkeit* trend, with both *Rechts und Links* and *Der Stumme Prophet* containing few examples of Heuristic Visuals.

The four reportage articles which have been chosen for closer analysis in this chapter are: 'Einer liest Zeitung' (JRW, II, 531-532), 'Nonpareille aus Amerika' (JRW, III, 39-42), 'Der Nachtredakteur Gustav K.' (JRW, III, 46-50) and 'Der Polizeireporter Heinrich G.' (JRW, III, 54-57).[173] In these Roth gives a critical insight into the press, in terms of both the consumers and the producers.

3.2 Reportage 1926-1929

3.2.1 'Einer liest Zeitung'

In the 1926 article 'Einer liest Zeitung' Roth does not simply present the reader with a vignette of a gentleman reading a newspaper in a cafe, but through the use of Heuristic Visuals provides insights into the mechanisms underlying the

[172] Heizmann, p. 8.
[173] 'Einer liest Zeitung', first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 11 January 1926, 'Nonpareille aus Amerika', first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 21 March 1929, 'Der Nachtredakteur Gustav K.', first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 21 April 1929, 'Der Polizeireporter Heinrich G.', first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 28 April 1929.

manipulation of the public by the press. This aspect of manipulation is hinted at in the first sentence of the article, where the visual focus is on the man's facial expression: 'Das Angesicht des Zeitungslesers hat einen ernsten Ausdruck, der sich bald bis zum Düsteren verstärkt, bald sich in lächelnder Heiterkeit aufzulösen gedenkt' (JRW, II, 531). The depiction of the face with its rapidly changing expression is suggestive of the face of a puppet, with the use of the verb 'auflösen' implying an almost unnatural capacity to switch expressions, and the use of the verb 'gedenken' also indicating a lack of natural spontaneity. Whereas the puppeteer manipulates the puppet's face, here it is the newspaper which is the external manipulating force. The fact that these emotions do not result from the direct experience of phenomena, but from the mediated experience of the phenomena through the newspaper, is also hinted at by making the facial expression the subject of the verbs rather than the man himself.

The reference to the man's reading glasses, which 'in der Mitte stärker geschliffene runde verdickte Pupillen haben' (JRW, II, 531), is also suggestive of a puppet with 'comedy' glasses which exaggerate the size of the pupils. However, the most striking aspect of this image is that rather than the glasses being depicted as a prosthetic tool for the man's eyes, it is the eyes which are given a prosthetic quality. By presenting the reader with an image in which the normal roles are reversed, Roth draws attention to the metaphorical significance of the glasses – just as the man's naked eyes are dependent on the mediating apparatus of the lenses to read the newspaper, so he can only perceive reality as mediated to him through the prism of the newspaper. This aspect of dependency on an external agent is further reinforced when Roth comments that the glasses, 'langsam und wie forschend über die Zeilen kriechen' (JRW, II, 531). One could argue that the fact that the glasses, rather than the eyes, are depicted as being active, also indicates a sense of detachment.

Although the visual focus remains on the man's physicality, attention moves to his activity at the unconscious level:

> […] die verträumten Finger des Zeitungslesers [huschen] über den marmorenen Sandstein des Kaffeehaustisches und

> vollführen hier ein lautloses, ein stummes Klavierspiel, das wie eine Art zu trauern aussieht und so, als wollten die Fingerspitzen verstreute unsichtbare Krümel aufsuchen und hurtig an sich nehmen. (JRW, II, 531)

Here the man's unconscious activity seems to indicate that there are still aspects of his essential humanity which remain untouched by the manipulations of the press. Moreover, the juxtaposition of the 'verträumten Finger' with the goal-oriented action of the glasses could be regarded as a metaphor for the way that the physiological and affective levels of existence continue despite the pull of the artificial attractions of the newspaper. However, while the spontaneous creative urge may still exist, the reference to the 'lautloses' music is suggestive of ultimate sterility. The imagined image of the fingers gathering up the crumbs on the table also reveals a sense of futility, and can be regarded as an indication that there are deeper instinctive needs within the man which are not being satisfied by the newspaper. The comparison to mourning also indicates that within the man there is an unconscious awareness of something that has been lost or a potential that remains unfulfilled. The heuristic function of this image is to draw attention to the inadequacy of the intellectual diet which the newspaper is feeding him – just as the crumbs are leftover fragments of a former whole, so the reality presented in the newspaper is a fragmented and ultimately unsatisfactory one.

Roth then moves from this imagined image to detailed descriptions of the man's beard and tie. The observation that the man's beard 'das Feuilleton verdeckt, wenn die politischen Nachrichten gelesen werden' (JRW, II, 531), points to the fact that the layout of the newspaper undermines the effect of the critical feuilleton section, since it is visually less prominent and therefore more likely to be 'verdeckt'. Roth then introduces himself in the first person and comments that the man's tie can only be seen in 'halb zu erahnender Pracht' (JRW, II, 531) because the man's beard is also concealing the knot of the tie. Here Roth seems to be indicating a sense of waste, where something which is visually impressive is only partially visible to those who would appreciate it. One could argue that the juxtaposition of this with the previous image of the beard covering the feuilleton, emphasizes the irony that the most important part of the newspaper (in Roth's view) is the part that is visually less prominent. In addition, it also

conveys a sense of waste, in that its content is less likely to be appreciated and acknowledged.

While the concrete and precise nature of the images emphasize the tangible reality of the man himself, the fact that Roth is interested in directly observable reality contrasts with the man's absorption in the constructed reality of the newspaper. Moreover, through the use of the first person the man is presented to the reader as an object within Roth's observed reality – he is not portrayed as an imagined or second order construct but a real person observed in real time. Whether or not this was indeed the case, this claim of direct experience can nevertheless be seen as lending a sense of authority and objectivity to Roth's reportage writing (see 1.5.2).

In the next section of the article, Roth turns his critical gaze from the newspaper reader to the the visual format of the newspaper itself and the layout of the report which the man is reading. Here, although Roth does not use Heuristic Visuals, through the use of carefully chosen adjectives he draws attention to the role which the construction of the page layout plays in manipulating the reader. The description highlights how the format of the paper is designed to arrest the reader's visual sense, with the bold headline being the initial 'Blickfang'. The reader is then further drawn in by the fragmentation of the report into easy-to-digest short paragraphs, each prefixed by its own seductive subheadline. With regard to Roth's own readers, one can argue that the incongruity which arises from the explicit use of erotic vocabulary, 'lüstern' and 'verführerisch', is intended to startle, so that the extent of the calculated manipulation and seduction by the press is made plain. By transferring the erotic epithets 'locker', 'einladend', 'lüstern' and verführerisch' Roth has personified the press as a prostitute, simultaneously suggesting the prostitution of the medium – the press – and revealing its mechanism as an appeal to the senses. This extended metaphor with strong visual connotations falls short of being Heuristic Visuals, but is still, like the Heuristic Visuals, making an argument by use of a discourse that is sensual rather than abstract. 'Alle Nachrichten verraten sich selbst, noch ehe man sie vernimmt' (JRW, II, 532), continues the personification, taking up the discourse of criminality and the court, pursuing the literal and legal

meanings of 'vernehmen' as 'to hear' and 'to hear evidence in court'. The metaphor of the prostitute for the news suggests its deceptive, cheap and exploitative appeal. The final comment that 'Alle Nachrichten [...] verraten mehr als sie bieten können' (JRW, II, 531), indicates that behind the lure of the headlines, as with the prostitute's blandishments, there is little of any substance. Nevertheless, the fact that the newspaper reader has been so studiously engaged in reading this empty sensationalism shows how effective the seduction is.

Roth goes on to suggest how the press succeed in retaining the reader's attention, even though the sensationalized reports contain little news of any import: 'Aber gerade das Nicht-erfahrene ist aufregend. Die Lücken in den Nachrichten sind am interessantesten' (JRW, II, 531). While the press often fabricate stories based on a few known facts and give them more importance than they really have, Roth also indicates that they deliberately withhold information from the readers. The latter is perhaps the more sinister manipulative aspect, for it is in withholding and selecting information and thus defining reality that the power of the press lies. Furthermore, in the 1920s for most people the newspaper was the main source of information about the wider world beyond their own everyday experience. It is recognized that the mass media limit people's knowledge of current political, social, and economic affairs by withholding issues and information, and, as Roth shows here, the media instead concentrate on safe, noncontroversial issues or even mere titillation and crude entertainment. By constructing reality along the lines of certain agenda, mainly through the selection and framing of information, the media tends to promote what Bachrach and Baratz refer to as a 'mobilisation of bias'. [174]

Although Roth does not examine here how this mobilization of bias can be explicitly exploited by the press and politicians, he does highlight how easily emotions can be manipulated and controlled. The comment that the man 'zu der großen Schar der sittlich Empfindenen [gehört], die jede fremde Fälschung in entlehnten Harnisch bringt' (JRW, II, 531), refers to the reaction of self-righteous indignation among readers which is often triggered by media reports

[174] See Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, 'Decisions and Nondecisions: An Analytical Framework', *The American Political Science Review*, 57 (September 1963), 632-642.

of other people's wrong-doing, with the metaphor of the flock suggesting unthinking gullibility on the part of the readers. Also by taking the metaphor 'in Harnisch bringen' literally by inserting the term 'entlehnt' Roth shows that this is not a spontaneous emotion at a directly experienced phenomenon (which is what Roth himself tends to write about) but vicarious feelings, orchestrated by the press. By shifting the response apparently into the realm of direct experience, through the restoring of concrete reality to the metaphor with the attribute 'entlehnt', Roth critically exposes the dubious nature of second-hand moral reactions for which the press is responsible.

Using a visually-based extended metaphor, Roth then goes on to highlight how these orchestrated emotions fail to result in any productive outcomes:

> Alle Lunten, die in ihm langsam schwelten, erreichen den Punkt, an dem sie eine Explosion hervorrufen. Keine sichtbare! Keine nach außen wirkende! Bewahre! Sondern eine gleichsam in sich selbst verkapselte, eine *Im*plosion.....(JRW, II, 531-532)

The idea of the smouldering fuses suggests that the journalist has tapped into the man's potential for violent reaction, but the fact that the feelings which have been triggered remain internalized, and have no effect, productive or otherwise in the real world, makes them questionable. While this lack of any productive outcome echoes the sense of ultimate sterility indicated in the first section of the article, it also suggests a certain continuum in societal behaviours – just as the newspaper contains and controls the presentation of reality, so the man's emotional responses remain contained and controlled, and his role remains that of the passive consumer. As David Spurr comments on the issue of news format and consumption:

> The episodic form like melodrama, releases us from active engagement at the moment of its inception. [...] In the case of social disorder, disaster, or injustice, the narrative constructs imposed by the press constitute a narrative and symbolic response that tends to obviate the demand for concrete practical action on the part of its audience. Faced with this display of the "march of events", the audience's role is largely passive and consuming, though appreciative of what it

> perceives as the satisfaction of its desire for information and amusement. [175]

However, while readers may be happy in their passive role, they are not always fully aware of the nature of the manipulation processes involved. As Roth points out here, the man assumes himself to be the reading subject when in fact he is the object being manipulated by the words on the page:

> Auf jeden Fall ist zu sehen, daß die Nachrichten an die verborgen [sic] Saiten seiner Seele rühren, während er glaubt, er selbst rühre an die Nachrichten. Wenn er nicht die Brille trüge, es hätte beinahe den Anschein, als würde er selbst von der Zeitung gelesen. (JRW, II, 352)

The man's manipulation by the press is encapsulated here in concrete visual terms. The musical metaphor highlights the controlled nature of the man's emotional responses – they are, in effect, part of a performance orchestrated by the press, in which he is ultimately only an instrument. Moreover, the striking surreal image conveyed in Roth's ironic comment that if the man were not wearing his glasses, it would look as if the newspaper were reading him, exemplifies the reader's subordinate role. Roth then further comments using more discursive language on how the man is deluding himself, in that he believes that his imagination is actively engaged in filling in the gaps in the articles, when in fact the very existence of the gaps is evidence of active manipulation on the part of the press. The man's ignorance of his own manipulation is all the more poignant, given that he believes that he has expanded his knowledge and understanding by reading the news reports: 'Jetzt steht er auf, der Leser, geklärt, gewachsen, reifer geworden und an Erfahrungen bereichert' (JRW, II, 532). While Roth's use of irony here again emphasizes the man's self-delusion, the listing of participial adjectives is also suggestive of a ritual having been performed, indicating the instrumentalization of the act of reading itself. Indeed, as Spurr notes: 'The very ritualization of news production and consumption becomes part of the mechanism by which journalism creates a distance between audience and reality.'[176]

[175] Spurr, pp. 44-45.
[176] Spurr, p. 45.

However, Roth again indicates that the newspaper reader himself is loath to face the real world, and prefers the constructed reality that he is presented with in the newspaper. Having finished reading the paper, the man removes his reading glasses and puts on his normal glasses: 'Dann klappt er den schwarzen Sarg einer weltlichen Brille auf, und streift die gläsernen Panzer für die Straße über seine Augen...' (JRW, II, 532). The reference to the glasses as armour points to the man's reluctance to be confronted with the reality of direct experience – he is deliberately fending it off. Moreover, the connotations of war and death conveyed in these visual metaphors suggest that the man himself lacks a certain humanity, as if he too is a mere construction. However, the fact that Roth comments on the brief moment when the man's 'schüchterne kleine mausgraue Augen' (JRW, II, 532) can be seen as he changes his glasses, indicates that humanity is present, but it is being constrained and held in check. Thus both his individual reality and the social reality remain hidden under a constructed surface.

It is the truth behind these surfaces which Roth is seeking to uncover in his writing. The inference is that the man should have read the feuilleton section which could have engaged his critical awareness, but to him it remains literally and metaphorically 'verdeckt'. Given that the reader of Roth's article will be reading the feuilleton section, it could be argued that in a sense Roth is preaching to the converted. At the conclusion of the article, however, he makes clear that he is aware that he is writing for a limited audience and not the general mass.

In 'Einer liest Zeitung' the Heuristic Visuals provoke critical thought which goes beyond the images conveyed, and so provide a deeper understanding. In this article they also act as an organizing principle for the particular discourse on the manipulative nature of newspaper reporting and the reluctance of people to face the unpleasant realities of life.

3.2.2 'Nonpareille aus Amerika'

In his 1929 article 'Nonpareille aus Amerika' Roth explores the discrepancies between the visual presentation of a news item and the inherent significance of

its content. In contrast to 'Einer liest Zeitung', where the gaps in the news report demonstrated the manipulation of the public, here it is the selected content and the typographic format which indicate a mobilization of bias on the part of the press.

At the beginning of the article Roth explicitly comments on the common practice of the newspapers to print things which they consider to be of minor importance in the Nonpareille typeface, and quotes one such news report from the *New York Times*. The report briefly describes the punishment in an American prison whereby inmates were bound to stakes, lashed with the whip, and then had their wounds treated by the prison doctors. The punishment took place in front of 200 official witnesses. Before Roth elaborates on this report, he draws the reader's attention to the discrepancy which can exist between the form of visual presentation and what the words in print represent by citing the example of the First World War casualty lists, which were also published in Nonpareille. While each printed name represented the sacrifice of a human life, Roth's implicit argument is that the reduced print size nevertheless indicates an undermining of that sacrifice. The 'Platzmangel' in the newspaper not only refers to the terrible scale of the casualties, it also points to the fact that the main business of the newspaper was to sell copies, and a paper entirely taken up with the names of the dead would not sell. Thus Roth's comment, 'Sie waren unwichtig, die Gefallenen' (JRW, III, 39), can be regarded as referring both to the primary economic motive which led to the choice of the typeface, and to the subliminal message conveyed by the typeface itself. Roth is appealing here to the reader's implicit understanding and recognition that the sacrifice of the dead *was* important, and is thus signalling to the reader to be wary of the insidious phenomenon of the typeface.

In the next section of the article Roth elaborates on the words of the laconic *New York Times* report. Here, Roth is not examining concrete, three-dimensional, visual surfaces but the two-dimensional print surface of the newspaper. He points out that regardless of the form of the two-dimensional surface, in terms of print size, all events which enter the public domain of the

print media are worthy of attention,[177] and asserts that one should not simply accept the connotational and pragmatic presentation of the world given by the press. However, implicit in his comments is the understanding that this is all too often not the case among readers – they tend to accept without question the categorized importance of the world as presented to them in the newspapers. Moreover, referring specifically to the *New York Times* report, Roth highlights the discrepancy between the significance of an event and its presentation:

> Es gibt Begebenheiten in der Welt, die keiner ausführlichen Beschreibung bedürfen, um eindringlich zu sein. Vielmehr wächst jedes Detail dieser Exekution im Zentralgefängnis Wilmington aus jedem der knappen 'Nonpareille' Worte riesengroß zu einem Eindruck, der würdig wäre, 'Borgis' und sogar 'Garamond-Fett' gedruckt zu werden. (JRW, III, 40)

However, while Roth himself may be able to see beyond the spare words of the report, again the implicit argument is that this is most likely not the case for the majority of newspaper readers. Here, Roth is drawing attention to the irony that lies in the paradoxical invisibility – while the words printed on the page are 'seen' by the readers, in terms of physical visual perception, the readers remain blind to the inherent significance of these words. They do not 'see' the words, in terms of cognitive perception, and do not perceive the hypocrisy of the legally-sanctioned barbarity. Just as the newspaper has reported the incident in a factual, indifferent manner, so too is the readers' perception of the incident indifferent – they do not question the given interpretation. (Roth indicates here and later in the article that the readers' attention is instead drawn to the sensationalist reports which are printed in a much larger, visually-striking typeface). It could be argued that just as with the perception of three-dimensional objects, where perceiving and thinking are not independent, Roth demonstrates here how this is also the case with two-dimensional words in print.[178] By visually contextualizing the sparse information given in the report,

[177] There is also the implicit suggestion here that readers should also be interested in events which occur all over the world, and not merely in their own local area. Roth comments more specifically on this aspect in 'Der Nachtredakteur Gustav K.' See 3.2.3.

[178] See R.L. Gregory, *Eye and Brain, The Psychology of Seeing* (London: World University Library, 1966).

he shows his readers how critical thought can result in a deeper understanding of the inherent significance of the words in print.

Roth uses imagined visuals to impart a sense of concrete reality to the report, and primarily focuses on the role of the official witnesses. The reference to the witnesses' 'eiserne Kinnladen und eiserne Augen' (JRW, III, 40) is another example of Roth's use of synecdoche, and here it is used to highlight the lack of humanity in these witnesses. The jaws are fixed and unyielding, almost suggestive of robotic figures, and the eyes are not organs of sight which can absorb and relay information to the brain to be processed, but are instead impenetrable, blank and inhuman. Thus Roth highlights the irony that these people whose primary function was to 'witness', that is to see, and directly experience the punishment of the men, 'saw' with their physical gaze, but did not truly perceive what they were witnessing. Just as the newspaper readers unquestioningly accept the presentation of the report, so did the witnesses unquestioningly accept the justice of the punishment that they were witnessing.

Roth further emphasizes how their official role has dehumanized them. The natural human reactions of shaking and crying in the face of human suffering are repressed, and instead they look on 'stumm und würdig' (JRW, III, 40). Here, the 'dignified' silence of the witnesses is ironically at odds with the notion of human dignity, since the human dignity of the prisoners has been violated. Moreover, the prisoners' screams contrast with the silence of the witnesses, and in his description of these screams Roth combines an appeal to both the reader's auditory and visual senses: 'Durch die Mauern des Kerkers von Wilmington dringt ein Geheul. Es durchbricht die betonierten Plafonds und steigt zum amerikanischen Himmel' (JRW, III, 40). In contrast to the inanimate impenetrable eyes of the witnesses, here the prisoners' cries penetrate the concrete ceiling of the prison, thus emphasizing both the extreme suffering of the prisoners and their essential humanity. Here, Roth is also drawing attention to the fact that while these cries are heard by the witnesses, the witnesses remain metaphorically deaf to the prisoners' suffering – they follow the law blindly, and do not see the incongruity of such a barbaric act being used as a form of

punishment in a civilized society: 'Sie erfüllen eine ehrenvolle Pflicht. Sie gehorchen dem Gesetz, das sie sich selbst gegeben haben' (JRW, III, 40).

Roth also uses Heuristic Visuals to go beyond the scene in the prison and uses precise visual detail to contextualize the domestic lives of the witnesses once they have returned home from the prison. The descriptions of domestic mealtimes lend the witnesses a degree of reality, which serves to highlight the discrepancy between the reality of the suffering of the prisoners and their blindness and indifference to it. Just as the witnesses would slip back into their domestic routine from a nights's entertainment, so do they return home to an undisturbed domesticity after witnessing the spectacle of the whippings. Thus the barbarity and brutality of the punishment is all the more shocking, given the apparent hypocrisy of the witnesses. Furthermore, by referring to the punishment as a 'Schauspiel', Roth implies that the punishment had little to do with appropriate concepts of justice, but was a public performance, and therefore ethically questionable.

In 'Nonpareille aus Amerika' Roth shows how the natural order has been disturbed, whereby the law has become something sacrosanct, no matter what form it takes. People do not challenge or question givens but blindly accept the status quo. However, Roth demonstrates in this article that this is not only the case with regard to the law, but also with regard to the presentation of the world through the distorting lense of the press. Just as the witnesses in the United States choose the easy option of indifferent acceptance, so too do the readers of the newspapers. By focusing on different levels of understanding and perception, and how they reflect ironically on each other, Roth shows his readers that beneath the surface there is often a deeper significance, but one needs to use critical thought and analytical effort in order to be able to perceive it.

3.2.3 'Der Nachtredakteur Gustav K.' and 'Der Polizeireporter Heinrich G.'

In 'Der Nachtredakteur Gustav K.' and 'Der Polizeireporter Heinrich G.' Roth presents his readers with two vignettes of men who, although employed in the

journalistic profession (albeit in different roles) do not conform to the assumed stereotypes for their occupations, either in terms of physical appearance or behaviour. Thus they are to an extent 'outsiders', and yet their identities are still heavily influenced by the work that they do – the titles of both pieces refer to their occupations but only the first initial of their surnames is given.[179] In these two articles Roth is making the reader aware of the human face involved in the social construction of news production.

Roth uses the format of a typical working day as the structure for each piece, with his critical eye focusing on the appearance and behaviour of the two 'protagonists'. In 'Gustav K' the reader's attention is initially drawn to the fresh, clean-cut and carefully constructed appearance of Gustav, which seems totally out of place at the late hour. Indeed the unnatural aspect of the structure of his working day is encapsulated by the reference to his 'Morgenwanderung durch die nächtlichen Straßen' – he is a 'vorausgeeilter Teil des nächsten Morgens' (JRW, III, 46). (This use of synecdoche is again echoed when the time frame is reversed and Gustav is ending his day just as others are beginning theirs: 'Der Redakteur, dem gestern nacht bereits der heutige Morgen gewesen war, erinnerte heute morgen an die gestrige Nacht' (JRW, III, 49).) Moreover, his energetic demeanour seems at odds with his 'schwächliches Aussehen', and Roth suggests that it is as if by his behaviour he is trying to deny his skinny and pale appearance. This initial description of Gustav K in all his pristine feebleness serves to provide a direct contrast to the next section of the article in which Roth's gaze focuses on Gustav as he goes about his work.

The radical transformation in Gustav's physical appearance which has occurred in the period of two working hours is conveyed to the reader in precise visual detail, focusing on his head, hands and clothes. (This may be compared to a close-up in a film but one in which the camera does not rest on one part of the body – it moves from one focus to another.) The intensity of Gustav's work, which is confirmed by the observation that in these two hours he has done the equivalent of a day's work, is emphasized by Roth's particular visual focus on

[179] It should be borne in mind that they may not be actual people but perhaps 'fusions' of several people, or indeed entirely fictitious.

the visible external effects of Gustav's efforts. Thus the duties of Gustav's job are not recounted objectively as 'separate' tasks but are reflected in their visible manifestations on Gustav's appearance – his hair now stands like 'Drähtchen', the crookedness of his nails is made visible by the lilac ink, and as if his work were an 'unfehlbares Haarwuchsmittel' his beard begins to grow back. (It is important to note here how Roth's Heuristic Visuals are not only able to place the images in a wider context but are also able to highlight the mechanisms of cause and effect, such as the lilac ink making his crooked nails visible. Such insights would not be obvious to the observer of a camera close-up.) Just as his physical features begin to lose their 'freshness' so too do his clothes – the 'halbgesteifter Glanz' of his cuffs has disappeared as they have become limp, and the knot of his tie has become so loose that it moves from side to side. Gustav's polished appearance is gradually being 'dismantled', and Roth suggests that Gustav's whole outfit, and indeed the man himself seems to be hanging on his collar stud – as if this is the one thing that is physically holding him together. This suggests not only the frailty of Gustav's external appearance, which has been so rapidly deconstructed but also the fragility of his physical and mental health.

It is then the physical and mental aspects of Gustav's occupational health which become the focus of Roth's intense gaze. The intellectual intensity of Gustav's work is paradoxically reflected in the physical metaphor which compares his spine to a drill that bores a hole in the back of a chair, suggesting that mental activity can be just as exhausting as physical activity – in fact it is both mentally and physically exhausting. This sense of exhaustion, and also the constrictions of his physical environment are further reflected in the manner in which Gustav climbs the stairs to the composing room: 'Er erinnerte an einen Lahmen, der die Krücken abgelegt hat' (JRW, III, 47). Gone is the bounding energy and enthusiasm with which Gustav had initially greeted his night-shift colleagues. The stresses of his job have not only deconstructed his pristine shell – they have broken through the shell to constrict and distort the very function of his limbs. Furthermore, once in the composing room Gustav's body acquires a prosthesis in the form of his copy pen, 'eine natürliche Fortsetzung der Zunge' (JRW, III, 47). Thus we are presented with the 'fusion' of the human being and part of his

work equipment, highlighting his functionalization within the context of his occupation. However, unlike the factory-worker automatons whose movements are controlled by other machines, here Gustav is the one who controls the movement of the copy pen, following his eyes as he reads a 'galley-proof'.

Thus this visual demonstration emphasizes not only the intensity of Gustav's work but also his functionalization as an integral element in the process of producing the newspaper. The merging of the human with the mechanical and functional is perhaps best demonstrated in the observation that: 'In seinen dünnem Angesicht flossen die Schatten der Sorgen mit den zufälligen fetten Spüren der Druckerschwärze zusammen, die ein achtloser Finger hinterlassen hatte' (JRW, III, 47). The references to Gustav's 'Sorgen' and the 'achtloser Finger' further emphasize his total absorption in his work, and reflect the psychological effects of the work on Gustav. He is no longer simply Gustav K but 'Der Nachtredakteur Gustav K.', as his individual identity is absorbed into the production process. However, as mentioned previously, his functionalization is not as brutal as that of a factory worker: he is not turned into a mindless robot, rather he is 'performing a role' and the requirements of the role take precedence over those of the individual. This aspect of performing a role is alluded to later in the text when Roth observes that as Gustav wipes his face clean of ink at the end of the day: 'Er erinnerte an einen Schauspieler, der sich abschminkt' (JRW, III, 49). Of course when an actor performs a role he is expected to portray the emotions of the assumed identity, whereas Gustav's role is to assume an identity which has no 'irrational' emotions but follows logical and rational processes. It is in this respect which Gustav's dehumanization is most evident. His autonomy may not be completely extinguished but it is constrained by parameters which, as we shall see, force him to act against his very nature.

There is a brief glimpse of individual autonomy when Gustav throws a ball of paper at one of the type-setters. However, Gustav himself recognizes that he cannot neglect his responsibilities and quickly returns to his work:

> Einen Augenblick nur hatte sein Angesicht den Ausdruck einer knabenhaften Verspieltheit gezeigt. Man konnte ihn sehen, wie er in kurzen Höschen vor dreißig Jahren am Ufer eines Wassers Steinchen in die Wellen schleudert.

Er wurde sofort wieder ernst. (JRW, III, 48)

This imagined visual of Gustav as a young boy at once contrasts the freedom and lack of responsibility in childhood with the burden of duty in the adult working world – a contrast which is also reflected in the style and form of the sentences. The sentence referring to his childhood has a playful quality marked by the use of diminutives, whereas the following sentence is spare and brief. The individual Gustav, the young boy of his childhood which is still a part of him, briefly surfaces but is suppressed by Gustav himself out of necessity – he must live up to his responsibilities: 'Er vergaß nicht einen Augenblick, daß er die 'ganze Verantwortung' für 'das Blatt' trug […]' (JRW, III, 48).

Roth has now switched from his focus on the visible physical effects of Gustav's practical duties to his 'intellectual' duties and responsibilities, and the problems which he faces. He must make decisions as to which stories are newsworthy, and what prominence different stories should be given within the paper. His task is made all the more difficult by his own individual character, for he does not regard any news story as unimportant, regardless of where in the world it took place: 'Für ihn gab es keine geographische Ferne' (JRW, III, 48). Although Roth has moved away from the intense visual focus of the previous section, (the intensity of which to some extent reflects the intensity of Gustav's work) visual elements are not completely absent. The description of Gustav tossing crumpled bits of paper containing news items into a bin, only to take them out a few minutes later, reflects not only his personal dilemma and indecisiveness, but also highlights the atomized nature of the news reports. Events that have happened, perhaps involving people's deaths are reduced to words on bits of paper that can easily be thrown away. The power that lies in the hands of the editor is the power to decide what the 'news' will be, as if he is 'constructing' not only the reporting format of the events but the world itself. If the reports are thrown into the bin, it is as if they never happened. The idea of a socially constructed world in which people are manipulated by the selectivity of the media is not far removed from the experience of the German population under National Socialism.

Gustav's understanding of the complexity of the world in terms of cause, effect, and unforeseen consequences is closer to reality than the selective, sanitized and artificial view of the world which is presented to the public by the press. Although Roth uses many humorous examples here to illustrate the potential wider impact and significance of seemingly unimportant occurrences, in 'Nonpareille aus Amerika' he makes the same important point in the context of retributive justice (see 3.2.2). Nevertheless, Gustav reconciles himself to the fact that there are borders, that the world itself is in fact a social and political construction – fragmented and divided, sometimes in an arbitrary fashion:

> […] so erinnerte er sich mit einem wehen Schrecken an die unbarmherzige Wirklichkeit einer in Nationen, Staaten, Länder, Städte aufgeteilten Welt und an die Tatsache, daß er selbst der Redakteur eines bestimmten national bestimmten Blattes war, das in einer bestimmten Stadt erschien. Daß es also Grenzen gab zwischen nahen und den fernen Ereignissen und daß 'der Leser' kein Kosmopolit war, dem die ganze Erde ein gleichmäßig interessantes Angesicht bot, sondern ein festgesessener Mensch, den der Nachbar mehr interessiert als der Ausbruch des Vesuvs. (JRW, III, 49)

Although Roth does not refer specifically here to the rise of National Socialism, it is clear that it underlies this description of a world of nation states, of territories surrounded by borders, both tangible and intangible, and of the narrow-mindedness of those that live within them.[180] It is this parochial and limited mind-set to which the newspaper must pander. In turn, just as the newspaper must accept the reality of what its readers wish to read, and conform to the role expected of them by the public, so must Gustav conform to the role that is expected of him by his employers. He must suppress his own opinions, and in doing so becomes a part of the social construction of reality. However, Gustav's task does not end with the decision to include an item in the paper – they must be categorized in terms of importance, which is then to be reflected in the size of the type-face which is used to print them: 'Und er sortierte die Ereignisse, wie es seine Pflicht war, nach nahen und fernen, nach Garamond,

[180] This is also a theme explored in *Flucht ohne Ende*. See especially 3.3.1.2.
The use of the word 'Kosmopolit' here is particularly significant, given its associations with Jewish culture.

Borgis, Petit, und Nonpareille, und die nächsten Dinge bekamen die größten Schriften (JRW, III, 49).

Thus Roth highlights not only how the news is subjectively constructed, in terms of content but also in terms of importance, and how this subjective importance manifests itself visibly. Although it may well be that in doing such the newspaper is pandering to the desires and expectations of the average reader, there is the disturbing possibility that this behaviour on the part of the press helps to feed and perpetuate the prejudices of the public (see 1.5.2). One key aspect of press subjectivity was in the realm of politics, as Peter Gay comments:

> The phenomenon of the party press did little to mitigate the divisions in German society; millions of voters read only the newspapers of 'their' party, thus hardening attitudes they already held.[181]

It is important to note that the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, the organ in which both these articles of Roth's were published, and indeed the newspaper with which he was most closely associated, was one of the few truly politically independent newspapers in the Weimar Republic at the time. Gay summarizes it thus:

> […] that voice of reason emanating from the provinces, […] democratic, liberal but free of parties; its tone was reasonable, its coverage wide, its politics intelligent and wholly independent.[182]

The last section of Gustav's daily routine, when he leaves the workplace and enters a local café, once again emphasizes the inharmonious nature of his life and the dehumanizing and alienating aspect of his shift work. He does not 'fit' with the regular patterns of the rest of society. However, Gustav is not merely an 'outsider' in the café in terms of his tired appearance – he is surrounded by countryfolk who have come from the nearby market, and is 'zehnfach einsam'. Here Roth appeals to our olfactory sense as well as our visual sense in the demarcation of Gustav's 'otherness' from the people in the café. They bring with them the smells of turnips and carrots from the countryside, whereas he is

[181] Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as the Insider* (London: Penguin, 1992), p. 79.
[182] Gay, p. 79.

'der intellektuelle Repräsentant der Stadt […] ein Redakteur' (JRW, III, 49). It is the man-made, inorganic smell of the newsprint from his paper which dispels that of the carrots and the turnips, signifying the dominance of the urban over the rural in this particular setting. (This contrasts with the novel *Flucht ohne Ende* where in the Paris setting, the natural smells of the countryside are able to percolate through the urban environment. See 3.3.1.3.) However, given a wider perspective it is Gustav and the other urban dwellers who are displaced. They are alienated from nature and its natural rhythms and processes. The people of the countryside follow the rising of the sun and the passing of the seasons, their lives are in harmony with the rhythms of nature, whereas Gustav must follow the artificial rhythms of the printing press and the constructed world of the consumer.[183]

In 'Der Polizeireporter Heinrich G.', although there are formal parallels with the article on Gustav K, such as the framework of a working day and a section focusing on the appearance of the protagonist, the overall visual focus is less intense, paralleling to some extent the more easy-going personality of Heinrich G and his seemingly nonchalant attitude towards his work. As in 'Gustav K.', Roth begins the piece by presenting the reader with a detailed visual description of the protagonist: 'Er war ein Mann von einem freundlichen, runden, heiteren Angesicht und einem behäbigen Körper' (JRW, III, 54). Not only is Heinrich's G's bright, cheery and corpulent appearance in direct contrast to the serious, pristine and lean Gustav K, it also seems inconsistent with the expected professional characteristics of a crime-reporter. Indeed, whereas Gustav K's energetic manner is at odds with his feeble appearance, Heinrich G would seem physically incapable of any sort of energetic activity at all: 'Er schien weder die Schnelligkeit zu besitzen, die sein Beruf erfordert, noch einen kritischen Sinn für die Erträglichkeit der Schrecken, über die er berichtete' (JRW, III, 54).

In Heinrich G's working day there is no sense of any physical and mental toil, no brow dowsed in sweat, unlike in 'Gustav K'. In fact the main source of

[183] This is somewhat similar to the use of *Denkbilder* to convey how rural life is seen to give people's lives shape, stability and regularity.

energetic movement seems to be his tie flapping in the wind, 'ein munteres Spielzeug der Lüfte' (JRW, III, 54). Whereas Gustav K's clothes seemed to constrain him to the extent that they held him together, Heinrich G's clothes are loose, unstructured and detached from the wearer, reflecting the greater physical freedom which he enjoys in his day to day existence. As Roth asserts, on the basis of his physical appearance and carefree manner, one would have taken Heinrich G for the director of a puppet theatre or a 'leisure photographer' – both jobs which not only have a high degree of autonomy, but their functions to entertain and amuse are in direct contrast to the serious and somewhat unsavoury business of a crime reporter. The very presence of such words as 'heiter', 'Spielzeug' and 'Puppentheater' in an article about a crime-reporter seems incongruous and even slightly improper. This apparent incongruity is in fact made explicit by Roth himself: 'Die lächelnde Ruhe des Mannes lag über seinem Interesse für die blutigen Schauder der Kriminalistik wie ein heiterer Sommertag vor dem Eingang zu einer panoptikalen Schreckenskammer' (JRW, III, 54).

Yet even in this simile which explicity refers to the violent crimes which Heinrich G reports on, the comparison with the chamber of horrors indicates that this 'darker side' of life also provides a means of amusement or entertainment. The fact that aspects of life such as violence, brutality, immorality and criminality are used in the production of waxworks emphasizes that society's fascination with the macabre goes beyond the level of 'objective interest' in facts. Of course the chamber of horrors is based on artifical imitations of reality, whereas a crime-reporter must investigate the unsavoury reality itself. However, it becomes clear to the reader that Heinrich G himself remains at arm's length from the actual crimes on which he reports, never even attending the scene of a crime. Unlike Gustav K, Heinrich G succeeds in maintaining much of the physical and creative freedom of childhood, and although he works in an unconventional way, in the end he still fufils his duties and responsibilities as a crime reporter.

The reader follows Heinrich G as he meanders along the streets of the city, pausing every now and then to gaze, seemingly aimlessly into shop windows:

‘Sein Blick suchte nicht die ausgestellten Gegenstände, sondern den Luftraum hinter der Scheibe, vielleicht aber auch sein eigenes Spiegelbild. Das Auge war verloren wie das eines Träumers, der zwecklos in den Himmel sieht’ (JRW, III, 54). We are given the impression of a man who does not have a care in the world, whose sight and senses are unfocused like those of dreamer – indeed he has something of the flâneur about him. Yet this nonchalant behaviour belies a precise and calculated purpose – Heinrich G is in fact doing his job. Contrary to what one might expect of a crime reporter he is not rushing off to witness the aftermath at the scene of the crimes, rather he is waiting for his network of detective friends to approach him and pass on the relevant information. Thus his physical and creative freedoms are closely linked. While the rest of his colleagues hurry along the streets, he strolls, while their lives are regulated by regular working hours, he works ‘unterwegs’. While they carry bags containing files and papers, if he carries a bag at all, it will contain food: ‘[…] schöne blutige Fleischklumpen und herzerfrischende Möhrchen und flatternder Blättersalat’ (JRW, III, 55). (Interestingly the adjectives used here convey a sense of the food almost being alive, far-removed from the inanimate, stale and boring files and papers found in his colleagues’ cases. In addition the vivid description of the food, and in particular the rather unsavoury ‘blutige Fleischklumpen, provide a stark contrast to the spare and factual accounts of the crimes which are relayed to the newspaper). Heinrich G does not need to be in the office to do his job, rather he has found another way of achieving the same result – he combines his charismatic authority with bribes.

The social network which is important for Heinrich to function in his job results from the autonomy inherent in his job, and it is this degree of freedom which allows him to exploit his charismatic authority. This contrasts not only with the submissiveness evidenced in ‘Gustav K’ but also with the legal authority of the police. While their authority is based on rules and laws, Heinrich G’s authority is based on his personality, albeit supplemented with bribes. However, one could argue that this kind of bribe is worth very little and is more a gracious gesture than a repayment for information or services. He has created a ‘following’ of people which extends beyond those who are useful to him in the remit of his job, to those who can provide him with services in other aspects of

his daily life. From the detectives who pass on the latest news to him, to the officials in the police HQ, to the market stall holders, to the workers in the editing room, to the waiter in the restaurant – all these people know him, seem to respect him, and his 'commands' are instantly obeyed, even though they are often wordless, for example when he is in the market:

> Man brachte ihm alles entgegen. Er brauchte nicht zu wählen. Blieb er wortlos, einen Finger am Hutrand, die Zigarre zwischen den Lippen, vor einem Händler stehen, so wandte sich dieser um, ging zu seinen Körben, holte eine Ware hervor, packte sie ein und legte sie selbst in Heinrich G.s Aktentasche. Heinrich G. zahlte. Alles spielt sich lautlos ab. Andere Kunden mußten warten. (JRW, III, 55)

The very precise way in which Roth describes each part of the transaction which takes place without the need for verbal communication, is suggestive of the mechanical movements of those in factories, where the predesignated functions of the workers and the machines often render verbal communication unnecessary. However, here the underlying and unseen mechanism producing these actions on the part of the marketstall-holder is not a technological one but that of Heinrich G's authority. Indeed, here there is something of the puppet master who invisibly controls the actions of others, pulling the strings from behind the scenes. This idea of a hidden mechanism is made more explicit in the description of Heinrich G greeting the officials in the police HQ:

> Heinrich G. [öffnete] eine Tür nach der andern, steckte den Kopf durch den Spalt, während gleichzeitig sein Stock, von der Linken am Rücken gehalten, ein paar lebhaftere Wedelbewegungen machte, als hätte er eine unmittlebare physiologische Beziehung zu der Zunge und den Lippen, die 'Guten Morgen!' in den Büros hineinriefen. (JRW, III, 56)

Here the suggestion seems to be not only that the stick acts as a kind of prosthesis, (earlier it is mentioned that the roundness of his stomach seems to come from the stick being held at his back) but also that there is a hidden connection between the movement of the stick and the movement of his lips, echoing the act of ventriloquism. Although here the 'dummy' appears to be his own mouth rather than that of a puppet. Once again Heinrich G is portrayed as something of a mysterious character whose methods and means remain hidden

from the outside observer. Roth asserts that it appears as if Heinrich G draws his information out of the air: 'Woher erfuhr er alle Grausamkeiten? Er entzog sie der Luft, in der sie gelegen waren […]' (JRW, III, 56), suggesting that Heinrich G is like a magician who conjures up the gruesome crimes, as if they do not exist in the 'real world'.

Indeed for the newspaper readers, who will only see the end result of this unconventional means of gathering his information, the crimes will remain as distant from their everyday reality as events on the other side of the world. Indeed the closest they might come to such violence and immorality is the 'panoptikale Schreckenskammer'. However, as Roth suggests Heinrich G also maintains a physical and, one would assume, emotional detachment from the crimes themselves, there is little sense that these terrible events mean more to him than the means to an end. The violence and crime are reduced to the bare facts, fragmented words, firstly scribbled down on crumpled bits of paper and then dictated over the telephone: 'Sie bestand nur aus Rohmaterial, aus Namen, Daten, Fakten' (JRW, III, 55). (This is similar to the atomization of the newsreports in 'Gustav K', although here the distances are not geographical but societal.) Although the written police reports are sent to the newspaper, Heinrich G on eventually arriving in the office in the evening has nothing but disdain for these pieces of paper: 'Er kam von den Quellen, nichts Neues konnte er noch erfahren' (JRW, III, 56). He does not need the tools of pen and paper, he has conjured up the crimes and transported them through the air.

There is of course a lot more to the crimes than the few scant words that appear in the newspapers but these contextual details remain unknown, both to Heinrich G and the newspaper readers. Roth seems to be echoing this in his ironizing closing comments: 'Und nichts weiter geschah. Und nichts mehr habe ich zu erzählen. So wie oben geschrieben, war Heinrich G, der Polizeireporter' (JRW, III, 57). There is always something else that happened and always something else to tell.

3.2.4 Reportage 1926-1929: Summary

In 'Einer liest Zeitung' Roth uses Heuristic Visuals as an organizing principle for the discourse on the manipulation of the reader by the press, and the willingness of the readers to accept the constructed and sensationalized reality presented to them. He also draws attention to how the physical characteristics of the newspaper contribute to the reader's manipulation, an aspect which he examines in more detail in 'Nonpareille aus Amerika'. In the latter, Roth highlights how the readers 'see' the words in terms of physical visual perception, but are led away from recognizing the importance of what the words signify. He uses Heuristic Visuals to shock the reader into recognizing the discrepancy between the sparse words of a newspaper report, and the reality of retributive justice. The two vignettes of the night editor and the crime reporter primarily focus on the physical aspect of the men, and their working environment. However, Roth uses visual techniques to make the reader aware of the human face behind the manipulating mechanisms of news production.

3.3 Fiction 1926-1929

All four novels written in this period are characterized by a much lower frequency of Heuristic Visuals. Out of the four novels written during this period, examples of Heuristic Visuals from two of the novels, *Flucht ohne Ende* and *Zipper und sein Vater*,[184] have been selected for close analysis. These novels have been chosen as indicative examples since they are complete and more successful.

3.3.1 *Flucht ohne Ende*

The idea for *Flucht ohne Ende* was conceived during Roth's travels in Russia. He began to work on it while in Russia, and eventually finished it in Paris, in March 1927. The novel charts the westward journey from Siberia of the Austrian *Heimkehrer*, Franz Tunda, after the end of the First World War. While

[184] *Flucht ohne Ende*, JRW, IV, 393-496. First published as a novel, Munich: Kurt Wolff, 1927. *Zipper und sein Vater,* JRW, IV, 503-607. First published as a novel, Munich: Kurt Wolff, 1928.

the *Heimkehrer* theme links this novel to Roth's first three novels, in *Flucht ohne Ende* Roth employs a documentary style for the first time, which led to him being viewed by many of his contemporaries as a champion of *Neue Sachlichkeit*. However, later analyses of Roth's work recognize that while he was influenced by the movement, he was no means its advocate. Indeed, in his 1929 article 'Es lebe der Dichter!',[185] Roth himself argues that critics had misunderstood his preface to *Flucht ohne Ende*, and asserts that it was not connected to the *Neue Sachlichkeit* emphasis on documentary writing.

David Bronsen notes that a consequence of the documentary style is that 'die Episoden im Leben Tundas dem Leser nicht durch literarische Inszenierung vor Augen geführt [werden], sondern meistens umschrieben oder referierend berichtet'.[186] The novel is, however, not devoid of Heuristic Visuals. There are three key sections where Roth uses Heuristic Visuals, namely in the descriptions of different urban contexts: the Russian cities after the revolution, the small town in Germany where Tunda's brother is a conductor, and Paris.

3.3.1.1 End of the Revolution in Russia

The first section in which Heuristic Visuals can be found is in Chapter Five in which Roth describes the general situation in the Russian towns and cities after the victory of the Red Guard over the White Guard. Although a specific date is not mentioned, this is probably the winter of 1920-21. The passage begins with a visually-based personification in which Roth employs zeugma: 'Die Häuser in den Städten zogen rote Fahnen an und die Frauen rote Kopftücher. Wie lebendiger Mohn gingen sie herum' (JRW, IV, 406). The use of the verb 'anziehen' suggests a superficial rather than fundamental change, since things which are 'put on' or attached to bodies and structures are also easily removed. While the ornamental symbols of the victory of the revolution may be ubiquitous, the fact that they remain disposable attachments highlights a lack of substantiality. Roth reinforces this idea with the poppy metaphor – the evanescent quality of the poppy points to the fragility of the victory of the

[185] JRW, III, 44-46
[186] David Bronsen, *Joseph Roth: Eine Biographie* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1974) p. 292.

revolution, and even perhaps that of the communist ideals on which it was fought.

Roth then contrasts the colourful decorative symbols of the communist victory with the darker reality of the revolution. He presents the reader with a list of visual images depicting the destruction which the revolution has wreaked on the ordinary citizens of Russia, showing what lies beneath the unfamiliar red, 'unbekannte Röte' (JRW, IV, 407). The concrete nature of these contrasts with the evanescent quality of the images of victory, and with the abstract 'unbekannte Röte', thus underlining the reality of people's suffering. In addition, the use of prenominal adjectives with emphasizing prefixes in the references to the 'verwüstete Straßen' and the 'zerschossene Häuser', creates a forceful and concentrated visual image, which in turn underscores the force of the violence of the revolution and the fragmentation and disintegration resulting from it.

Roth also refers to the human devastation which has resulted from the revolution: '[die] Friedhöfe, die unaufhörlich ihre Gräber öffneten und schlossen' (JRW, IV, 407). Here the personification of the graveyards suggests that death has become an all too familiar part of daily life for the Russian people – as common and as automatic as the opening and closing of doors. Moreover, the final image in the list of people clearing the snow from the footpaths further points to the fact that for the ordinary citizens, the struggles of daily life continue regardless of what political system they are under. Roth's reference to the victory of the communist political machine as the 'unbekannte Röte' indicates ordinary people's unfamiliarity with, and perhaps also isolation from, the actual ideology which was behind the revolution, whereas they have had direct experience of the chaos and devastation that it brought.

In the last part of this section, Roth indicates the importance for the communists of winning the propaganda war now that the military victory has been won: 'Letzter Feuerschein huschte über nächtliche Horizonte. Die schweren und schnellen Glocken der Kirchen hörten nicht auf zu läuten. Die Setz- und Druckmaschinen begannen ihre Räder zu drehen, sie waren die Mühlen der

Revolution' (JRW, IV, 407). The juxtaposition of the image of the church bells with that of the printing presses suggests the replacing of the traditional religious doctrine of the church by the political doctrine of communism.[187] Furthermore, the analogy between the printing presses and mills indicates the substitution of the concrete sustenance of grain with the abstract sustenance of rhetoric. Roth goes on to ironize the rhetoric of the period: 'Die Rotgardisten marschierten in zerissenen Kleidern und in zerissenen Stiefeln und sangen. Die Trümmer sangen. Freudig stiegen die Neugeborenen aus den Schößen der Mütter' (JRW, IV, 407). The juxtaposition of the concrete, real image of the Red Guard with that of the surreal image of rubble singing highlights the human destruction, and suggests that contrary to propaganda the revolution has provided people with very little to celebrate. By referring ironically to the symbolic image of the upward-striving newborn babies, Roth highlights how propaganda does not merely ignore reality but often distorts it to fit the required message. This unnatural image of humanity contrasts sharply with the concrete reality of the death and destruction wreaked upon humanity by the revolution.

3.3.1.2 Small Town in Germany

In the representation of Tunda's experience of going for a Sunday walk in the small German town where his brother lives, Roth uses a series of visual snapshots to portray the activities and scenes which Tunda witnesses. However, the snapshots do not merely or indeed primarily serve to give the reader a broad visual overview of the town, their fragmented quality also reflects Tunda's perception. The sentence structure in Chapter Eighteen is predominantly paratactic and thus conveys Tunda's sense of disorientation – he cannot make sense of what he is seeing. There is no sense of order, harmony or meaningful relationships in this portrayal of the town. The visual snapshot technique apears to attribute the same importance to everything – the piles of whipped cream on top of cups of coffee are just as worthy of note as the epileptic lying on the ground. It can be argued that here Roth is both pointing to Tunda's sense of alienation from his surroundings, and to a sense that those surroundings

[187] Although communists reject any religious interpretation of their ideology, it has been argued that communism is esentially religious in its nature. See Robert Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961).

themselves lack substance and coherence – the indication being that this is a society which is itself fragmented and superficial. Whereas in the section on Russia, Roth pointed to the distortion of reality inherent in communist rhetoric, here reality itself is portrayed as unnatural and distorted. Roth highlights this through reference to the discrepancy between form and function (the secularization of the sacred, infantilized adults, and the militarized nature club) – this points to the perversion of values that pertain in society. It is society's tacit acceptance that allows these distortions to function as natural.

Among the series of visual snapshots of the town there are also examples of Roth using Heuristic Visuals to draw the reader's attention to particular aspects of German society. In the old part of the town as he walks 'zwischen bunte Giebel, zwischen Weinstuben mit mittelhochdeutschen Namen' Tunda sees 'armselig gekleidete Männer [...], offenbar Arbeiter, die zwischen gotischen Buchstaben wohnten, aber wahrscheinlich in Bergwerken internationaler Besitzer ihr Brot verdienten' (JRW, IV, 445). Here Roth takes the real image of the gothic lettering on the *Weinstuben* signs and distorts it into a striking surreal image. The linguistic parallel set up by the repetition of 'zwischen' for architectural features (Giebel, Weinstuben) which you have to look up to see, programmes the visual imagination to perceive the parallel phenomenon of the letters as having similar dimensions. The gothic letters represent the German Romantic tradition, and the reference to the workers 'embedded' in these letters points to the nationalistic and politically isolationist nature of this tradition. Thus Roth's surreal image makes the men a punctuation mark in a historical narrative which is itself questionable. Furthermore, the fact that the mine is owned by an international company indicates that the national tradition of Romanticism is mismatched with the reality of increasing globalization. This discrepancy is underlined by the contrast between the two-dimensional aspect of the gothic letters and the more concrete three-dimensional aspect of the mine. Moreover, the connotations of physical toil and hardship which the reference to the mines suggests, indicates that for these workers the cultural tradition of German Romanticism has little relevance for their daily lives, being little more than a constructed narrative.

Roth then goes on to ironize German idealism and its political adherents in the portrayal of a group of members of one of the right-wing youth movements which were gaining increasing popularity during the 1920s:

> Junge Männer mit Stöcken bewaffnet, marschierten hinter Pfeifern und Trommlern. Es klang wie Musik von Gespenstern oder wie von einer militarisierter Äolsharfen. Die jungen Leute marschierten mit ernsten Gesichtern, keiner sprach ein Wort, sie marschierten einem Ideal entgegen. (JRW, IV, 445)

While Roth is clearly highlighting the militarism inherent in these groups, the references to being armed with sticks and the ghost-like music indicate something absurd and pathetic within this militarism. In the reference to the Aeolian harp, there are again echoes of the Romantic tradition, however, the fact that this harp is militarized again suggests an incongruity between the tradition and the real world. It could also be argued that the harp points to an insubstantiality present in this marching group, and perhaps also an insubstantiality in the ideology from which this phenomenon has sprung. These aspects of the absurd and the insubstantial are combined in the final image of the young men marching towards an ideal. The juxtaposition of the concrete marching action with the abstraction of an ideal as the goal of the march indicates a sense of ultimate futility – the physical effort of their marching will ultimately lead them nowhere, for ideals and perfection cannot be realized in real life. It would seem that in this section Roth is picking up and satirizing aspects of Hegel's philosophy, in particular the ideas that the goal of History is the liberation of Spirit from its confinement in Nature in order that the Spirit might be reunited with its essence as Idea, and the subordination of individuality to a group substance, the State, which is defined as the divine Idea as it exists on earth: '[...] es ist der Gang Gottes in der Welt, daß der Staat ist'.[188]

At the end of the chapter, Roth does not merely point to a lack of coherence and harmony within the town, rather he indicates an ultimate lack of purpose in people's lives:

[188] Georg W. F. Hegel, *Werke*, ed. by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel, 20 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1986), VII, p. 403.

> Es war, als wäre die Stadt gar nicht bewohnt. Nur am Sonntag
> kamen Verstorbene auf Urlaub aus den Friedhöfen.
> Man ahnte weit geöffnete, wartende Grüfte. (JRW, IV, 447)

By reversing the natural order of roles, with respect to the living and the dead, Roth emphasizes the emptiness and morbidity of people's lives. One could argue that the reference to 'Verstorbene' rather than 'Gestorbene' is more suggestive of a sense of loss in those that remain. The personification of the graves serves to highlight ironically the lack of humanity in the people themselves – the normal expectation of comfort from human arms is substituted by the cold comfort of the 'Grüfte'. In addition, the graves can be seen as a metaphor for people's daily lives. Once Sunday is over they will have to return to their banal daily routine, from which there is no escape, just as there is ultimately no escape from death.

Although one could argue that the lack of meaningful activity depicted in this portrayal of the town is due to it being a Sunday, this final image points to the fact that there is little substance in this society at all. In fact later in the novel in Chapter Twenty Tunda makes explicit what he finds disturbing about what he saw of German society and culture: 'Das ist ja ein Maskenfest und keine Wirklichkeit! Ihr kommt ja aus den Kostümen nicht heraus!' (JRW, IV, 456).

Claudio Magris argues that the disorder of the post-war period is portrayed through the disorder of the narrative form:

> Der Sonntagsspaziergang Tundas in der deutschen Kleinstadt zeigt mit einer Filmtechnik diese unterschiedlose und wahllose Anhäufung von Einzelheiten. […] Roths Filmkamera scheint zahllos um die Gegenstände herumzukreisen, um einige davon zufällig zu vergrössern und in einem zusammenhanglosen Katalog aufzureihen. Ein solches Verfahren erfolgt auch beim allgemeinen Aufbau seiner Werke. Durch die unorganische Summierung, die den Aufbau von *Rechts und Links* oder von *Flucht ohne Ende* in eine Notizkladde verwandelt, versucht Roth das Chaos und die Sinnlosigkeit der Nachkriegszeit zu schildern.[189]

[189] Claudio Magris, 'Die verschollenen Annalen: Historische Regression und epische Totalität in der Erzählkunst Joseph Roths', *Lenau Forum*, 3 (1971), 58-78 (p. 62).

However, the series of snap-shots of disconnected images reflect the disorientation within Tunda himself, rather than an objective social disorder. Tunda cannot see how the activities and events meaningfully fit together, and implicit in this is that he is separated from the population who are unaware of this *Sinnlosigkeit*. In addition, although there is an apparent randomness in the magnification of certain snap-shots, as we have seen in the cases of the gothic letters, and the militaristic youth group, Roth uses these details to draw attention to the emergent dangers in this fragmented society.

3.3.1.3 Tunda in Paris: Arrival

In Chapter Twenty Four Roth depicts Tunda's arrival in Paris. The use of Heuristic Visuals in this section contrasts sharply with those in the section on the German town. Although the reader is once again presented with Tunda's perspective on the place as he walks through it, here there is no sense of fragmentation or incoherence. Instead, the Heuristic Visuals function as a montage, in which the various images form a composite whole and a sense of harmony, order and purpose is created. The frequent use of metaphors and similes to make sense of things and make connections intensifies the impression of unity and concord. In fact Tunda's initial perception of Paris has many similarities to Roth's own impression of the city:

> Der sonst so kritische Roth, beflügelt durch das Gefühl, endlich "seine" Heimat gefunden zu haben, macht aus Paris ein Märchenland der Vollkommenheit und begründet auch gleich die Quelle seiner seelischen Verwandschaft mit dieser Stadt.[190]

Even Tunda's initial sight of the city shrouded in a grey morning mist is portrayed positively, despite his expectations of a bright blue morning sky. The comment that 'der Morgen in Paris mit einem weichen Bleistift gezeichnet [ist]' (JRW, IV, 467) suggests a grey mist of soft contours rather than something heavy and oppressive. The reference to the particles of smoke from factories mixing with the last glimmers of silver gas lamps indicates a harmony of

[190] Bronsen, *Biographie*, pp. 266-267.

substance, even though there is an aesthetic contrast between the ugly factories and the elegant gas lamps.

Roth also points to the sense of harmony and order in his portrayal of the Parisians themselves. Unlike in the town in Germany, the people here are engaged in meaningful activity. The Parisian women leaving their houses in the morning are purposeful and confident:

> Sie aber gehen mit klaren, nüchternen Augen in einen klaren, nüchternen Tag. Sie gehen schnell, mit starken Beinen, auf sicheren Füßen, die zu wissen scheinen, wie man Pflastersteine behandelt. Tunda hatte, als er sie gehen sah, den Eindruck, daß sie niemals Absätze und Sohlen verbrauchen. (JRW, IV,467)

In contrast to the 'gläserne Augen' of the students in the town in Germany, or the 'eiserne Augen' of the witnesses in 'Nonpareille', the description of the women's eyes here emphasizes their engagement with the world around them. The repetition of the adjectives 'klar' and 'nüchtern' to describe the day itself forms a syntactic echo which creates an effect of balance. This in turn reflects the harmony between the women and their environment, and indicates their seamless integration into reality. The sense of a purposeful dynamic is reinforced by the alliteration of the letter 's', which suggests a force of movement but one that does not jar. Indeed, their ability to balance on the cobblestones not only suggests the smoothness of their integration, but also an efficiency of elegance.

Another key dimension of the portrayal of Paris as a benign and harmonious place is the presentation of aspects of the natural world within the city. The baskets of vegetables outside the shops counteract other aspects of the urban landscape to such an extent that they evoke a rural ideal for Tunda through the stimulation of both his visual and olfactory senses. Rather than the experience of alienation in a large cosmopolitan city, the impression is given of a cosy and welcoming atmosphere which is more reminiscent of a village. This is later reinforced when Roth uses a nature metaphor to infuse the inanimate with a sense of organic warmth:

> Am Nachmittag ging er durch kleine und große, enge und breite Straßen, in denen Kaffeeterassen blühten mit runden Tischchen auf dünnen Beinen, und die Kellner gingen wie Gärtner einher, und wenn sie Kaffee und Milch in Tassen schütteten, war es, als besprengten sie weiße Beete. An den Rändern standen Bäumen und Kioske, es war, als verkauften die Bäume Zeitungen. (JRW, IV, 468-469)

Here, although the waiters themselves are animate beings, their comparison to gardeners suggests a productive and creative role, rather than one that is merely servile. Furthermore, the image of the trees selling newspapers also signals a productive harmony between nature and its urban environment – the urban does not exclude or dominate the natural but the two interact in a productive and organic way.

Thus, in contrast to the German town where the people seemed barely alive, Paris is presented as a place in which even the inanimate seems to be infused with life. Even the statue of a dead poet is presented as a still-animate being, as if he has chosen to stand on a plinth in the middle of a square in order to continue to write his poetry.[191]

3.3.1.4 Tunda in Paris: The Champs Elysées

In Chapter Twenty Eight, a very different perspective on Paris is presented. Tunda walks along the Champs Elysées after visiting Frau G, a rich woman with whom he fell in love when he was in Baku. He has no money, and cannot bring himself to ask her for any – he is acutely aware of the fact that she would despise him for being poor. Roth uses Heuristic Visuals here to emphasize how Tunda's impoverished status now marks him as the outsider. Despite the fact that he is a physical part of the crowd he feels alienated from all the people around him: 'Als stünde er wie ein Bettler jenseits der Welt und sähe sie nur durch eine harte, undurchdringliche, in all ihrer Freundlichkeit bedrohliche Fensterscheibe' (JRW, IV, 482). The contrast between the concrete image of the windowpane, and the oxymoron of its 'bedrohliche Freundlichkeit' reinforces Tunda's sense of emotional exclusion. It is precisely because he can see the rich

[191] JRW, IV, 468.

people around him, and yet cannot participate in their activities that he feels alienated from them. Unlike the vegetable stalls in the previous section, the shops here sell goods which are out of his reach financially, and the image of the impenetrable glass has connotations of a child who is looking longingly through shop windows, and whose feelings of frustration are merely increased by the visual exposure to goods which they cannot afford.

Tunda's sense of alienation is also conveyed in the grammatical structure of the sentences, with widespread use of parataxis in the description of the Champs Elysées itself. As was the case when Tunda was walking in the German town, here too we are presented with a list of images describing the activities of others. Once again, there are no productive or linked actitivies which Tunda can take part in, and the use of anaphora in the repetition of 'da gingen' (JRW, IV, 480) highlights Tunda's alienation – he is merely the observer reporting what he sees. Although his environment stimulates his visual perception, he cannot engage with it on any affective level. Even the young girls that he sees crossing the road seem to be more at home in this setting than he does:

> Da gingen die kleinen Mädchen, die gesitteten, reifen, klugen Weltstadtkinder, die ihre Mutter an der Hand führen und mit der zierlichen Sicherheit der Damen über das Pflaster wandern, zauberhafte Wesen zwischen Tier und Prinzessin. (JRW, IV, 482)

This description of the small girls indicates that they have been socialized into a taken-for-granted world of wealth and confidence, and this is emphasized by the apparent role-reversal between them and their mothers. Unlike the positive description of the women walking along the cobblestones in the morning, here the same self-assured elegance seems out of place when attributed to small girls. In fact, Roth emphasizes this discrepancy in the final metaphor, with the juxtapostion of the words 'Tier' and 'Prinzessin', indicating an incongruous mix of primitive instinct and a superiority arising from their particular socialization.

Although there is movement and activity all around him, for Tunda the Paris of the Champs Elysées is not a real, living world: 'Die Welt lag hinter Glas, wie in einem Museum alte und wertvolle Teppiche, um deren Zerfall man zittert'

(JRW, IV, 482). Like the previous metaphor of Tunda looking at the world around him through glass, this visual image also indicates Tunda's inability to connect with his environment. However, the focus here is not on Tunda's sense of otherness, but rather on the fact that this world has lost its functionality and can be no more than an aesthetic experience for Tunda. In addition, the reference to the fragility of the carpets suggests something of the insubstantiality of this world, hinting at the fragility of civilized society and the primitive barbarity which lies just beneath the constructed surface. Indeed, Roth compares the people on the Champs Elysées to zoo animals let out for their daily walk. Although he asks the rhetorical question, 'Wer dirigiert diese Menschen?' (JRW, IV, 482), he goes on to indicate that the controlling mechanism behind this artificial world is in fact the rituals and laws of society itself, 'Es waren keine Zufälle, es waren Gesetze' (JRW, IV, 482).

In the final paragraph of the chapter, Tunda's negative perspective on this aspect of Parisian society culminates in an extended metaphor for death. Echoing the reference to the graves at the end of the section in the German town, Roth once more highlights the insubstantiality of civilized society and an inherent sense of futility:

> Manchmal kamen sie Tunda vor wie Totenwürmer, die Welt war ihr Sarg, aber im Sarg lag niemand. Der Sarg lag in der Erde, und die Würmer bohrten Wege durch das Holz, bohrten Löcher, kamen zusammen, bohrten weiter, und einmal wird der Sarg ein einziges Loch sein – dahin die Würmer und der Sarg, und die Erde wundert sich, daß keine Leiche dringelegen hat – (JRW, IV, 483)

Through this striking set of visual images, Roth points to the void at the centre of this society. The fact that there is no corpse for the earth to take, indicates that there is not even a natural cycle of 'ashes to ashes', whereby the earth is made fertile. The depiction of the earth itself as animate and sentient underlines society's own lack of humanity. Roth forces the reader by repetition of the visual elements to follow the path of the worms, and in doing so highlights the difference between activity and productivity. Like the worms, the people have participated in no productive activity, and have merely become self-destructive vestiges.

3.3.2 *Zipper und sein Vater*

In *Zipper und sein Vater*, the second of Roth's novels written between 1926 and 1929, Roth continues to be influenced by *Neue Sachlichkeit*, and as with *Flucht ohne Ende*, he claims that the novel is a 'Bericht'.[192] In *Zipper und sein Vater* Roth returns to the theme of the inability of the *Heimkehrer* to reintegrate after the war and combines this with a social critique of the gulf between the generations. Although Herr Zipper managed to escape his proletarian origins and become a member of the petit-bourgeoisie, he was not able to rise any higher in the class system due to his own foolishness. He gambled and lost most of the money which he had intended to use to open his own musical instrument shop. His son, Arnold Zipper, is not only unable to find a place for himself in the world after his return from the First World War, he is also never able to escape his petit-bourgeois upbringing and the thwarted aspirations of his father.

There are only a few examples of Heuristic Visuals in this novel, and where they do occur, they tend to only take up a few lines of text. Examples have been chosen from the sections where Roth makes use of Heuristic Visuals in his descriptions of the Zipper family's flat, and the physiognomies of Zipper's parents and Zipper himself. The only section of text in which greater use of Heuristic Visuals is made is in Chapter Eleven where Roth describes the coffee house which Arnold Zipper frequents in the evenings after leaving his office in the Ministry of Finance.

3.3.2.1 Social Aspirations: 'Sein und Schein'

In Chapter Two Roth provides the reader with a detailed description of the photographs which are on the walls of the Zippers' drawing room. Unlike his wife, Zipper has no portraits of his ancestors because his family were too poor, and instead has had photographs of himself enlarged and put on the walls, indicating his desire to be 'der Ahnherr eines respektvollen Geschlechtes' (JRW, IV, 506). The fact that the photographs are a second-best replacement for

[192] JRW, IV, 605.

ancestral portraits suggests, however, an element of pathetic futility in Zipper's social aspirations – as if his life itself is an inferior copy of the one that he desires. Roth lists the different poses which Zipper has adopted in the photographs, and the various petit-bourgeois acoutrements such as his top hat and white gloves, thus highlighting the constructed nature of the images. Although the poses do reflect Zipper's societal roles as father and husband, as a composite they function more as a visual text of Zipper's desire for social status and recognition, rather than evidence of status itself.

Alongside these photographs, there is a more numerous set of photographs of Zipper's youngest son Arnold. The sheer number of pictures suggests a pathetic absurdity on the part of Herr Zipper, who projects his desire for greater social status on to his son: 'Alles konnte Arnold werden; alles, was der alte Zipper *nicht* geworden war' (JRW, IV, 516). Roth lists the various poses which are adopted in the pictures, with the first set of photographs in the list charting Arnold's development from a baby to a young schoolboy. These are a standardized set of images which represent a conventional notion of class aspirations and their presence on the walls indicates a desire to comply with societal norms and expectations. This is then followed by a set of pictures which present the young Zipper in various guises and costumes such as that of a sailor, a cyclist, a soldier, and also posing with musical instruments. To a large extent these are fantasy roles which have little to do with the reality of young Arnold Zipper's life but indicate his father's aspirations for him. The photographs reflect notions of upper class superiority and constitute conventional symbols of an elegant way of living. However here they do not represent real wealth but rather the desire for wealth and status. As images, the photographs suggest a life of variety, culture and excitement, whereas the reader is aware that such a life does not exist for those who live 'in dem Viertel der kleinen Bürger' (JRW, IV, 505). Thus Roth points to the ridiculous and pathetic nature of the conventionally agreed artifices of the petit-bourgeoisie which ultimately conceal rather than reveal reality. As Juergens observes: 'Die Diskrepanz zwischen Sein

und Schein, die in Verlogenheit umschlägt, macht Zipper zum Repräsentanten einer ganz bestimmten kleinbürgerlichen Gesellschaftsschicht.'[193]

3.3.2.2 Family Physiognomies: The Faces of Superfluity and Impotence

In Chapter Three, the reference to Zipper being like a 'traurige[r] Clown' (JRW, IV, 511) combines the elements of the pathetic and the ridiculous, with that of subterfuge – the face of a clown is always a painted mask, concealing the real face and thereby obscuring any truthful emotions. Furthermore, as Juergens points out, Zipper is neither an appropriate role model for his son, nor a figure of any note in society – he is unimportant and essentially redundant.[194] Roth underlines Zipper's superfluousness in the description of his face, with the comment that his beard 'ein überflüssiger Luxus war wie ein Rahmen um ein gleichgültiges Bild' (JRW, IV, 511). This is then emphasized by a set of visual similes which all point to a lack of function and a sense of redundancy: '[er ist] traurig wie ein aufgeräumtes Zimmer, traurig wie eine Sonnenuhr im Schatten, traurig wie ein ausrangierter Waggon auf einem rostigen Gleis' (JRW, IV, 511). In fact, Zipper's dispensability is all the more ironic because it is so important for him to have a purpose and a role in life, yet he is blind to his own superfluity.

Whereas the description of Herr Zipper highlights the fact that he is oblivious to the reality of his social situation, Roth's description of Frau Zipper reflects the bitter reality of her life:

> Wenn sie ihr Taschentuch vors Gesicht führte, sah man ihre Hände, trockene, harte Hände, an denen die Finger unverhältnismäßig stark waren, wie künstlich angesetzt an eine viel zu schwache Hand. Zog sie manchmal, an Festtagen, ihr schwarzes Flitterkleid an, so sah sie noch gelber aus wie gewöhnlich, sie hatte etwas Erforenes, als hätte man sie aus einem Eiskasten genommen. (JRW, IV, 512)

The reference to her work worn hands indicates that hers is by no means a life of leisure. This is reminiscent of the focus on the hands of the toilet attendant in

[193] Juergens, p. 59.
[194] Juergens, p. 53.

'Der Mann in der Toilette' (see 2.2.1.2). For Roth, the hands can be read, and they are used to convey lives filled with manual work and poverty. By highlighting the contrast between Frau Zipper's strong fingers and her feeble hand Roth also underlines her essential powerlessness. The drudgery of her everyday life has not made her physically strong, merely distorted her appearance. She is presented as a pitiable creature, and even her attempts to improve her appearance such as putting on her sequinned dress are simply counterproductive. Moreover, the surreal visual image of her being taken out of a fridge not only suggests an inflexibility and a lack of animation, but also has connnotations of death. Thus Roth emphasizes the extent to which Frau Zipper is 'ein geschlagener und zerschlagener Mensch.'[195]

Frau Zipper is powerless to change her situation or influence her husband in any way. When Herr Zipper announces that he is renting out the salon her response is not verbal, but instead one single tear rolls down her face, indicating her helplessnes and impotence. A second tear rolls down her face when she learns that her husband has not even agreed on an amount for the rent: 'Jetzt kam aus dem Auge der Frau Zipper die zweite Träne. Still und glänzend kam sie, rollte langsam und lautlos in die Stille und verlor sich bei den Lippen' (JRW, IV, 521). The two separate tears indicate that there are mere vestiges of emotion which remain within her – there is no outburst of anger or recrimination. Also the detailed visual focus on the tears, moist and shining, constrasts with the focus on her hard and dry hands in the previous section, thus emphasizing that there is very little sense of a living being left within her.

3.3.2.3 Arnold Zipper : The Indicators of Infantilization

Arnold's appearance is first commented on in detail by Roth after the war has ended, when the narrator Roth remarks on Arnold's changed appearance. Although there is no explicit contrast made between Arnold in military uniform and civilian clothes, Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to indicate Arnold Zipper's difficulty in integrating into civilian life again. He does this through the description of Arnold in an ill-fitting civilian suit:

[195] Juergens, p. 56.

> Hinter den Bewegungen, die Arnold Zipper in diesem Anzug machte, ahnte ich die ursprünglichen, feineren und gelenkigeren Bewegungen des nackten Körpers. Es war, als kämen die Ärmel und die Hose dem Arm und dem Bein um den Bruchteil einer Sekunde nach. So entstand eine kaum bemerkbare Unbeholfenheit im Gehaben Zippers – vielleicht verursachte sie es eigentlich, daß ich Arnold jetzt genauer zu beobachten begann. (JRW, IV, 534)

Here the contrast between the image of the fluid movements of the naked body, and the stiffness of the cheap suit that he is wearing indicates the awkwardness which Arnold now feels – he no longer fits in to his environment. The image also has connotations of the discomfort of young boys who feel ill at ease in formal wear, indicating Arnold's infantilization and the fact that he is confined and limited by his environment. (This image is in direct contrast to that of the self-assured small girls on the Champs Elysées in *Flucht ohne Ende*.) The image also conveys a lack of dignity, which is further underlined by the reference to his teeth being like those of a rodent – he cannot open his mouth without looking faintly ridiculous. There is nothing left here of the army officer who had status and power, and he has become inconsequential. This is emphasized by the reference to his eyes: 'Seine Augen hatten einen federleichten Blick, der von den Zielen abglitt wie ein Korkpropfen' (JRW, IV, 535). This not only suggests Arnold's alienation from his environment, in that his eyes never seem to engage with what they perceive, it also indicates that he no longer has any impact on his environment. The simile of the cork gun also serves to emphasize his infantilization. He is no longer the soldier with the gun that can aim and shoot, but is like an awkward schoolboy whose games are of little consequence to the rest of the world.

3.3.2.4 The Haven of the Coffee House

In Chapter Eleven Roth describes the coffee house which Arnold takes refuge in after his day's work at the Ministry of Finance. The thought of being alone in the evenings now fills Arnold with horror, yet he does not want to live with other people, he simply wants to spend his time in the coffee house. In fact, Roth likens Arnold to an alcoholic or a gambler (JRW, IV, 552), indicating that

there is something pathological in his behaviour. For Arnold, the coffee house represents an escape from his petit-bourgeois background, and he enjoys the bohemian atmosphere, spending time with the artists and writers who frequent the place. However, he also envies them because they seem to have a purpose in life: 'Sicherlich beneidete er sie. Denn sie allein, so schien es ihm, hatten einen Sinn in ihrem Leben gefunden und besaßen ein Recht dazusein, Geltung zu haben, Ansehen und Macht' (JRW, IV, 551). This envy indicates that unlike his father, Arnold is aware of his superfluity, and that while he does not strive for social status, he is nonetheless discontent.

However, one of the reasons why Arnold enjoys being in the coffee house is that he has carved out a role for himself there: 'Er war mit der Zeit manchen Spielern ein unentbehrlicher Kiebitz geworden' (JRW, IV, 551). Although it would seem that in this context Arnold has become indispensable, his role is merely that of an outside observer, and he himself remains unproductive.[196] In fact, when there is no game being played Arnold feels uncomfortable because he cannot make any active contribution to the conversation, and is therefore superfluous:

> Außerdem war er an einem Tisch, an dem man nur sprach, mehr fremd als an einem, an dem man spielte. Denn verlangten die Gesetze des Kartenspiels geradezu einen Kiebitz, so waren die Gesetze einer Unterhaltung einem Außenseiter nicht hold. Arnolds hellhörige Empfindlichkeit erriet hundertmal die Frage, die sich viele stellten und die niemand aussprach: Was macht eigentlich dieser Zipper hier? (JRW, IV, 552)

Thus, despite the fact that Arnold is welcomed by the artists and writers in the coffee house, he remains on the margins. The fact that the others do inwardly question Arnold's presence there, and the fact that Roth suggests that Arnold is aware of this, also serves to underline his lack of integration. Ironically, the only thing which stops the others from continually questioning his presence there, is their belief that at some point they must have been given an answer.

[196] Roth also indicates that the writers themselves in the coffee house are also not particularly productive, 'Und da sie mehr sprachen, als sie schrieben, war ihnen ein Leser, der zuhörte, von Nutzen (JRW, IV, 552). This underlines the lack of any kind of goal-oriented progress within the coffee house.

Nevertheless, despite his position as observer rather than participator, for Arnold the coffee house is indispensable. Roth's extended visual description of the location underlines its function as a safe retreat for Arnold in which an atmosphere of harmony and concord prevail. Whereas in the section on the German town in *Flucht ohne Ende* (see 3.3.1.2) the fact that nothing was privileged over anything else in the visual description was disorienting, Roth's technique is different here. Although there are superficial similarities, in *Flucht ohne Ende* parataxis is predominant, whereas here an effect of harmony is produced by the connection among the sentences, through double, triple, and multiple constructions, and the use of relative attributes which create formal and syntactical links. In addition, the use of semi-colons in the detailed visual list of the various fixtures and features which Arnold loves to look at, creates a sense of a unified and co-existing whole. There is no one image which is visually striking in this list; however, as a composite they create a cosy atmosphere, in which there is a comforting regularity and routine. It is as if the coffee house has been hermetically sealed, and time has been suspended: 'die [Kellner] niemals wechselten, niemals starben' (JRW, IV, 553). The sense of a secure refuge is further underlined by the description of the curtains:

> Nur dünne gelbe Vorhänge verhüllten die Straße an den Fenstern. Aber diese Vorhänge waren so dicht, daß man glauben konnte, selbst Steine und Schüsse würden an ihnen wirkunglos zurückprallen. Diese Welt hat nichts mit der bitteren und nüchternen des Tages zu tun. (JRW, IV, 554)

Thus Roth highlights the protective function of the coffee house for Arnold – for him it is a retreat from the petit-bourgeois world of his work and his father.

Roth also uses an appeal to the reader's auditory sense, and lists the various sounds of the coffee house. Here the accumulation of the sounds, combined with the use onomatopoeia conveys the comforting hustle and bustle of the coffee house, in which there is never an uncomfortable silence. Moreover, Roth uses the noise of the carbide lamps to unifiy all the other sounds, 'über allem sangen die Karbidlampen' (JRW, IV, 553), pointing again to the sense of a harmonious whole. (This is similar to the unifiying quality of the morning mist in Paris in

Flucht ohne Ende.) There is no sense in which the noises are portrayed as irritating or distracting. Even when Roth compares the glowing coals in the stoves to the entrance to hell, it is a hell which has lost its threatening aspect: 'die [Öfen] aussahen wie Eingänge zu einer Hölle, die nichts schreckliches hat' (JRW, IV, 553). Indeed for Arnold, the coffee house represents a paradise, rather than a hell, and it is only here that he feels free. However, as Rosenfeld notes, in the end he merely replicates the patterns of his father and his coffee house is simply a more sophisticated setting for futility.[197]

3.3.2.5 Zipper: Thwarted Aspirations

Zipper's fate as depicted at the end of the novel, namely playing two notes on a violin at the beginning of a variety show, is not merely an ironic symbol of his failure to live up to his father's bourgeois aspirations, it also represents the impotence of a lost generation of *Heimkehrer*, as Roth himself asserts in his 'letter' to Arnold Zipper at the end of the novel: '[Dein Beruf] ist symbolisch für unsere Generation der Heimgekehrten, die man verhindert zu spielen: eine Rolle, eine Handlung, eine Geige' (JRW, IV, 606-7). Roth also explicitly states in the letter that Zipper's new profession is symbolic of the position that Roth finds himself in as a writer. Rosenfeld comments:

> Much as Zipper must clown at violin playing before an audience unreceptive to the sorrows of his existence, Roth feels himself frustrated by a readership unable to appreciate his artistic aims. In laying claim to the authenticity of a report at the expense of the truths unique to narrative invention, Roth confesses his inability to portray the fate of the war generation in a novel that flows from the belief in the validity of storytelling.[198]

Although Rosenfeld suggests here that Roth's main problem is that the reading public cannot appreciate his artistic aims, it could also be argued that the underlying problem, with respect to *Zipper und sein Vater*, is that Roth as an author does not find his voice in the novel. Roth's reference to 'mühselige Worte' (JRW, IV, 606) suggests that he has had difficulty in finding adequate

[197] Rosenfeld, *Understanding Joseph Roth*, p. 31
[198] Rosenfeld, *Understanding Joseph Roth*, p. 33.

words to portray the fate of the war generation. Roth is struggling to find adequate language to express the way in which the indifference and trauma experienced by the *Heimkehrer* has led to a lack of ability to communicate.

The report form is essentially cerebral rather than sensual, and tends towards the abstract rather than the concrete, thus producing a text which is less likely to successfully engage the reader (see 1.3.3.2.2). Despite the fact that Eduard P, a mutual friend of Zipper and Roth (as narrator), comments in the final chapter of the novel that the intradiegetic Roth himself said, 'es sei Aufgabe des Autors abzuschreiben, was er sehe' (JRW, IV, 601), this is in fact not what Roth has done in this novel. The low frequency of Heuristic Visuals in the novel is testament to this – Roth has explained, rather than shown the reader the fate of Zipper and his father. By giving the reader an explanation, Roth is less likely to be able to engage the reader or prompt them to become involved in the process of interpretation (see 1.3.3). In addition, the discursive style employed at the end of the novel, and the fact that Roth comments explicitly on the symbolism of Zipper's thwarted violin playing, suggest that Roth perhaps recognized that the novel was in some sense inadequate in its portrayal of the isolation of the war generation.

However, in one sense the novel parallels the experience of the *Heimkehrer*, in that it seems to withdraw rather than engage. As Roth the narrator comments on the attitude of the *Heimkehrer*:

> Wir waren nicht nur müde und halbtot, als wir heimkamen, wir waren auch gleichgültig. Wir sind es noch. Wir vergaben nicht unseren Vätern wie wir den jüngeren Generationen nicht vergeben, die uns nachrücken, ehe wir noch unsere Plätze hatten. Wir vergeben nicht, wir vergessen. Oder noch besser: *Wir vergessen nicht, wir sehen gar nicht. Wir geben nicht acht. Es ist uns gleichgültig*. (JRW, IV, 604)

This sense of numbness and inability to engage with the world around them underlines the position of the *Heimkehrer* as the lost generation, and in the novel the intradiegetic Roth is one of them. It would seem that the lack of a sense of engagement in the novel may also stem from the fact that Roth the novelist has produced a narrator who himself has withdrawn from the text.

3.3.3 Fiction 1926-1929: Summary

In *Flucht ohne Ende* Roth employs Heuristic Visuals mainly in the form of snapshots to convey the feelings of alienation and disenchantment of the *Heimkehrer*, Franz Tunda. Roth also uses visual techniques to draw the reader's attention to the emergent dangers in the fragile society of post-war Germany. While the use of Heuristic Visuals in *Flucht ohne Ende* is infrequent compared to the novels of the earlier period, the Heuristic Visuals are even less frequent in *Zipper und sein Vater*. The latter focuses on the inability of the *Heimkehrer* to communicate – a theme which offered Roth relatively opportunity for the use of Heuristic Visuals.

3.4 Chapter Three Conclusion

There are no thematic correspondences between the Heuristic Visuals in the selected reportage and novels of this period. However, in both genres Roth continues to use different variants of Heuristic Visuals to engage the reader and provide insights into modernity. In the articles dealing with the press, Roth employs visual techniques to highlight the manipulative nature of newspaper journalism, and the willingness of the majority of the public to accept a constructed and sanitized presentation of reality. One can see Roth's Heuristic Visuals in these articles as an attempt to counteract the passivity of the modern public, and encourage them to adopt a more critical approach to their daily diet of atomized reality.

In both *Flucht ohne Ende* and *Zipper und sein Vater*, although there is a lower frequency of Heuristic Visuals than in the earlier novels, Roth employs Heuristic Visuals to convey the alienation experienced by the protagonists, Tunda and Zipper, after their return from the First World War. In both novels Roth does use Heuristic Visuals in relation to other issues, such as the Russian revolution and German Nationalism/Romanticism in *Flucht ohne Ende*, and the social aspirations of the bourgeoisie in *Zipper und sein Vater*. However, the key common theme is the inability of the *Heimkehrer* to reintegrate and find a place for themselves in the world. In the two portrayals Roth indicates that Tunda's

alienation is more clearly a result of external factors, whereas Zipper's alienation is also coupled with an active withdrawal from the world. While Tunda's sight of the Parisian crowd is mediated through the 'bedrohliche Fensterscheibe', Zipper's gaze averts itself, like the cork gun, and so prevents any clear perception and engagement with his environment.

As well as their sense of alienation, Roth also uses Heuristic Visuals to highlight the brief sense of belonging which the two men are able to experience – Tunda in the side streets of Paris, and Zipper in the coffee house. Yet, through the use of Heuristic Visuals, Roth also indicates that the harmony which Tunda and Zipper feel can only be transient – the fairytale world of the backstreets of Paris is soon superseded by the alienating harsh reality of capitalism on the Champs Elysées, and the hermetically-sealed coffee house remains only a place of refuge, and cannot conceal Zipper's ultimate superfluousness in the society that exists outside it. The image of the small girls on the Champs Elysées, self-assured and confident, provides a stark contrast to the awkwardness and sense of detachment experienced by both Tunda and Zipper.

Thus, although Roth makes less frequent use of Heuristic Visuals in these two works, they do contain examples of how Roth's visual technique can convey meaning to the reader. Although the influence of *Neue Sachlichkeit* on Roth can be seen in both these novels, as Jürgen Heizmann argues, Roth's writing during this period does not follow the *Neue Sachlichkeit* tendency of attempting to produce a dispassionate photographic reproduction of reality:

> Die bisherigen Betrachtungen haben aber gleichfalls gezeigt, wie sehr die Texte Roths rhetorisch durchgearbeitet, wie sehr sie doch 'komponiert' sind. Dieser Stilwille rührt daher, daß Roth nicht, wie die Neue Sachlichkeit fordert, die Dinge gleichgültig registriert wie ein Kamera; er schreibt nicht teilnahmslos und auch nicht tendenziös, aber in dem was er schreibt, ist ein Wertzentrum auszumachen. Denn das Ideelle wird in seinen Romanen nicht geleugnet, es ist vielmehr […] im Konkreten eingeschlossen.[199]

The *Heimkehrer* themselves may have returned from the war indifferent to the world around them, and unable to engage with their environment, but Roth's

[199] Heizmann, p. 113.

engagement with the world around him and his ability to convey meaning through concrete visuals continued during the late 1920s. As Bronsen notes, the *Neue Sachlichkeit* movement was not consonant with Roth's talents and proved to be somewhat of an artistic dead-end: 'Sein Vorhaben, den "modernen Roman" im Zeichen der Neuen Sachlichkeit zu gestalten, kann Roth nur zum Teil verwirklichen, denn die Voraussetzungen hierfür stehen zu wenig im Einklang mit seinen eigentlichen Antrieben.'[200] The foregoing investigation of the use of visual techniques in the relevant novels confirms this conclusion.

[200] Bronsen, *Biographie*, p. 293.

Chapter Four: Reportage and Fiction 1930-1932

4.1 Introduction

Between 1930 and 1932 Roth produced his two best known novels: *Hiob* and *Radetzkymarsch*.[201] Although his previous novels had been generally well-received by the critical press, they had not enjoyed the level of commercial success which *Hiob* now heralded. Although these two novels mark a shift in thematic focus from the 1920s fiction (see 4.3.1), as Fritz Hackert points out, the themes of Eastern European Jewry (*Hiob*) and the Habsburg Empire (*Radetzkymarsch*) had their precursors in Roth's non-fiction of the late 1920s.[202] What was a significant change, however, is that Roth's breakthrough as a *Romancier* corresponded with a decline in the number of reportage articles, and by 1932 his journalistic output was less than half that of 1929.

In the first quarter of 1930 the bulk of Roth's reportage appeared in the conservative *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, which he had joined after leaving the *FZ* in the summer of 1929. It is widely held that his move to the *MNN* was for financial reasons, and did not signal either a shift to the left in the politics of the paper, nor a shift to the right in Roth's own *Weltanschauung*. Having written some thirty articles for the *MNN*, mainly on aspects of everyday culture and entertainment,[203] he left the paper at the beginning of May 1930, whereupon he reestablished contact with Benno Reifenberg at the *Frankfurter Zeitung*.[204] By July 1930 Roth had negotiated the serialization of *Hiob* in the *FZ*, and his articles began appearing again in the feuilleton section in November of the same year.

In these last three years before the beginning of his exile in 1933, Roth continues to engage with the cultural phenomena of modernity in his journalistic writings, and his concerns with the sanitization and depersonalization of modern

[201] *Hiob*, JRW, V, 3-136. First published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 14 September to 21 October 1930. First published in book form, Berlin: Kiepenheuer, 1930. *Radetzkymarsch*, JRW, V, 139-455. First published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 17 April to 9 July 1932 (Sunday, *Zweites Morgenblatt*). First published in book form, Berlin: Kiepenheuer, 1932.
[202] See Hackert, JRW, V, 889.
[203] See for example, 'Der Primgeiger' (JRW, III, 179-181), 'Berliner Vergnügungsindustrie' (JRW, III, 211-215), and 'Der Zauberer' (JRW, III, 164-167).
[204] See Bronsen, *Biographie*, pp. 378-379.

life remain.[205] While Roth still uses Heuristic Visuals in many of his articles on everyday culture and popular entertainment, this is not the case with regard to his journalism on the theme of writers and writing.[206] What is striking is that in his reportage Roth does not respond in the same way to the economic crisis of 1929/30 and the increasing political tension in Germany as he did to the crisis years of the early twenties. There are no articles which deal with the suffering of ordinary people and the stark visuality of that suffering. This may in part be explained by his employment with the *MNN*, albeit that the paper did not have exclusive rights over his journalistic output. Later in September 1931 Roth does engage with the political situation and challenges the narrow concept of nationalism espoused by the right-wing in his article 'Bekenntnis zu Deutschland' (JRW, III, 391-395). However, here Roth employs the rational discourse of the essay – a form which he increasingly turned to during his exile years.

Although *Hiob* and *Radetzkymarsch* signal a shift away from the *Zeitromane* of the 1920s, and the bulk of Roth's reportage during these years continues to focus on aspects of modernity, nevertheless there are certain thematic correspondences between some of the reportage written during this period and the novels. Three reportage articles which reflect this have been chosen for closer analysis: 'Die Scholle' (JRW, III, 167-169), 'Kleine polnische Station' (JRW, III, 291-293) and 'Eisenbahn' (JRW, III, 462-464).[207]

4.2 Reportage 1930-32

4.2.1 'Die Scholle'

Although Roth's articles for the *MNN* mainly deal with aspects of everyday culture, in his 1930 article 'Die Scholle' Roth challenges the right-wing concept of *Heimat* and the appropriation of the word *Scholle* into the discourse of

[205] See for example, 'Das Vaterhaus' (JRW, III, 193-195), 'Die Girls II' (JRW, III, 201-203) and 'Die Schönheitskönigin' (JRW, III, 169-171).
[206] See for example, 'Wirkungen der Literatur' (JRW, III, 177-179), and 'Gedicht von Verschollenen Büchern' (JRW, III ,353-356).
[207] 'Die Scholle' first published in *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, 29 January 1930, 'Kleine polnische Station' first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 22 February 1931, and 'Eisenbahn' first published in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 10 September 1932.

nationalist propaganda. The slogan *Zurück zur Scholle* was part of the language of *Heimatdichtung* which was a precusor to the *Blut und Boden* literature of the Nazi period.[208] The phrase *Blut und Boden* existed before Hitler adopted it, and was originally less anti-Semitic in its connotations. It was used by the nationalistic literary movement, exemplified by Friedrich Griese among others, which promoted nostalgic and idealized depictions of German peasant life. However, the Nazi *Blut und Boden* ideology, as developed by Walther Darré,[209] was used as a moral justification for the expulsion of Jews and non-Germans from German soil. In the Nazi context the term emphasizes a group of people's right to live on the soil (land) from which they claim to descend. Therefore the National Socialists stigmatized the Jews as a race without roots or native land who did not belong in Germany. Although in 'Die Scholle' Roth does not make explicit reference to the specifics of the narrow nationalist concept of *Heimat* and its anti-Semitic connotations, his agenda in challenging it can be inferred from the contemporary circumstances.

Roth begins the article with the observation that the word *Scholle* is being used as a '*pars pro toto*'. He is, however, aware that the right-wing writers and politicians employ the word to represent not the physical 'whole' of the earth itself, but a 'whole' which is a cultural and political construct. Roth satirically highlights how the word is being used by the *Heimatdichtung* writers as a term to represent their literature in contrast to what they pejoratively label *Asphaltliteratur*. The latter is set in the modern urban context and is seen by the proponents of *Heimatdichtung* as decadent because of the denaturization of humans in the cities. Politicians use the word *Scholle* as a symbol, a polemical tool for propaganda purposes, drawing attention away from the complexities of the concepts of 'Natur- und Erdnähe' (JRW, III, 167). The artificiality of the language used in this appropriation, such as 'Schollenduft' and 'schollennah', is highlighted by Roth through the creation of his own absurd neologisms to refer

[208] See Ernst Loewy, *Literatur unterm Hakenkreuz: Das Dritte Reich und seine Dichtung* (Frankfurt a. M.: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1966), pp. 105-112.
[209] Darré was to go on to become *Reichsbauernführer* in the Third Reich. See Peter Zimmermann, 'Kampf um den Lebensraum. Ein Mythos der Kolonial- und der Blut-und-Boden-Literatur', in *Die Deutsche Literatur im Dritten Reich*, ed. by Horst Denkler and Karl Prümm (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1976), pp. 165-182 .

to city life – 'Asphaltgestank', 'schollenfremd' and 'asphaltnah' (JRW, III, 167). The last two are especially incongruous formulations designed to disturb the reader's complacency.

Roth rejects the transformation of the word into a symbolic abstraction, robbed of its intrinsic qualities, and guides the reader to focus instead on the concrete reality of the *Scholle* in its simplest physcial form. He is direct about this: 'Unsere Aufgabe wird es nun sein, eine wirkliche Scholle in die Hand zu nehmen und zu betrachten' (JRW, III, 167). The reader is presented with a description of the variations in colour, texture and size that will naturally occur, influenced by the type of soil and the effects of natural phenomena such as the rain, sun, wind and seasons. By means of a visual focus on these physical variations, Roth challenges the notion of a 'uniform' abstraction. Roth is nevertheless aware that a *Scholle* is endowed with a significance that goes beyond its physical characteristics. It is 'etwas Heiliges', but it is so because of the physical whole that it is part of, namely the entire world: 'Immer ist sie etwas Heiliges, eben ein Stück Erde, ein kleiner Teil der großen Erde, auf der alle Menschen zu Hause sind, und ein kleiner Teil unserer heimatlichen Erde, auf der unser Volk zu Hause ist' (JRW, III, 167-168). Here Roth recognizes as legitimate people's emotional and spiritual attachment to their homeland; however, it is the universal homeland of the whole world which he privileges. He then returns his focus to the object of the *Scholle* itself: 'In der Scholle, die wir in die Hand nehmen, ist der Duft eines ganzen Ackers enthalten, der herbe Geruch der Fruchtbarkeit, des Samens, der wahre Duft des Lebens also' (JRW, III, 168). Here the use of the first person plural engages the readers, and the evocation of the human senses of sight, touch and smell encourages them to draw on their own sensory experience, simultaneously deflating the idealizing bombast which takes the clod of earth as an abstraction. Roth then emphasizes the humble lump of earth's importance for the sustaining of human life in what we would now call the global ecosystem. He refers to the different smells which emanate from the soil as a consequence of different climatic events. Furthermore, he makes the link between the fresh water of the rain and the salt

water of the sea.[210] This underlines how the relationships of the one clod of earth extend beyond the boundaries of particular homelands, thus emphasizing the idea of the *Scholle* as an element of globality and not of localism.

Although Roth rejects the use of the term *Scholle* as an abstraction, he promotes the legitimacy of the symbolism of the *Scholle* in the customs of various peoples. For example, travellers on long journeys take a clod of soil from their homeland with them, and soil from their homeland may be placed in the graves of those buried in foreign countries. It is important to note that the symbolism here is not that of the rhetoric practised by the politicians. This symbolism is embodied in customs which are based upon the object of the *Scholle* itself – it is a symbolism which thrives on the *Scholle*'s very tangibility. Roth then employs the well-worn metaphor of having roots in the soil, but does so in such a way as to bring out the complexity of people's relationship to the concept of homeland – a complexity which is obscured by the discourse of the nationalists. People are nourished by the soil from which they come through customs, practices and socialization. However, Roth uses a dialectical representation (see 1.3.3) in that he at first asserts that people are 'in einem bestimmten Teil der Erde unsichtbar, unerklärbar verwurzelt' (JRW, III, 168), and then thwarts the expectations which he has set up in the reader by going on to say that we are actually different from trees because: 'die Menschen auch in Ländern heimisch werden [können], in denen sie nicht geboren worden sind [...]' (JRW, III, 168).

Visually, the dialectic is enhanced further by juxtaposing the image of roots with that of flight in the reference to aeroplanes and air balloons. Roth indicates that advances in modern technology will not stop us from being 'Kinder der Erde, aus Staub gemacht, aus dem Staub, der ein leichtsinniger Sohn der Erde ist' (JRW, III, 168). Roth simultaneously evokes the universal fate of humanity and the specific Judaeo-Christian tradition. This earth that we return to is the eternal earth, it is elemental and religious, not geographically specific. The paradoxical relationship of characters to the idea of a homeland is a recurring theme in *Radetzkymarsch*, and the final return to the eternal earth is central to

[210] In Roth's 1937 novel *Der Leviathan* the theme of the link between the marshes and the ocean plays a prominent part.

the novel's epilogue (see 4.3.2.3). 'Die Scholle' culminates with a strong claim to *Heimatrecht* on behalf of all the wandering or displaced: 'Wer seinen Vater in fremder Erde versenkt, der besitzt ein Heimatrecht in der fremden Erde, mit der er durch seinen Vater verwachsen ist für alle Zeiten' (JRW, III, 168). Thus Roth propounds an idea of *Heimat* which is cultural, not national, and is transferable and inclusive. This is consistent with his anti-Zionist position, and he believed that the Jews had the advantage and merit that they could become an *Übernation*.[211]

In 'Die Scholle' Roth is not questioning the concept of *Heimat*, but he is dialectically challenging the reader to question how it is constructed. The criticisms of Klaus Westermann and Wolf Marchand overlook the effectiveness of this strategy. Westermann argues that the *Scholle* symbolized for Roth 'ein Stück Gegenwelt zum Reich der Maschinen',[212] and quotes with apparent agreement accusations that Roth's idealization of the peasant way of life helped to contribute to the 'geistigen Nährboden' of German fascism.[213] Marchand views Roth's focus on the intrinsic qualities of the *Scholle* as laughable and ineffective in the face of actual Nazi aggression.[214] However, Roth's focus on the varying physical characteristics of a clod of earth and the associated customs serves to debunk the Nazi idea of a unified German soil. He does not polemicize or employ political discourse, but appeals to the reader's tacit knowledge. This example of Roth's reportage exemplifies Nadine Gordimer's comment that 'Roth manages to convey complicated political concepts without their vocabulary of didacticism, rhetoric, and jargon'.[215] Given that Roth was writing for a conservative newspaper and thus addressing a mainly conservative readership, the unsettling dialectical approach can be seen as a more effective strategy than a direct polemic.

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[211] In his 1929 article 'Betrachtung an der Klagemauer' (JRW, III, 86-89), Roth writes: 'Sie lehnen sich gegen sich selbst auf, indem sie eine "Heimstätte" suchen. Sie sind keine Nation, sie sind eine Übernation, vielleicht die vorweggenommene, zukünftige Form der Nation überhaupt' (JRW, III, 87).
[212] Westermann, p. 176.
[213] Westermann, p. 176.
[214] Wolf Marchand, *Joseph Roth und völkisch-nationalistische Wertbegriffe* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1974), p. 165.
[215] Nadine Gordimer, 'Introduction', in *The Radetzky March* (London: Penguin, 1995), pp. vii-xx (p. xi).

4.2.2 'Kleine polnische Station'

In Roth's 1931 article 'Kleine polnische Station' he presents the reader with a detailed depiction of a small rural train station. The structure of the reportage reflects the intense visual and thematic focus – the main body of the article is one paragraph. (In the *Werke* the paragraph is more than two pages of text.) Thus the reader is drawn into the text, with the demarcation of the feuilleton section focusing their sensory gaze and the intense visual focus channelling their cognitive gaze (see 1.5.2). Also, the extensive use of hypotaxis not only creates a sense of unity and harmony within the text, which conveys Roth's positive view of his subject matter, it also guides the reader towards a seamless reading of the text. Here Roth does not employ the techniques of the 'optischer Schrei' or an unsettling dialectical representation, rather throughout the text he makes appeals to the reader's visual, auditory and olfactory senses. In the text as a whole Roth evokes a precise and almost complete sensory experience for the reader, and so activates the reader's own sensory responses (see Sadoski's comments on mulitmodal imagery in 1.3.3.2.2).

Although the station is connected to 'der großen Welt' by its three tracks, the outside world is unaware of the existence of the station. However, by depicting the station building, the staff and passengers, the locomotives and the rural setting, Roth brings the station to the awareness of his metropolitan readers. He highlights not only the fact that it is not the sleepy, uneventful place which one might imagine, but also draws attention to it as a site of convergence between the industrial and the rural, the technological and the human. This connection between spheres is encapsulated in the two sides of the station building – the 'amtliche' and the 'dörfliche'.

The station building is initially described as being like a cottage rather than an official building – although Roth does not refer to train stations in cities, the contrast is implicit. There is a homely atmosphere with flowers growing and gentle plumes of smoke coming from the chimneys: '[…] der friedliche Rauch, der Sommer und Winter, an Vor- und Nachmittagen aus ihren zwei weißen Schornsteinen, bald grau, bald bläulich und bald violett, gegen den Himmel

stieg, war wie ein stummes, gütiges, grüßendes Signal des Privaten, des Menschlichen, des Häuslichen, ja des Dörflichen' (JRW, III, 291). Here Roth evokes a peaceful image of domesticity in which the reference to constancy throughout the seasons and times of day points to continuities in the human sphere. He attributes positive human 'social qualities' to this smoke, and by using the term 'Signal' rather than 'Zeichen' he introduces the connotation of railway signals, and sets up a contrast with the later unsympathetic description of the actual railway signals. Roth then juxtaposes the domestic smoke with that produced by the locomotives: 'Dieser Rauch, geboren in geheizten Öfen und in brennenden Kochherden, war ein sehr entfernter, fast feindlich entfernter Verwandter der gelblichgrauen, dicken und wilden Schwaden, die vorne, an der amtlichen Front der Station, den Lokomotiven entströmten, ungebärdig und elementar' (JRW, III, 291). There are phenomenal differences in the smoke from the two different sources, domestic and industrial – the smoke from the station has its greyness tinged with tones of blue and violet, whereas the industrial smoke is a yellowy grey, suggestive of chemical gases. Also the gentle plumes of smoke rising into the sky from the chimneys contrasts with the great thick clouds that are belched out of the train with force and urgency. The metaphor of the types of smoke as 'fast feindlich entfernter Verwandter' (JRW, III, 291) draws attention to factors of commonality, but also to the way close connection and conflict can be intimately related. Moreover, Roth's assertion that 'die Verwandschaft zwischen beiden keine nähere als etwa zwischen Katze und Panther [war]' (JRW, III, 291), together with the forcefulness attributed to the locomotive smoke, suggests paradoxically that industry is the wild element, and that technology is therefore a potential threat.

Later in the text Roth points to the station as a place of convergence where there is a synthesis between the industrial and the domestic. It is a marginal place which wholly belongs in neither sphere but is an interchange for the arrivals and departures of peoples, goods and cultures: waiting passengers can hear at the same time the whistles of passing locomotives and the noises of the geese and chickens in the station master's yard (JRW, III, 292). Roth then uses a concentrated and extended appeal to our visual, auditory and olfactory senses to highlight the integration of the industrial and natural elements in this site:

> Manchmal roch man auch durch den Dunst der Kohle den scharfen, süßlichen Dung von den Feldern, den feuchten Regenduft des Tangs aus den nahen Sümpfen, man hörte, schon im Zuge sitzend, ein fernes Sirren der Sensen, ein Wiehern der Pferde, ein Grunzen der Schweine und das Blöken des Hornviehs, den Gesang eines Hirtenbuben, rhythmisches Quaken der Frösche und das schleifende Wispern der Grillen. Eingebettet in die Geräusche des Ländlichen waren die Rufe des Zugverkehrs, der Technik, der großen, entfernten Welt, die schwarzgelben Sonnenblumen standen hinter dem dunkelgrünen Zaun und blickten mit breiten, sonnigen Gesichtern auf den Glanz der Schienen und das dunkle Eisen der Wagons, dahinter wartete, langsam wachsend, geduldig der junge Holunderstrauch, und die strohblonden Kinder der Eisenbahner spielten Murmeln mit dem Schotter, den jede Woche die Bahnwärter zwischen die grasbewachsenen Schienen streuten. (JRW, III, 293-294)

In this passage Roth not only evokes the sounds and smells of the rural idyll, but shows the possibility of their coexistence with the industrial and the modern by setting them in the context of railway travel. The use of onomatopoeia conveys a landscape teeming with life, and the use of the impersonal pronoun 'man' encourages an active sensory response in the reader. Also, the references to human activity within the rural setting (the shepherd boy and the movement of the scythes) and the implicit passenger in the train, point to the integration of humans in both the industrial and natural spheres. Roth then refers to the sounds of the railways being 'eingebettet in die Geräusche des Ländlichen', thereby not only semantically but also prosodically integrating the locomotive into this rural setting – the rhythm imitates that of a steam engine starting up. The movements of the steam engine are further echoed in the assonance and alliteration of the 's'. Furthermore, the personification of the sunflowers and the elder bush underlines the sense of integration among the industrial, rural and human spheres. This is enhanced by the image of the children playing with the gravel – they have integrated it into their way of life so that it functions as a toy, not merely as part of the industrial system of track maintenance.[216]

[216] This image echoes the efforts of the military in *Radetzkymarsch*, as they try in vain to control the muddy roads by means of gravel. See 4.3.2.1.

In the final paragraph Roth completes the progression of ideas from that of potential conflict, through harmony in exchange, to actual symbiosis. He depicts the organic whole formed by the railway and the countryside as growing and giving birth to new life: 'Überall wuchs es und sproßte, gebar sich etwas neu, winzig und einfach, gütig und fromm' (JRW, III, 293). However, the signal communication system continues to expose the otherwise harmonious rural sphere to the interference of the 'eilfertigen Welt' (JRW, III, 193). The hurried rhythm of Roth's prose evokes the hectic tapping of the signals and the restless world from which they come. This hurried rhythm slows towards the end of the sentence as Roth personifies the stations dotted throughout the unending countryside as fair sisters – their unifying effect being felt not only over geographical areas but also in the convergence of the technological and the human. Thus the rhythms and cycles of nature continue through this symbiosis: '[das Land] blühte und schlief, schlief und blühte-' (JRW, III, 293).

4.2.3 'Eisenbahn'

Roth's 1932 article 'Eisenbahn' laments the loss of the mysterious and magical quality of the old railways. People's initial fascination with them has now waned and they are no longer regarded with curiosity and reverence. Roth literarizes the railway and evokes the musical and magical qualities of the old technology, assimilating it into the natural sphere. He uses the first person and makes more use of a narrative style than in 'Kleine polnische Station'. In 'Eisenbahn' the function of the Heuristic Visuals is not that of recreating the immediacy of a complete sensory experience for the reader, but of evoking a rich texture of memories that draws attention to the magical aura which has now been lost.

Roth comments on the power of the railway culture to transfer its magical qualities on to mundane everyday objects, such that they were transformed and 'erschienen gehüllt in den wunderbaren gelblich-grauen Dunst der Steinkohle und umwittert von den schrillen kurzen und den langen wehmütig heulenden Pfiffen der Lokomotive' (JRW, III, 462). Thus the mundane is enveloped in the magical and romantic aura of the railways, just as the station is suffused with

the smoke and sounds of the locomotives. Roth cites the specific example of the ticket punch. Profane items such as ordinary pliers are imbued with a unique charm on account of their actual resemblance to the ticket punch of the conductor. He then focuses on the ticket punch itself and lifts it from a lowly object to one of great importance – its function is to legitimate the traveller's ticket. Roth deepens the visual focus by concentrating on the minute detail of the hole which the punch makes in the ticket, and highlights its symbolic significance:

> Die zauberhafte Kraft, die geheimen großen Tore einer unendlich blauen Ferne zu öffnen, bekam die Fahrkarte erst durch das magische Zeichen des kleinen, hellen, luftigen Kreises, das ihr die Knipszange verlieh. Durch diesen winzigen Kreis erst konnte man die weite Welt schauen; oder umgekehrt: einladend konnte die ganze reiche blaue und grüne Welt durch dieses Loch der Fahrkarte auf den Reisenden blicken. (JRW, III, 463)

Roth continues the theme of the mysterious and magical, but the visual shift is to a wider perspective. The visual contrast between the tiny circle made by the ticket punch and the unending expanses of land highlights the paradox that such a small physical 'opening' signifies the metaphorical and literal unlocking of access to the wider world. This is further underlined by the assonance and alliteration of the 'l', which creates a sense of lightness, contrasting with the heaviness of the 'Tore' suggested by the alliteration of the 'g' and the assonance of the 'o'. In addition, the presentation of an imaginary reciprocal relationship between the passenger and the wider world suggests a metaphysical connection, and in so doing emphasizes the possibility of unity and harmony. Roth thus highlights the railway's positive role in connecting people and places.

Roth uses a combination of Heuristic Visuals and appeals to the auditory sense in the section in which he laments the reduction in the number of signals on the railways today compared to the past. (At this point in the text Roth specifically refers to Austria, invoking the importance of the railway network as a unifying force in the Habsburg Empire of 'damals'.) He complains that the wealth of melodies created by the 'wohltönenden Instrumente' has been virtually silenced – now the signals are only 'dirigiert' by optical signs (JRW, III, 463). The

orchestra metaphor points to the melodic nature of the sounds – they are not a cacophony, nor are they the monotonous rhythm of the heavy machinery of the production line. Roth then distinguishes the different sources and sounds of these 'verheißungsvolle Lieder', beginning with the clattering morse machine and a high-pitched bell. While these less melodic sounds are only briefly referred to, Roth then employs an extended nature metaphor: the sonorous tones of the platform's heavy iron bell are likened to bursts of birdsong – the bell itself being 'ein alter rostiger Vogel' (JRW, III, 463). Thus Roth suggests that for humans, the old signalling system blended easily into the environment. This is underlined by the visual focus on the precise, measured movements of the external bell clapper and the suggestion that one would not question why it was moving. The focus then moves from the platform to the wider station area:

> Indessen pfiffen und johlten rangierende Lokomotiven auf entfernten Nebengleisen, es zischte aus den Ventilen, es knirschte und kreischte auf den Schienen, und aus ganz weiter Ferne klang der melodische Schlag eines Hammers gegen gelockerte Nieten – ähnlich dem Ruf einer Waldschmiede. Über all dem – weil es keine der modernen "Hallen" von heute war, sondern ein offener Bahnhof – sangen im Sommer die Lerchen, krächzten im Winter die Raben. Also eingebaut in die Natur war unser Bahnhof, und alle seine Stimmen harmonierten mit ihren Stimmen. (JRW, III, 464)

The personification of the trains singing out loud with joy is suggestive of the playful exuberance of young children. Roth not only employs onomatopoeia to imitate the sounds of the locomotives; the alliteration and assonance of the 'sch' in the onomatpoeia directly links these sounds to the melodic clanging of the hammer. Thus Roth connects the industrious activity of trains and humans, pointing to the possibility of harmonious coexistence. This is emphasized by the reference to the 'Ruf einer Waldschmiede' which evokes a poetic rural idyll. The sounds are not working in a spatial framework; unlike in the modern 'enclosed' stations where they could be acoustically distorted, here they are carried through the open air. Moreover, the absence of a physical barrier enables these sounds to mingle with those of the songs of the birds overhead. For Roth the noise and culture of the railways are not alien sounds in the landscape, but echo those of the rural environment. As in 'Kleine polnische Station', he is drawing attention to how the railway culture facilitates the integration between

the natural and the industrial spheres. The two choruses – the rural and the industrial sing in harmony throughout the seasons.

In the final paragraph, Roth returns to the idea of the railway opening up the world, and evokes the excitement and anticipation of boarding the train.[217] He then draws together the three themes of the magical, musical and natural: the reference to the compartment doors as 'Sesam-Türen' (JRW, III, 463) continues the magical theme; the personification of the train – the windows are big square eyes and the curtains are eyelids – presents the train as closer to humans than to the other industrial machinery; there is a chorus of different whistles; and the reference to the conductor's whistle as a 'winziges schrilles Vögelchen' echoes the extended nature metaphor of the previous paragraph. The train is ready to depart, the chief guard blows his horn, and Roth comments: 'Der Sang des Postillions lebte noch darin' (JRW, III, 464). This allusion to a pre-industrial age suggests that Roth regards the railways as a natural progression, as if the stagecoach has evolved into the train.

4.2.4 Reportage 1930-1932: Summary

The use of Heuristic Visuals in 'Die Scholle' serves Roth's dialectical technique employed in laying bare the constructed nature of *Heimat*. He thus challenges the simplistic and racist assumptions underlying the Nazi concept of *Heimat* within their *Blut und Boden* ideology. This use of Heuristic Visuals may be contrasted with their use in the two railway articles. In 'Kleine polnische Station' and 'Eisenbahn' Roth employs Heuristic Visuals to portray the railways in a positive light. He uses different variants in the two pieces: in 'Kleine polnische Station' he uses multi-modal imagery to recreate a complete sensory experience for the reader, while in 'Eisenbahn' he weaves visual details into the text to evoke memory. Despite their origins in early industrialization, Roth locates the railways nearer to the pre-industrial world. He does not equate them with the destruction of the landscape and the dehumanization of people. Rather, he presents them as a locus within which technology and humanity can find a

[217] In *Radetzkymarsch* Roth conveys Carl Joseph's sense of excitement as he gets off the train in Vienna. For Carl Joseph the imperial capital is like a distant, foreign land compared to the border town where he is stationed. See JRW, V, 374.

mutual accommodation. He celebrates the liberating potential for humans of geographical mobility, and the opening up of far-off places, and highlights the unifying function of the railways, both in his Habsburg homeland, where they connected centre and periphery, and in the wider world where they still connect cultures and peoples.

4.3 Fiction 1930-32

4.3.1 *Hiob: Roman eines einfachen Mannes*

While earlier critics categorized Roth's fictional works into two distinct, separate periods, with 1930 being regarded as a clear turning-point,[218] later analyses have shown that this is too simplistic a view. There are in fact many continuities which connect Roth's early and later work.[219] However, *Hiob* does mark a turning-point in Roth's fiction writing, in that it signals a break from the influence of 'Neue Sachlichkeit',[220] and also the end of Roth's examination of the *Heimkehrer* theme and the problems of post-war society. *Hiob* also proved to be a great success with the reading public at the time, with over thirty thousand copies sold.[221] In the novel Roth employs the simple, timeless style of a legend, particularly in the earlier sections, and elsewhere the prose is more lyrical than in the previous novels. Roth himself said of the novel that 'zum ersten Mal [...] meine Melodie eine andere ist, als die der Neuen Sachlichkeit, die mich bekannt gemacht hat.'[222]

In *Hiob*, which opens a few years before the outbreak of the First World War,

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[218] For example, Hermann Kesten asserts: '[Roths] Romane lassen zwei scharf getrennte künstlerische Perioden erkennen, zuerst die des Skeptikers und Neuerers und Revolteurs, danach die des Gläubigen und Klassizisten und Konservativen.' Hermann Kesten, 'Der Mensch Joseph Roth', in *Joseph Roth Leben und Werk: Ein Gedächtnisbuch*, ed. by Hermann Kesten (Cologne: Kiepenheuer, 1949), pp. 15-26 (p. 20).

[219] Juergens highlights the continuities with regard to the socio-critical aspects in Roth's writing. See especially Juergens, pp. 119-120. While Andreas Wirthensohn argues: 'Berücksichtigt man Roths theoretische Äußerungen bei der Interpretation, so lassen sich in seinem Schaffen eher Kontinuitäten statt der häufig beschworenen Brüche ausmachen.' See Wirthensohn, p. 268.

[220] In the middle of January 1930 Roth published a polemical essay 'Schluß Mit Der Neuen Sachlichkeit' (JRW, III, 153-164) in which he explicitly rejected the *Neue Sachlichkeit* movement, and called for an end to the unquestioning privileging of the factual and the documentary.

[221] Bronsen, *Biographie*, pp. 389 f.

[222] Quoted in Bronsen, *Biographie*, p. 381.

Roth deals with the fate of a poor Russian Jew, Mendel Singer. Mendel, who teaches young children the Torah and the Talmud, lives an impoverished existence in the small Russian town of Zuchnow, with his wife Deborah and four children – Jonas, Schemarjah, Mirjam and Menuchim. The novel opens with the birth of the youngest child Menuchim, who is born a cripple. Deborah decides to go to a *Wunderrabbi*, in her desperation to find a cure for her son, and the rabbi prophesies that, although it will take many years, Meunchim will be cured. However, he also warns Deborah that they must not abandon Menuchim, even if he is a burden. (Deborah tells Mendel of the prophecy that Menuchim will be cured, but does not disclose the rabbi's warning.)

Whereas Mendel's life had previously followed an uneventful course,[223] Menuchim's birth signals the beginning of a series of blows which fate deals Mendel and his family. The two older sons are called up for military service in the Russian army, and while Jonas is happy to leave and lead a military life, Deborah pays for Schemarjah to be smuggled across the border to avoid conscription. Schemarjah travels to America, where he is relatively successful financially, and then sends word for the rest of the family to follow. Mendel at first rules out emigrating, arguing that Menuchim cannot make the journey. However, when he discovers Mirjam's affair with a Cossack from the nearby barracks he decides that they must leave for America, and arranges for Menuchim to be left in the care of friends. Thus Mendel decides to abandon his own son in the belief that this will save Mirjam from disgrace. He justifies his decision to Deborah by arguing that by going to America, they can help Mirjam, whereas only God can help Menuchim: 'Menuchim ist krank, daß ihm nur ein Wunder helfen kann. Hilft ihm aber ein Wunder, so kann er uns folgen' (JRW, V, 59).

Although there is a significantly higher frequency of Heuristic Visuals within *Hiob* than in any of the previous novels, Hermann Kesten's assertion that *Hiob* marks a change in Roth's fictional works from the epigrammatic to the visual ('An die Stelle des Epigramms tritt das Bild'[224]) is mistaken, as has been

[223] Juergens notes that although Mendel had been leading an impoverished life, it was one in which there was harmony and order. See Juergens, p. 120.
[224] Kesten, p. 21.

demonstrated. In *Hiob* the Heuristic Visuals mainly occur as passages of intense visual focus, either in the form of close-ups or scenes, rather than as visual snapshots. The sections in *Hiob* which have been chosen for closer analysis are Mendel's first experience of America, and the final chapter of the novel, after Mendel has been reunited with Menuchim.

4.3.1.1 Arrival in America

After the family's release from quarantine, Sam, as Schemarjah now calls himself, and his best friend Mac take the family on a tour of New York in a cart. Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to depict Mendel Singer's individual sensory experience of New York, rather than the physical concrete surfaces of the urban landscape. This is similar to *Flucht ohne Ende* where Roth conveys Tunda's perception of the German town, rather than focusing on the town itself. However, Roth employs different visual techniques to convey the different types of perception. Whereas in *Flucht ohne Ende* Roth uses visual snapshots to convey Tunda's disorientation and sense of alienation, here Roth reproduces Mendel Singer's entire sensory experience through Heuristic Visuals to show how his senses are completely overwhelmed by urban modernity. Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to evoke multiple senses (see 1.3.3.2.2) – he appeals not only to the reader's visual sense but also the olfactory, auditory and tactile senses. The relentless onslaught on Mendel's senses is in part reflected in the unbroken prose – the paragraph is a page and a half long, and in it Roth also uses accumulations to recreate the effect of sensory bombardment.

The aggressive and inhuman atmosphere perceived by Mendel is first introduced by the comparison of the cart in which they are travelling to an instrument of destruction: 'Der schwere Wagen ratterte über die Straßen mit einer wütenden Wucht, wie es Mendel Singer schien, als wäre es seine Absicht, Stein und Asphalt für ewige Zeiten zu zertrümmern und die Fundamente der Häuser zu erschüttern' (JRW, V, 73). There is no indication of the cart's ability to provide freedom and flexibility of travel. For Mendel, the cart's eternal purpose is one of destruction – the description is reminiscent of a machine used in heavy industry. The personification of the cart, and in particular the

alliterative reference to the 'wütende Wucht' suggests a physical power over which humans have no control, which contrasts here with Mendel Singer's passive role. The intensification of the image from the general ('Stein und Asphalt') to the specific (die Fundamente der Häuser), suggests the desecration of the architectural fabric of the city. Thus, Roth's image is all the more striking as it suggests the devastation of the very urban landscape which the new arrivals intend to view.[225]

The focus moves to Mendel Singer's direct sensory perceptions of his surroundings. Roth conveys Mendel's intense physical discomfort through a series of visual similes which create the impression of a hell-like inferno – a comparison later made explicit when he refers to the wind as 'der feurige Atem der Hölle' (JRW, V, 73). The leather seat of the cart is like a 'heißer Ofen' and the wooden handle of his umbrella is so hot 'als wäre er aus rotem Eisen' (JRW, V, 73). Roth also focuses on the inappropriateness of Mendel's traditional Jewish dress: his feet, encased in heavy boots covered with 'heimatliche[n] Galoschen', are burning 'wie in einem offenen Feuer', and 'die Hitze [glühte] wie graues, schmelzendes Blei durch die alte Mütze aus schwarzem Seidenrips auf den Schädel Mendels, drang in sein Gehirn und verlötete es dicht, mit feuchter, klebriger, schmerzlicher Glut' (JRW, V, 73). The juxtaposition of the image of the heavy, sluggish, molten lead with the silk of Mendel's cap underlines his human frailty and powerlessness, and the elaborated image of the lead penetrating his brain indicates the suppression of his cognitive faculties. Not only do the images evoke the biblical hell of Mendel Singer's religion, they also evoke the urban hell of industrial modernity – a modernity which stands in direct contrast to the idyllic landscapes of rural Russia[226] and the quiet small-town existence which Mendel had been leading. Indeed, Juergens asserts that Roth deliberately includes the arrival in America at the end of the 'Russian' part of the novel, '[…] um so eine Nebeneinanderdarstellung des modernen teuflischen New York mit dem alten gottesfürchtigen Gesellschaftsmilieu der

[225] Although here Roth's image of the cart shaking the foundations of the houses is surreal, the image is prescient in that a few decades later heavier vehicles began to cause architectural damage to buildings.
[226] See for example JRW, V, 20, and JRW, V, 34.

Ostjuden zu realisieren'.[227]

At the same time Roth conveys Mendel's inability to perceive visually the concrete aspects of the urban landscape around him: 'Vor den Augen Mendels wehte ein dicht gewebter Schleier aus Ruß, Staub und Hitze' (JRW, V, 73). Once again Roth indicates how the environment of urban modernity alienates the individual, and the impenetrability of the 'dicht gewebter Schleier' underlines the visual barrier between Mendel and his surroundings. Rosenfeld argues that in this part of the novel with respect to America, and in a previous section with respect to Russia, by depicting a milieu void of any concrete form or substance Roth indicates the Jews' foreignness and lack of connection to their environment.[228] However, here Roth is also revealing the alienating mechanisms of urban modernity to which humans in general were subjected (see 1.3.3.2 and 1.5.1). The sensory bombardment which Mendel Singer experiences prevents him from perceiving, and thus engaging with his environment – he cannot distinguish separate objects and the city seems an amorphous confusion.

The assault on Mendel's auditory sense also underlines the overwhelming and seemingly aggressive nature of his surroundings:

> Der Wind war kein Wind, er bestand aus Lärm und Geschrei, es war ein wehender Lärm. Er setzte sich zusammen aus einem schrillen Klingeln von hundert unsichtbaren Glocken, aus dem gefährlichen, metallenen Dröhnen der Bahnen, aus dem tutenden Rufen unzähliger Trompeten, aus dem flehentlichen Kreischen der Schienen an den Kurven der Streets, aus dem Gebrüll Macs, der durch einen übermächtigen Trichter seinen Passagieren Amerika erläuterte, aus dem Gemurmel der Menschen ringsum, aus dem schallenden Gelächter eines fremden Mitreisenden hinter Mendels Rücken, aus den unaufhörlichen Reden, die Sam in des Vaters Angesicht warf, Reden, die Mendel nicht verstand, zu denen er aber fortwährend nickte, ein furchtsames und zugleich freundliches Lächlen um die Lippen, wie eine schmerzende Klammer aus Eisen. (JRW, V, 73-74)

The reference to the sounds as a wind consisting of noise and screams indicates

[227] Juergens, p. 123.
[228] See Sidney Rosenfeld, '"Hiob": Glaube und Heimat im Bild des Raumes', in *Joseph Roth und die Tradition*, ed. by David Bronsen (Darmstadt: Agora, 1975), pp. 227-240 (p. 231f). Müller-Funk also refers to the alienation of the Eastern European Jews from their natural environment. See Müller-Funk, *Joseph Roth* (Munich: Beck, 1989), p. 124.

the distortion and superseding of nature within this urban modernity. In addition, it emphasizes the all-encompassing and overwhelming force of sound which Mendel is being subjected to. The use of anaphora and the listing of the sources of the noise one after the other replicates the endless attack on the auditory sense – an effect which is further heightened by the recurrent use of onomatopoeia. As Rosenfeld notes, the many prenominal adjectives serve to make the objects from which the sounds emanate seem even more strange and threatening, and the references to the 'hundert unsichtbaren Glocken', and the unzähliger Trompeten' indicate Mendel Singer's inability to distinguish individual objects or sounds.[229] Thus Roth conveys the complexity of the mosaic of urban auditory stimuli which is produced both by humans and their interaction with inanimate objects. The fact that Mac uses a loud speaker to make himself heard above the clamour of New York shows how humans do adapt to the urban environment. However, Mac here is a product of the process of urban socialization which has taken place over time, whereas Mendel Singer's senses are being exposed to this environment for the first time and are thus in a heightened state.[230] The effect of this sensory bombardment is encapsulated in the oxymoron of Mendel's smile – it is not a spontaneous emotional reaction born of pleasure, but a forced, involuntary smile resulting from disorientation. Furthermore, the comparison to a 'schmerzende Klammer aus Eisen' evokes images of a torture chamber, and reinforces the association of aggression with the assault on Mendel's senses.

Roth also reflects Mendel's disorientation in his description of the smells of the city. He uses the technique of accumulation to recreate the effect of the complex mixture of smells which assail Mendel's olfactory sense:

> Er roch den scharfen Teer aus dem schmelzenden Asphalt, den trockenen und spröden Staub in der Luft, den ranzigen und fetten Gestank aus Kanälen und Käsehandlungen, den beizenden Geruch von Zwiebeln, den süßlichen Benzinrauch der Autos, den fauligen Sumpfgeruch aus Fischhallen, die Maiglöckchen und das Chloroform von den Wangen des Sohnes. Alle Gerüche vermengten sich im heißen Brodem, der

[229] See Rosenfeld, 'Glaube und Heimat', p. 234.
[230] As noted in Chapter One, however, assimilation into the urban environment is achieved only at the cost of dehumanization. See 1.5.1.

> ihm entgegenschlug, mit dem Lärm, der seinen Ohren erfüllte und seinen Schädel sprengen wollte. Bald wußte er nicht mehr, was zu hören, zu sehen, zu riechen war. Er lächelte immer noch und nickte mit dem Kopfe. Amerika drang auf ihn ein, Amerika zerbrach ihn, Amerika zerschmetterte ihn. Nach einigen Minuten wurde er ohnmächtig. (JRW, V, 74)

The first two smells are ones which emanate from the physical environment, and Roth combines an appeal to the reader's olfactory sense with an appeal to the visual sense. The references to the melting asphalt and the brittle particles of dust suggest an environment which is unstable and lacking a definite form, and serve to reinforce Mendel's perception of the urban landscape as an amorphous confusion. This is followed by the smells which result from human activity, with the prenominal adjectives reflecting the mixture of pleasant and repellent smells to which Mendel is exposed. Roth also uses a form of zeugma to indicate Mendel's disorientation. He draws attention to the phenomenon whereby the attractive and the repellent can be very close together on a continuum of perception, but normally one's olfactory sense would be able to distinguish the pungent smell from the cheese shop as an attractive smell, whereas the smell coming from the drains would be too extreme and therefore disgusting. Here, however, Roth recreates Mendel's inability to discern one smell as distinct from the other. The lack of clear boundaries between smells is also emphasized by the reference to the smells of lily-of-the-valley and chloroform from Sam's cheeks. The attribution of both a natural and a chemical smell to Sam's aftershave indicates the artificial and manufactured nature of the aftershave – it may be trying to imitate a natural smell, but it does not quite succeed in reproducing it. Thus Roth shows how the senses can be deceived in this urban landscape, where the smell of flowers may emanate from factories and not fields.

Roth then returns to the extended hell metaphor, and refers to the miasma of smells as a 'heißer Brodem.' He makes Mendel's confusion and disorientation explicit, with the final result of the sensory overload being Mendel Singer's physical collapse. Unlike Tunda, whose alienation did not prevent him from perceiving concrete aspects of his environment in the small town, here Mendel's alienation results from his inability to perceive his surroundings at all. Furthermore, the alienation which Mendel experiences is more extreme than

Tunda's, for Mendel is not only alienated from his environment – when he recovers consciousness, he feels as if he is 'von sich selbst getrennt' (JRW, V, 75). In this section in *Hiob* Roth recreates the multiple assault on the senses from an initial exposure to urban modernity before the individual has had a chance to develop sensory accommodation. He does this through the use of Heuristic Visuals in combination with more specific sensory images which evoke and appeal to the auditory, tactile and olfactory senses.

4.3.1.2 A Modern Miracle?

After an initial period of good fortune in America, Mendel is brought to renounce God when he and his family are again dealt a series of blows by fate: Sam is killed in the war, fighting on the side of the Americans; Deborah is overcome with grief by Sam's death, and dies; Jonas who is fighting on the Russian side goes missing in action; and Mirjam becomes mentally ill. On his return from visiting Mirjam in the mental hospital, Mendel resolves to end his relationship with God. Although Mendel renounces God, like Andreas Pum in *Die Rebellion* he does not lose his belief in God, but rather his faith in him.[231] Despite entreaties from his friends not to give up hope and to think of his grandson (Sam's son), for Mendel the link between the generations has been severed by Sam's death: 'das Band ist zerrissen' (JRW, V, 105). Mendel withdraws from his faith and refuses to pray or follow the Jewish religious observances. However, Roth makes clear that Mendel's anger and rejection of his faith is in itself futile and ineffective: 'Aber es tat ihm weh, daß er nicht betete. Sein Zorn schmerzte ihn und die Machtlosigkeit dieses Zorns. Obwohl Mendel mit Gott böse war, herrschte Gott noch über die Welt' (JRW, V, 107). Not only does Mendel reject his religion, he also withdraws from life, and becomes a pitiable figure within his community. Unlike the biblical Job, who was a figure of note before his trials began, Mendel only becomes a recognized figure within the community due to his misfortune: 'Lange Jahre hatte er wie sie

[231] Although he starts a fire with the intention of destroying his *Gebetriemen, Gebetmantel* and prayer books, he cannot bring himself to burn them: 'Er hielt das rotsamtene Säckchen in den Armen, aber er warf es nicht hinein. Ein paarmal hob er es in die Höhe, aber seine Arme ließen es wieder sinken. Sein Herz war böse auf Gott, aber in seinen Muskeln wohnte noch die Furcht vor Gott' (JRW, V, 101).

alle seine Tage gelebt, von wenigen beachtet, von manchen gar nicht bemerkt. Eines Tages ward er ausgezeichnet in einer fürchterlichen Weise. Es gab keinen mehr, der ihn nicht kannte' (JRW, V, 107). However, he does not become a figure on the margins of the community, rather he becomes something of a general community factotum – he looks after children when the parents are out, and does various menial tasks (JRW, V, 108).

Once the war is over, Mendel begins to plan his return to Zuchnow, in order to be reunited with Menuchim, be he alive or dead. However, Mendel is pre-empted by Menuchim himself, who in Chapter Fifteen, suddenly appears during the Jews' Easter observances. Completely cured of his illness, Menuchim is now a celebrated musician and a man of some wealth. The Jews interpret his recovery as a divine miracle within their ideological understanding of the universe, and Menkes, Mendel's closest friend pronounces: 'Groß sind die Wunder, die der Ewige vollbringt, heute noch wie vor einigen tausend Jahren' (JRW, V, 130).[232] Although Mendel himself does not explicitly attribute Menuchim's recovery to a miracle, he nevertheless believes that God has been magnanimous: '"Schwere Sünde hab' ich begangen, der Herr hat die Augen zugedrückt. Einen Isprawnik hab' ich Ihn genannt. Er hat sich die Ohren zugehalten. Er ist so groß, daß unsere Schlechtigkeit ganz klein wird"' (JRW, V, 131).

In Chapter Sixteen, the final chapter of the novel, Mendel goes with Menuchim to his hotel in the heart of New York City. Roth shows how foreign this world is to Mendel by creating a visual contrast between Mendel's appearance and the interior luxury of the hotel:

> Kümmerlich und gebeugt, im grünlich schillernden Rock, das rotsamtene Säckchen im Arm, betrat Mendel Singer die Halle, betrachtete das elektrische Licht, den blonden Portier, die weiße Büste eines unbekannten Gottes vor dem Aufgang zur Stiege und den schwarzen Neger, der ihm den Sack abnehmen wollte. (JRW, V, 131)

Here the composite image highlights the incongruity of the wretched figure of

[232] Menkes thus contradicts his earlier pronouncement: '"Obwohl Gott alles kann", begann der Bedächtigste von allen, Menkes, "so ist doch anzunehmen, daß er die ganz großen Wunder nicht mehr tut, weil die Welt ihrer nicht mehr wert ist"' (JRW, V, 104).

Mendel within this setting of modern opulence. The faded colour of his coat contrasts with the strong colours of the hotel milieu in the bright electric light, and underlines a sense of disharmony. The juxtaposition of the red sack which contains the essential items for his Jewish prayer observances, and the bust of an unfamiliar god is symbolic of the religious as well as the cultural differences which separate Mendel from this American modernity. One could also regard the image as symbolic of the clash between the two cultures. The reference to one of the porters wanting to take the red sack from him can be seen as representing the weakening of orthodox Judaism in the New World.

When Mendel Singer enters the hotel room he goes straight to the window, and for the first time he can see the busy night life of America directly in front of his own eyes. It is a very different America from the one which he had experienced within the borders of the Jewish ghetto. Unlike the rest of the family, Mendel had led a confined existence and had never experienced at first hand the bright lights of American modernity. Indeed, much of what he knew about American society and culture was mediated to him by his family (JRW, V, 85). As Juergens points out, Roth indicates a half-hearted admiration for America on the part of Mendel while he still lives in harmony with God. However, the description of American society (JRW, V, 86), which Juergens refers to as a 'positive Klischee-schilderung der amerikansichen Realität',[233] has a heavy ironic undertone, signalled, for example, by the references to dance as 'hygienisch',[234] and rollerskating as 'eine Pflicht'. The lack of visual elements and concreteness in the description create a sense of superficiality which may be seen as reflecting Roth's perception of the superficiality and lack of substance in American society.

By juxtaposing this idealized (albeit ironized) representation of America with a detailed depiction of the Jewish ghetto in summer, Roth draws attention to the fact that Mendel's reality is very different from the America of skyscrapers and popular entertainment. An elaborated visual description of the infestation of bugs in Mendel's flat is followed by an auditory accumulation of the domestic

[233] Juergens, p. 123.
[234] A term Roth uses widely as a negative attribute (see 2.2.3).

noises of the ghetto. Roth thus conveys the banal misery of poverty in the ghetto, and the atmosphere created is one of oppression, not freedom and excitement. Mendel's isolation from urban modernity is emphasized when he looks out of the window of his flat:

> Da sah er den rötlichen Widerschein der lebendigen amerikanischen Nacht, die sich irgendwo abspielte, und den regelmäßigen, silbernen Schatten eines Scheinwerfers, der verzweifelt am nächtlichen Himmel Gott zu suchen schien. Ja, und ein paar Sterne sah Mendel ebenfalls, ein paar kümmerliche Sterne, zerhackte Sternbilder. Mendel erinnerte sich an die hellgestirnten Nächte daheim, die tiefe Bläue des weitgespannten Himmels […]. (JRW, V, 87)

Mendel can only see the glow created by the bright lights of the centre of New York in the distance. However, here Roth is not only indicating Mendel's physical and cultural isolation – he is also drawing attention to the strict separation of urban society from the natural world. The artificial city lights dominate the sky and obscure most of the stars, in contrast to the expansive star-lit skies of the Russian countryside.[235] Whereas Mendel's physical gaze is dominated by the lights of the city which are localized and can be seen only within the restricted urban area, in his mind's eye he can see the stars which shed their light all over the earth. Thus the contrast between the real and imagined visuals underlines the restricted nature of Mendel's life in the ghetto. Roth is not only highlighting the staining of the immediate surrounding environment, but also human estrangement from nature and its perpetual forces. The spotlight which appears to search for God points to the fact that the sky also has a religious quality, although as Rosenfeld notes, it suggests that in America transcendental values have been lost.[236] Furthermore, the reference to 'zerhackte Sternbilder' suggests that intentional violence has been perpetrated on the eternal constellations, indicating a rupture in the patterns of the universe. Given that at this point in the novel Mendel himself is in harmonious relationship with God, this sense of discord draws attention to the general spiritual alienation of the inhabitants of urban modernity.

[235] Although the concept of light pollution had not been developed at this time, Roth here identifies and describes this phenomenon.
[236] See Rosenfeld 'Glaube und Heimat', p. 235.

This view of the city from the window of Mendel's ghetto flat directly contrasts with the outlook from the window in the city centre hotel. Now Mendel can see the city lights and the neon advertisements at close range: 'Da sah er zum erstenmal die Nacht von Amerika aus der Nähe, den geröteten Himmel, die flammenden, sprühenden, tropfenden, glühenden, roten, blauen, grünen, silbernen, goldenen Buchstaben, Bilder und Zeichen' (JRW, V, 132). These flashing signs and letters are as far removed from the modest and indistinct Jewish butcher's shop sign in the ghetto as Mendel Singer has been from the mainstream of American life.[237] Here Roth's compact list of gerundives and adjectives reflects the movement and colour of the city lights, and by their ordering conveys a positive atmosphere. The attributes which hint at apocalyptic ('gerötet') and infernal ('flammend', 'glütend') associations are outweighed and superseded by ones which suggest beauty and value. Roth also reflects Mendel's auditory perception of the heart of American modernity: 'Er hörte den lärmenden Gesang Amerikas, das Hupen, das Tuten, das Dröhnen, das Klingeln, das Kreischen, das Knarren, das Pfeifen und das Heulen' (JRW, V, 132). The oxymoron of the 'lärmender Gesang' highlights the fact that although the noise level is high, Mendel nevertheless perceives it has having musical qualities – it is not a raucous din. Roth again employs the technique of accumulation to reproduce the mulitfarious sounds of the city, as he did in the description of Mendel's first experience of New York. However, here the lack of prenominal adjectives creates a light, almost playful rhythmn which indicates that Mendel's auditory perception of the city is now a positive one.

In contrast to his first experience of urban modernity, Mendel's senses are not subject to an aggressive, bewildering bombardment. Whereas in the cart his vision was obscured by a miasma of dust and heat, he can now clearly perceive concrete details in his environment. Even the neon lights of an advertisement for lemonade are imbued with a concrete quality through Roth's detailed visual description. As Rosenfeld observes, Mendel is no longer prompted to compare

[237] 'Unten war der Laden des jüdischen Selchers mit dem hebräischen Schild, weiße, schmutzige Buchstaben auf blaß-blauem Grund' (JRW, V, 91-92). Roth also refers to signs in hebraic script in his 1929 article about the Jewish ghetto in Berlin, 'Betrachtung an der Klagemauer' (JRW, III, 86-89). However, in this article he contrasts the hebraic script with Roman typefaces rather than neon signs.

the urban night skies with those of Russia, but rather perceives the garish advertisement as 'die vollkommenste Darstellung des nächtlichen Glücks und der goldenen Gesundheit' (JRW, V, 132).[238] Later when Mendel closes his eyes to go to sleep he does not see images of Russia in his mind's eye, even though he and Menuchim have been recalling the past in Zuchnow: 'Er dachte an Mirjam, hörte die ungewohnten Geräusche der Welt, fühlte durch die geschlossenen Lider die nächtlichen Flammen des hellen Himmels' (JRW, V, 134). Here the flames are not the threatening, infernal ones of the description of his first experience of New York, and the fact that the lights penetrate his eyelids suggests a degree of integration and harmony between Mendel and his environment. Thus Roth shows how a change in one's emotional state can influence one's perception of the visual environment. The joy resulting from the end of the separation of father and son facilitates an end to Mendel's alienation from urban modernity. Furthermore, one can also read this sense of harmony and acceptance of modernity as an indication that Mendel, albeit perhaps unconsciously, recognizes the role which modern medicine had in curing Menuchim.[239] The sense of concord and unity contrasts with the discord indicated at the beginning of the chapter when Mendel first entered the hotel – it was only when they were in the hotel room that Menuchim explained how he was cured to his father. Although Mendel regards God as having been magnanimous, and does use the term 'Wunder' to describe Mencuhim's recovery (JRW, V, 133), unlike Menkes he does not explicitly attribute the miracle to divine intervention. Moreover, the fact that Mendel believes in God's grace does not automatically exclude his recognition of the modern scientific basis of Mencuhim's cure. Right in the modern heart of the American city, Mendel can now engage with and accept the modernity which has restored his son to him.

[238] See Rosenfeld, 'Glaube und Heimat', p. 237.

[239] Roth explicitly indicates that Menuchim's recovery is due to modern medical science (see JRW, V, 126 and 133). Even at the beginning of the novel, the possibility of a medical cure is suggested by a doctor, but Mendel's strict orthodox beliefs will not allow him send his son to a Russian hospital (JRW, V, 7).
Müller-Funk, Juergens and Mathew all note that Menuchim's recovery is not presented as a divine miracle, in the sense that it is not portrayed as an event which is inexplicable by scientific laws. See Müller-Funk, p. 127, Juergens, p. 125, and Celine Mathew, *Ambivalence and irony in the works of Joseph Roth* (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 1984), p. 129.

Menuchim takes his father out of the city to the coast the following day. Here Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to emphasize Mendel's new-found harmony: 'Und sie gelangten in eine Welt, wo der weiche Sand gelb war, das weite Meer blau und alle Häuser weiß' (JRW, V, 134). An atmosphere of concord and unity is reflected through the regular rhythmn and alliteration, while the colours infuse the landscape with a feeling of vividness and vitality. The sense of harmony is deepened by the alliterative reference to the 'sanftem regelmäßigem Schlag' of the waves, and the description of the warm sun on Mendel's back. This not the furnace-like heat he experienced on his arrival in America, but a gentle warmth. Roth thus presents the reader with a depiction of an idyll, but the concrete physical details suggest the embeddedness in reality of this harmonious scene – there is little of the fairytale or legend in Roth's writing here. It is within this natural setting that Mendel's joy at his reunion with Menuchim is supplemented with a new sense of hope for the future of his surviving children: 'Unter diesem Himmel war es Mendel recht, zu glauben, daß Jonas sich einmal wieder erfinden würde und Mirjam heimkehren, "schöner als alle Frauen der Welt" zitierte er im stillen' (JRW, V, 134). While they were still in the hotel room, Menuchim had to encourage his father to believe that Mirjam's recovery would still be possible, whereas now Mendel's mood is infused with an unswerving optimism. Roth does not explicitly ascribe transcendental values to the landscape here, but rather the harmony of the natural surroundings has been internalized by Mendel and motivates him towards a belief in a more hopeful future – a future which will see him end his days like the biblical Job, 'umringt von vielen Enkeln und "satt am Leben" ' (JRW, V, 134).

Despite the parallel here with the Old Testament Job, Roth indicates a change in Mendel's religious attitude:

> Er fühlte ein merkwürdiges und auch verbotenes Verlangen, die Mütze aus altem Seidenrips abzulegen und die Sonne auf seinen alten Schädel scheinen zu lassen. Und zum erstenmal in seinem Leben entblößte Mendel Singer aus freiem Willen sein Haupt, so wie er es nur im Amt getan hatte und im Bad. Die spärlichen, gekräuselten Härchen auf seinem kahlen Kopf bewegte ein Frühlingswind wie seltsame, zarte Pflanzen.
> So grüßte Mendel Singer die Welt. (JRW, V, 134-135)

While Celine Mathew regards the removal of the cap as 'a spontaneous gesture of freedom and gaiety',[240] the direct visual contrast between this image and that of the sun soldering the cap onto Mendel's head (see 4.1.3.2) suggests a deeper significance. In this context the previous image can be seen as not only conveying the oppressive atmosphere and the inappropriateness of the orthodox Jewish dress, but as a branding and reinforcing of cultural and religious identity. While the rituals of Jewish orthodoxy may have lent Mendel's life a sense of harmony and order, they also resulted in a certain rigidity of existence and isolation from other cultures and environments (see 4.3.1.2). Now, however, Roth indicates that the harmony of ritual has been replaced by harmonious integration with his environment. The visual image of Mendel removing his cap within this natural setting points to the discarding of the isolationist and constricting orthodoxy in favour of a freer and more integrative religious doctrine. In this sense Mendel is not only reunited with Menuchim, he is also reunited with the world: 'So grüßte Mendel Singer die Welt' (JRW, V, 135). In addition, the comparison of his hair to 'seltsame zarte Pflanzen' signals an interconnectedness between Mendel and nature, while the concrete visual detail of the hair on Mendel's balding scalp, tousled by the wind, underlines his frail humanity. Here Mendel is not portrayed as an authoritative or substantial character. He is not a figure of legend and fable but a humble individual – the 'einfacher Mann' of the title, and one of many millions on Earth.

At the end of the chapter when Menuchim and his father have returned to the hotel, Roth again uses Heuristic Visuals to emphasize Mendel's new-found sense of concord. Although Mendel is looking at a photograph of Menuchim's wife and children, Roth transforms the static image into one where there is motion, as he describes the movement of the wind in the garden where the family are gathered (JRW, V, 135). The reference to the shrubs moving in the wind echoes the previous image of the wind on Mendel's scalp, thus creating a unity of images within the text which reflects what Mendel now feels. In addition, although the people in the photograph are static, the reference to the wind imbues the Heuristic Visual with a sense of vitality, showing that the photographic image represents living, breathing beings. The focus of Mendel's

[240] Mathew, p. 132.

gaze moves from the photograph to the window: 'Sein müdes Auge schweifte durchs Zimmer zum Fenster. Von seinem tiefgelagerten Sofa aus konnte er einen vielgezackten, wolkenlosen Ausschnitt des Himmels sehn' (JRW, V, 135). The use of the adjective 'vielgezackt' recalls acoustically as well as visually the image of the 'zerhackte Sternbilder'; however, here the image is much less negative. Whereas the previous image suggested that violence had been perpetrated on the heavens, 'vielgezackt' relates to the limiting of Mendel's physical visual perception of the sky. Although Mendel's view is bounded by the frame of the window, and the architecture of the urban landscape prevents him from perceiving an expanse of sky, he can now see the sky itself – it is no longer obscured. This not only underlines Mendel's integration with the natural world, but also indicates that the urban landscape itself has a legitimacy. It suggests that the enivronment of urban modernity does not automatically have to result in alienation from the natural sphere.

In the final lines of the novel, a sense of order and harmony is again framed and conveyed in visual terms:

> Während sie sich langsam schlossen, nahmen seine Augen, die ganze blaue Heiterkeit des Himmels in den Schlaf hinüber und die Gesichter der neuen Kinder. Neben ihnen tauchten aus dem braunen Hintergrund des Porträts Jonas und Mirjam auf. Mendel schlief ein. Und er ruhte aus von der Schwere des Glücks und der Größe der Wunder. (JRW, V, 136)

In this visual conflation, Mendel's lost family is restored to him, and the continuity of the generations is represented by the faces of his grandchildren. The fact that this is focalized through Mendel and not the narrator, emphasizes that from Mendel's perspective, the legitimation of his own life has now been realized. As Rosenfeld notes: 'Implicit in Mendel's joy at the miracle of his son's return is a renewed faith in the continuity of life and the eternal link between the living and the departed.'[241] Rosenfeld also argues that for Mendel as an *Ostjude*, the sky is symbolic of God's omnipotence, and that this image underlines Mendel's restored faith in God and the divine order of the

[241] Rosenfeld, *Understanding Joseph Roth*, p. 41.

universe.[242] However, unlike the section in *Radetzkymarsch* to which Rosenfeld compares this passage, the transcendental values associated with the sky are not made explicit here. Moreover, given the previous emphasis on Mendel's new-found integration with his environment, be it natural or urban, and the suggestion of a move to a less orthodox doctrine, one could regard it as a more general image of Mendel's hope for the future, and acceptance of life and his place in the world. While Juergens views the fact that father and son plan to return to Europe as indicative of a rejection of American modernity,[243] this ignores the significance of the atmosphere of harmony and stasis which Roth constructs at the end of the novel. The text comes to rest here, and the final image is not one of flight and despair, but peace and acceptance.

While it is thanks to the miracle of Menuchim's recovery that Mendel is able to reach this state of harmony and restored faith, the role of modern medicine in this miracle is made clear by Roth. One could therefore regard Menuchims's cure as a secular modern miracle in the sense of a remarkable event, rather than the result of divine agency. In this context Ritchie Robertson's contention that the novel 'issues an affront to secular reason by vindicating the *Wunderrabbi*'[244] is not fully supported by the text. However, the fact that in the end the *Wunderrabbi* is vindicated, along with the mysterious aura conveyed in Menuchim's almost prophet-like reappearance, shows that Roth does not exclude a religious, non-rational interpretation of events. Rather than presenting the reader with a definitive explanation, Roth is exploring issues of faith and reason. Although Roth himself is reported to have said 'Mein Hiob findet ihn [Gott] nicht',[245] the novel itself does not present such an unequivocal view. Both Mendel's realization that strict religious observance, or lack of it, does not automatically result in good or bad, and the acknowledgement of his own mistakes and failings (JRW, V, 133) do point to a greater rationality in Mendel's thinking. However, even within the context of modernity, this rationality does not have to exclude the spiritual and religious.

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[242] See Rosenfeld, 'Glaube und Heimat', pp. 237-238.
[243] See Juergens, p. 125-126.
[244] Ritchie Robertson, 'Roth's *Hiob* and the Traditions of Ghetto Fiction', in *Coexistent Contradictions: Joseph Roth in Retrospect*, ed. by Helen Chambers (Riverside CA: Ariadne, 1991), pp. 185-200 (p. 200).
[245] Quoted in Bronsen, *Biographie*, p. 389.

4.3.2 *Radetzkymarsch*

By the time *Hiob* was published in the autumn of 1930, Roth had already begun work on his most famous novel, *Radetzkymarsch*, which charts the last years of the Habsburg Empire through the fate of three generations of the Trotta family. It took Roth almost two years to complete the novel, and he was still working on the ending when the first instalment was published in the *FZ* in April 1932.[246] Not only did it take Roth longer to write *Radetzkymarsch* than any of his other novels, but for the first and last time, Roth undertook extensive preparatory research before he began to write.[247] He found the writing of the novel exhausting and challenging, and in a letter dated 20 March 1932 he complains of feeling overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task: 'Der Stoff ist zu groß, ich bin zu schwach und kann ihn nicht bändigen' (JRB, 215). He was further tormented by the fear that the novel would not be up to standard, but his fear was to prove unfounded, and the first edition sold 25,000 copies.[248]

Radetzkymarsch was initially regarded by many critics primarily as a swan song for the Habsburg Empire, and for many years afterwards critical analyses of the novel continued along this vein, the best-known of these being in Claudio Magris' *Habsburgischer Mythos*.[249] The novel was seen as a rejection by Roth of the increasingly alienating and barbaric present, and an attempt to seek refuge in the idealized past of the Habsburg Empire. This view was prevalent despite the fact that in the forward published in the *FZ*, Roth himself speaks of the 'Fehler und Schwächen' of the Monarchy.[250] Indeed, Roth's portrayal of Kaiser Franz Josef was regarded by some monarchists in the 1930s as an insult to the memory of the dead emperor.[251] However, it was Georg Lukács, in a review published in 1939 who first commented explicitly on the multi-layeredness of the novel. Lukács highlighted the existence of social criticism in the novel, albeit observing that he regarded this aspect as of secondary importance to the

[246] See Roth's letter to Stefan Zweig in JRB, 222.
[247] See Bronsen, *Biographie*, p.394.
[248] See Bronsen, *Biographie*, p.417.
[249] Claudio Magris, *Der habsburgischer Mythos in der österreichischen Literatur* (Salzburg: Müller, 1966).
[250] This forward was not, however, published in the later monograph versions of the novel. In the *Werke* it is published in the appendix (JRW, V, 874-875).
[251] See Hackert in JRW, V, 892-893.

evocation of nostalgia for the lost Empire.[252] Many critics now accept that the novel does not depict a purely nostalgic ideal, but rather shows the reality which led to the inevitable decline and break-up of the Monarchy.[253] In fact, Juergens regards the novel as both an attempt to understand better how the present came to be, and a search for civilized values with which to counteract its increasing banality:

> Roths Hinwendung zur Vergangenheit ist keinesfalls eine Flucht in das Gestern; seine Intentionen sind vielmehr der Versuch, die Gegenwart transparent zu machen mittels der Vergangenheit. Interpretationen, die bei Roth primär eine nostalgische Flucht hervorheben, verwechseln Roths Mittel mit dem Zweck.[254]

Although the novel contains numerous visual elements, many of these have a symbolic function, such as the portrait of the Kaiser, and do not fall into the category of Heuristic Visuals.[255] Other visual aspects of the novel, such as the refrain-like evocations of the eastern European landscapes, and the function of military uniform do, on occasion, contain elements of Heuristic Visuals. However, given that these aspects have already been examined in other studies, and given that they are not key examples of Heuristic Visuals, they are not the main focus in this analysis.[256] In general, the occurrence of Heuristic Visuals in the text is relatively infrequent, and there are few sections of concentrated Heuristic Visuals. The three sections which have been chosen for closer analysis are the description of the town on the eastern border of the Empire in Chapter Nine, the depiction of the gambling room and the town's bristle factory in Chapter Twelve, and the epilogue. In the first example the Heuristic Visuals are

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[252] See Juergens, pp. 131-132 and Claudio Magris, 'Die verschollenen Annalen: Historische Regression und epische Totalität in der Erzählkunst Joseph Roths', *Lenau Forum*, 3 (1971), 58-78, (pp. 58-59).

[253] See, for example, Adolf D. Klarmann, 'Das Österreichbild im "Radetzkymarsch"', in *Joseph Roth und die Tradition* (see Bronsen, above), pp. 153-162, and Werner G. Hoffmeister '"Eine ganz bestimmte Art von Sympathie": Erzählhaltung und Gedankenschilderung in *Radetzkymarsch*', in *Joseph Roth und die Tradition* (see Bronsen, above), pp. 163-180, and Mathew, pp. 135-151.

[254] See Juergens, pp. 52-53.

[255] For a discussion of the symbolism in *Radetzkymarsch* see Peter Branscombe, 'Symbolik in *Radetzkymarsch*', in *Joseph Roth: Der Sieg über die Zeit*, ed. by Alexander Stillmark (Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1996), pp. 96-111.

[256] See Sidney Rosenfeld, '"Hiob"', in *Joseph Roth und die Tradition* (see Bronsen, above), and Ritchie Robertson, 'Roth's *Hiob* and the Traditions of Ghetto Fiction', in *Coexistent Contradictions: Joseph Roth in Retrospect* (see Chambers, above), on the depictions of the rural landscape. See Jon Hughes, '"Zivil ist allemal schädlich"' on uniform and masculinity.

scattered over a few pages, whereas in the second they are concentrated in two pages of text, and they are woven through the whole epilogue.

4.3.2.1 Peripherality and Alienation

The novel begins with the battle of Solferino and the act of heroism by lieutenant Joseph Trotta, a humble descendant of Slovenian peasants, which results in his ennoblement. Most of the novel, however, deals with the fate of his son, Franz Trotta, who becomes a Bezirkshauptmann, and his grandson, Carl Joseph. Having been forbidden to follow a career in the army by his father, Franz Trotta fixes on a military career for his own son, despite the fact that Carl Joseph is a rather ineffectual, somewhat sensitive young man, and ill-suited to military life. He initially serves in a cavalry regiment but is obliged to leave it after he becomes embroiled in a scandal which ends with the death of two of his colleagues in a duel. Although Carl Joseph expresses the wish to be transferred to an infantry regiment near the home of his Slovenian forebears, his father is of the same mind as the authorities and refuses him: '"Das Schicksal hat aus unserem Geschlecht von Grenzbauern Österreicher gemacht. Wir wollen es bleiben"' (JRW, V, 256). Unlike his son, Franz Trotta has never felt any nostalgia for his humble ancestral roots, but instead wholeheartedly embraces the supranational aspect of the Empire. For Carl Joseph, the choice remains between a transfer to a regiment stationed near the centre of the Empire, or at its eastern border. He chooses the latter, given that this area is 'die nördliche Schwester Sloweniens' (JRW, V, 256).

After a long train journey, Carl Joseph arrives at his new posting, and the first example of Heuristic Visuals in Chapter Nine is employed in the evocation of the harmonious natural landscape which surrounds him:

> Der Frühling, lange schon heimisch im Innern des Reiches, war erst vor kurzem hierhergelangt. Schon leuchtete der Goldregen an den Hängen des Eisenbahndamms. Schon blühten die Veilchen in den feuchten Wäldern. Schon quakten die Frösche in den unendlichen Sümpfen. Schon kreisten die Störche über den niederen Strohdächern der dörflichen Hütten, die alten Rädern zu suchen, die Fundamente ihrer sommerlichen Behausung. (JRW, V, 256)

Here the use of anaphora conveys the sense of immediacy and intensity in the natural landscape, which the spring-time rejuvenation of nature has brought. It emphasizes the simultaneity of the blossoming of the flora and the re-emergence of the fauna from winter hibernation, thus imbuing the landscape with an atmosphere of boundless fertility. Also, the use of assonance in the words 'leuchtete' and 'feuchten' creates a linguistic unity within the text which reflects and underlines the sense of harmony prevailing within the natural landscape. This sense of concord is accentuated further in the last line of the paragraph. While the first three sentences of the anaphora are simple sentences of similar length, the last sentence is a complex sentence with two relative clauses in which Roth brings the storks to rest both semantically and syntactically. The reference to the storks' nests also suggests the peaceful integration of nature and the human world. In this section Roth creates the feeling of a benign atmosphere, and the reader is given the impression that it is a region in which the harmony of nature is undisturbed. However, the narrator's comment at the beginning of the next paragraph that this part of the Empire 'um jene Zeit eines der merkwürdigsten Gebiete [war]' (JRW, V, 256), contrasts sharply with the harmonious image. This juxtaposition replicates the common phenomenon of the stranger's senses initially being captured and distracted by the beauty of an unfamiliar physical landscape, only to be later rid of their illusions. Again, Roth is pointing to the dissembling nature of appearances and the danger of accepting first impressions as a fixed reality.

Roth next describes the town with its large *Ringplatz*, at the centre of which is the intersection of the two main streets: 'Die eine führte von Osten nach Westen, die andere von Norden nach Süden. Die eine führte vom Bahnhof zum Friedhof. Die andere von der Schloßruine zur Dampfmühle' (JRW, V, 256). In this short description Roth uses sparse language but the images that are evoked are themselves rich in associations. While crossroads are often symbolic of change and personal choice, the use of the verb 'führen' suggests a movement that is predestined and already marked out – one must go from east to west, and north to south. Although the town's connnection to the wider world is conveyed by the reference to the points of the compass, the polarization in this description

is not merely geographical. Literal arrival is connected to metaphorical departure, foreshadowing what we are later told is often the fate of many of the young officers who come to this town – they prematurely end their days here.[257] In addition, the movement from east to west echoes the progress of the sun across the sky which itself is understood as a metaphor for birth and death. The transience of individual life in the east-west movement is complemented by the ephemerality of social systems in the reference to the road which leads from the north to the south. Here Roth conveys the replacement of the privileged order of the feudal past by a new social system in which the poor no longer owe allegiance to the aristocracy but to the new order of industry, run by the nouveaux riches. In these few lines he puts paid to the communist ideal, and points to the fact that while change is inevitable, the social hierarchy will merely take on a different form.

Although Roth does not examine the social structure of the town in detail, he classifies the townspeople's economic activities, and in particular he focuses on those who are traders. The longitudinal points of the compass are once again employed, but this time they are not used to convey a sense of movement, rather they highlight the physical marginality of the townspeople: 'Denn sie lebten fern von [der Welt], zwischen dem Osten und dem Westen, eingeklemmt zwischen Nacht und Tag, eine Art lebendiger Gespenster, welche die Nacht geboren hat und die am Tage umgehn' (JRW, V, 257). Here the geographical polarization indicates a state of non-belonging, as if the inhabitants exist between nations and loyalties without any clearly defined sense of national identity. The idea of people stuck in a temporal limbo also suggests a certain otherness, which is further emphasized by the reference to the traders as living ghosts. While the oxymoron points to ephemerality, it is not one which suggests weakness, but rather a sense of supernatural powers which do not belong to the rational world. Thus through visually-based metaphors, Roth highlights both the social and the physical peripherality of the inhabitants in this part of the Empire.

Despite the geographical remoteness of the town, the people do not feel cut-off from the rest of the world, given the endless horizons which surround them.

[257] See JRW, V, 259.

Moreover, Roth emphasizes their integration with the world through the use of a visually-based accumulation of the products and commodities from which the traders earn their living:

> Sie handelten mit Bettfedern, mit Roßhaaren, mit Tabak, mit Silberstangen, mit Juwelen, mit chinesischem Tee, mit südländischen Früchten, mit Pferden und Vieh, mit Geflügel und Eiern, mit Fischen und Gemüse, mit Jute und Wolle, mit Butter und Käse, mit Wäldern und Grundbesitz, mit Marmor aus Italien und Menschenhaaren aus China zur Herstellung von Perücken, mit Seidenraupen und mit fertiger Seide, mit Stoffen aus Manchester, mit Brüsseler Spitzen und mit Moskauer Galoschen, mit Leinen aus Wien und Blei aus Böhmen. (JRW, V, 257)

The farraginous nature of the list reflects the great variety of products which the people trade in, ranging from mundane dairy produce to exotic silks and lace. In addition, the multifarious nature of the products and the lack of a clear ordering or classification indicates the flexible, entrepreneurial approach which the traders have. Just as they do not bind themselves to one nation, neither do they bind themselves to one source of income. The evocation of a variety of concrete images, with the mixture of the animate and the inanimate, the physically substantial (marble) and the delicate (human hair), imbues the list with a visual animation which reflects the industrious activity of the traders. Also, the only common characteristic of the products is that they are all natural materials, albeit that some of them have been processed or fashioned by humans. The lack of artificial materials places the traders in the sphere of the old pre-industrial order, and points to a strong connection to the natural world. Furthermore, the citing of the geographical origin of the commodities in the last section of the list emphasizes the global nature of the trade. The people of this seemingly insignificant corner are not the myopic peasants one might have thought them to be, but are as much a part of the international economic infrastructure as the train tracks which stretch across the continents.

Roth also underlines the significance of the town's train station and the train tracks as symbols of the unity of the Habsburg Empire. Indeed, for Carl Joseph the train station provides a certain solace:

> Es war der letzte aller Bahnhöfe der Monarchie, aber immerhin: Auch dieser Bahnhof zeigte zwei Paar glitzender Schienenbänder, die sich ununterbrochen bis in das Innere des Reiches erstreckten. Auch dieser Bahnhof hatte helle, gläserne und fröhliche Signale, in denen ein zartes Echo von heimatlichen Rufen klirrte, und einen unaufhörlich tickenden Morseapparat, auf dem die schönen, verworrenen Stimmen einer weiten, verlorenen Welt fleißig abgehämmert wurden, gesteppt wie von einer emsigen Nähmaschine. (JRW, V, 260)

The image of the train tracks in their unbroken continuity emphasizes the physical unity of the Empire, whose reach extends even to the most seemingly isolated and distant part. While the alliteration and assonance of the 'z' suggests the rapid movement of a train, the fact that the rails are described as stretching out to the centre of the Empire indicates a centripetal force, which reflects Carl Joseph's perspective. He finds consolation in the knowledge that although he is far from the civilization and comforts of the heart of the Empire, the train tracks at least represent the possibility of a return. The positive tone is continued in the reference to the signals with the assonance of the 'l' and the short vowels in the prenominal adjectives creating a light, playful rhythm, and the use of onomatopoeia further underlines the sense of a lively, bustling atmosphere. However, the references to the echoes of calls from home and a lost world indicate Carl Joseph's feeling of alienation here on the edge of the Empire.[258] Unlike both the traders in the town and the busy morse transmitter, Carl Joseph and the other officers are not engaged in any real purposeful activity. While the strict routines and consistent order of the train station represent the traditional discipline of the Empire,[259] there is little evidence of strict discipline within the military who are stationed here.

The punctuality of the trains and the efficient running of the station mean that the officers can time their mid-day meal in the station restaurant to the length of time the train stays in the station. However, there is a sense of futility in all this

[258] Given that the word 'gesteppt' carries the connotation of quilting as well as stitching, there is an underlying suggestion that the Empire is a patchwork of many different peoples rather than a single piece of cloth.

[259] Bruce Thompson interprets the narrator's intention as satirical, poking fun at the trains' regularity. However, this would seem at odds with the indication that the narrative voice here reflects that of Carl Joseph. See Bruce Thompson, 'Schlecht kommen wir beide dabei nicht weg!: Joseph Roth's satire on the Emperor Franz Joseph in his novel *Radetzkymarsch*', *Neophilologus*, 81 (1997), 253-267 (p. 256).

technological efficiency because no one ever comes to this outpost, and for Carl Joseph and his fellow officers there is nothing left to do but return once more along the muddy tracks to the primitive boredom of the town. Despite the army's best efforts, the surfaces of the roads remain miry:

> Rings um ihn knirschten die genagelten Stiefel der Jäger über die kantigen Schottersteinchen, die immer wieder, jede Woche im Frühling, auf das Verlangen der Militärbehörde dem Sumpf der Wege geopfert wurden. Alle Steine, Millionen von Steinen, verschluckte der unersättliche Grund der Straße. Und immer neue, siegreiche, silbergraue, schimmernde Schichten von Schlamm quollen aus den Tiefen empor, fraßen den Stein und den Mörtel und schlugen klatschend über den stampfenden Stiefeln der Soldaten zusammen. (JRW, V, 259)

Here Roth makes a combined appeal to the auditory and visual senses to convey the battle between the army and the mud. Initially the focus is on the soldiers marching on the gravel. The use of onomatopoeia and the alliteration of the 'k' echo the harsh sounds of the hobnailed boots on the gravelstones. Although this would seem to suggest the dominance of the military, the use of the word 'geopfert' points to the futility of their attempts at restraining the natural world. The personification of the mud insatiably consuming the gravel borders on the animistic, and the repeated alliteration of the sibilant 's' further emphasizes the sense of a relentless, all-consuming energy. Moreover, the reference to the layers of mud surging up from the depths has connotations of a volcanic lava stream, and highlights its elemental force. Whereas the later description of the moisture from the train's 'graue Dampf' rolling down the windows 'in feuchten Perlen und Streifen' (JRW, V, 260) suggests a gentle, almost restrained movement, Roth's depiction of the mud slapping over the stamping boots of the soldiers evokes a turbulent conflict. Although the colour of the steam links it to the mud and thus invites comparison, this artificially produced moisture's minor surface manifestation is similar to the gravel in its ephemerality. While the gravel is an alien, man-made surface, the rain-sodden earth is the natural foundation of this landscape, and nature wins out in the end. Thus the indication is that this region is closer to the primitive forces of nature than the civilized heart of the Empire.

Nevertheless, in the town itself the state institutions represent the reach of the authority of the Empire, and the link to Vienna and the Habsburg dynasty is still in evidence as Carl Joseph can survey from his window: 'Er sah den Giebel des Bezirksgerichts, das weiße Türmchen der Bezirkshauptmannschaft, die schwarzgelbe Fahne über der Kaserne, das doppelte Kreuz der griechischen Kirche, den Wetterhahn über dem Magistrat und alle dunkelgrauen Schindeldächer der kleinen Parterrehäuser (JRW, V, 260). In contrast to the gables, towers and flags of the state institutions, the houses of the native inhabitants are plain, single storey buildings with shingle roofs. The cultural and societal norms of the Empire are not all-encompassing – the town is like a village with no street names and no house numbers. Here the social structure seems closer to Tönnies' concept of *Gemeinschaft* in which the people live in the intimacy of a pre-industrial society rather than the anonymous structure of the *Gesellschaft* which is based on impersonality.[260] Even the soldiers are part of the network of gossip in the town:

> Und die Geheimnisse der Menschen in den niederen Häusern, unter den dunkel-grauen Schindeldächern, hinter den kleinen, quadratischen Fensterscheiben und den hölzernen Türen quollen durch Ritzen und Sparren in die kotigen Gassen und selbst in den ewig geschloßenen, großen Hof der Kaserne. (JRW, V, 261)

Here Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to convey the primitive nature of a community in which the instinctive inquisitiveness of human beings transcends class and cultural boundaries. There is a striking contrast between the concrete details of the houses and the abstract nature of the human level which penetrates these physical barriers – the permeability between the two levels verges on the surreal. The juxtaposition of the physical 'flaws' in the native houses with the eternally closed yard of the barracks, highlights the cultural openness of the native community and the seemingly inaccessible elite culture of the military. However, the fact that the human level does succeed in penetrating the military establishment emphasizes the extent to which cultural and social norms are modified in this far-flung region of the Empire.

[260] See Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Leipzig: Reisland, 1887).

In this section of the novel the Heuristic Visuals' function is to convey the characteristics of the autochthonous population and the forces of the natural environment in the region. Roth highlights how both the societal structure and the physical landscape prove to be superior to the forces of the Empire – in the end the primitive and the natural win out over the civilized and the man-made. The passage depicting the train station (JRW, V, 260), however, is distinct from the other examples as the visual description of the railway lines is more obviously symbolic, and auditory impressions supersede visual ones. Unlike the other passages, it relates to Carl Joseph's perception of the Empire and his sense of alienation, rather than revealing the essence of the border region. Thus by stylistic shifts, Roth underlines Carl Joseph's feeling of detachment and difference from his new neighbours. The people who live on the periphery of the Empire do not lead an idle or restricted existence, and compared to Carl Joseph, they seem to have more degrees of freedom with which to define and conduct their own lives.

4.3.2.2 Positive and Negative Freedoms

Although Carl Joseph is not constrained by poverty, he nevertheless suffers from a lack of freedom in that he is bound by the expectations of his family and the societal norms of his class – he was not permitted to choose a career for himself, and now he must follow the rules and regulations of the army. His situation is representative of a lack of what Isaiah Berlin terms 'positive freedom', in that he has not been able to take control of his life and does not have the option of self-realization.[261] Carl Joseph is conscious of his lack of autonomy, and Roth makes his feelings of helplessness and powerlessness explicit at various points in the text.[262] He is also aware of the fact that the cultural and social norms which now define his life have only been present in

[261] See Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: OUP, 1969).

[262] For example, when Carl Joseph returns from a trip to Vienna to find that there is social unrest in the town he recognizes that unlike his aristocratic friend Count Chojnicki, he cannot simply leave: 'Und man war ein schwacher Gefangener und konnte nicht sofort umkehren, den Zug besteigen und zurückfahren' (JRW, V, 331). Also, Carl Joseph's comment to his father about the portrait of his grandfather, the *Held von Solferino*, indicates his feelings of helplessness and inadequacy in the light of his heroic ancestor: 'Ich bin nicht stark genug für dieses Bild. Die Toten! Ich kann die Toten nicht vergessen! Ich kann gar nichts vergessen! Vater!' (JRW, V, 296-297).

his family for three generations, and that his deeper ancestry is that of the Slovenian peasant farmers. However, Roth makes clear that regardless of Carl Joseph's nostalgia for the life of his ancestors, his lack of positive freedom means that he will never be able to shed the expectations of his class and culture. Despite Carl Joseph's feeling of estrangement from the institutionalized military life, he has no definitive answer as to where he does belong: 'Wohin sonst gehöre ich? Nicht zu Jenen, die dort in der Schenke sitzen! Nach Sipolje vielleicht? Zu den Vätern meiner Väter? Der Pflug gehört in meine Hand und nicht der Säbel?' (JRW, V, 335). The tentative nature of his thoughts suggests a man who is day-dreaming rather than one who is seriously debating a real possibility.

Here on the edge of the Empire, Carl Joseph is only able to overcome his feelings of multiple alienation through drinking. When he is drunk he feels a sense of identity with the town and its people: 'Das Städtchen war ihm vertraut, als wäre er darin geboren und aufgewachsen' (JRW,V, 295). Although Roth uses visual elements to convey the inebriated Carl Joseph's positive perception of the town and his life there, the visuals are more obviously descriptive and symbolic, rather than heuristic. Unlike the previous accumulation of the traders' goods, the short accumulation of cheap junk-shop wares, over which Carl Joseph likes to haggle, does not have a particular visual impact (JRW, V, 295). It serves to highlight both the metaphorical poverty of distractions which the town has for the young lieutenant, and the literal poverty which marks the townspeople's daily lives. After a short description of the various aspects of Carl Joseph's undiscriminating positivity, Roth makes clear that Trotta is deluding himself and does not realize the pitiful figure he has become: 'Leutnant Trotta wußte nur nicht, daß sein Gang unsicher wurde, seine Bluse Flecken hatte, seine Hose keine Bügelfalte, daß an seinen Hemden Knöpfe fehlten, seine Hautfarbe gelb am Abend und aschgrau am Morgen war und sein Blick ohne Ziel' (JRW, V, 296). Thus Roth indicates that Carl Joseph has become a risible character, reminiscent of a clown in uniform, rather than the dashing, smart soldier of his father's memory (JRW, V, 294). The suggestion is that he has simply let down the standards of his class and status, and has not succeeded in escaping them.

Bound by the constraints which are laid down by the army, and imprisoned in a temporal limbo in which there is no war to occupy them and offer the possibility of glory (JRW, V, 301-302), Carl Joseph and his fellow officers do not have the freedom to do anything meaningful – they simply have trivial positive freedoms such as being able to indulge in drinking to excess and gambling. Thus, for the officers, the establishment of a casino in the town's hotel is a cause of great excitement. In Chapter Twelve, Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to highlight the effect of gambling on the officers, and presents the reader with a detailed visual close-up of the roulette wheel in motion:

> Wenn die weiße Kugel zu laufen begann, so daß sie selbst wie ein milchiger Kreis aussah, gezogen um die Peripherie schwarzer und roter Felder, wenn die schwarzen und roten Felder sich ebenfalls vermischten zu einem einzigen verschwimmenden Rund von unbestimmmbarer Farbe, dann erzitterten die Herzen der Offiziere, und in ihren Köpfen entstand ein fremdes Tosen, als rotierte in jedem Gehirn eine besondere Kugel, und vor ihren Augen wurde es schwarz und rot, schwarz und rot. Die Knie wankten, obwohl man saß. Die Augen jagten mit verzweifelter Hast der Kugel nach, die sie nicht erhaschen konnten. Nach eigenen Gesetzen fing sie schließlich an zu torkeln, trunken vom Lauf, und blieb erschöpft in einer numerierten Mulde liegen. (JRW, V, 302)

The detailed focus on the roulette wheel itself reflects the captivated gaze of the officers as they stare intently, and the initial long complex sentence parallels the both the officers' constant gaze and the uninterrupted motion of the wheel. Also, the use of anaphora mirrors the repetitive spin of the wheel and its hypnotic effect on the officers. Roth further emphasizes the extent to which the officers have become entranced by the use of a surreal visual comparison, with the reference to the roulette ball inside their heads suggesting a form of mind-control or brainwashing. It is not only their gaze which has been captivated, but also their minds. While the slower movement of the wheel may enable the officers to distinguish the colours, the reference to their eyes desperately chasing the ball which they will never be able to direct, points to their inability to control the outcome and highlights their subservience to the game. Moreover, the description of the physical effects on the officers, their trembling hearts and buckling knees, portrays them as the antithesis of the heroic and courageous

soldier – the irony being that the 'Kugel' which has reduced them to this pathetic state is not that of a gun, but that of a roulette wheel. By using the visual metaphor of a stumbling drunk who finally collapses from exhaustion to portray the last movements of the ball, Roth simultaneously evokes the dissolute habits and the demoralization of the officers. In the absence of an enemy to defeat, their ability to exercise only trivial positive freedoms has led to the officers being subjugated by the addictive power of gambling.

Roth follows the description of the roulette wheel with a brief portrayal of the wider effects of the newly-opened gambling room on the town – strangers come from afar to frequent the casino, the droshkies suddenly spring to life with plenty of business, and the small, dingy shops seem transformed into vibrant, colourful establishments (JRW, V, 302-303). However, the opening of the casino is not the only new development in the town – at this time posters begin to appear calling on the bristle factory workers to go on strike. In a striking contrast of locus and activity, Roth juxtaposes the gambling scene with a depiction of the bristle factory (JRW, V, 303-304).

The first paragraph of the section on the factory does not employ Heuristic Visuals, and informs the reader about the social background of the factory workers: they are mainly poor peasants who chop wood in winter, work on the harvests in the autumn and have no other choice but to work in the bristle factory in the summer; others are lower-class Jews who have no particular skills or trade. These are people who do not have the privilege of choosing a particular career or type of work – their struggle is one of basic existence. The second paragraph begins with Roth detailing the 'unbequemen und kostspieligen' rules and regulations which the factory owners do not like observing, and then moves to an intense visual focus on the factory building and its surroundings:

> Die Fabrik war ein altes, baufälliges Gemäuer mit kleinen Fenstern, einem schadhaften Schieferdach, umzäunt von einer wildwuchernden Weidenhecke und umgeben von einem wüsten, breiten Platz, auf dem seit undenklichen Jahren Mist abgelagert wurde, tote Katzen und Ratten der Fäulnis ausgeliefert waren, Blechgeschirre rosteten, zerbrochene irdene Töpfe neben zerschlissenen Schuhen lagerten. Ringsum dehnten sich Felder, voll vom goldenen Segen des Korns,

> durchzirpt vom unaufhörlichen Gesang der Grillen, und dunkelgrüne Sümpfe, ständig widerhallend vom fröhlichen Lärm der Frösche. (JRW, V, 303)

Here Roth's visual representation of the factory conveys the owner's disregard for the building regulations. The description of the desolate factory grounds with the images of the putrefying animals and the useless and unwanted products of human consumption associate the factory with death, decay and destruction. It seems less a place of formative productivity and more one of neglect and dereliction, with no attempt made to provide pleasant surroundings or promote a positive image. The references to the proliferating hedge and the surrounding fields highlight the barrenness and lifelessness of the factory site, and the unconstrained growth of the hedge contrasts with the constricted conditions of the factory workers.[263] The desolation surrounding the factory is further underlined by the vitality and energy of the countryside which Roth conveys using another combined appeal to the auditory and visual senses. The assonance of the 'o' suggests the fullness and richness of the golden corn, and here even the swamps are presented in a positive light. Also, Roth's use of the neologism 'durchzirpt' adds a playful element to the description, and this is continued in the repeated assonance of the 'l' which reflects the continuous melody of the crickets and frogs. Thus Roth points to the incongruity of the dereliction of the immediate factory surroundings within the wider setting of the vibrant natural world.

The visual focus then moves to the workers who are confined inside the factory building:

> Vor den kleinen, grauen Fenstern, an denen die Arbeiter saßen, mit großen, eisernen Harken das dichte Gestrüpp der Borstenbündel unermüdlich kämmend und die trockenen Staubwölkchen schluckend, die jedes neue Bündel gebar, schossen die hurtigen Schwalben vorbei, tanzten die schillernden Sommerfliegen, schwebten weiße und bunte Falter einher, und durch die großen Luken des Daches drang

[263] This visual representation of the factory building and its environs echoes the earlier description of the land around Chojnicki's ramshackle hunting lodge (JRW, V, 286). Although Chojnicki's lodge is not surrounded by unwanted waste, the garden is wild and neglected, and there is a reference to an old ruined tower. There is a common element of disorder in both sites which can be seen as reflecting a loss of control. Paradoxically, this loss of control is worse in the new rising forces of industrialism than in the traditional aristocratic sphere.

> das sieghafte Geschmetter der Lerchen. Die Arbeiter, die erst vor wenigen Monaten aus ihren freien Dörfern gekommen waren, geboren und groß geworden im süßen Atem des Heus, im kalten des Schnees, im beizenden Geruch des Düngers, im schmetternden Lärm der Vögel, im ganzen wechselreichen Segen der Natur: Die Arbeiter sahen durch die grauen Staubwölkchen Schwalbe, Schmetterling und Mückentanz und hatten Heimweh. (JRW, V, 303-304)

Here the juxtaposition of the description of the flies, birds and butterflies with that of the workers highlights the freedom of the former and the physical confinement of the latter. Also, the variety of types of movement in nature contrasts with the limited and monotonous quality of the controlled activity of the workers – the continuous and repetitive nature of their task is emphasized by the use of present participles. The use of the verb 'gebären' with reference to the clouds of dust produced by raking the bristles carries an implicit oxymoron, given that the dust is inanimate and will ultimately take life away. Thus Roth uses the theme of life and death to draw out the sinister nature of the factory conditions. By evoking the smells, sounds and changing seasons of the countryside in which the workers grew up, Roth indicates the extent to which they are alienated from their natural environment. He also points to the variety of experience for all the human senses which nature offers, and thereby further underlines the monotony of experience in the industrial enivronment of the factory. Confined in their work-place, the peasants' auditory and visual perception of the natural world is one which is framed and limited by the windows and the skylight of the factory. Their sensory deprivation is all the more poignant, given that they have lived their lives closer to the rhythms of nature than the imperatives of mechanized industry.

In the last few lines of this section, Roth moves away from the visual focus on the factory and details the activities of the strangers who go about informing the workers of their rights under the law. Whereas the army officers suffer from a lack of positive freedom, the factory workers suffer primarily from a lack of what Isaiah Berlin terms 'negative freedom', in that they lack freedom from

external coercion (in the form of the factory owner).[264] Although the workers are accorded freedom from coercion by the law and the political constitution, on the periphery of the Empire they lack the knowledge and cultural capital to realize this freedom – a situation which the factory owner is able to exploit. However, the outsiders who have now come to the town, having educated the workers about their rights, are able to mobilize them into collective action: '[Die fremden Männer] waren lauter als die Lerchen und die Frösche: Die Arbeiter begannen zu streiken' (JRW, V, 304).

The juxtaposition of the gambling scene and the depiction of the factory is not merely a striking visual contrast, but underlines the paradox noted by Bance:

> Roth's perception of the true, insulated position of the army *vis à vis* the strikers is shown by the fact that at precisely the moment when the working population is at breaking point, and strikes and political unrest hit the headlines, gambling fever breaks out among the bored and redundant military of the remote garrison town.[265]

In this section of the novel Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to highlight not only the disparity between the dissolute life of the army officers and the suffering of the factory workers, but also, paradoxically the increasing subjugation (albeit by gambling) of the former and the decreasing subjugation of the latter. While discipline among the officers is being undermined and they increasingly lack a sense of purpose, the factory workers are now becoming an organized, purposeful and disciplined movement, directed towards self-determination. Roth thus encapsulates the essence of two important developments which were undermining the authority of the Empire and contributing to its destabilization.

4.3.2.3 Eternal Elements

The original ending of the novel which appeared in the *FZ* was, in Roth's own words, 'ein flüchtiger Schluß' (JRB, 222). However, he extensively reworked

[264] In winter the peasants have more positive freedom than in summer – their winter tasks are more in tune with their natural environment and give them more autonomy. Even though the winters are harsh, it is not the routinized and dehumanized work of the factory.
[265] Alan Bance, 'Introduction', in *The Radetzky March* (London: David Campbell, 1996), pp. ix-xxx, (p. xxv).

the ending for the novel's publication in book form, developing an epilogue from Chapter Twenty One of the newspaper version.[266] (The fact that Roth made significant revisions indicates not only dissatisfaction on his part with the original, hurried ending, but also points to the importance that he attached to the ending.) In the final book form of *Radetzkymarsch*, the main body of the novel ends with the personal tragedy of Franz Trotta, whose son, Carl Joseph has been killed in the first Galician offensive of the First World War: 'Was ging ihn der Untergang der Welt an, den er jetzt noch deutlicher kommen sah als einstmals der prophetische Chojnicki? Sein Sohn war tot. Sein Amt war beendet. Seine Welt war untergangen' (JRW, V, 447). These lines convey not only abject despondency, but also the sense of a sudden, irrevocable finality, devoid of any future. Roth's epilogue, however, provides a counterbalance to this abrupt ending, and closes the circle which has been left open in the main body of the novel.

The epilogue, which constitutes eight pages in the *Werke*, depicts the last few days of Franz Trotta's life.[267] Having received a message asking him to visit Count Chojnicki, who is now in a mental asylum in Vienna, Franz Trotta goes to the capital and learns from Chojnicki that the Kaiser is dying. He makes his way to Schönbrunn and joins the crowd of lower-ranking servants who are keeping vigil outside. Once the bell has tolled for the Kaiser, Franz Trotta returns to his provincial home, takes to his bed, and dies on the day of the Kaiser's funeral. The epilogue closes with Dr Skowronnek's attendance at the burial of Franz Trotta, and his return to the old friends' regular meeting place, the coffee house. While the mood of the epilogue is elegiac, it is tempered by the use of images which draw attention to the 'ultimate reality' of eternal nature.[268] These visual representations are not particularly detailed or complex, and in keeping with the elegiac tone do not contain surreal or disturbing elements. Nevertheless, they can be regarded as heuristic in the sense that they do encourage and assist the reader to see beyond the downfall and decay in the human sphere.

[266] See Hackert JRW, V, 875, and JRW, V, 893.
[267] JRW, V, 448-455.
[268] See Bance, 'Introduction', p. xxx.

The images are based on the natural elements of earth and water, but unlike the section depicting the miry roads of the border region, there is no sense of a turbulent conflict between humans and nature. Rather, the visuals contribute to the evocation of an atmosphere of quiet harmony. While the references to the soft, steady autumn rain evoke something of the sombre funereal atmosphere, they also suggest an element of renewal and cleansing, in particular the purification of the body before burial in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Moreover, the repeated references to the 'unermüdliche Regen' (JRW, V, 454), albeit in slightly varying linguistic forms, function as a type of visual anaphora, which underscores the sense of harmony and unity, and links the fates of the Empire, the Kaiser and his subjects. Roth also indicates the levelling aspect of the rain in the middle of the epilogue: 'Der unermüdliche, dünne Landregen hüllte das Schloß von Schönbrunn ein, genau wie die Irrenanstalt Steinhof' (JRW, V, 451) – like death, nature is oblivious to the status of humans.[269] The visual anaphora is also complemented by an appeal to the auditory sense with the reference to the trees in Schönbrunn park, which are rustling and murmuring (JRW, V, 453). Through this personification, the trees are assimilated into the crowd of people waiting to hear news of the Kaiser, further underlining the unity of humans and nature. In addition, in the Kaiser's feverish imaginings the drizzling rain, the murmuring of the servants around him, and the noise of people walking across the gravel outside all become one indistinguishable '"Säuseln" der Welt' (JRW, V, 452), and this points to the continuing integral relationship between humans and the natural world, irrespective of the dissolution of the political order.

Roth links the scene at Schönbrunn with the Bezirkshauptmann's own funeral through both the visual and auditory aspects of the anaphora: 'Indessen rann der uermüdliche Regen über alle entblößten Häupter der um das Grab Versammelten, und es rauschte und raschelte ringsum von den nassen Sträuchern, Kränzen und Blumen (JRW, V, 454-455). However, here it is not

[269] In Chapter Fifteen Roth highlights the mortality of the Kaiser, portraying him as a slightly eccentric old man (JRW, V, 342-354). In particular, the detailed visual close-up of his dripping nose indicates his human frailty and fallibility (JRW, V, 354). Klarmann notes that in this depiction the Kaiser is portrayed as a pitiable figure, bordering on the ridiculous. See Klarmann, p. 161.

only the image of the endless rain which functions to connect Franz Trotta's death to that of the Kaiser, and simultaneously evoke a sense of the eternal. Echoing the reference to the Schönbrunn gardener returning to his work, to dig up the 'ewige Erde' (JRW, V, 452), Roth focuses on Dr Skowronnek's act of placing earth on the Bezirkshauptmann's coffin: 'Er verschmähte den Spaten, den ihm ein Totengräber hinhielt, sondern er bückte sich und brach eine Scholle aus der nassen Erde und zerkrümelte sie in der Linken und warf mit der Rechten die einzelnen Krumen auf den Sarg' (JRW, V, 455). The visual image of this symbolic act is not particularly striking or unusual, although the fact that the doctor chooses to take the clod of earth into his hands makes the symbolism more meaningful. However, by drawing attention to the element of earth and its incorporation into the burial ceremony, Roth is evoking the origin and significance of this Judaeo-Christian tradition – a tradition which would be familiar to the vast majority of his contemporary readership. He is pointing to the final *Heimkehr* – the return to the earth from which man was made: 'Im Schweiße deines Angesichts sollst du dein Brot essen, bis du wieder zu Erde werdest, davon du genommen bist. Denn du bist Erde und sollst zu Erde werden.'[270] Thus the significance of the imagery of earth is not only the link to Trotta's peasant ancestors or the cycle of the seasons, as Bance and Hackert emphasize, but it is also a pointer to the literal absorption of the body into the earth, which subsumes the individual into the eternal.[271]

There is an implicit contrast between the *Scholle* which Dr Skowronnek crumbles into the coffin, and that which Carl Joseph visualizes in his daydreams about returning to the land of his peasant forebears (JRW, V, 193). The former is the eternal soil, whose significance is elemental and religious, not geographical, whereas for Carl Joseph 'die saftigen Schollen des Ackers' (JRW,

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[270] Genesis 3. 19.
In Jewish tradition nothing should hinder the body from the return to the earth – in Israel no coffins are used at all. Outside Israel the placing of earth on the coffin is considered to be a *hesed shel emet*, an act of loving kindness and the last that we can extend, since we can expect no reciprocal favour from the deceased.
See Willamette Valley Jewish Burial Society Homepage, <http://www.beitam.org/burial.html> [accessed 04 September 2006], and Board of Rabbis of Southern California, 'Guide to Jewish Burial and Mourning Practices'
<http://www.jewishla.org/boardofrabbis/assets/applets/Funeral_Practices_Guide.pdf> [accessed 04 September 2006].
[271] See Bance, 'Introduction', p. xx and p. xxx, and Hackert, JRW, V, 893-894.

V, 193) signify his ancestors' homeland as well as their occupation. Although Carl Joseph's father and grandfather also 'instinctively strive to return to the "earthy" life of their forebears',[272] unlike him, their sense of longing was for a way of life inextricably bound to nature, and they were not motivated by sentiment of place. Carl Joseph's specific nostalgia for Sipolje can be seen as a response to his sense of deracination – a phenomenon increasingly common among his generation given that, 'es keine Tradition mehr gibt, in der die Enkel der Monarchie heimisch werden könnten.'[273] Although he had shown himself hostile to the outright nationalism which was undermining the monarchy, his yearning for geographical roots is part of the same cultural phenomenon which contributed to its downfall.

Carl Joseph does eventually leave the army to work on Chojnicki's estate, but his few weeks of living a life close to the land are interrupted by the outbreak of war, and his death, although self-sacrificing, does not conform to a heroic narrative. He is not granted a return to the soil in either sense – he never treads the earth of his forebears in Sipolje, nor is his death marked by a formal interment. Roth evokes the consequential lack of closure for the Bezirkshauptmann at the end of the main body of the novel: 'Der Leutnant Trotta war schon längst vermodert oder von den Raben zerfressen, die damals über den tödlichen Bahndämmen kreisten, aber dem alten Herrn von Trotta war es immer noch, als hätte er gestern erst die Todesnachricht erhalten' (JRW, V, 447). The first reference to the rain in the epilogue echoes this image of death and decay, as Franz Trotta looks out of the window in the asylum and thinks of the railway embankment on which his son died: 'Jetzt wird er ganz naß, dachte der Bezirkshauptmann; als wäre der Leutnant erst heute oder gestern gefallen und die Leiche noch frisch' (JRW, V, 449). Although the image of the fresh corpse lying in the rain underlines the continued rawness of Herr Trotta's pain, the absence of decay mitigates the loss. Through this image Carl Joseph is also drawn into the present in preparation for the father's discovery of a meaning in his son's death. The revelation on the father's part is associated with the second reference to the rain:

[272] Bance, 'Introduction', p. xxx.
[273] Bronsen, *Biographie*, p. 406.

> Der unermüdliche, dünne Landregen hüllte das Schloß von Schönbrunn ein, genau wie die Irrenanstalt Steinhof. […] Und zum erstenmal, seitdem Herr von Trotta die Todesnachricht erhalten hatte, glaubte er zu wissen, daß sein Sohn nicht zufällig gestorben war. Der Kaiser kann die Trottas nicht überleben! Dachte der Bezirkshauptmann. Er kann sie nicht überleben! Sie haben ihn gerettet, und er überlebt die Trottas nicht. (JRW, V, 451)

Thus, Roth closes the open wound of Carl Joseph's death for the Bezirkshauptmann, and reinforces a sense of wholeness and unity in the epilogue.

The epilogue closes with the image of Dr Skowronnek, who, having just come from the Bezirkshauptmann's funeral, sits alone in the coffee house where he and his friend met to play chess in the afternoons: 'Und er spielte mit sich selbst eine Partie, schmunzelnd, von Zeit zu Zeit auf den leeren Sessel gegenüber blickend und in den Ohren das sanfte Geräusch des herbstlichen Regens, der noch immer unermüdlich gegen die Scheiben rann' (JRW, V, 455). Here, the doctor is smiling quietly to himself, suggesting that he is thinking of his friend with fond memories – he is closer to him here than had he remained at the graveside. By perpetuating the ritual of the chess game through which they cemented their friendship, the doctor is keeping Herr Trotta's memory alive. Roth thus points to the human need for structure in life, and its satisfaction through human patterns of activity as well as the cycles of the natural world.[274] The final image of the rain running down the window panes unifies the past, present and future. While it signals the end of an Empire, and of a way of life, its ceaseless movement points to the continuation of the earth and of life itself. In the epilogue, Roth indicates three ways in which the past can live on in the present: humans are subsumed into the eternal earth, people live on in the memories of those who knew them, and the essence of Empires and eras can be inscribed and passed on to posterity.

[274] Bance notes that for the Bezirkshauptmann, the rigid routines and fixed rituals of the Empire had become part of 'the natural order of things', and any change to this order seemed intolerable. See Bance, 'Introduction', p. xxxvi.

4.3.3 Fiction 1930-1932: Summary

In *Hiob* there is a particularly high frequency of Heuristic Visuals, and the two examples chosen for closer analysis illustrate Roth's use of different variants. The analysis of the first example shows how, through the use of multi-modal imagery, Roth recreates a complete sensory experience for the reader and communicates Mendel's sense of alienation and displacement in his inital experience of American urban modernity. Roth does not present the reader with a documentary or object-centred description, but rather highlights the disorienting effect of the urban environment's assault on the senses before sensory accommodation has been developed (see 1.3.3.2.1). However, the second example illustrates how a change in one's emotional state can influence one's perception of the environment, and the Heuristic Visuals highlight Mendel's subsequent integration into both the natural and urban environments of America.

Although there is a significantly lower frequency of Heuristic Visuals in *Radetzkymarsch* compared to *Hiob*, the analysis of the chosen examples shows how Roth has employed different visual techniques to convey both positive and negative aspects of the Habsburg Empire, and the consolations that the world offers even after the Empire's demise. In the depiction of the characteristics of the border region, the Heuristic Visuals are dispersed through the text, whereas in the socio-political critique there is a concentrated visual focus. The use of visual techniques in the eiplogue differs from the two earlier sections in that they are not highly detailed. They contribute not only to the elegiac tone of the epilogue but also underline elements of continuity beyond the downfall of the old order.

4.4 Chapter Four: Conclusion

In both *Hiob* and *Radetzkymarsch* Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to depict negative aspects of modernity. Whereas in *Hiob* he employs multi-modal imagery to convey the disorienting and alienating impact of urbanism on the uninitiated senses of the newcomer, in *Radetzkymarsch* the concentrated visual

focus highlights the sensory deprivation of the factory workers and their alienation from their natural environment. Roth encourages the reader to understand how industrial modernity can alienate humans through both sensory extremes, that of overload and of deprivation. However, at the end of *Hiob* he does point to possibilities of integration where there is a sense of harmony among the natural, human and urban. This theme of integration is also to be found in the reportage dealing with the railways. In 'Kleine polnische Station' Roth again uses multi-modal imagery, but in contrast to *Hiob*, its function is to recreate a positive sensory experience for the reader. The reader is led from an initial sense of opposition between railway and countryside to a final view where the railway and the life of the countryside are portrayed as an integrated organic whole. Both the railway pieces allude to the unifying function of the railway network. In doing so they mirror the depiction of the railways connecting centre and periphery in *Radetzkymarsch*.[275]

The analysis of the Heuristic Visuals in the selected examples has also highlighted that the signals represent the aspects of the railways towards which Roth is ambivalent. While in 'Kleine polnische Station' the signals have a negative connotation as they represent the interference of the zealous world in the peaceful life of the countryside, in 'Eisenbahn' the treatment of the signals is more sympathetic, focusing on their contribution to the melody of the whole station. For Carl Joseph the signals have a consoling function, as they maintain contact with the civilized centre of the Empire from his position on the periphery. Given that Carl Joseph chose this border posting due to the region's cultural affinity to the Slovenian homeland of his forebears, his attachment to the imperial centre reflects his lack of a clear identity. The theme of belonging, in particular that of *Heimat*, is a recurring concern for Roth. In 'Die Scholle' Roth addresses this as a political issue, with particular reference to the wandering and displaced. He also draws attention to the eternal earth and the universal fate of humanity as essential to the process whereby *Heimat* is constructed. It is this eternal earth which is one of the two central images in the epilogue of *Radetzkymarsch*.

[275] See Bance, 'Introduction', p. xxii.

The cyclical aspect of nature is evoked by Roth in all three pieces of reportage, as well as in the *Radetzkymarsch* epilogue. Bance regards Roth's depiction of the natural world in *Radetzkymarsch* as the metaphysical setting against which political events take place.[276] John Heath, on the other hand, argues that the first sentence in the epilogue is evidence that the belief in transcendence is absent from Roth's world:[277] 'Es bleibt uns nur noch übrig, von den letzten Tagen des Herrn Bezirkshauptmanns Trotta zu berichten' (JRW, V, 448). However, Heath overlooks the dialectical function of this first sentence, for the reader will discover that the epilogue conveys much more than a mere *Bericht* on the Bezirkshauptmann's last days. The images of the earth and of the rain locate human life in the context of the continuing natural order that does transcend the death of the Empire.

[276] Bance, 'Introduction', p. xx.
[277] John Heath, 'The Legacy of the Baroque in the Novels of Joseph Roth', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 40 (2004), 329-338 (p.331).

Conclusion

The foregoing analysis of the use of Heuristic Visuals in Roth's reportage and fiction published between 1923 and 1932 has revealed the variety and adaptability of his use of visual techniques. Given the protean nature of Roth's writing, any generalizations must be subject to a caveat. Nevertheless, some underlying patterns can be discerned.

Despite the widespread use of visual techniques in the analysed texts, Heuristic Visuals cannot be seen as a key organizing principle in Roth's work as a whole, given the variety of levels at which they operate, and the varying degrees of importance of the visual element in different texts. There are, however, examples within the genre of reportage where the Heuristic Visual is a central organizing principle for a whole text. Two striking examples of this are 'Die Krüppel' (see 2.2.2.2), and 'Einer liest Zeitung' (see 3.2.1).

It has been possible to establish synchronic correspondences between the different genres, and diachronic correspondences within genres. The discovery of such diachronic continuities bears out the findings of other recent research. Correspondences between the different genres are to be in found in the period 1923 to 1925, and again in the period 1930 to 1932. However, in the intervening period there is greater divergence between the reportage and the fiction.

In the period 1923-1925, Roth employs Heuristic Visuals to reveal the semiotics of social stratification in all the novels, and in the reportage dealing with the poor and dispossessed. The greatest similarity between the novels and the reportage in this respect is to be found between *Das Spinnennetz* and the articles discussed in 2.2.1. An important difference, however, is that in the novel the Heuristic Visuals are focalized through Lohse, the effect of which is to illustrate for the reader the lack of empathy for the marginalized on the part of the petit-bourgeois. In the later period from 1930 to 1932, Roth has brought his mastery of Heuristic Visuals to the highest level in both the novels and the reportage. In particular he combines appeals to the reader's visual imagination with appeals to the auditory, olfactory and tactile senses. There is a close similarity between Roth's use of Heuristic Visuals to recreate a complete sensory experience for

the reader in *Hiob* (4.3.1.1) and in 'Kleine polnische Station' (4.2.2). There is a difference, however. The sensory experience in *Hiob* is negative, mirroring the disorienting and alienating effect of the urban environment on the senses before sensory accommodation has been developed, whereas in 'Kleine polnische Station', the reconstructed sensory experience is positive, and evokes a sense of integration among the technological, rural and human spheres. Between 1926 and 1929, the Heuristic Visuals are more frequent in the reportage than in the fiction. Where Heuristic Visuals do appear in the novels of this period, they do not play a central role, whereas they are often a key organizing principle in the individual reportage piece (3.2.1).

Throughout the three time periods analysed, Roth continues to use Heuristic Visuals widely in his reportage, in relation to a variety of themes. There is evidence of Roth's use of different variants of Heuristic Visuals in all three periods, according to the varying rhetorical demands of different thematic issues. One of the most significant approaches is to combine a strong Heuristic Visual with a dialectical representation. This is found, for example, in 'Die Krüppel' (2.2.2) and 'Die Scholle' (4.2.1). In the first example Roth also employs the technique of the 'optischer Schrei', whereas in 'Die Scholle', he uses a detailed close-up. Roth's use of Heuristic Visuals as an organizing principle within individual articles can be seen in 'Die Krüppel' (2.2.2), 'Einer liest Zeitung' (3.2.1), and 'Kleine polnische Station' (4.2.2).

There are a number of diachronic correspondences with regard to the use of Heuristic Visuals within the fiction genre. The most striking are between *Die Rebellion* and *Hiob*, and between *Flucht ohne Ende* and *Radetzkymarsch*. In the first case, Roth uses Heuristic Visuals to give the reader insights into perception. In *Die Rebellion*, Roth shows how a shift in physical visual perception can lead to a change in cognitive perception, whereas in *Hiob*, he shows how a change in emotional state can lead to a change in both cognitive and physical visual perception. *Flucht ohne Ende* and *Radetzkymarsch* both have central characters who suffer from a sense of alienation. Whereas in *Flucht ohne Ende* Roth employed the technique of snapshots of the small town in Germany to directly convey Tunda's alienation from his environment, in *Radetzkymarsch*, it is Roth

as narrator who uses visual techniques to evoke the intensity and immediacy of the harmonious natural landscape of the border region. We do not see the region through Carl Joseph's eyes – he does not seem to have the active eyes of the stranger, and so his feelings of detachment and difference from his new neighbours are not conveyed through visual means. This key difference lies in the positive evaluation of the border region in *Radetzkymarsch*, which shows Carl Joseph's alienation as pathological, whereas Tunda's alienation is from an environment which Roth himself saw as negative.

There is an example of difference within the fiction genre of the period 1930 to 1932. Whereas *Hiob* is characterized by an extensive use of Heuristic Visuals, concomitant with its lyrical style, in *Radetzkymarsch* the Heuristic Visuals occur in relatively few passages, as befits the style of an epic in which descriptive elements are interspersed into the narrative progression. In addition, there is one example of a parallel across time and genre, namely that of the socio-political critique of the position of the factory workers in *Radetzkymarsch*, and the various depictions of the marginalized in Roth's reportage of the 1923 to 1925 period (2.2.1).

It has been shown that Roth's sharply focused visual representations do function as an heuristic device, especially when employed within a dialectical representation. Given that concrete language evokes mental imagery more readily than abstract language, and according to Dual Coding Theory is therefore more easily comprehended and retained by the reader, Roth's use of Heuristic Visuals can be seen as an effective technique with which to engage the reader. The effect is heightened by the reconstruction of sensory experiences and an appeal to the reader's tacit knowledge. Additionally, the technique of shocking the reader by means of the 'optischer Schrei', particularly when used within a dialectical representation, can encourage cognitive restructuring. However, it could be argued that one of the major weaknesses of, for example, Roth's emphasis on the visual concomitants of poverty is that he sacrifices the opportunity to provide the reader with an explanation. Similarly, with regard to the visual arts, Susan Sontag writes: 'Harrowing photographs do not inevitably lose their power to shock. But they are not much help if the task is to

understand. Narratives can make us understand.'[278] As against this, one must recognize that the Heuristic Visual, by engagement, can encourage the reader to ask the question why the poor occupy this particular place in society. Whereas the commercial visuals of modernity promote a self-satisying response in the reader, Roth's Heuristic Visuals, as we have seen, promote a self-consuming, critical response.

Roth's writing can be regarded on one level as the synthesis of American visuality and German cerebrality. It is not without intellectual critique, rather Roth has developed an alternative poetic medium for its expression. By not subscribing to any particular theory or ideology, Roth is able to engage with the world around him in a more open way. He is the 'engagierte Beobachter'.[279] Roth sees with the objective eyes of the stranger, and his writing reflects an awareness of what exists rather than a preconceived notion of what ought to exist. This is not to say that his writing is without value judgements. However, these are not imposed upon the reader, rather the reader is guided towards them through the particular narratives which Roth creates.

There is scope for the further development of this line of research by incorporating the *Reisereportage*, and extending the time frame to include Roth's earlier reportage and the works of his exile years. The potential of this approach can be seen in the fact that by focusing on and analysing Roth's use of visual techniques, the foregoing analysis has led to a reinterpretation of the endings of Roth's two most famous novels: *Hiob* and *Radetzkymarsch*. In *Hiob* the analysis led to the conclusion that contrary to previous interpretations, the novel does not reflect an outright rejection of American modernity, nor does it imply that rationality must exclude the spiritual and religious. In *Radetzkymarsch*, the dialectical interpretation of the epilogue points to the continuing natural order transcending the fall of the Empire, and to three ways

[278] Susan Sontag, p. 89.
[279] Ralf Dahrendorf, *Engagierte Beobachter: Die Intellektuellen und die Versuchungen der Zeit* (Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 2005). Dahrendorf argues that the successful intellectual is the observer, who is nevertheless engaged with the object of their critical inquiry.

in which the past can live on in the present, thus transcending the finality of death. 'The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning[...].'[280]

[280] Ecclesiastes 7. 4.

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