SOCIAL CRITICISM IN

JOSEPH ROTH'S 'RADETZKYMARSCH'.

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by

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ABSTRACT

Roth's emotional attachment to his subject does not prevent him from presenting the faults and weaknesses of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Monarchy at the turn of the twentieth century is in the grips of decay, which is manifest in the ever-widening discrepancy between appearance and reality. The author's ambivalent attitude to the past results in a tendency to refrain from direct comment on persons and events. The double-edged nature of irony appears to be the most adequate tool for expressing social criticism in the context of 'Radetzkymarsch'.
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INTRODUCTION

Sterne gibt's, die ewig scheinen wollten
Und doch verglöhn'...
Wolken gibt's, die eher weinen sollten
Und weiterzieh'n...
Steine gibt's die viel zu fragen würsten,
Doch keiner spricht...
Menschen gibt's, die sich was fragen müssten
Und sagen's nicht...

Roth [1915] 1.1

During his life time he was not unknown. After 1945 he was virtually forgotten. Hermann Linden described him as 'der grösste Dichter Österreichs zwischen den zwei Weltkriegen'. 2.

Joseph Roth was born in East Galicia in 1894. His mother was a slavic Jewess, his father an Austrian. Roth went to school in Brody and Vienna and later studied German literature and philosophy. During his war service in the 'K.u.K.' army [1916-1918], his first publications appeared: mainly articles and feuilletons. After the war he worked as a journalist, travelling throughout the cities of Europe. Like many others of his time, Roth left Germany at Hitler's rise to power in 1933. For the rest of his life he lived and published his works in exile. He died in 1939, in Paris, at the age of forty-five.

Roth does not seem to have been strongly influenced by any one writer or literary movement. He oriented himself to some extent on Gustave Flaubert and Joseph Conrad, (two writers he held in great esteem), and partly on Heinrich Mann. He schooled himself
on Karl Kraus and Alfred Polgar as far as stylistic techniques are concerned. He knew and appreciated the works of men like Grillparzer, Mörike, Tolstoy, Gogol and Stendhal. Apart from these scattered influences, however, Roth does not seem to have had any direct literary model.

It would also be difficult to place Roth in any movement or school of thought. In his early work can be seen influences of the psychological realism of the French and Russian writers. Later Roth tends more towards Viennese impressionism. His works in the last years of his life could well come into the category of 'Emigrantenliteratur'; but it would be oversimplified to classify Roth as an exile-writer. On this question of literary influence one would be inclined to agree with Famira-Parcsetich who notes: 'Joseph Roth ging literarisch seine eigenen Wege und hielt nicht viel von der ihm umgebenden Literatur in Deutschland ... Roth ist literarisch durchaus als 'Einzelmünder' zu bezeichnen und seine Zugehörigkeit zu einer literarischen Bewegung beruht auf nicht viel mehr als einer gemeinsamen Schaffensatmosphäre.'

Critics of Roth have not ceased to be fascinated by the ambivalent attitudes expressed in his works. Roth has been described as a sceptic and a believer, a rebel and a reactionary.

Hackert describes this ambivalence: 'Das Alte zu schätzen, ohne es doch bewahren zu können, das Neue nicht anzuerkennen, ohne es aber leugnen zu wollen, dies kennzeichnet den doppelten Aspekt der Zwischenstellung, die Joseph Roth im Umbruch der Zeit bezog.'

A comment in his essay on Grillparzer indicates Roth's double-

sided attitude towards the collapsing empire; an attitude conveyed throughout 'Radetzkymarsch'. 'Der Untergang des grossen, aber fühler restriingierten und ständig im Zurückweichen begriffenen Reiches hat immer noch einen noblen Aspekt, trotz inneren Brüchen, Verfehlungen, Kleinlichkeiten, Fäulnissen.'

Kurer analyzes this dualism as he sees it expressed in 'Radetzkymarsch': 'Dem Zwiespältigen der Empfindung begegnen wir in Roths Werken immer wieder: einerseits der Erschütterung, Trauer und Ergriffenheit, die sich uns im 'Radetzkymarsch' im 'Sentimentalen' mitteilt; andererseits der Erbitterung und Opposition gegen die alte Ordnung noch viele Jahre nach ihrem Untergang; sie finden ihren Ausdruck in dem feinen ironischen Durchschüssen, die das Gewebe sanfter Melancholie immer wieder aufruhen, und in den Erzählabschnitten satirischen Charakters.'

Böning explains Roth's fluctuating loyalties described by Kurer above: 'Als Angehöriger einer Zwischenzeit, der sich der alten Monarchie noch liebevoll verbunden weiss, sehnt er sich nach der lockenden Ruhe und dem Glanz der goldenen Vergangenheit zurück, weiss er aber ganz genau, dass ihm seine Position in der neuen Zeit und sein Wissen, dass die K.u.K. Monarchie endgültig einer vergangenen Epoche angehört, eine uneingeschränkte Glorifizierung der alten Zeit nicht erlauben. Aus dieser Lage entsteht seine Unsicherheit und sein Schwanken zwischen Sympathie und nüchtern, sachlicher Beurteilung dessen, was in der Vergangenheit schlecht war.'

Alone among Roth's critics Ward H. Powell sees no contradiction in the author's 'conversion' from revolt and scepticism to monarchy and belief. In fact he denies such radical change in attitude; maintaining that, in his later novels, 'Roth takes on the appearance of a monarchist and a believer.' Powell proceeds to explain the
ambivalence manifest in Roth's works in a fairly straightforward fashion: 'In the beginning he was a liberal, forward-looking critic of his times who could believe in the possibility of something better to come. At the end of his career he was a man completely disabused of his faith in the future, but one who nonetheless refused to admit the fact openly, baldly, and with finality. In some respects he resembled a person who suffers from an incurable disease and resigns himself to a palliative in order to ease the suffering and to salvage anything at all from the days which remain. Roth's disease was despair; the palliative was ironic primitivism; and what he ultimately salvaged was his own artistic being.' 7.2. It is difficult to assess how far Roth's latter-day monarchism is a mask and how far it is an expression of his true feelings. Although the above reasoning sounds convincing, it could be argued that Powell has underestimated Roth's attachment to the past.

The fact remains, however, - and it is the aim of this thesis to prove it - that loyalty to his past, veiled or otherwise, did not prevent Roth from correctly diagnosing 'die Krankheiten der Zeit'. 8.1. One may well wonder what Roth's true attitude to these questions was. Perhaps Kurer comes closest to answering this, when he says: 'Die Wahrheit liegt nicht ... im dokumentarischen Detail - das unter Umständen nur wenig besagt-sondern in der dichterisch gestalteten Vision.' 6.2.

'Radetzkymarsch' was written during the last years of the author's life. In other words, it takes its place among those works composed when Roth's attitude is said to have become monarchistic and reactionary. It is proposed that this novel,
'das wohl bedeutendste Buch Roth's' — despite the author's alleged swing to patriotic fervour, still stands as a witness to its time, by virtue of the significant social criticism inherent in it.

Part I of this thesis will discuss those features in the 'K.u.K.' society which herald its collapse. In Part II, an attempt is made to evaluate Roth's criticism in these matters. Direct expression of a disapproving attitude will be shown to be an exception to the rule. Indirect or implied criticism would appear more appropriate in the light of Roth's wavering attitude towards his subject. Narrative perspective, characterization, contrast and irony are discussed as techniques used in the presentation of criticism. Irony, as a pervading element in the novel and as the most adequate expression of the author's ambivalence, is treated in greater detail.
PART I: THE MONARCHY: AN OBJECT OF SOCIAL CRITICISM

Order

In a changing world, scrupulous adherence to tradition and social convention reveals itself as an absurd anachronism. Indeed the over-widening discrepancy between appearance (order) and reality (dissolution) can be seen as symptomatic of a decaying society.

In a discussion of the themes in Roth's 'Austrian' novels, ('Radetzkymarsch' and 'Kapuzinergruft' would come specifically under this heading), Wegner maintains that central to his works is 'der Zerfall einer geordneten Welt.' This assertion is certainly valid for 'Radetzkymarsch'.

Order and harmony as represented by the Monarchy are reflected in the minds of the individuals, and this is recognizable in the sphere of family, profession and work. (The fact that the state of a society affects its individual members should be noted here as a justification for discussing personal relationships within the context of social criticism.) As the inner order of the empire begins to crumble, so too does that of its representatives, (exemplified by Franz Trotta), who implicitly believe in it. Under the threat of change, both monarch and subject assume a mask which superficially and temporarily belies the inner turmoil already brewing in the empire.

Against the background of profound social change, Franz Trotta's clinging to long established norms of living and petty formalities in social conduct becomes an effective target for Roth's gentle mockery. In their monotonous regularity Trotta's days truly roll on wie gleichmässige, friedliche, stumme Räder.

* Although the collapse of the Monarchy affects all areas of society, it is most evident in the upper social crust: the aristocracy, the army and the higher bureaucracy.
The detailed description of his (and his monarch's) daily shave and manicure emphasizes the importance given to external appearances and reflects a meticulous pattern of existence. Trotta's side-whiskers, for example, are worn

als ein Uniformstück ..., als ein Abzeichen, das seine Zugehörigkeit zu der Dienerschaft Franz Josephs des Ersten beweisen sollte, als einen Beweis seiner dynastischen Gesinnung; 1.2

The daily performance of dressing proceeds almost as formally as the ceremony of eating. The taking of meals in the Trotta household is indeed something of a ritual, especially on Sundays, when it is accompanied by the music of the military band:

Sie [die Musik] umrankte die feierliche Zeremonie des
Essens mild und verschönend ...1.3

The beginning and the end, as well as the duration of the meal, are determined by old Trotta:

Der Bezirkschauptmann gab das Zeichen zum Niedersitzen.1.4

A brief pause occurs between the second and third courses of the meal when Franz Trotta takes his customary stroll to the window, ruffles the curtain and returns; upon which point the third course is duly served. The ceremonial conclusion of the meal, as specified by Old Trotta, is indicated in Carl Joseph's attempt to emulate his father:

Er faltete, im gleichen Rhythmus wie der Alte, seine Serviette.1.5

So great is the emphasis on form, that the essence or significance of a situation often goes unnoticed. In this instance the preoccupation with trivial formalities proves a stumbling block in
communication. However this problem will be discussed in the next chapter.

Kurer analyzes this insistence on form and correctness with characteristic discernment. 'Handeln nach Zeremoniell und Etiquette steht für richtiges Handeln...Leben ist selbstverständliches Sich-Einordnen.'\(^3\)\(^1\). 'Die Ordnung wirkt bis ins einzelne. Das Leben wird zum zeremoniellen Ritual, und zeremoniell bedeutet hier feierlich, förmlich, gemessen wie steif und umständlich. Jeder Schritt ist von vorneherein bestimmt, jede Handlung bis in ihre Teile festgelegt.'\(^3\)\(^2\). This rather formal behaviour is often evident in the relationship between Carl Joseph and his father. One is reminded of the painful probings into his studies to which the former is exposed during the summer vacation. The young cadet knows how he is to conduct himself. Even the relaxation of the atmosphere is subtly conveyed through the gestures of the father. Old Trotta

... stiess am Tischrande die Manschette in den Ärmel zurück, es gab ein hartes Scheppern. 'Erzähle weiter!' sagte er und zündete sich eine Zigarette an. Es war das Signal für den Anbruch der Gemütlichkeit.\(^4\)\(^6\).

The inflexible adherence to form and convention is treated with obvious scepticism on the part of the author in his delightfully ironic account of the process of letter-writing:

Wie Urlaubsscheine und Dienstzettel glichen die Briefe einander, geschrieben auf gelblichen und holzfaserigen Oktavbogen, die Anrede: 'Lieber Vater!' links, vier Finger Abstand vom oberen Rand und zwei vom seitlichen, beginnend mit der kurzen Mitteilung vom Wohlergehen des Schreibers, fortgehend mit der Hoffnung auf das des Empfängers und abgeschlossen von der steten, in einen neuen Absatz gefassten und rechts unten im diagonalen
Abstand zur Anrede hingemalten Wendung: 'In Ehrfurcht Ihr treuer und dankbarer Sohn Joseph Trotta, Leutnant.' It is only too evident that within these hard and fast conventions of letter-writing genuine expression of feeling is stifled from the outset; hence Joseph Trotta von Sipolje’s consternation: how was one to convey out-of-the-ordinary news 'in gesetzmaßigen' letters, in 'normierten' sentences? How was one to change the 'für ein ganzes Soldatenleben berechnete Form der Briefe'? Yet neither the grandfather, nor the son, nor even the grandson attempts to break free of these constricting conventions. Indeed most of the time they follow the rules unquestioningly. '...Die Welt ist mechanisch geworden, und die Mechanik der Gebräuche ersetzt Gedanken und Entscheidungen.' According to one critic, the letters are a 'Manifestation der Regelmäßigkeit und des Formalismus und informieren im Kanzleistil den Leser über die gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse'. The characters in 'Radetzkymarsch' 'flüchten sich in den konventionellen Briefstellerstil und verbergen ihre Gefühle hinter der Unverbindlichkeit der Floskeln. Das Wichtige und Menschliche erscheint, mehr getarnt als angedeutet, günstigstenfalls in der Nachschrift.'

By clinging to order and discipline, by maintaining the meticulous exterior, old Trotta succeeds in concealing from the world his real anguish. First of all, he is shattered by his son's intention to leave the army. For Franz Trotta, this desertion is synonymous with the abandonment of an ideology. The career of an officer is, in his eyes, no ordinary occupation. Secondly, Trotta sees in the handing over of responsibility to his son a relinquishing of his power as the father-figure. These two factors produce a feeling of emptiness in Trotta. He finally decides to pass on to his son the responsibility of his own future; a decision which is tantamount to agreeing to Carl
Joseph's departure from the army. We read of old Trotta's reactions to his decision:

Er ging, wie jeden Tag, an seine Arbeit. Und niemand wäre imstande gewesen zu erkennen, dass Herr von Trotta seinen Glauben verloren hatte. Denn die Sorgfalt, mit der er heute seine Geschäfte erledigte, war keineswegs eine geringere als an anderen Tagen... Herr von Trotta glich einem Virtuosen, in dem das Feuer erloschen, in dessen Seele es taub und leer geworden ist... 1.8

Kurer's comment: 'Das Makellose der Erscheinung ist Spiegel der inneren Haltung', 3.2 did once have some validity, but the above description of old Trotta's bearing is all too indicative of the growing discrepancy between the internal and the external order. It is true; Trotta's appearance is "makellos." But his appearance is no longer a 'mirror' but a mask disguising his inner state. Franz Trotta displays virtuosity in the acting out of his role. The sociologist would no doubt classify his "Rollenspiel" as an adjustment mechanism. Reflections aside, one fact remains clear. Appearance seems to be overshadowing reality. The once 'sacred' order - or rather 'sacred' in the memories and imagination of the characters - is now no more than the false face of a rapidly decaying society. Böning's comment reveals the inevitable abortion of such upheld pretense: 'Ihr unfruchtbares Festhalten am Starren, Genormten, an der Konvention von gestern wird der Flexibilität der neuen Zeit nicht mehr gerecht und bereitet den Personen den Untergang.' 5.2

Perhaps the strongest attack on the preservation of order at all costs - without a doubt the most scathing social criticism in the novel - is to be found in the scene of Carl Joseph's visit of condolence to Slama. The suppression of the lower class; the cruelty in humiliating Slama, the 'offended', who is not permitted a word of
protest within the framework of the 'sacred order' of the privileged few, is an all too clear indictment of an underlying brutality; a brutality, as Scheible points out, veiled by fine manners; a brutality which also helps to perpetuate that rather false order and security, but which, by the same token, must herald the collapse of that same ordered world.

Communication

Throughout 'Radetzkymarsch' one cannot help noticing that Roth's main characters are lonely figures. They experience extreme difficulty in communicating even with their most intimate friends, not to speak of fellowmen from other social strata. It would appear that three main factors give rise to these communication difficulties; and it must be stressed here that it is a difficulty in communication rather than a lack of it that is peculiar to these characters. First, it cannot be denied that communication is restricted by the numerous formalities prescribed in social intercourse. Secondly, the traditional patriarchal nature of the family is seen to create a barrier to any warm relationship. And thirdly, an inability to give expression to their thoughts results in fully introverted characters who suffer and cause others to suffer in their own isolation.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the concentration on form and self-discipline too frequently acts as an impediment to communication. The frustrating conventions of letter-writing immediately spring to mind in this context. Joseph Trott's predicament when it comes to informing his father of the sudden honour bestowed on him is described in some length on the third page of the novel. The following quotation illustrates to what extent he is a victim of formalities. Trotta simply cannot bring himself to express the extraordinary:
Wie aber sollte man jetzt...die gesetzmaßige, für ein ganzes Soldatenleben berechnete Form der Briefe ändern und zwischen die normierten Sätze ungewöhnliche Mitteilungen von ungewöhnlich gewordenen Verhältnissen rücken...? An jenem Abend...sah er ein, dass er über die Anrede: 'Lieber Vater!' niemals hinauskommen wurde. \footnote{1.7}

When Demant is later faced with his father-in-law's insinuations as to Carl Joseph's visit that day, he himself realizes that his stereotype answer to Knopfmacher has an empty ring about it:

"Ich habe gar keine Veranlassung, lieber Papa, Eva oder meinem Freund zu misstrauen." Er sagte es zögernd, der Regimentsarzt. Es klang ihm selbst wie eine ganz fremde Wendung, entnommen irgendeiner fernen Lektüre, abgelauscht einem vergessenen Schauspiel. \footnote{1.9}

A prisoner of social clichés, Demant is unable to convey his true feelings.

Analyzing the importance of direct speech in Roth's works, Wegner arrives at the following conclusions: Most of the characters in Roth's novels, and this applies to 'Radetzkymarsch', fall into four groups, according to their ability to communicate. To the first group belongs the person who embodies the spirit of the new age. Just this spirit is incarnated in the figure of Knopfmacher. Uncomplicated and realistic, not bound by the past and completely unaware of the problems of the present, he is characterized by overflowing self-confidence and a tendency to empty chatter. The second group is a contrast to the first. To this belong figures such as Jacques and Onufrij, whose ordered existence, objectively a thing of the past, is still possible in certain areas of life in the present. Jacques' service to Trotta is merely an extension of his employment under the latter's father. Onufrij is bound to the land. Both men speak only when necessary and then, unlike Knopfmacher, express
themselves clearly and concisely. The third group comprises rogues and cynics, that is, cold beings like Kapturak and Winternigg who survive successfully in any world. Sensitivity is unknown to them. With remarkable ease they use their language to their own calculated ends. In the fourth and last category we find figures such as Chojnicki and Skowronnek. Both are intellectuals who are capable of analyzing the problems of life and formulating thoughts and ideas which are confusedly felt but never given verbal expression to by certain other individuals. Carl Joseph, his father and his friend Demant are such individuals. Wegner argues that the absence of dialogue in 'Radetzkymarsch' is an expression of their loneliness and inability to communicate and that it stresses the central problem of Roth's characters who 'live between two worlds', that is, between the 'ordered' world of the past, for which they yearn, and the strange, new world of the future, which has no meaning for them. Following on from here, it may be justifiably argued that Chojnicki and Skowronnek experience a similar kind of existential dilemma. They too belong principally to the world of yesterday, but are somehow better fitted to make the most of life in the circumstances of the time. This applies especially to Skowronnek. Chojnicki cannot endure the final stages of the collapse of 'his' world. He becomes insane. It would appear that, as well as being more objective in their approach to life, they are much less confined by the forms and conventions which thwart natural expression of thoughts and feelings. Again it is this slavery to rules, traditions and petty formalities, typified in characters such as Franz Trotta, that is gently but consistently held up to ridicule.

Early in the novel we witness Joseph Trotta's reaction to the 'unheilichen Glanz der Kaiserlichen Gnade'. He wonders whether, in view of his new standing, 'die gemessene Liebe' he has always shown for his father does not demand 'an altered mode of behaviour and
a new form of relationship between father and son'\textsuperscript{1.7} (Note again the preoccupation with formalities). As is later seen, the new rank of the son serves only to aggravate - or rather suffocate - a relationship suffering under the traditional patriarchal nature of the family. All authority is vested in the father as head of the family. A certain distance is then naturally created between father and son; so that it is not surprising that awe and respect, on the part of the child, replace warmth and affection, or that love, as in the case of Joseph Trotta, is 'measured'\textsuperscript{.} 

'Schon der erste gemeinsame Auftritt von Vater und Sohn zeigt, dass in der patriarchalischen Welt des 'Radetzkymarsches' ein Vater der unumschränkt herrschende pater familias ist, dem sich alle Familienmitglieder unterzuordnen haben. So unterdrückt die Gewalt der Väter die Söhne und hindert sie, ein eigenes Leben zu führen.'\textsuperscript{5.3} Franz Trotta's exercise of parental authority is manifest on many an occasion. He smoothly proceeds to determine his son's profession with no regard for the latter's wishes. After all, had not his own father rightly proclaimed:

Ich habe beschlossen, dass du Jurist wirst.\textsuperscript{1.10} 

Years later, when old Trotta decides to hand over to his son the responsibility for his own future, we realize with what religiosity this patriarchal authority is treated:

Da er nun aber mit diesem Brief die Befehlsgewalt über seinen Sohn niederlegte, schien es ihm, dass sein ganzes Leben wenig Sinn mehr hätte...\textsuperscript{1.11} 

Despite the barrier created by authority in the relationship between father and son, it would be incorrect to speak of a generation conflict. Until the end of the novel, when Carl Joseph decides to leave the army, he never questions his father's authority. Rather, there exists here \textsuperscript{ cf p.7.}
what is commonly referred to as a generation gap.

During a visit to his son on the border, we note the Bezirkshauptmann's sad reflections. Inherent is the comment of the narrator. The distance between father and son has reduced contact to a minimum:

Der Sohn mochte viele Geheimnisse haben. Der Vater kannte sie nicht. Man sagte: Vater und Sohn, aber zwischen beiden lagen viele Jahre, grosse Berge! Man wusste nicht viel mehr von Carl Joseph als von einem andern Leutnant. 1.12

It is interesting to note that although patriarchal authority does hamper a close father-son relationship (as was seen in the above instance), the fact that the barrier to communication does remain is due not so much to this as to a common inability to voice one's thoughts and be demonstrative in one's emotions. Once Carl Joseph is an officer, the father's superiority in their relationship becomes less noticeable; on the surface at least. Böning remarks that the father-son relationship 'nicht aus Gefühlskälte, sondern vor allem infolge der Kommunikationsschwierigkeiten äusserlich unentwickelt blieb.' 5.4

Repeatedly one notices expressions of these difficulties in communication. Phrases such as: 'Er wollte etwas sagen und brachte keinen Laut hervor', 'ich kanns nicht ausdrücken', 'Er suchte nach Worten' describe the problem facing most of the main characters in 'Radetzkymarsch'. (It is only when drunk that Carl Joseph finds ease in communicating. In the outpour to his father at the celebrations he unwittingly reveals his main problem and fear in life.*) When Demant questions his friend's role in the 'scandal' over his wife, Carl Joseph cannot even find words to answer his friend:

* Böning prefers the term "Generationsproblem". p.61.
* cf p.124
Man hätte Jahrzehnte umsonst nach einer Antwort suchen können; als wäre die Sprache der Menschen ausgeschöpft und für ewige Zeiten verdorrt. 1.13.

Not even intimate relationships are free from misunderstandings which inevitably arise from an inability to convey one's emotions in words or in gestures. At the slightest sign of emotion the Bezirkshauptmann has the habit of pretending not to hear what is being said. As the old servant Jacques congratulates Carl Joseph on his graduation as an officer we read:

Der Bezirkshauptmann ging zum Fenster, die Szene drohte rührend zu werden. 1.14.

And thus, some small act which could have brought father and son together is neglected.

By way of conclusion to these reflections on the problem of communication, it may be of interest to note that the affection between Franz Trotta and his son, - and there can be no question that this exists - however and whenever suppressed, is increasingly manifest as the collapse of the monarchy becomes more and more imminent. The parallel created here would suggest that the strictly ordered world of the past was a direct hindrance to communication: surely a subtle technique in conveying the author's disapproval of this matter.

The Past

'Ich stehe zwischen zwei Welten, bin in keiner daheim und habe es infolge dessen ein wenig schwer.' 8. Tonio Kröger's words to his friend Lisaweta could well have come from the lips of Joseph Roth. It is well known that Roth, the man, especially in the later years of his life, was deeply attached to the past and the glorious days of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. As an artist, however, with a keener sense of objectivity, he never allows himself to wallow in sentimentality,

* cf. pp. 85, 115, 126, 127, 225
by closing his eyes to the faults in the empire.

The misfortune of figures such as Carl Joseph and Max Demant, namely that they are torn between the past and the present, is treated in the novel in the ambiguous manner characteristic of Roth's attitude to this problem. The artistic presentation of this dilemma, however, (as will be shown in Part II) would leave no doubt in the reader's mind that the author does in fact view the characters' hankering after the past with a great amount of scepticism.

The problem of Carl Joseph is that he is rooted in the past; so much so that he actually views life almost entirely from the perspective of his father and grandfather. The following passage should illustrate how intensely Carl Joseph clings to his past. His reactions to his grandfather's portrait are being described:

An dieses Bildnis klammerte sich die Erinnerung Carl Josephs, als an das einzige und letzte Zeichen, das ihm die unbekannte lange Reihe seiner Vorfahren vermacht hatte. Ihr Nachkomme war er. Seitdem er zum Regiment eingerückt war, fühlte er sich als der Enkel seines Grossvaters, nicht als der Sohn seines Vaters. 1.15.

A brief analogy may be drawn here: Just as Carl Joseph feels encumbered with the legend of his grandfather, so too does the Monarchy feel burdened by a responsibility to live up to its reputation attained in the past.

It would seem that the substantive 'Enkel' appears more frequently in the text than its relative 'Sohn'. The above quotation, along with numerous others, would bear out this impression. The insistence on 'Enkel' indicates Carl Joseph's desire to identify himself with his grandfather and thus, by association, with the Emperor Franz Joseph. It is interesting to note that Carl Joseph, viewing life from the same fixed perspective, sees his friend Demant primarily as 'Enkel des

* cf. pp. 28, 50, 56, 58, 67, 73, 74, 81, 156 etc.
Grossvaters." 1.16. Speaking of this grandfather fixation, Böning remarks:

'Hinter allem, was der Bezirkshauptmann sagt oder tut, steht für Carl Joseph der Grossvater, der in den Augen des Enkels eine fast mythische Grösse bekommt und selbst den Vater noch überrasgt. Carl Joseph fühlt sich in erster Linie als Enkel, nicht als Sohn." 5.5.

For Carl Joseph, moral standards are set by the 'Hero of Solferino', his grandfather. His preoccupations with the glory enshrouding this figure and his underlying fear of not meeting the expectations he believes desired of him, frequently border on the ridiculous.


Another similar reflection reveals the sorry plight of Carl Joseph. Resoluteness and stability, in his eyes, are to be found only in the past.

Mutig wurde man nur, wenn man an den alten Helden von Solferino dachte. Immer musste man beim Grossvater einkehren, um sich ein bisschen zu stärken. 1.18.

Carl Joseph seems to find no meaning in the world in which he lives. Ironically, as he grows older, his grandfather, and together with him the Kaiser, become more remote, more abstract figures. And all the while Carl Joseph strives rather pitifully to revive the fading past; but he no longer feels so bound, as a person, to the fate of the empire.

'Die immer wieder erschene Einkehr beim dem Vater symbolisiert die erneute Hinwendung zu Ordnung und Tradition, welche jedoch nie in die Reichweite der Selbstüberzeugung gelangt; denn die Enkel kehren zur Tradition zurück, ohne darin heimisch zu werden. Das Ordnungsprinzip selbst geht in die Brüche, man wächst aus der Tradition heraus und
wird der seelischen Obdachlosigkeit ausgesetzt'. 4.2. Unable to come to grips with the present; no longer able to reach the past, Carl Joseph wanders solitarily between two indifferent worlds.

A further expression of the futile clinging to the past is seen in an almost morbid fascination for the dead. This is revealed in a conversation between Demant and Carl Joseph as they stroll through the cemetery:

'Es gibt so viele Tote,' sagte der Regimentsarzt. 'Fühlst du nicht auch, wie man von den Toten lebt?' - 'Ich lebe vom Grossvater', sagte Trotta.' 1.19.

And again later before Demant's fatal duel we read of young Trotta:

Er fühlte, dass die Toten die Lebenden riefen... 1.20.

Carl Joseph, his father and his friend Demant provide a striking contrast to figures such as the analytical Chojnicki or the hollow Knopfmacher. All three are prisoners of their feelings, memories and dreams of the past. Their reminiscences are coloured with highly emotive words expressing deep romantic yearning. In these reminiscences and in other ways (which will be studied later) the author makes it quite clear that 'their' past in retrospect has often little in common with the past in reality.

Carl Joseph pines for former days. His frequently uttered longing (indirectly presented through the use of substitutionary speech) for the simple peasant life with its inherent order is so inseparable from his glorification of the Hero of Solferino, that it often leaves the reader unconvinced. Does not his heart really sigh for the 'heile Welt', in all its manifestations, characterized by his grandfather's time? A quotation may serve to illustrate this:

Manchmal glaubte er [Carl Joseph], in sich das Blut seiner Ahnen zu fühlen... Sipolje war der Name des
Dorfes aus dem sie stammten. Sipolje: das Wort hatte eine alte Bedeutung... Er sah es, wenn er an das Porträt seines Grossvaters dachte, das verdämmernd unter dem Sufit des Herrenzimmers hing. Eingebettet lag es zwischen unbekannten Bergen, unter dem goldenen Glanz einer unbekannten Sonne ... 1.21.

Analyzing this particular passage Wegner has this to say: 'Er [Carl Joseph] ist mit diesem Dorf und mit seinen Ahnen, die in ihm 'unter einer goldenen Sonne' lebten, wesensmässig verbunden. Aber beide sind ihm fern. Nah ist ihm die Zeit, in der er lebt. Aber er ist seinen Ahnen ähnlich, viel zu ähnlich, um in dieser, jetzt ganz anders gearteten Welt leben zu können. Die Diskrepanz zwischen seiner gemütsmässigen Veranlagung und dem Geist seiner Zeit bedingt die Eigenart dieser Gestalt, ihr Gefühl des Fehl-am-Platte-Seins und die daraus entspringende Traurigkeit, eine Traurigkeit, die wesensmässig zum Gesamtbild der Figur gehört.' 2.4. What Wegner calls 'gemütsmässige Veranlagung' is often implicitly criticized as an inability to come to terms with the present. So that one can only pity young Trotta whose predicament is best described by Kurer: 'Das Leben wird Traum, der Traum Leben.' 3.3.

The conservative and reactionary element in 'Radetzkymarsch' becomes a further target for criticism, in as far as it is a blind clinging to the past, a complete disregard for contemporary problems. The aristocrat Chojnicki is a conservative. "Als Känder von Schönheit, Ruhm und Grösse der Monarchie wird er...zum Sprachrohr des exilierten Konservativ legitimistischen Dichters." 3.4. However, this does not prevent him from discerning and objecting to the increasing signs of decadence within the empire. Franz Trotta, on the other hand, as well
as the 'K.u.K' officers doggedly persist in upholding the old order; even if this means, as in the case of the latter, employing armed force to do so.

In his review of 'Radetzkymarsch' Georg Lukács praises Roth's realism in penetrating the psychology of this period of collapse. 'Es wird klar, dass diese Offiziere und Beamte ihre anfänglich bindende und zivilisatorische Rolle bereits verloren haben und zu einfachen Gendarmen des österreichisch-ungarischen Völkergefangnisses geworden sind.

Dieser Personenkreis verabscheut das Wachstum des Kapitalismus, die Entwicklung der Arbeiterbewegung, der Demokratie, jegliches Aufleuchten aus dem Wege der Völkerbestrebung zur Selbstbestimmung.9.1. Franz Trotta is characterized by conservatism and political naïveté. Brushing aside the term of 'national minorities' as nothing more than larger groups of 'revolutionary individuals' he ponders:

Ja, er war von lauter revolutionären Individuen umgeben. Er glaubte sogar zu bemerken, dass sie sich in einer widernatürlichen Weise vermehrten, in einer Weise, wie sie dem Menschen nicht entspricht. Es war für den Bezirkschauptmann ganz deutlich geworden, dass die 'staatsstreuenden Elemente' immer unfruchtbarer wurden und immer weniger Kinder bekamen, wie die Statistiken der Volkszählungen bewiesen, in denen er manchmal blätterte.1.22.

'Der Kaiser ist Diener Gottes, die Beamenschaft und die Angehörigen des Offiziersstandes wiederum sind Diener des Kaisers. Sie alle sind konservativ im ursprünglichen Sinne des Wortes: das Bewahren des Bestehenden und das Fortführen der Tradition scheinen ihnen der beste Garant für den sicheren, ewigen Bestand Österreichs.'3.5. Even the emperor, Kurier notes, 'klämmert sich an ...eine Tradition, in der er gross geworden ist, die aber mit fortschreitender Zeit mehr und mehr zum Formalismus erstarrt.'3.6.
The Army

From a historical point of view, relative peace reigned within the Austro-Hungarian Empire for nearly half a century. In such circumstances, what was the role of the army, the backbone of the Monarchy? It continued, as before, to exercise in the art of warfare. It maintained its position as guardian of peace and order, by being ever ready to protect the empire from its enemies outside and within. Numerous parades were conducted to impress upon the people that the Monarchy was still intact.

The army, as Roth understands it, has become an institution; the routine life, a thing of monotony. Overcome by boredom and, in some cases, an overriding sense of futility, the officers fall to drinking and gambling. Alcohol especially has a numbing effect. It helps the officers to forget. On the other hand, it inevitably plunges them into deeper frustration and melancholy. In the final analysis, the only compensation seems to lie in the aura of authority generated by their elegant, brightly coloured uniforms.

Without a doubt, the strongest criticism in 'Radetzkymarsch' is levelled against the army. As will be shown in Part II, it is on this subject that the author most frequently resorts to irony and indeed, as in the scene of the jubilee celebrations, to the more pointed technique of satire. As mainstay of a crumbling Monarchy, the army too is characterized by the general symptoms of decay. Appearance replaces reality; order and tradition defy mounting chaos; the increasing tension of social discontent is stubbornly dismissed or blindly overlooked.

The operetta-like character of the army is emphasized throughout 'Radetzkymarsch'. During one of their military exercises, the
officers are presented as seen through the eyes of the "little" people. The description is an implicit criticism of the spectacular uselessness of the army:

Zwei Mal in der Woche ritt das Regiment durch die Strassen der kleinen Stadt. Der helle und schmetternde Ton der Trompeten unterbrach in regelmässigen Abständen das regelmässige Klappern der Pferdehufe, und die roten Hosen der berittenen Männer auf den glänzenden braunen Leibern der Rösser erfüllten das Städtchen mit blutiger Pracht. An den Strassenrändern blieben die Bürger stehen. Die Kaufleute verliessen ihre Läden, die müssigen Besucher der Kaffeehäuser ihre Tische, die städtischen Polizisten ihre gewohnten Posten und die Bauern...ihre Pferde und Wagen. Nur die Kutscher auf den wenigen Fiakern ... blieben unbeweglich auf den Böcken sitzen. Von oben her übersahen sie das militärische Schauspiel noch besser als die am Strassenrand Stehenden. ¹²³.

The sheer construction of this passage, with its final shift of perspective, is a masterful presentation of social criticism. The cavalry exercises are seen by the man in the street as a theatrical show; as something unreal to be stared at.

In one of his more reflective moments, brought about, as usual, by drink, Carl Joseph allows himself a rather perceptive comment on the farcical role of an officer. He has even contemplated leaving the army:

Lächerlich, dieses Soldatenspiel im Frieden! Niemals wird es einen Krieg geben! Verfaulten wird man in den Kassen! ¹²³.

The attentive reader, recognizing dramatic irony when he sees it, knows that Carl Joseph is only partly right. This theatrical play at soldiery in peace time is indeed ridiculous. At the same time, however, the realization of such senselessness is an alarming factor
for the future of the Monarchy. For as Kurer says, '... welche sind die Folgen, wenn die Diener des Staates, die Stützen der Gesellschaft, nicht mehr an die Idee glauben?' 3.7. The officers may sense the oncoming dissolution of the empire, they may seek temporary refuge in cafés, hotels, gambling casinos and brothels, but they persist in keeping up the façade of order and purposefulness. And here lies their decadence. Form becomes more important than content. Appearance masks reality.

As was mentioned in the opening words to this chapter, order and tradition are upheld in the face of mounting chaos. An example of this may be seen in the rather incongruous phenomenon known as the code of honour. Kurer explains the significance of this convention. 'Die Offiziere haben in Friedenszeiten keine Möglichkeit, ihre Tapferkeit nach Aussen hin unter Beweis zu stellen; die Konvention des Sich-Schlagens wird par force aufrecht erhalten.' 3.8. Max Demant is the only one to speak out against the absurdity of this code:

Ein nichtswürdiges, infames, dummes, eisernes, gewaltiges Gesetz fesselte ihn, schickte ihn gefesselt in einen dumm Tod. 1.24.

Yet at the same time he realizes he has no energy to withstand this senseless convention.

The army is shown to condition its officers to mechanical behaviour and reaction. Multifarious rules and regulations, set phrases and conventions create uniformity and "save" the men from having to think. In the end, the members of the army become puppets of the authorities. After having once expressed himself in such a conventional phrase, Carl Joseph immediately checks himself:

...gleichzeitig spürte er wohl, dass er diese Phrase nicht selbstständig gedacht und nicht
ernst gemeint hatte. Es war eine mechanische Wendung, ewig parat in seinem militärischen Gehirn, eine von den zahllosen mechanischen Wendungen, die in den militärischen Gehirnen Gedanken ersetzen und Entscheidungen vorwegnehmen.1.25.

Finally, the army, which, as Kurer rightly notes, seldom comes in contact with the demands of 'real' life, (such as making decisions), is criticized repeatedly for failing to recognize the most obvious signs of decay and collapse. Roth's censure is rather severe when he contrasts the blindness of the officers with the apprehension of civilians on the borders of the empire. Just how far removed from the realities of life Carl Joseph is, may be seen in the narrator's comment following Hauptmann Wagner's reflection that the striking workers were 'poor devils'1.26 and that they were probably in the right all along:

Es war dem Leutnant Trotta noch nicht eingefallen, dass es arme Kerle seien und dass sie recht haben konnten.1.26.

The ignorance of the officers is ridiculed in the satirical description of the officers' preparations for the centennial celebrations. 'Österreich treibt in seinen Untergang nicht mit der trauernden Miene des Ahnenden und Wissenden, sondern in der freudigen Erwartung neuer Genüsse. Man leugnet den Tod, indem man ihn nicht wahrnimmt.'3.9. That the climate has been slowly changing for some time, in more than one sense, becomes obvious to most officers at hearing the news of the assassination at Sarajevo. They have been blind for too long and seemingly in the face of reason. 'Wie reif der Staat für den Untergang in Wirklichkeit war, veranschaulicht Roth auf den letzten Seiten des Kapitels; kaum hat das Gerücht über die

* cf. p.96.
Decadence

Decadence has been the central theme of some of the great works in modern German literature. Thomas Mann and his brother Heinrich showed their fascination for the subject in their novels "Buddenbrooks" and "Untertan." In both these works the Manns were influenced in their concept of decadence by the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. The main critics of Roth make no mention of Nietzschean influence in his works, but it would be rash to assume that the novelist, who also had a great esteem for the pessimistic Grillparzer, had not read these philosophic writings. Incidentally or otherwise, numerous manifestations of decay in 'Radetzkymarsch' are very much in line with Nietzschean philosophy. For example, a weakening of vitality with the accompanying loss of security; a sense of fantasy and/or fatalism which causes introversion and results in social isolation; insight into the will and illusion of the world, with ensuing lassitude; and finally the attempt to appear unaffected in the face of outward change, by assuming a façade, are all seen to characterize various persons in 'Radetzkymarsch'. All four symptoms are accounted for by Nietzsche in his philosophy of decadence.

A general definition of terms may be appropriate here. Decadence usually refers to a gradual decline from some culminating point. This deterioration is often masked by a persistence in or

affectation of that which flowered at the given height. Such a phenomenon frequently occurs during periods of profound social change.

In 'Radetzkymarsch' we witness, as has been repeatedly stressed, a widening discrepancy between appearance and reality, a discrepancy characteristic of the 'fin de siècle' mood. In the area of the bureaucracy, the army, the aristocracy and in the person of the emperor himself 'Schein' takes over from 'Sein'. On all these levels men are seen to assume a role.

A certain duality is visible in Franz Trotta. His spartan attitude towards his son, for example, strikes a rather discordant note when contrasted with his epicurean indulgences at the dinner table. But then Roth likes to explain this duality, if even with a gentle sprinkling of irony:

Mit einem glücklichen Geschick vereinigte er also die Sättigung seiner Lust mit den Forderungen der Pflicht.
Er war ein Spartaner. Aber er war ein Österreicher. 1.4.

In the band-leader Nechwal, the attempt to divorce himself from his identity as father of the family is described much more bluntly:

Er hatte drei Kinder und eine Frau 'aus einfachen Verhältnissen,' aber er selbst stand im vollsten Glanz der Welt, losgelöst von den Seinen. 1.15.

Böning describes how the changing reaction to the imperial portrait is in itself evidence of decay. A gradual 'Entfremdungsprozess' is undeniably at work. 'Die Dekadenz der Personen nun wird mit Hilfe dieses Bildes dadurch zum Ausdruck gebracht, dass Roth das Kaiserporträt immer wieder unverändert präsentiert, demgegenüber aber darstellt, wie sich Carl Josephs Verhältnis zu diesem Bild wandelt.' 5.6.

Decadence manifests itself in the form of 'mal du siècle' and 'ennui' experienced especially by the officers and higher officials of
the bureaucracy. Old age seems to descend prematurely. In fact, a sense of ageing pervades 'Radetzkmarsch' and underlines the decay and collapse of the Monarchy. Demant, one of the few characters in the novel with an acute perception of the contradictions embodied in the empire, reflects on one occasion:

Das Leben schien schneller dahinzulaufen als die Gedanken. Und ehe man einen Entschluss gefasst hatte, war man ein alter Mann. 1.27.

And later, on the eve of his death, Demant sighs:

Ach! ... ich bin müde, seit Jahren müde! 1.28.

Carl Joseph's gestures and reactions are frequently referred to as those of an older man. On first meeting him Frau Taussig remarks:

Er sieht alt aus für seine Jahre ... er hat traurige Dinge erlebt, aber er ist nicht an ihnen klug geworden. 1.29.

During the last meeting with his father Carl Joseph sadly realizes how old he is next to the Bezirkshauptmann:

Er ist jung und törlich, dachte der Sohn. Er ist ein lieber, junger Tor mit weissen Haaren. Ich bin vielleicht sein Vater, der Held von Solferino. Ich bin alt geworden, er ist nur bejahrt. 1.30.

Böning comments on Carl Joseph's symptoms of decadence. 'Seine Müdigkeit, sein Weltschmerz und seine Todessehnsucht machen ihn zu einem typischen Repräsentanten der Fin-de-siècle-Dekadenz, der sich bei allem Raffinement einiger Gefühle - man erinnere sich an ihre die Gegensätze vereinigende Ambivalenz - nach dem einfachen Leben sehnt und trotzdem weiterhin mit einer gewissen masochistischen Lust am eigenen Untergang für alles Prächtige und Farbenfrohe schwärmt. Infolge der schnell einsetzenden inneren Leere wird selbst die
Dekadenz noch als Genussquelle empfunden. So ist Carl Josephs
Personalitätsstruktur unlösbar mit dem Endzeitcharakter seiner
Welt verbunden.¹5.7.

As was mentioned above, the men, especially the officers, of
this dissolving empire rapidly become victims of boredom or 'ennui.'
Direct expression is given to this early in the novel:

Alle Tage glichen einander wie Schneeflocken. Die
Offiziere des Ulanenregiments warteten auf irgendein
ausserordentliches Ereignis, dass die Eintönigkeit
ihrer Tage unterbrechen sollte.¹1.31.

The monotony of daily routine is broken temporarily when everyone's
attention is focused on the local scandal over Demant's wife and his
friend Trotta. With only hours to go before his death, Demant, moved
by his friend's distress, is suddenly overcome by a longing for all
those things which had made his life miserable. Demant, one of the
few persons suffering from 'Erkenntnissekel', actually yearns for,
what he calls, 'diese Schalheit',¹1.32 which characterized his life.

Georg Lukács refers to this empty life: 'Die Ziellösigkeit und
die Leere des Lebens sind charakteristisch sowohl für den Vater als
auch für den Sohn. Aber im Leben des Sohnes tritt diese Leere und
die Abgetrenntheit von der Wirklichkeit mit voller Dentlichkeit
hervor.'⁹.². In the end, characters such as Carl Joseph escape into
love affairs or drink in an attempt to fight their loneliness and
desperation. 'Der Rausch löst den Widerstand der Realität auf,
Subjekt und Objekt nähern sich, und für einen Augenblick scheint
diese adaequatio rerum et intellectus alle Probleme zu lösen. Nur
im Alkohol findet Carl Joseph das konfliktlose Leben, das er sich
wünscht.'⁵.⁸. Escape, as such, is an inability to face the realities
of life. It offers no permanent consolation or solution, as Wegner
points out. 'Die Flucht ist die einzige, trügerische Möglichkeit, dem Untergang oder dem Wissen um den Untergang für eine Weile zu entgehen.' 2.5.

Reflecting the general state of the monarchy, many of the characters in the novel display a fundamental sense of insecurity and a weakening of vitality. Carl Joseph constantly looks to his grandfather for guidance; but even this is not much help, as his friend Demant points out:

Unsere Grossväter haben uns nicht viel Kraft hinterlassen, wenig Kraft zum Leben, es reicht gerade noch, um unsinnig zu sterben. 1.28.

It is only when he is drunk that he manages to act on his own strength; as, for example, when he openly upbraids the aristocrats for their infamous allusions to the murdered successor to the throne and even threatens to kill if need be. Such spasms of independence and resolution are rare, however, and all too short-lived. Young Trotta generally lacks the strength to make a decision, not to speak of carrying out one. The following passage is typical of his helplessness.

As so often before, he resolves to leave the army:


The men may be weak but the women are strong. The fact that the woman becomes more virile than her husband points once more to a decaying society. 'Das ursprüngliche Verhältnis zwischen Mann und Frau', writes Kurer, 'erscheint bei Roth ins Gegenteil pervvertiert. Die Frau als aktiver, zielstrebiger, auf Eroberung bedachter Mensch
hat gleichsam die Rolle des Mannes übernommen; der Mann ist der gegen sein besseres Wollen Verführte.\textsuperscript{3,11} Katherine Slama, Eva Knopfmacher and Wally Taussig all dominate their men. (The wives of Franz Trotta and his father Joseph Trotta are, in significant contrast, barely given a mention. Both are too weak to survive their husbands. But then, those were times of order.) The description of Carl Joseph's visit to Frau Slama depicts him in pathetic passivity:

Wie ein ohnmächtig Gefesselter sah er zwischen halbgeschlossenen Lidern, dass sie ihn entkleidete...
Mit einigem Entsetzen bemerkte er, wie Stück um Stück seiner Paradekleidung schlaff auf die Erde sank...\textsuperscript{1,34}

The corruption prevalent on all levels within the empire portends its inevitable collapse. The contraband trading and other illegal activities on the borders are referred to on several occasions. Corruption within the higher ranks is often conveyed in a more subtle manner. A quotation from Carl Joseph's days in the cavalry school will illustrate this. Old Trotta advises his son:

\textit{Du bist der Enkel des Helden von Solferino.}
\textit{Denk daran, dann kann dir nichts passieren!}

But the counsel appears to be unnecessary, for we then read:

\textit{Auch der Oberst, alle Lehrer, alle Untereffiziere dachten daran, und also konnte Carl Joseph in der Tat nichts passieren. Obwohl er kein ausgezeichneter Reiter war, in der Terrainlehre schwach, in der Trigonometrie ganz versagt hatte, kam er 'mit einer guten Nummer' durch, wurde als Leutnant ausgemustert und den X. Ulanen zugeteilt.}\textsuperscript{1,35}

Although decay is generally presented in the framework of the upper bureaucracy, the army and the nobility, Roth's criticism is equally, and indeed often more pointedly, directed against figures
such as Knopfmacher, who epitomize the spirit of the new world. Despising the upper classes and trampling on the working classes when he has no need of them, he reveals himself as the ruthless opportunist; a kind of 'neuer Barbar', paving the way for the bestiality Roth saw in the new world of capitalism. The monarchy was in the process of collapse and men like Knopfmacher served only to accelerate this process.

A Glimpse at the Underprivileged

"Roth zeigt, dass die regierenden Klassen Österreich-Ungarns nicht mehr nach alter Art leben können. Dass jedoch die unterdrückten Klassen nicht mehr nach der alten Art leben wollen, darauf weist Roth überhaupt nicht hin, davon spricht er nur nebenbei." Lükács is partly right in his assessment. The people of the lower social classes are often presented as part of the greater background.

However, to be fair in this issue, one must consider Roth's aim in writing this novel. What does he want to portray first and foremost? Roth demonstrates that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy has outlived itself. It goes without saying that the undercurrent of nationalism is largely responsible for this. The resistance to these underlying forces, however, comes from above. But times are changing and absolution is no longer effective. In 'Radetzkymarsch' not the life of the people, not even so much the fate of each minority group, but rather the ordered existence of the 'ruling' class is destined to collapse. The glorious strains of the 'Radetzkymarsch' fade away, for they are part of a forgotten past. They belong to a 'world of yesterday'.

In the light of such an interpretation it is easy to see why, in Lükács' words, 'the suppressed classes' do not assume a salient role in the novel.
Lukács' statement may be further contested on the grounds that Roth, who - one must conclude from the warm testimonies of men like Hermann Linden, Hermann Kesten, Gustav Kiepenheuer and Józef Wittlin - was always known to side with the poor and the exploited, does not refrain from showing a sympathetic face towards them in 'Radetzkymarsch'. It is noted in the novel, either explicitly or implicitly, that the less privileged classes within the empire feel or recognise the signs of the impending collapse. As has already been mentioned, the perception of these often helpless people is pitted against the blindness of the 'ruling' classes. In this contrast Roth's stand is clear.

Finally, keeping Lukács' comment in mind, it may be argued that of all the instances in the novel criticized by the author, those dealing with Carl Joseph's treatment of Slama and his shooting of the striking brush workers, receive his most unreserved condemnation. Scheible rightly ranks the latter incident as the 'most scathing' example of social criticism in 'Radetzkymarsch'. Speaking of this episode Wegner remarks how, in shooting on the brush workers, Carl Joseph feels himself to be representative of the Monarchy. He vehemently defends its order, but fails to comprehend the roots of the social unrest. His acts of brutality, generally a result of fear, indecision and lack of understanding, serve only as a catalyst in the general downfall of the Monarchy.

By way of conclusion, the following passage, depicting the dangerous, unhealthy conditions of the brush workers, should illustrate that Roth's interest in 'the suppressed' is more than 'nebenbei'.

Seit Jahrzehnten reinigte man in dieser Gegend Borsten, schickte sie nach Mähren, Böhmen, Schlesien in die Bürstenfabriken und bekam aus diesen Ländern fertige

* cf. p.96.
Bürsten. Seit Jahren husteten die Arbeiter, spuckten Blut, wurden krank und starben in den Spitälen. Aber sie streikten nicht.\textsuperscript{1,36}

Some may argue that Roth does not take as critical a standpoint in these areas as the preceding chapters would indicate. It remains the task of Part II to determine the socially critical nature of 'Radetzkymarsch'.


PART II: METHOD OF PRESENTATION

In the introduction to this thesis attention was drawn to the ambivalent attitude of the author towards the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Roth's feelings for his 'Heimat' were coloured at once with affection and scepticism. He genuinely longed for the past, but this did not prevent him from recognizing its faults and drawbacks.

Such divided feelings do not lend themselves to clear-cut expression, it would seem. Thus it is customary for Roth to refrain from direct comment on characters or events in 'Radetzkymarsch'. Authorial intervention is rare. Critical observations made by characters, speaking for Roth, are more frequent. In general, however, Roth prefers to present his social criticism under the mantle of narrative perspective, characterization, symbolic contrast and irony; in short, within the more complex web of artistic presentation.

a). Direct Expression

Authorial comment

Direct intervention by the author is an exception to the rule in 'Radetzkymarsch'. Although events are often related from the omniscient author's point of view, critical interpretations of them are scarce. It stands to reason, therefore, that any occurrence of unqualified social criticism has a damning effect. It is interesting to note what Roth attacks in his rare authorial intrusions. A few quotations will serve as examples.

Reflecting on the ignorance of the officers, Roth has this to say:

Damals wussten sie noch nicht, dass jeder von ihnen, ohne Ausnahme, ein paar Jahre später mit dem Tod zusammentreffen sollte. Damals war keiner unter ihnen
scharfhörig genug, das grosse Räderwerk der verborgenen grossen Mühlen zu vernehmen, die schon den grossen Krieg zu mahlen begannen.  

Distancing himself by the insistence on 'Damals', Roth presents the reader here with explicit social criticism.

Another passage reveals the author's violent contempt for the ruthlessly destructive elements within the empire:


There can be no doubt as to who is speaking here. Authorial omniscience is established in the first sentence. The simile of the vultures qualifies Roth's censure of characters like Kapturak. The change of tense in the third sentence - from the preterite to the so-called 'generalizing present' - has a double function. In the first place, it intensifies the image; so that simile becomes metaphor. Kapturak is no longer like a vulture; he is a vulture. Secondly, it takes the situation beyond the framework of 'Radetzkymarsch'; thereby contributing to a particularly harsh criticism on the part of the author.

Other examples of authorial comment will be obvious to the attentive reader. They need no further enumeration here.

* cf. pp. 74, 81, 97, 144.
Characters as author's mouthpiece

Critical observation made by persons in the novel is not as direct a technique as authorial intervention. Yet this does not mean that the comment is not explicit; but rather that the medium used to convey the author's standpoint has altered slightly.

As a general rule, a certain amount of credibility is required of a character who is supposed to act as spokesman for the author. A reasonable rapport must exist between character and reader, before the latter can readily accept the former's statements as being valid. A brief example may serve to clarify. Knopfmacher, as if in echo to the words of his son-in-law, holds forth on the senselessness of the military code of honour. His criticism is sound and just. Yet as he talks, his character gradually unfolds. His oscillating opinions reveal him as obsequious and finally completely contradictory; with the result that his words of judgement have little impact, if any. Lacking in sincerity, repelling the reader by his character, Knopfmacher is hardly fit to act as a mouthpiece for the author.

The Pole Chojnicki is. Like his creator he is torn between two worlds. As in the case of Franz Trotta, Carl Joseph and Demant, his loyalties lie firmly with the Monarchy. Yet alone among all the characters in the novel, Chojnicki sees and predicts the collapse of his beloved world. The proof of history naturally gives weight to his prophecies; but his credibility as spokesman for Roth rests on more than this. 'Dadurch, dass er als Aussenseiter die besondere Aufmerksamkeit des Lesers erregt, wird seinen Aussagen ein besonderes Gewicht verliehen. Roth kann ihm infolgedessen die Rolle des politischen Aufklärers und Propheten Übertragen, die ihn hoch über alle anderen Personen erhebt'. Chojnicki shocks the Bezirkshauptmann with his daring utterances concerning the Monarchy:
... sie zerfällt bei lebendigem Leibe. Sie
zerfällt, sie ist schon zerrissen! Ein Groß ... hält den alten Thron, einfach durch das Wunder, dass er auf ihm noch sitzen kann ... Die Zeit will uns nicht mehr! ... 1.3.

After his grave warnings about rising nationalism and rampant corruption in the empire, his audience of officers scoffs at him and dismisses his premonitions as an absurdity, for 'Chojnicki war ein Witzbold'.

Nicht am Alter, writes Böning, 'sondern am plötzlichen Wahnsinn Chojnickis zeigt Roth, wie sich die Lage am Ende des Romans verändert hat ... Aber auch im Wahnsinn noch erkennt Chojnicki die politische Zukunft besser als der kaisertreue Bezirksheutenant: Er sagt diesem den nahen Tod des Monarchen voraus, der dann auch bald darauf eintritt.

Dadurch, dass diese Prophezeiung in Erfüllung geht, sind auch die früheren Voraussagen Chojnickis, die das Ende des ganzen Reiches betrafen legitimiert.' 2.4.

An interesting biographical note stresses the prophetic nature of Chojnicki; a character cleverly used to say those things which Roth would have been reluctant to admit. In his speech commemorating the fifth anniversary of Roth's death, Jozef Wittlin recalls his friendship with the author. He mentions a common friend of theirs, a Pole by the name of Ludwik Brudzinski: 'Brudzinskis Güte, seine fast überirdische Güte harmonierte mit grosser Intelligenz und künstlerischem Empfinden... Brudzinski war ein idealer Kritiker... Er war viel reifer als wir, weit über sein Alter hinaus ... Ich habe den Eindruck, dass die Gestalt des Grafen Chojnicki in dem Roman 'Der Radetzkymarsch' ein ziemlich getreues Abbild von Brudzinski ist.' 3.

Max Demant also serves as a mouthpiece for the author. His main function is to criticize the army.

Demant is an outsider, suffering from an insight into the absurdities of his time. Yet finally faced with a duel, required
by the military code of honour, he seems unable to find the energy to withstand the social pressures made on him. One has the impression that his resistance has also been weakened by the realization that his wife no longer loves him. In this sense, his death would appear as suicide; as the renunciation of a world which no longer has meaning for him. The futility of his existence—one remembers how he virtually sold himself to the army, abandoning his life's ambition to have his own medical practice—is mirrored once more in his senseless death, and tragically Demant realizes this.

Ich werde aus Blödheit, ein Held sein, nach Ehrenkodex und Dienstreglement.\textsuperscript{1.5}

Dieser Tod ist unsinnig ... So unsinnig, wie mein Leben gewesen ist.\textsuperscript{1.6}

Through Demant, the author voices his opinion of the code of honour guiding the lives of the army officers and the aristocracy.

Diese Dummheit! Diese Ehre, die in der blöden Troddel da am Säbel hängt. Man kann eine Frau nicht nach Haus' begleiten! Siehst du, wie dumm das ist? Hast du nicht jenen dort,' - er zeigte auf das Bild des Kaisers — 'aus dem Bordell gerettet? Blödsinn! ... infamer Blödsinn!'\textsuperscript{1.7}

Demant's last words to his friend, Carl Joseph, contain explicit criticism.

'Ich rate dir, verlass diese Armee!' \textsuperscript{1.5}

Coming from one of the few characters who has insight into the stupidities of a 'false' world, - a dying world - this piece of advice to his best friend succeeds as one of the harshest censures of the army.
The balanced Skowronnek also acts as spokesman for Roth on more than one occasion; * pointing out to his friend Trotta, to what extent their world has changed.

Even Old Trotta is seen to give voice to the difficulties and contradictions of his time. In one of his more deeply reflective moments he admits:

Wie einfach hat die Welt immer ausgesehen! ... 
Für jede Lage gab es eine bestimmte Haltung.
Wenn der Sohn zu den Ferien kam, prüfte man ihn.
Als er Leutnant wurde, beglückwünschte man ihn.
Wenn er seine gehorsamen Briefe schrieb, in denen so wenig stand, erwiderte man mit ein paar gemessenen Zeilen. Wie aber sollte man sich bemühen, wenn der Sohn betrunken war? Wenn er: 'Vater' rief? 1.8

In a society which prescribes the correct conventions of behaviour for every normal event in life, the extraordinary poses a problem. Franz Trotta has never been confronted with such a problem. Visible in him now is the conflict between cultivated discipline and paternal instinct. The world is not always as ordered or as easy as it might seem; and Trotta momentarily realizes this.

The role of the working class people must not be overlooked. As has already been mentioned, their apprehension distinguishes them from the rather blind officers. Using their clear-sightedness, Roth makes them a mouthpiece for his social criticism. After Demant's death in the duel, a somber atmosphere seems to hover over the army officers. Rumour spreads that the two officers were victims of honour. The inhabitants of the town sadly reflect on the incident, pointing out the advantages of the privileged military class; but they are quick to discern the disadvantages.

* cf. p. 178, 181.
The criticism in this passage is ironically presented through the naïveté of these people. In their awe of the cavalry officers, they unwittingly expose the shallowness and absurdities of the 'K.u.K.' army life. The irony here is especially noticeable in the choice of the naïve word 'herumgehn'; where one would normally expect a verb such as 'tragen'. Apart from the personal considerations of the emperor, the advantages of the officers, as presented by Roth, appear - to the twentieth century reader anyway - ridiculously insignificant. The disadvantages are frightening, but, paradoxically, the price of senseless social conventions. The traditional awe of the officers, on the part of the civilians, gives way to pity. The criticism here speaks for itself.

b). Indirect Expression

Three methods of presentation will be considered here, as examples of indirect expression of social criticism: narrative perspective, characterization and contrast. A fourth method - the most important for 'Radetzkymarsch' - is that of irony. This will be treated more fully in a separate chapter.

Roth's conflicting views on the Monarchy have already been emphasized. It was concluded that a direct expression of
criticism would be incompatible with such ambivalence. Indirect presentation would appear to be the preferred practice of the author.

The canvas of 'Radetzkymarsch' is broad: the decline of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy; and, as Böning points out, '...selbst der Roman ist für einen so gewaltigen Stoff zu eng'. \(^2\text{2}\). Isolated persons and events must serve as symbols of the general decay. Atmosphere must be evoked by impressions, rather than facts. Speaking of Roth's impressionistic style, Böning mentions the 'Eisberg-Technik', so coined by a writer some years ago. \(^\ast\) 'Man hat diese Technik 'Eisberg-Technik' genannt, da sie nur ein Siebteil zeigt und sechs Siebteil verbirgt.' \(^2\text{2}\). The aim of the greater section of Part II is to explore the six-sevenths concealed beneath the surface, using the information given in the one-seventh above.

**Narrative Perspective**

A story may be told from several points of view: from the omniscient author's standpoint; that is, the author stands above his creation, observes it with the eye-of-God, comments on it and frequently converses with the reader about it; from the standpoint of a figure/or figures within the novel; that is, the author stands back, (although his presence is still felt), and presents a world as seen and experienced by the characters of his creation; and finally, from the point of view of the narrator, who is himself one of the characters in the story and who can tell the reader only that which enters into his sphere of experience. Each of these viewpoints is commonly referred to as a narrative perspective.

Opinions diverge on the question of the narrative technique in 'Radetzkymarsch', but most critics would concur that the situation

oscillates between the 'authorial' and the 'personal'.

It would be correct to say that Roth prefers to convey his criticism of a matter through the use of substitutionary speech; that is, he vividly presents a fact or event as it is seen and experienced by a character in the novel. In this way, he bypasses the necessity to comment. Words and actions speak for themselves. Without any authorial intervention, characters reveal their follies and weaknesses and thus unwittingly set themselves up as targets for criticism.

Some examples, taken from the text, will illustrate how narrative perspective can be an instrument of social criticism.

After learning of Joseph Trotta von Sipolje's anger at the distorted rendering of his heroic deed, one notices with astonishment how, on the strike of the hour, he stops pacing up and down and hurries into the house. The reason for this peculiar behaviour is given in the next sentence:

Es war die Stunde des Schachspiels. 1.10.

It looks as if this is nothing else but an authorial statement, which is not meant in any critical sense. On closer inspection, however, at least two reasons could be put against such an assumption. To begin with, the perspective through which this piece of information is conveyed is that of Trotta himself. This seems fairly obvious. So far, there has been no indication by the author of a general hour set aside for this game of chess. The pastime, at a given hour, is a reality experienced by Trotta and his partner only. The second reason which accounts for the criticism inherent in these words is the element of irony. The pompous formulation of the sentence indicates the ordered existence of Trotta. Not even the turbulence of the preceding scene is allowed to conflict with the daily programme. Life continues in its ordered way, even when it has become meaningless.

* Terms used by Stanzel in 'Tyroische Formen des Romans', Göttingen,
A more obvious example of indirect criticism, conveyed through a certain narrative perspective, may be seen in Carl Joseph's reaction to the Corpus Christi procession. Overcome by the splendour of the spectacle, he dismisses any former fears that the Monarchy might be collapsing.

Nein, die Welt ging nicht unter, wie Chojnicki gesagt hatte, man sah mit eigenen Augen, wie sie lebte! 1.11.

Since the author has frequently shown him, the reader knows that Carl Joseph is easily intoxicated by pomp and glory. The conviction that the world is still intact obviously belongs to Carl Joseph and not to the narrator. This is a clear example of substitutionary speech. Commenting on this episode Kurer writes: 'Mit fortschreitendem Zerfall macht man sich mehr und mehr vor: das Kakanische erscheint noch gegenwärtig zu einer Zeit, da es schon der Vergangenheit angehört. Die Überladene Umgebung des Kaisers, die prunkenden Militärs und amtsrätlichen Beamtenheere in einem wie auf Goldgrund flimmernden Wien sind — wie Lernet — Holenia es einmal prägnant fasst — ein nicht mehr ganz geglücktes Abbild des Mittelalters, wie eine falsche Vorstellung sich's von der Vergangenheit zu machen pflegte' ... Man ist bereits legendar geworden. Faktisches wird kaum wahrgenommen: man wendet sich dem Überlieferten Schönen zu. Nicht die politischen Kundgebungen der Dissidenten sind wichtig, sondern die Pronleichnamsprozession ... nicht die sozialen Unruhen in den Gassen des 11. Bezirks, sondern der Blumenkorso in der Praterhauptallee.' 4.1. Carl Joseph's reaction, as quoted above, contains indirect criticism. It is a further instance of his self-deception. Kurer continues: 'Das Leben in der Residenzstadt ist, kurz gefasst, eine umfassende, gewaltige Selbsttäuschung. Carl

A final illustration of social criticism, indirectly expressed through the use of a narrative perspective, is to be found in the scene of the shooting on the strikers. Scheible cleverly indicates how the author presents his criticism in the form of a picture. The incident beginning with the raising of the workers' spokesman is vividly described through the eyes of Carl Joseph. It is only to him that the worker's words seem like 'unverständliche Laute'. 

Scheible points out that Carl Joseph's vision of the entire event symbolizes that of the society from which he comes. The restricted perspective is a criticism of the limited view of the upper social classes. 'Diese Schweize ist selbst das Produkt gesellschaftlicher Deformation: wie der Leutnant den Redner über der Menge isoliert 'schweben' sieht, ohne erkennen zu können, wie es um die Verbindung zwischen Redner und Zuhörern bestellt ist, so sieht die gesellschaftliche Schicht, der Trotta gehört, zwar die Symptome der sich anbahnenden sozialen Umwälzungen, nicht aber deren Verflechtung mit den realen gesellschaftlichen Vorgängen.' In this aesthetically pleasing presentation, achieved, as it were, through the subtle shift of the narrative perspective, the reader encounters an example of penetrating social criticism.

Characterization

The techniques employed in presenting characters in a literary work are to be understood in the term 'characterization.'

This chapter aims to show that methods of character portrayal
used in 'Radetzymarsch' serve as indirect expressions of social criticism. The demonstration model will be Knopfmacher. This figure was chosen for several reasons. His description, achieved, among other things, through a discerning selection of details and a pervading ironic tone, is a masterpiece of character presentation. Also, after only two brief appearances, he emerges as a fully rounded character. A third reason for choosing this figure lies in his role or function in the novel. Undeniably ambitious and servile, Knopfmacher represents the other side of the Austro-Hungarian coin: the uncultured, ruthless capitalist of the new world. He provides Roth with the opportunity of criticizing this social milieu and, as will be shown, Roth makes full use of this opportunity. Knopfmacher has the added function of acting as a foil to Demant and Carl Joseph respectively.

On the problem of characterization Böning remarks: 'Charakterisierung und Ironie sind ... oft ... nicht zu trennen, vor allem auch dann nicht, wenn die Personen sich selbst durch ihre Gedanken innerhalb der erlebten Rede und durch ihre naive Aussagen charakterisieren.' This statement is directly applicable to the case of Knopfmacher, where irony is used in characterization and where characterization produces irony. However, as irony is to be the topic of the last chapter, it will receive only brief mention here.

Three methods of character presentation stand out in an analysis of the figure of Knopfmacher. The process of characterization may be seen in Knopfmacher's speech, in the description of his appearance and finally in the contrast set up by main characters.

Knopfmacher is distinguished from most of the other persons in the novel by his garrulity. There is no question of communication difficulties on his part. It is Roth's skill to have drawn this
character with a minimum use of objective description. Knopfmacher unwittingly—and thus ironically—betrays himself by his own words; and by his thoughts, as rendered through the use of substitutionary speech.

Criticizing his son-in-law, Demant, for having neglected his wife, Knopfmacher uses the opportunity to lash out at what he calls 'lauter Konzeptsbeamte'. In the following quotation he reveals himself as self-centred and complacent:


In his second appearance, yet another facet of his character is manifest. Roth introduces, in the figure of Knopfmacher, the materialistic burgher, the callous opportunist, the relentless capitalist of the new era. The following passage is taken from the scene in which Carl Joseph, on his visit of condolence to Eva Knopfmacher, is confronted with her father-in-law's exposition on the role of the code of honour in the modern world. In a tone that is vaguely reminiscent, Knopfmacher maintains:

The description of Knopfmacher's appearance, movements and habits accentuates his self-confidence and pomposity. It is here that the author is seen to be unspiring in his use of irony. He does not miss a chance to ridicule Knopfmacher's feeling of self-importance; even resorting to the use of parentheses in order to underline his scorn:

Er ging (die Schösse seines Mantels flatterten) zum Schrank und holte mit sicherem Griff eine Flasche aus der Reihe. 1.15.

By the choice of one word,

Er stand auf, nickte und wallte würdig und langsam zur Tür hinaus. 1.16.

or the addition of a single phrase,

Er entfaltete ein grosses blütenweisses Taschentuch, schneuzte sich dröhrend, barg das Tuch behutsam in der Brusttasche, wie man einen wertvollen Besitz einsteckt... 1.17.

Roth succeeds in caricaturing this arrogant and affected figure.

One final example will illustrate Roth's mastery in the indirect presentation of criticism. His target in this instance is the shallow sincerity of Knopfmacher. This is evident in his expression of sympathy to Carl Joseph at the death of Demant. Roth captures the character's superficiality in the image of the handshake. When Knopfmacher goes up to Carl Joseph, we read:

In diesem Händedruck kündigte Herr Knopfmacher alles an, was an Kummer über den Tod des Doktors auszudrücken war. 1.17.

A page later Carl Joseph stands up to take his leave.

The first description of the handshake is qualified in the second by the image of 'warm velvet'; an image which, in its vividness, clearly indicates the depth of his Knopfmacher's sincerity.

Contrast was noted as the third method of character presentation. This is never directly expressed but nonetheless subtly conveyed in the atmosphere of both 'Knopfmacher-scenes'. In the first instance Knopfmacher's confidence and resoluteness jar with Demant's anxiety and hesitation. In the second, Knopfmacher's hypocritical feelings and hollow-sounding exclamations - "Welch ein Malheur!" 117. 'Eine Kapazität!' 117 - contrast with Carl Joseph's sadness and sense of helplessness.

In the conclusions to her doctoral dissertation, Wegner remarks that the clear-cut distinction between main and secondary characters reflects a certain immaturity in Roth's work. Yet she rightly concludes that this very contrast between a Carl Joseph and a Knopfmacher, a Franz Trotta and a Jacques implies a critical standpoint on Roth's part. 'Mann kann hierin aber auch eine entschiedenere Stellungnahme Roths zu seiner Zeit sehen: Unwissend wie Jacques kann der Mensch nicht mehr leben, wie Knopfmacher oder Winternigg darf er nicht sein.' 16.

Contrast

Indirect expression of social criticism may be further seen to take the form of contrast. It will be evident to the attentive reader that the entire narrative of 'Radetzkymarsch' is so structured as to permit more than one level of meaning. The term structure here includes the techniques of 'Vorausdeutung', symbolism, shifting narrative perspectives, contrast and irony; all of which may be used to point to the two-faced world of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; to the discrepancy between the ordered world, as Franz Trotta would like
to see it, and the gradual dissolution of it, which is a reality.

Contrast is a basic constituent of irony. It may be achieved through tone, (as in verbal irony *), or it may be inherent in the nature of things, (as in situational irony *). In either case, it would seem that the contrast created by irony is the result of subtle presentation.

However, contrast may be also more directly effected: simply through the antithetical presentation of facts. It is this form of contrast which will be dealt with here. It will be seen as a stylistic expression of social criticism.

Two passages in 'Radetzkymarsch' are especially striking, through the use of contrast. The first of these describes Carl Joseph's thoughts as he sets out on his condolence visit to Eva Knopfmacher. In virtue of his involvement in the scandal concerning Demant's wife — and thus in the death of Demant himself — the task that lies before him is an exceedingly unpleasant one. As so often before, Carl Joseph tries to summon up strength and courage by reflecting on his grandfather. The following passage continues from this point:

Immer musste man beim Grossvater einkehren, um sich ein bisschen zu stärken. Und der Leutnant machte sich langsam auf den schweren Weg. Es war drei Uhr nachmittag. Die kleinen Kaufleute warteten kümmerlich und erfroren von den Lädien auf ihre spärlichen Kunden. 1. 18.

Each problem is seen to spring from a certain social class. Carl Joseph's problem of having to visit the widow of his dead friend is partly self-created (he should not have allowed himself to be seen alone with Demant's wife) and partly the result of absurd social conventions (the code of honour causes the death of Demant). The problems of the lower social classes, however, revolve about the daily earning of their living. In pitting one problem against the other,

* This term will be defined more accurately in the following chapter on irony.
Roth appears to criticize the rather false and senseless world of the upper social crust.

The second excerpt begins with a description of the social atmosphere in the newly opened gambling casinos. The paragraph that follows has a rather sobering effect:

Man rückte die Tische aneinander und tanzte zu den Walzern von Lehár. Die ganze Welt war verändert. —

Ja, die ganze Welt! An anderen Stellen zeigten sich sonderbare Plakate, wie man sie hierorts noch niemals gesehen hat. In allen Landessprachen fordern sich die Arbeiter der Borstenfabrik auf, die Arbeit niederzulegen. Die Borstenfabrikation ist die einzige armelige Industrie dieser Gegend. Die Arbeiter sind arme Bauern. Ein Teil von ihnen lebt im Winter vom Holzhacken, im Herbst von Erntearbeiten. Im Sommer müssen alle in die Borstenfabrik...

Alle, die sich mit der Reinigung der Borsten abgaben, begannen nach kurzer Zeit Blut zu spucken. Die Fabrik war ein altes baufälliges Gemäuer, mit kleinen Fenstern, einen 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 Faulnis ausgeliefert waren, Blechgeschirre rosteten, zerbrochene irdene Töpfe neben zerschlissenen Schuhen lagerten. 1419.

Once again criticism is expressed in the juxtaposition of the gay money-spenders and the poor workers, who subsist in conditions of poverty and filth. In this contrast Roth speaks out against the workers' conditions under the 'K.u.K.' Monarchy. Government action amounts to nothing more than the isolated arrest of 'suspicious individuals'. 1420. Disciplinary action is ineffectual. Social reform is overlooked or ignored. All the while, decay penetrates deeper into the social structure.
Contrast indirectly expressing social criticism is nowhere more evident than in the scenes of the centennial celebrations. But here one already encroaches on the sphere of irony. It remains now to consider this rather elusive term within the context of 'Radetzkymarsch'.
Irony

'Every attempt to define irony unambiguously is in itself<br>ironical.' 7. This comment from Erich Heller indicates the<br>enormous difficulties entailed in an attempt to define and illustrate<br>this age-old concept.

The phenomenon goes back hundreds of years and has since then<br>been obscured in 'conceptual fog'. 8.1. For centuries, critics<br>have tried to come to grips with the term: much overlapping,<br>duplication and further obscurity has been the result.

Samuel Hynes offers what seems to be an extremely clear and all-<br>embracing definition of irony: 8.2.  

'Irony is a view of life which recognizes that experience is open to multiple interpretations, of<br>which no one is simply right, and that the co-existence of incongruities<br>is a part of the structure of existence.'

From this explanation, one definite statement can be made: Irony<br>is an attitude - or what is more accurately described in German as<br>'eine Haltung'. It differs from satire in that it does not set out<br>to improve or change. It is not militant in nature. It rests on<br>the borderlines of the comic and the tragic.

Most definitions include one fundamental constituent: a contrast<br>of appearance and reality. It goes without saying that the observer<br>must be aware of this contrast for a situation to be ironic.

Although no attempt will be made to condense the secondary<br>literature on irony, Muecke's two basic classifications will be<br>offered here. These are: Verbal Irony, which is the 'irony of an<br>ironist being ironical', 8.3 and Situational Irony, in which a 'state<br>of affairs or an event is seen as ironic'. 8.3. Muecke explains:<br>'We look at Verbal Irony from the ironist's point of view but at<br>Situational Irony from the ironic observer's point of view. Verbal
irony tends to be satiric; Situational Irony tends to be more purely comic, tragic, or 'philosophic', 8.4.

Concisely stated: Verbal Irony is created; Situational Irony is observed.

To add to this, by now perhaps, confusing state of affairs, one must mention that what is ironic for one person need not be for another. So the perception of irony rests to a certain extent with the observer.

This section will look at the nature and function of irony, in an attempt to determine its effectiveness as a tool of social criticism.

At this point, however, a word of warning: Owing to the distance in time, which naturally permits a more objective survey of the period dealt with, the reader may sometimes be - dangerously - inclined to read more irony into the text than was perhaps intended by the author. However critical Roth's standpoint frequently appears to be, it should not be forgotten that at heart, the author laments the collapse of a world very dear to him.

As has been repeatedly mentioned, 'Radetzkymarsch' is generally characterized by the author's ambivalent attitude to his subject. This ambivalence arises from his own 'Zwischenstellung': Living and writing in the present, Roth is also engrossed in the past. His attitude to his past, as has been shown, is coloured at once with sentimental longing and scepticism. This ambivalence is synthesized in the irony which permeates the narrative standpoint. Most critics point out this ambivalence in Roth's works. Hackert, for example, remarks: 'Ironische Distanzierung und gefühlvolle Anteilnahme waren die Stilmerkmale der Feuilletons, dem Roth sein literarisches
Kurer explains this duality in Roth: 'Roth selber ist zwar spätzeitig wie seine Romanfiguren. Er versagt im Leben vollkommen. Ihm aber bleibt das Refugium der Kunst, in dem er sich behauptet. Indem er sich künstlerisch betätigt, erhebt er sich über die Welt: er übersieht die von ihm gestaltete Wirklichkeit von Anfang bis Schluss.'

This distancing attitude, Kurer later remarks, is peculiar not only to Roth but to those Austrian novelists who deal specifically with the theme of the dying Austro-Hungarian Empire. 'Obwohl sich der Dichter in die subjektive Sphäre jedes einzelnen seiner Protagonisten versenkt, trotz seiner liebevollen Hinwendung zur Welt von gestern, hat es mit der sachlich-objektivierenden Darstellung nicht sein Bewenden. So wenig die ironisch-satirische Tendenz aus den Werken aller oben erwähnten Autoren [Musil, Broch, Gütersloh, Saiko, Lernet-Holenia, Doderer] wegzudenken ist, so wenig ist sie es bei Roth.'

As in the case of Thomas Mann, one has the impression that Roth adopts an ironical attitude - that is, a certain superiority in his objectivity - in order to protect himself from becoming too involved with a world claiming his loyalties and affection. Otto Forst de Battaglia speaks of Roth's 'inniger Liebe, die sich hinter kühl-ironische Sachlichkeit flüchtet...'

Bronsen talks of 'Roths gelinde Ironie, die sich scheut, die brüchige, aber geliebte Welt der Vergangenheit anzugehen'.

In addition, irony in 'Radetzkymarsch' is the adequate expression of the two-faced world collapsing at the turn of the twentieth century. The predominance of 'Schein' over 'Sein' precipitates the inevitable decline of the Habsburg Empire. Only irony, it seems, can so effectively illustrate this contrast of reality and appearance. The order and discipline of the army and of the higher government
servants belie gradual but certain corruption and disintegration. Indeed exterior order is retained to give 'sense' to an otherwise senseless world. 'Die Grundpole zwischen denen sich bei Roth die Bezüge bewegen, sind Wirklichkeit und Un - bzw. Übervirklichkeit.'

In underlining the discrepancy between appearance and reality, irony may be seen as a tool of social criticism.

Beda Allemann indicates another function of irony: that of relativization. This is evident in 'Radetzkymarsch' on several occasions and would seem to correspond with the author's wavering attitude to the past and the present. Allemann states: 'Es ist im Grunde...sinnlos, zu sagen, die Ironie...vernichte das Ironisierte. Allenfalls relativiert sie es, wie denn im ironischen Spielraum alles 'relativ' das heisst beweglich auf einander bezogen erscheint.'

It would be true to say, however, that Roth does criticize or 'destroy' what he ironizes, in as far as he holds it up to ridicule; and there can be no doubt that the 'K.u.K.' empire is frequently shown in a ridiculous light. Hackert comes closer to defining the function and effect of irony as seen in 'Radetzkymarsch', when he remarks: 'Was sie [die Ironie] relativiert, wird nicht verworfen, sondern nur in seine Begrenztheit gezeigt. Die Ironie zerstört nur ein Moment an der Sache, die sie trifft. Sie fungiert im romantischen Sinn 'als Endlichkeit vernichtendes und über sie erhebendes Phänomen', das den Glauben an die Unendlichkeit auf negative, auf paradoxe Weise vermittelt.'

It stands to reason that, with a consistent use of irony, - as is undoubtedly the case in 'Radetzkymarsch', - there will be numerous destructive 'moments', (to use Hackert's description above). Thus, it could be said that, in general, Roth's irony is an, admittedly somewhat veiled, expression of his criticism.

The functions of irony in the context of 'Radetzkymarsch' have now been touched on. To summarize: irony reflects the ambivalent

* cf. pp 84, 139, 198.
attitude of the author to his subject; it serves as a guard against too much involvement with the world he creates; it illuminates the contrast between reality and appearance, characterizing the decaying empire; and finally, owing to its dialectical nature, irony relativizes, thus contributing to a more objective presentation of reality.

It remains now to illustrate Roth's irony as an instrument in the expression of social criticism.

The predominance of appearance over reality in the Austro-Hungarian Empire cannot be over-emphasized. This perhaps accounts for the fact that it is the most frequent target for Roth's irony.

Early in the novel the 'Kapellmeister', Nechwal, is introduced. The narrator does not delay in informing the reader as to the distinguishing characteristics of this figure.


The irony in this passage may be attributed to two factors. To begin with, the narrator not only stresses the predominance of form over content, but even pretends to view this positively in the word 'auszeichnete'. Secondly, the trivial (shared musical direction) assumes, in the mind of Nechwal, catastrophic importance ('Untergang'). A ridiculous detail is branded as a "deutliches" sign of the collapse of the Monarchy. The gravity of the situation, in Nechwal's eyes, is accentuated by the use of the full title of the 'kaiserlichen und königlichen Monarchie'; thus sharpening the contrast between the
trivial and the significant. All in all, Nechwall is portrayed as a rather decadent member of an already decaying society.

The insistence on form and appearance is frequently held up to ridicule in the case of Franz Trotta. The following excerpt is taken from his arrival at the 'Border', where he is to visit his son:

In munterer Gelassenheit stieg er vom Trittbrett, mit jenem 'elastischen Schritt', den die Zeiten den alten Kaiser nachzurühmen pflegten und den allmählich viele ältliche Staatsbeamte gelernt hatten. Denn es gab um jene Zeit in der Monarchie eine ganz besondere, seither völlig vergessene Art, Eisenbahnen und Gefährt zu verlassen, Gaststätten, Perrons und Häuser zu betreten, sich Angehörigen und Freunden zu nähern; 1.22.

Irony lies not only in the emphasis on form and correctness but also in the depiction of Trotta's unconscious imitation of his Kaiser.

Towards the end of the novel, one reads how Franz Trotta is faced with the problem of finding a large sum of money, in order to pay his son's debts. He does not possess this sum. He is forced to beseech someone for help. Just how much this will affect his pride is indicated in a few words:

Herr von Trotta hatte immer darauf gehalten, reicher zu erscheinen, als er war. Er hatte die Instinkte eines wahren Herren. Und es gab um jene Zeit (und es gibt vielleicht auch heute noch) keine kostspieligeren Instinkte. 1.23.

Again the discrepancy between appearance and reality is recognizable. Irony is evident in the use of the word 'instincts', where the word 'efforts' is indicated. The contrast between natural and 'cultivated' instincts is subtly conveyed in the words 'wahren' and 'kostspieligeren'. Although the irony here is intended to criticize, the blow is somewhat softened by the bracketed reference to the present day. The criticism is thereby relativized to some extent. What does Roth
attack here? Implicit in the above passage is a criticism of the upheld façade. Trotta's desire to appear wealthier than he is, is analogous with the Monarchy's pretense in showing itself to be as intact as it ever was. Referring to these false appearances, Kurer remarks: 'Um die Zerfallsituation aufzufangen, wird das Intakte überbetont...Diese Welt besteht aus Künstlichkeiten. Die habsburgische Tragödie, die sich schon lange abzuzeichnen begonnen hat, soll möglichst nicht sichtbar werden.' 4.4.

Much of the irony in 'Radetzkmarsch' is situational; it is left for the observer to discern. The reader realizes, for example, that the 'heile Welt', so often referred to by the Trottas and others, is largely, if not entirely, a figment of their imagination. Irony lies in their striving to re-create and relive these legendary times. It is in this 'heile' past that they find a sense in life. Roth makes it quite clear throughout the novel that the past, as envisaged by Carl Joseph, (and naturally kindled in him by his father) never existed. Not only does the author contradict himself on several occasions but the evidence received in the first few pages concerning the Hero of Solferino is shown to have little in common with the glorified portrait sketched in Carl Joseph's mind; hence the irony that the 'heile welt', from which Carl Joseph gains strength, is nothing but, to use Scheible's phrase, 'eine rückwärts gewandte Utopie'. 5.2.

The Hero of Solferino is shown to have aspired in his turn to his father's life-style. ** The glory of the past is, therefore, quite clearly, not localized in the figure of the grandfather, as Carl Joseph would have it. Rather it is an ideal state for which characters such as young Trotta and his grandfather, who fail to find their place in life, constantly yearn.

The author deliberately blurs the border between history and

* cf. pp. 5 and 84 re. 'Lucko'.

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fiction; thereby heightening the central irony of the novel: that the
glorious, 'heile' past, which the Trottas long for, never existed.
Carl Joseph and his father remember the Hero of Solferino as he was
portrayed in the story book for children. That this version is fiction
and not history is, however, obvious to the attentive reader. The
second account of the heroic deed is a negation of the first. By
ridiculing the characters' clinging to an imagery past, Roth
criticizes two things: their unquestioning acceptance of inherited
values and their inability to come to terms with reality, which
inevitably leads to escape in various forms.

Most critics are agreed that Roth's irony is nowhere as frequently
or as effectively used as in the case of the 'K.u.K.' officers.

As has been mentioned in Part I, the army is frequently criticized
for conditioning its officers to unreflective conformity in the
observance of social norms. Roth's censure is more subtle but
extremely effective in the following quotation. Intoxicated by the
pomp and splendour of the 'Fronleichnamsprozession', Carl Joseph's
thoughts wander to the glory and patriotism embodied in the myth of
his grandfather. Then the narrator continues:

Er dachte an seine eigene heilige Aufgabe, für den
Kaiser zu sterben, jeden Augenblick zu Wasser und zu
Lande und auch in der Luft, mit einem Worte, an jedem
Orte. 1.24.

In the first place, the author's criticism is implicit in the
childlike rhyme he uses to reflect the parrot-like learning of the
officers. Also inherent in this passage is Carl Joseph's unconscious
association with his grandfather's heroic deed. Young Trotta is
repeatedly characterized by hesitance and lack of confidence. He
looks to the past for his courage. Thirdly, irony lies in the
ridiculous nature of Carl Joseph's 'heilige Aufgabe'. He can no

* cf. pp. 6 and 40.
longer save the emperor. The monarchy is collapsing. Dying for
the Kaiser in a dying world is futile and absurd.

The ironic treatment of the 'K.u.K.' officers frequently borders
on the satiric. This is most noticeable in the scenes of the
centennial celebrations, where the frivolity of the officers is
sharply contrasted with the macabre atmosphere of the impending
collapse. Any opportunity to make merry is gladly taken. Kurer
notes the rather immature escapism on the part of the officers:
'Statt den Tatsachen gemäss zu leben, vergisst man sie und verwandelt
das Leben nach Möglichkeit in ein immerwährendes Fest. ... Military
exercises and preparations for warfare are dropped. Trivialities
suddenly assume the greatest significance. The plans for the officers'
parade, for example,

lagen in der Nähe der grossen, unheimlichen,
versiegelten Umschläge, in denen die geheimen Befehle
für den Fall einer Mobilisierung geborgen waren. ...

This misplacement of emphasis is only too clear in the above contrast
between the significant and the insignificant.

The accent is once again on appearance and formalities. The
task of composing the invitations to the centenary is given painstaking
attention by Festetics and Zschoch.

Allein die Stilisierung dieses höfischen Schreibens
beschäftigte zwei Männer, den Obersten Festetics und
den Rittmeister Zschoch. Manchmal gerieten sie auch
in heftige Diskussionen über stilistische Fragen. ...

Commenting on this part of the novel, Kurer indicates just how
effective a target for satire this officers' world really is: 'Was
an Krieg und Zerstörung mahnen könnte, ist aus dem Gesichtskreis
verbannt: statt in der Kunst des Attackierens üben sich die Soldaten
im kunstgerechten Servieren; statt der kriegerischen Fähigkeiten seiner
Leute prüft Oberst Festetics den Sitz ihrer weissen Handschuhe. Die Dragoner werden nicht auf ihren Pferden sitzend gezeigt, sondern — man beachte die Diminutive! — auf den 'Stämmchen' der 'Bäumchen' im 'Wäldchen' des Grafen Chojnicki, auf Wache nicht vor feindlichen Überfällen, sondern vor allfällig aufsteigenden Gewittern, die den Lämpions und Guirlanden gefährlich werden könnten.4,6. The officers are indeed portrayed as operetta-life figures, who have nothing in common with military men. At one stage they are described as being even more colourful than the women among the guests.

Pomp and pageantry blind the officers as to the real state of affairs. Muecke's comment, 'the greater the victim's blindness, the more striking the irony',⁸,⁵ was never more true as in these scenes. Not only do the officers disregard the signs of the storm, but they deceive themselves into believing they can ward it off:

Der Donner kam immer näher, aber die Militärkapellen übertönten ihn. ¹,²⁶.

The analogy is undeniable. Not only does the Monarchy ignore the signs of decay but it continues to impose the old order, to display its - fading - glory, in an attempt to prove its intactness.

The blindness of the officers at the festivities is so patent, that they become an effective object of dramatic irony. Some of the guests invited to the celebrations have written that they will forward a telegram at the last minute, indicating whether or not they will come. Little do the officers know how aptly they have described the state of affairs in the empire, when they exclaim, in reaction to these letters: Es ist ein Unglück! ...Es ist ein Unglück! ¹,²⁷. Even more striking is the dramatic irony inherent in the following passage which describes the officers' reactions to the celebration:
Boening describes in some detail the series of contrasts set up by the author, as a means of expressing - and thus implicitly criticizing - the decadence of the officers. Irony is frequently seen to give way to the more militant satire, in these pages, precisely because the contrasts, inherent in the situation, are often so marked.

In his chapter dealing with this novel, Famira-Parcsetich writes: 'In 'Radetzkymarsch' ist sie [die Ironie] mit beabsichtigter Deutlichkeit fast nur in einem Zusammenhang verwendet, und zwar an den Stellen, wo der Erzähler sich mit der äusserlichen bedeutungslos gewordenen Tradition des österreichischen Heeres beschäftigt.' 12 One would be inclined to modify this comment somewhat. Irony is indeed at its most pointed in the treatment of the 'K.u.K.' officers. The tendency to satire has already been emphasized. However, it would be rather rash to say that it is not used with 'beabsichtigter Deutlichkeit' in other parts of the novel. Irony has been seen to pervade 'Radetzkymarsch' and, whether it is scathing or just gently mocking in nature, it is usually employed for a purpose.

Roth uses irony as a tool of criticism on many other occasions - the irony of self-betrayal in the case of the despicable Knopfmacher, for example, spells out the author's disapproval of such men quite plainly - but these few examples should suffice to illustrate his use of the phenomenon.

Irony is often used to point to the contradictions in the Austro-Hungarian Empire; and in this function it expresses criticism. Irony may serve to relativize, thereby indicating the limitation of a

* cf. pp. 93 - 95.
person or thing. And finally, it may be seen as a playful ridiculing of persons or conventions.

Most critics are agreed that Roth resorts to irony, with didactic intent. In general, however, they would define his irony in milder terms. Böning, for example, concludes: 'Weise Überlegenheit und gültige Nachsicht gegen die Personen sind als Grundzüge der Ironie im 'Radetzkymarsch' charakteristisch.' 2,4. Harry Zohn describes Roth's style as 'ironisch-witzig.' 13.

The concept and function of irony is a controversial subject, which cannot be adequately treated within the scope of a paper such as this. One is reminded of Thomas Mann's comment that the problem of irony is 'without exception the profoundest and most fascinating in the world'. 8,6.
CONCLUSION

It has been the aim of this thesis to look at 'Radetzkymarsch' from the angle of social criticism. This area has received relatively little attention from Roth's critics. Wegner goes as far as to say: 'Nur die beiden ersten Romane ['Hotel Savoy', 'Die Rebellion'] kann man mit einem gewissen Recht als sozialkritisch ansehen'; and although she later modifies this comment: 'Sozialkritische Züge treten noch in allen seinen späteren Romanen auf'; her neglect of the critical content in a work like 'Radetzkymarsch' is alarmingly naïve. It is true that the novels following 'Hiob' display, to use her words, 'eine Neigung zum Konservativen, Monarchistischen', but it would be a little rash to see in 'Radetzkymarsch' nothing more than a panegyric of the past.

Part I treated those areas in which Roth's criticism is most apparent. The discrepancy between appearance and reality was consistently emphasized as the salient symptom of a decaying society. This contrast was most conspicuous in the higher bureaucracy, the army, the aristocracy and the emperor himself.

In Part II, an attempt was made to examine the critical nature of 'Radetzkymarsch'. It was shown that, although Roth occasionally resorts to direct comment, his characteristically ambivalent attitude towards his subject indicates a preference for veiled criticism. Narrative perspective, characterization, contrast and irony were discussed as techniques employed in the indirect expression of social criticism. Irony, as a pervading element in the novel, was considered in more detail. In general, Roth's irony was not seen as hostile or destructive. By playing on the

*Scheible deals briefly with social criticism. Kurur alludes to it in his study of the 'Spätzeitlichen'. See references for their works.*
predominance of 'Schein' over 'Sein', however, - notably in the treatment of the army - it was shown to highlight the falseness of the 'K.u.K.' society; and in this respect, irony was seen to be an indirect expression of criticism.

Böning remarks how some words in Roth's Grillparzer-Essay may well be used to describe the distinguishing attributes of the author himself. ' 'Drei königliche Dinge' prägten Joseph Roth und den Charakter seines Werkes: die 'goldene Krone der Phantasie', der 'Scharlachmantel der Einsamkeit' und das 'Szepter der Ironie' '.


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