

FRISCH: "STILLER"

MAX FRISCH'S NOVEL

"STILLER"

A STUDY BY

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: The attempt is made in the following study to present an interpretation of the novel Stiller by the Swiss author, Max Frisch, by tracing through the novel the dominant themes of the graven-image or 'Bildnis' and that of the problem of freedom with reference to the novel's main character.

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QUOTATIONS

All quotations from Max Frisch's works are identified by a number and/or abbreviation appearing in brackets after the quotation.

As the great majority of quotations are taken from Stiller, it has been considered most convenient to identify these by means of a number referring to the page of Stiller. Quotations from all other works by Max Frisch are identified by means of an abbreviated form of the title and a number referring to the page of the work to which reference is being made.

The abbreviated forms of the titles and the works to which they correspond appear below. A full list of the works used and the dates of the editions appears in the Bibliography.

Bin: Bin oder die Reise nach Peking.

Tagebuch: Tagebuch 1946-1949.

INTRODUCTION

In Frisch's Tagebuch 1946-1949 a young man, Marion, has conversation with an angel. On being asked by the angel what he wishes, Marion replies that just for once when he is sitting by the water in the evening he would like to walk upon the water or glide across the countryside: not even to fly like a bird but to glide down again into "die Gefangenschaft unserer Schwere" (Tagebuch, 20). All that he asks is that this incredible happening shall not be a dream, but quite real. It need never happen again and no one need know it or believe it, for it is sufficient that he knows that: "Einmal bin ich über das Wasser gegangen, ganz wirklich." (Tagebuch, 20.) And when challenged by the angel to follow him across the water, Marion asks: "Wo, wenn du ein Engel bist, führst du mich hin?" the angel replies: "Zu dir--." (Tagebuch, 180.)

Marion's conversations could stand as a metaphor for the situations basic to many of Frisch's characters: for Marion's desire - to be momentarily free from imprisonment in "human heaviness" and to experience the freedom which only he need or can know - is a desire found in many of the works of this author; the desire to experience the freedom of being oneself, and to escape the restriction which makes this very freedom unattainable.

The "I" of the story: Bin oder die Reise nach Peking feels the longing to travel to Peking. There he will find himself. His is "ein märzliches Heimweh nach neuen Menschen, denen man selber noch

einmal neu wäre." (Bin, 10.) He wishes to escape the image which others have of him and which imprisons him.

The image means imprisonment: for Yvonne in J'adore ce qui me brûle oder die Schwierigen, in the image of the woman; for Don Juan in Don Juan oder die Liebe zur Geometrie, in the image of the seducer; for Andri in Andorra, in the image of the Jew. All these characters wish to escape the petrification of the image. The "Rittmeister" and Elvira (in Santa Cruz) long to escape the snow-bound castle of their marriage for a dream on the Spanish Main, and the Public-Prosecutor in Graf Öderland finds his freedom as the legendary Count Öderland, riding with his axe through the world.

What Frisch understands by the image is the Biblical "graven image":

Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen, heisst es, von Gott. Es dürfte auch in diesem Sinne gelten: Gott als das Lebendige in jedem Menschen, das, was nicht erfassbar ist. Es ist eine Versündigung, die wir, so wie sie an uns begangen wird, fast ohne Unterlass wieder begehen-- Ausgenommen wenn wir lieben. (Tagebuch, 37.)

Any attempt to state what a human being is, is a crime against God in that human being, for God is a residue, the sum of real life (85) of that which is inexpressible. Love for Frisch means the acceptance of the totality of another.

In every one of Frisch's works from the early Jürg Reinhart of 1934 (later to become the first part of J'adore ce qui me brûle oder die Schwierigen of 1943), and Blätter aus dem Brotsack of 1940, to the latest play, Andorra of 1961, the central theme is that of

imprisonment in the image.

The priest in Andorra advises Andri whom everyone considers to be a Jew to accept the image and not to try to conform to the Andorran norms of behaviour. In his confession the priest in Andorra says:

Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen von Gott, Gott, deinem Herrn und nicht von den Menschen, die seine Geschöpfe sind. Auch ich bin schuldig geworden damals. Ich wollte ihm mit Liebe begegnen, als ich gesprochen habe mit ihm. Auch ich habe mir ein Bildnis gemacht von ihm, und ich habe ihn gefesselt, auch ich habe ihn an den Pfahl gebracht. (Stücke, 254.)

At every turn one encounters characters who are crucified on the image or have been turned into marionettes, "wie ein Hampelmann an den unsichtbaren Fäden der Gewöhnung" (320), characters like the couple in Santa Cruz who are frozen into complementary images, until the longing for freedom awakes in them. They then feel "Heimweh nach der Ferne" (Tagebuch, 25), "dies, damit wir Menschen begegnen, die nicht meinen, dass sie uns kennen ein für allemal; damit wir noch einmal erfahren, was uns in diesem Leben möglich sei--" (Tagebuch, 32.)

It is perhaps this fear of the petrified form which accounts for the "open" form of the novel Stiller and for Frisch's love of the parable as a means of expression. In the Tagebuch 1946-1949 Frisch writes:

Der Hang zum Skizzenhaften, der unsere Malerei schon lange beherrscht, zeigt sich auch im Schrifttum nicht zum erstenmal; die Vorliebe für das Fragment, die Auflösung überlieferter Einheiten, die schmerzliche oder neckische Betonung des Unvollendeten, das alles hat schon die Romantik, der wir zum Teil so fremd, zum Teil so verwandt sind. Das Vollendete: nicht gemeint als Meisterschaft, sondern als Geschlossenheit einer Form. (Tagebuch, 118.)

Frisch's use of the "open" form for his novel corresponds to White's use of parable within the novel as an oblique means of expression.

In discussing the novel, one method of approaching the problem of the interpretation would be to proceed from the outside, and to come to conclusions about the novel basing one's arguments upon the coincidence of material in the novel with events in Frisch's own life. It is interesting to note, for instance, that Frisch, like Stiller, spent a considerable period in the U.S.A., including time in Oakland near San Francisco, and in New York; he went, too, like White, from Oakland to Mexico. Likewise, it is interesting to note other similarities: for example, that White has come to Switzerland from Santa Cruz, of which the couple in Santa Cruz dream; that the Polish doctor, Wiska (Tagebuch, 302), appears in Stiller's description of his period in Spain, as Anja (352-354, and 443), or that the Jew in the sketch for Andorra, "Der andorranische Jude" (Tagebuch, 33-36), appears as the Jew in the Zürich prison. (24, 42, 90, 109-110.)

But any attempt to base an interpretation on such coincidence would be dangerous. It seems to the writer that the only valid approach to an adequate interpretation of Stiller is that of tracing through the novel the themes which appear to be dominant and of relating them to one another.

In Chapter I of this thesis the theme of identification is discussed with reference first to the attempts of the Swiss authorities to identify

the prisoner, White, with Stiller,¹ and then to the indirect confirmation of this identification through the prisoner's reactions. In Chapter II, two hypothetical alternatives, which are presented to White by his lawyer, are discussed: White must either confess that he is Stiller or prove that he is White. The reasons for his inability to take either path are discussed. In Chapter III, an attempt is made to demonstrate the working of "Bildnis-Machen" in the relationship of Stiller and Julika. Chapter IV discusses the theory of freedom propounded by the Public-Prosecutor and attempts to determine in how far it can be regarded as a stage-by-stage parallel of Stiller's development. The Public-Prosecutor's theory of marriage is examined, too, with reference to the relationship of Stiller and Julika as the Public-Prosecutor describes it in the "Nachwort". In the Conclusion, the writer attempts to describe the difficulties, which, it seems to him, Frisch had to overcome in writing Stiller. These difficulties, it is suggested, are the consequences of Frisch's attempt to make the commandment: "Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen", the idea which is to determine his attitude towards the central figure of the novel and towards the form of the novel. It would seem to the writer that Frisch overcame these difficulties. The method by which it appears they were overcome is described.

¹ Throughout those portions of this paper dealing with the first part of Stiller, "Stillers Aufzeichnungen im Gefängnis", the writer refers to the prisoner as White. The Swiss sculptor who disappeared and with whose past the prisoner is confronted, is referred to as Stiller, as is the prisoner after his release from prison, that is, in the second part of Stiller, "Nachwort des Staatsanwalts".

Chapter I

IDENTIFICATION

The problem of identification is the most obvious theme of the novel Stiller. Chapter I deals with the attempts by the Swiss authorities to prove that the prisoner, according to his passport, an American citizen, James Larkin White, is identical with the Swiss sculptor Anatol Ludwig Stiller, and with the reactions of the prisoner to these attempts. These reactions are expressed directly by way of White's comments and indirectly through his stories and dreams, which are metaphorically related to the problem.

Since the process of identification carried on by the Swiss authorities is brought to its conclusion with the decision of the court at the end of the first part, "Stillers Aufzeichnungen im Gefängnis", and since Stiller is concerned in the second part, "Nachwort des Staatsanwalts", mainly with the image held of him by his wife, it seems more convenient to treat only the first part in Chapter I of this paper and to reserve discussion of the second until a later chapter.

The first part, consisting of seven "Hefte", will be examined "Heft" by "Heft" for expressions of the problem of identification.

1. Heft I

In "Heft" I the Swiss authorities represented by White's lawyer, begin their process of identification by confronting White with people and facts from Stiller's past. White's reactions to this process confirm this identification.

In "Heft" I the outer action begins with White's arrest at the Swiss frontier charged with being Stiller: the charge, if proven, would render the prisoner liable to punishment for neglecting numerous obligations during the alleged six years of his absence. He finds that every magazine reader knows who he is supposed to be, that he allegedly left his wife, Julika Tschudy-Stiller, now directing a ballet school in Paris, in a serious condition in a Davos tuberculosis clinic. It is indeed through illustrated magazines that he is recognized by the passenger on the train at the frontier and by Knöbel, his warder in prison.

The task of his lawyer, Dr. Bohnenblust, is twofold: to prove the identity of White with Stiller, so that he may defend him in court; and to obtain a confession from White that he is Stiller. The lawyer brings a bulging dossier of information on Stiller which he regards as conclusive, since, for him, information is truth and incidence of appearance, identity. The following extract is typical for their conversations:

[the lawyer]: "Wieso sind Sie nicht Stiller?"

[White]: "Weil ich es nicht bin."

[the lawyer]: "Wieso nicht . . . man hat mich informiert." (28)

A further piece of evidence towards identification is hinted at with the arrival of the Public-Prosecutor and at his greeting: "Meine Frau

lässt Sie grüssen [. . .] vorausgesetzt, dass Sie tatsächlich Herr Stiller sind!" (39); that part of Stiller's past concerning his relationship with Sibylle, the Public-Prosecutor's wife, is introduced. As the Public-Prosecutor himself had had only indirect contact with Stiller, (once on the telephone from Paris), he cannot identify Stiller by appearance.

A letter from Wilfried Stiller brings news that their mother has died, that a young man by the name of Alex who had been a friend of Stiller in Zürich has committed suicide, that their father is in an old people's home, and reports the information again that Julika is in Paris.

White learns the full details of the man who disappeared on about January 18, 1946, that his name is Anatol Ludwig Stiller, a sculptor, last resident in his studio in the Steingartengasse in Zürich, and that there is some suspicion which seems to connect him with espionage.

On the confrontation, arranged by Dr. Bohnenblust, with Julika Tschudy-Stiller, she confirms the identification by recognizing her husband and various aspects of his character, for example, his love for telling fantastic stories: "Du bist noch immer der gleiche, kein vernünftiges Wort kann man reden mit dir, immer kommst du mit diesen Hirngespinsten." (72) Julika and White are taken to Davos and he is introduced to places which, as we later learn, Stiller would have had every reason to know. After being shown photographs of himself in various places in Zürich by the lawyer who considers photographs as well as information in dossiers to be an infallible means of identification,

White is taken by Julika to these self-same locations.

The inner action in "Heft" I is provided by White's reactions to the authorities' attempts to prove his identity with Stiller. These reactions are largely negative, and are typified by the opening words of the book: "Ich bin nicht Stiller!" (9), the denial of the attempts to identify him, but others, mostly expressed obliquely, point to his acceptance that he is by commonly accepted standards the same person as Stiller. His comment: "Zuweilen, allein in meiner Zelle, habe ich das Gefühl, dass ich all dies nur träumte: das Gefühl; 'ich könnte jederzeit aufstehen, die Hände von meinem Gesicht nehmen und mich in Freiheit umsehen, das Gefängnis ist nur in mir.'" (24) Clearly, the condition to which he is referring is not only that of nightmarish claustrophobia of mistaken identity, but a recognition that the prison and the reason for imprisonment lie within him, and are not being imposed from without. The persistent theme of the "Mord meiner ersten Frau" (29), introduced by him in a conversation with Knöbel, is his way of giving expression obliquely to the memory he has of his cruelty to Julika during his marriage to her and on leaving her for the U.S.A. He enlarges upon his remark on her murder: he had killed her because he had loved. But he warns the Public-Prosecutor: "Warten Sie auch nicht auf mein schlechtes Gewissen, Herr Staatsanwalt. Ich habe keines mehr. Irgendwie ist es einfach verbraucht. Ich hatte so viel schlechtes Gewissen, solange sie lebte." (41) Later he is to realize that by running away he is in fact murdering her: "Ich bin geflohen, um nicht zu morden, und habe erfahren, dass gerade ein Versuch, zu fliehen, der Mord ist." (77)

These remarks are forward-pointing indications which become clear when brought into relation with Stiller and Julika later in the novel, and are the introduction of themes which are to form the basis for the reported conversations with Julika and Sibylle in the "Hefte", taking the form of White's protocol.

His choice of stories is significant, as they are all in one way or another mirrorings of Stiller's position in marriage, some direct images, some inverted, some through the wishing mirror, and some of White's situation now: the story of Isidore in its two versions; the story of his adventures with Florence, the mulatto-girl, and Jo, her husband; the story of "Little Grey" and Helen, and the story of Rip van Winkle.

Isidore is a chemist who manages by mistake, but to his good fortune, to join the French Foreign Legion and so escape the questionings of his wife. He eventually returns twice to visit her "out of common decency", and when she begins her interrogation again, he shoots the cake on the tea table on his first visit and walks out, and on his second visit, when the questions begin again, he leaves and never returns. A divorce on the grounds of desertion follows.

It is clear that Isidore in his defiance is a kind of wish-dream figure. This is how White would like to be able to see himself in relationship to Julika, his flight from her and his return. The emphasis is on activity, just as it was in White's account of how he allegedly rescued the mulatto, Florence, from the burning house, and when pursued by her husband, Jo, shot him. These stories are inverted images.

Stiller was, and White is, through the constraint of his cell, passive. On being warned by White that he is a sensual person, uninhibited, particularly at this time of the year, Julika indeed says that it had always been the wish-dream of her husband to be sexually uninhibited. White says himself on the relief gained in activity, as against inward-turning:

Da ist es doch eine Erleichterung, wenn es einmal knallt, wenn Blut rinnt oder wenn einer an richtigem Gift verendet [. . .] Das ist ja das Grossartige an früheren Zeitaltern, beispielsweise an der Renaissance, dass die menschlichen Charaktere sich noch in Handlung offenbarten; heutzutage ist alles verinnerlicht. (164)

The stories, however, of the cat "Little Grey" are reflections of Stiller's feeling of guilt at his treatment of his wife, for the cat reminds him of the graceful movements of his balleteuse.

The story of Rip van Winkle, too, is another oblique confirmation of identity through analogy, for the hero of this American folk-tale is in a state of constraint, like Isidore before he joined the French Foreign Legion, like Stiller in his marriage to Julika, and like White, now in prison. Rip van Winkle goes out into the forest and pretends to hunt there. This is his method of escape, just as it is Isidore's method to join the Legion, Stiller's to run away to the U.S.A., and White's to tell fantastic stories, but Rip van Winkle can no more kill than could Stiller; and Rip, too, returns "ein Fremdling in fremder Welt" (99), just as White would like to have himself seen by others.

When White tells the story of Isidore to Julika, he leaves out the extravagant touch of the five children and of the shooting of the

cake on the tea table. Indeed, he has Isidore show his wife his stigmatized hands on his return home, just as Stiller had shown his stigmatized hands to Julika in the dream which White had just had. The stigmata are a significant part of White's image of himself and at the same time refer obliquely to the imagery of reciprocal "Bildnis-Machen", of reciprocal crucifixion of Stiller and Julika.

The conversations with Julika are carried on on a double level: on the surface the conversations are non-communicative, in so far that White denies at every turn that he is Julika's husband, Stiller; but throughout, there are unconscious indications which point towards identification. White comments upon her perfume: "Es muss eine gediegene Marke sein, man denkt sofort an Paris, an die Parfümerien bei der Vendôme." (72) This refers forward to the description Stiller gives of his search around the Vendôme perfumeries for perfume for Sibylle. (402) White's despairing: "Was will sie eigentlich von mir!" (74), is almost a leitmotif of both Stiller and Julika. White introduces the theme of forgivingness when he speaks of Julika's coming to him to forgive her husband: "Sie sind mit dem Flugzeug gekommen, um Ihrem verschollenen Mann zu verzeihen." (76) This is a reference to Stiller's favourite brickbat against his wife, his description of her forgivingness as "eine Satanie" (194); and White's desire to strangle her (76), referring forward to Stiller's desire to kill "Little Grey" as a substitute for her. In this first "Heft" reactions are, as was stated, on the surface, negative, but the comments such as "Meine Angst: die Wiederholung-!" (88) and the mirrorings in the "Märchen"

are, on the one hand, an expression of White's fear at constraint in the image, and on the other, an attempt on his part at expressing himself by way of metaphor.

The first "Heft", one in diary form, has been concerned with White's attempts to give expression to his past, and with the attempts on the part of the authorities to build up a picture of Stiller and to identify White with Stiller. White's reactions, direct and indirect, confirm the identification which the authorities are attempting to prove.

2. Heft II

The second "Heft" consists almost entirely of evidence towards identification, evidence advanced by Julika on her marriage with Stiller: evidence of how her sole interest in life has been ballet, of how the balletuse had first met Stiller, of how Stiller had just returned from the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War and of his penalty on his return, of his weakness, his effeminate traits, and his compulsion for making apologies for himself. Julika had been pleased by what she saw, a man of whom she was not afraid; they had married and it had soon become apparent that their marriage was based on weakness, either mutual exploitation of each other's weaknesses or exploitation of consideration for their own weaknesses.

Julika demands consideration. Her weapons against her husband are her ever-present demands for this consideration, and then the development of tuberculosis which she uses in her own way to exploit his bad conscience. She resents the alleged interference in her life and her art when he suggests that she should have a child, or that she should see a doctor regularly about her infected lung. She refers to the latter as "eine heimliche Kündigung seiner zärtlichen Rücksicht, ja als Anzeichen der Lieblosigkeit, und das machte sie eher trotzig. Sie fühlte sich zum Arzt geschickt, gezwungen, nur damit sein Gewissen beruhigt wäre." But it is in fact just this bad conscience which she required: " . . .]fast alles, was sie erzählt, deutet doch darauf hin, dass sie ihren Stiller nur durch sein schlechtes Gewissen glaubte

fesseln zu können." (116)

Stiller is egocentricity in person. He refers everything, including Julika's frigidity, to himself. He is not willing to accept or to recognize the fact that she is frigid, and that her only means of sexual gratification is in her life in the ballet, not in any relationship with Stiller or in attempted Lesbian ones. Instead of accepting this, Stiller blames himself for Julika's frigidity and persuades himself that she is frigid because of some lack of virility on his part. Her tiredness, too, Stiller refers to himself: "[. . .] seine Ich-Bezogenheit ging so weit, dass er sogar ihre ärztlich begründete Müdigkeit auf sich bezog." (131) Just as she is convinced of her insufficiency as a woman, so is he of himself as a man. He speaks of himself as "ein öliger, stinkiger Fischer mit einer kristallinen Fee", (140) as a "Besudelnder" (141) and attempts to purify his body: he chastises himself by swimming across a lake each day. He was "der Inbegriff einer männlichen Mimose" (138) and a "Wiederkäufer" (140). His very existence becomes a combination of persecution complex and bad conscience: his was "die Sehnsüchtigkeit eines Verkrüppelten" (142), for: "Oft bildete er sich ein, er hätte einen Ausschlag." (144) As he says in a short note from Paris: "Alles ist meine Schuld [. . .] du brauchst dir keine Sorgen zu machen, meine Liebe, du fährst also nach Davos, du Armes, und ich bleibe hier in der Stadt, ich der Gesunde - mein schlechtes Gewissen ist für dich das beste Ruhekissen." (127) It is as if Julika were ill only to give him a bad conscience.

The root cause of his feeling of insufficiency as a man appears to

be his "Niederlage in Spanien" (181), as he tells Julika on his second visit to her in Davos, when he had failed to guard a bridge against Franco forces and had lied his way out of the difficulty.

During her stay in the tuberculosis clinic, Julika has conversations with a young and brilliant Jesuit patient. In one of their conversations he introduces her to the concept of "Bildnis-Machen" (151f), which is, as already indicated, thematically very important for the novel as a whole and in particular for the relationship of Stiller and Julika. Stiller had accepted, e.g., the image created by his acquaintances, who say how odd they find it that such an undeserving person as Stiller should have such a wife as Julika: "Du bist die Dulderin, das wissen alle unsere Bekannten, ein nobles Wesen." (194) He also has a desire to perfect her, either by giving her children or by changing her character.

It is apparent that the protocol of "Heft II" takes up thematically many things mentioned by White in the diary of "Heft I" in his stories and conversations with his visitors, for example, Stiller's outburst - quoted above: "Du bist die Dulderin, das wissen alle unsere Bekannten, ein nobles Wesen." (194) is paralleled by White's words to the Public-Prosecutor, referring to the wife whom White had killed: "Ich sage Ihnen doch, sie war ein so nobler Mensch, dass alle unsere Bekannten nie zuvor einen so noblen Menschen getroffen hatten." (40) Stiller's dream, which he tells Julika (on his third visit to Davos) of his unsuccessful attempt to strangle her, is paralleled by the attempts to destroy the cat in the "Little Grey" episodes, and by the

attack on Julika in the prison cell; his supposition that Stiller's joining the International Brigade in Spain is a "Flucht vor sich selbst" (162) takes up the theme of fleeing which runs through the stories and White's short comments.

White's rôle in the second "Heft" is restricted on the face of it to conducting the protocol: "Ich will aber versuchen, in diesen Heften nichts anderes zu tun als zu protokollieren." (116), and he does indeed keep the material in the protocol alienated by his constant reminders that he is only reporting the story. But in addition to the clear cross-work of parallels between the words of White in "Heft" I and those of Stiller reported in "Heft" II, there is the interesting conversation interposed between the two sections of the protocol. (163-164)

White returns to the subject of the murder of his wife, but to a murder which is quite clearly removed from the physical sphere, for he tells his uncomprehending warder, Knöbel: "Es gibt allerlei Arten, einen Menschen zu morden, oder wenigstens seine Seele." (163-164) He continues his explanation by saying: ". . . heutzutage ist alles verinnerlicht - und so einen innerlichen Mord zu berichten, mein guter Knöbel, dazu braucht man Zeit, Zeit . . . Stunden und Tage." (164) This would seem to be what the protocol is: a report of an "innerlichen" murder.

In the same interposed passage (in words already quoted above on White's regrets for the lost age of action), one does not have the feeling that this would be coming from the adventurer, White, but rather from the husband of whom Julika says that being sexually uninhibited had

always been his wish-dream.

In this "Heft", too, the identification of White with Stiller has been confirmed by White's reactions to the authorities' attempts, although it is clear that his confirmation of this identification does not mean that he can accept it as having relevance to him.

3. Heft III

In "Heft" III the Swiss Army adds its attempts at identification. White is for them Mitrailleur Stiller, and they accuse him of deserting and thereby neglecting his duties to his Motherland; the Swiss civil authorities declare that his United States passport is a forgery and there is a suggestion that he had something to do with the Smyrnov affair, an espionage case of 1946.

The Public-Prosecutor continues to build up a picture of Stiller's past by telling White of his (the Public-Prosecutor's) reconciliation in New York with Sibylle after a year's separation. Little by little it is becoming clear that Sibylle, the wife, had gone to New York after the relationship with Stiller, hinted at in "Heft" I and referred to by Julika in "Heft" II. Sibylle continues to greet White through her husband and he and the prisoner discuss marriage theoretically, but it is obvious that the Public-Prosecutor is talking about his own theory of marriage and the threat posed to this theory and to his marriage by Stiller's relationship to his wife.

Knöbel, the warder, the only one who had believed that the prisoner was, in fact, White, and who had believed his stories, now comes to the conclusion that he is being deceived and that the prisoner is, in fact, Stiller.

White's reactions in this "Heft" to the attempts made to identify him as Stiller are expressed obliquely through the story of his discovery of the Carlsbad Caverns and his killing of his friend and companion,

Jim; the report of his father's (or stepfather's) death on the Bowery in New York; the continuation of the story of his life in California with "Little Grey", Helen and Florence.

The story of the Carlsbad Caverns is open to various readings: White claims that he killed his companion, Jim - his name is also Jim - in the Caverns, and deliberately confuses the issue of identification by refusing to differentiate the two Jims finally:

Ich weiss nicht, [. . .] welcher von den beiden Freunden eigentlich den mörderischen Streit begonnen hat, der Ehrlichere vermutlich, und jedenfalls ist nur einer aus der Kaverne gestiegen, der Stärkere vermutlich. Sein Name ist bekannt, sogar mit metallenen Lettern auf einen Denkstein geschrieben: Jim White. In einer Publikation, die heutzutage den Touristen verkauft wird, heisst es etwas genauer: James Larkin (Jim) White, a young cowboy who made his first entry trip in 1901. Von dem Freund hingegen, der immerhin als Begleiter erwähnt wird, heisst es bloss: a Mexican boy. Sein Name ist verschollen, und ich denke, dieser Verschollene wird sich nicht mehr melden. (224 - 225)

Throughout the diary sections of the novel White refers indirectly to an encounter with an angel. The encounter itself is finally described at the very end of "Heft" VII (499ff and 503). The episode in the Carlsbad Caverns mirrors his encounter with the angel. The parallels between this story and the account of the encounter with the angel are clear: the apparent absence of time and space in both the cavern and the semi-coma; the encounter with death as a skeleton in the story and the actual possibility of dying; the fight to throw off an old life and to assert a new one, and the fight with and the killing of the "Doppelgänger" and the final emergence from the cavern to the light. The story has, too, direct relevance to White's present situation

and the dual nature of identity.

Similarly, in his dream of being and not being Stiller drilling on the Swiss Army parade-ground on 3/9/1939, White betrays the consciousness of his double character.

The story of his father's (or stepfather's) death in humiliation on the Bowery is similar to the stories of Isidore or to the wild adventures on the American West Coast with Florence and Joe in "Heft" I: a sort of compensatory wish-dream for his resentment against his stepfather, referring forward to page 442, where he expresses his antipathy towards his stepfather: "Ich bestand meine Maturität gerade so mit knapper Not und war froh für meine Mutter, damit mein Stiefvater nicht sagen konnte: 'Siehst du jetzt, dein nettes Söhnchen!'" (442)

The continuation of the story of "Little Grey" brings further parallels to Stiller's situation with his wife before his disappearance. The cat seems to haunt him as a constant reminder of Julika. He tries to kill it just as in dreams he tries to strangle his wife, but the cat returns and watches over him. Florence, the mulatto living next door, is as unattainable as is Julika. The one is unattainable through her colour, for she seems always to be surrounded by Negroes, and the other is unattainable through her frigidity. It becomes clear that the stories in "Heft" I of White's rescuing Florence from the burning house, of his running away with her to California and finally to Mexico pursued by her husband were again wish-dreams. They were wish-dreams in compensation for his frustration at seeing Florence married to Joe, the U.S. sergeant, and for having had to restrict his relationship with her to

having conversations about the cat.

In the same complex of stories there is, too, a description of a Negro garden party. White comments on the attempts of some of the Negroes there to whiten their skins with powder:

Ach, diese Sehnsucht, weiss zu sein, und diese Sehnsucht, glattes Haar zu haben, und diese lebenslängliche Bemühung, anders zu sein, als man erschaffen ist, diese grosse Schwierigkeit, sich selbst einmal anzunehmen, ich kannte sie und sah nur eine eigne Not einmal von aussen, sah die Absurdität unserer Sehnsucht, anders sein zu wollen, als man ist! (254)

The parallel between this comment on the problem for the Negro of self-acceptance, on the one hand, Stiller's dissatisfaction with the image he has of himself, on the other, is apparent.

The lawyer is correct when he tells White that his highly critical attitude towards Switzerland betrays his true identity. This attitude Dr. Bohnenblust inaccurately calls White's hatred of the country:

"Ihr Hass gegen die Schweiz beweist mir noch lange nicht, dass Sie kein Schweizer sind. Im Gegenteil [. . .] gerade damit verraten Sie sich!"

(258) One would, however, no more call it hatred than one would call Frisch's own highly critical attitude hatred. White is striking out against the sacred cows of Swiss society, e.g., the military, the army of citizens guarding the holy spring of Freedom and Innocence which is Switzerland: "Sie können sich wohl vorstellen, dass Frankreich oder Grossbritannien einmal untergehen; aber nicht die Schweiz, das würde Gott, sofern er nicht Kommunist wird, nie zulassen, denn die Schweiz ist doch die Unschuld." (259) For White, Switzerland is historically irrelevant, eternally sitting on the fence, self-righteously telling itself that,

for example, other countries might have had concentration camps, but that its conscience remains unblemished. Sibylle reports that Stiller had taken the same attitude to Switzerland during the Spanish Civil War. One has only to compare White's record of his discussion with his lawyer on Switzerland with Stiller's outburst to see numerous parallels which provide further evidence on the identity of White and Stiller:

[White]: "Aber Sie glauben doch nicht im Ernst, dass das Schweizerische Bürgertum, als einziges in der Welt, keine Gefälle habe zum Faschismus, wenn er einmal ihr Geschäft nicht bedroht, sondern steigert." (260)

[Stiller] ". . . sie sekundieren dem Faschismus, wie jede Bourgeoisie, offen oder heimlich." [. . .] Warten wir ab [. . .], bis Deutschland, unser tüchtiger Nachbar, wieder das grosse Geschäft ist! Und wenn die es nochmals mit Faschismus versuchen, an der Schweiz wird's nicht fehlen, sie wird sekundieren. Glaub mir! Es ist ja klar; ein Land, das aufrüstet, ist anfänglich für seine Nachbarn immer ein herrliches Geschäft." (350-351)

[White] "Ich habe übrigens darauf geachtet, wie oft mein Verteidiger zur Rechtfertigung der Schweiz auf russische Untaten verweist, auf Hitler lieber nicht; wie sie ihm als Schweizer schmeichelt, die fürchterliche Tatsache, dass es anderswo Konzentrationslager gibt." (259)

[Stiller] "Heute entrüsteten sie sich über Bucherwald und Auschwitz und diese Sachen; wir wollen sehen, wie lange." (350)

Again in this "Heft" White's reactions support the argument advanced by the authorities towards his identification with Stiller.

4. Heft IV

"Heft" IV, consisting of the Public-Prosecutor's story, "die kleine Geschichte mit dem fleischfarbenen Kleiderstoff in Genua" (266ff), provides further evidence of Stiller's relationship with Sibylle. Through its mirroring of Stiller's own problems the story points through analogy to the identity of White who reports the Public-Prosecutor's story and Stiller whose problems are here being mirrored.

The Public-Prosecutor tells in it how, on his discovery of his wife's infidelity, he fled to Genoa and how he had a nightmarish experience with a roll of cloth, of which he could not seem to rid himself, of how he returned to Zürich, and of how his wife finally left for New York with their son after breaking off her relationship with Stiller.

White's reactions are restricted to continual reminders that this is the Public-Prosecutor's story and not his own, and to the introductory remark to the story: "Seine kleine Geschichte mit dem fleischfarbenen Kleiderstoff [. . .] will mir nicht aus dem Kopf." (266)

It is easy to understand why White cannot forget the story when one recognizes that there are again here two extensive parallels between the themes of this story and the themes running through Stiller's own story. One is the idea of fleeing which has been amply illustrated, and the fact that fleeing does not solve any problem; two, the bundle of flesh-coloured suiting represents for the Public-Prosecutor those

feelings which embarrassingly refuse to be subordinated to the intellect. Likewise, Stiller's feelings undermine his purely intellectual ideal of freedom as expressed in the Mexican episodes. The story is, too, a pre-mirroring of Stiller's and Julika's misery (in the "Nachwort") in their attempt to follow the theory which almost destroyed the marriage of the Public-Prosecutor and his wife.

5. Heft V

In "Heft" V the authorities continue their attempts at identification by a series of confrontations.

They introduce the leading critics of the town to White (308-309); and then, Professor and Frau Haefeli visit him in an attempt to find out details of their son's suicide and how and why Stiller had justified, as they allege, their son's decision to commit suicide, as being what he would himself do; another visit is from Sturzenegger, the young architect of the Public-Prosecutor's new house at the time of Sibylle's affair with Stiller, who was himself suspected of being Sibylle's lover. The architect finds the Stiller he expects to find, and sees the jokes which he knows Stiller would make at any particular point. They continue their conversation, this time on architecture, and Sturzenegger comes to the conclusion: "Mein Lieber [. . .] du bist wohl immer der alte!" (323) White then visits Sibylle on her husband's suggestion, in her maternity clinic: she, too, recognizes the Stiller she knew six years previously.

White's reactions to the first visit, that of the art critics, is to treat it with ironical detachment, but the parallels in the Haefeli's account of their homosexual son, Alex (referred to in Wilfried Stiller's letter on page 43), to Stiller's own problematical existence are strong. As mentioned above, Stiller gave advice to Alex Haefeli as if speaking about himself: "Stiller redete eigentlich bloss von sich selbst, aber alles, was er dabei sagt, gilt auch für mich." (315)

Stiller, too, attempts to flee from himself by seeking death in the Spanish Civil War and by attempting to commit suicide in California. The homosexual's fears are the logical projection of Stiller's own fears for his masculinity, of not measuring up to the demands of his wife or to society's idea of what a man should be. Stiller's reaction comes later (317): "Heute wieder sehr klar: das Versagen in unserem Leben lässt sich nicht begraben, und solange ich's versuche, komme ich aus dem Versagen nicht heraus, es gibt keine Flucht." It is significant and appropriate that the account of the suicide of a homosexual should prompt White to this remark, as in Stiller's mind his failure to shoot the Fascists on the Tagus, his "Versagen" is connected closely with his feeling of sexual inadequacy: "Ich möchte schießen, aber es schießt nicht - ich brauche dir nicht zu sagen, was das heisst, es ist der typische Trauma der Impotenz." (355)

His reactions to the third visit, that of Sturzenegger, are of a complicated nature. White is annoyed at the naivety of the architect's image of life in the Soviet Union and expresses the same critical attitude to Swiss life already mentioned, but the aspect of this visit which White finds particularly alarming is that he finds himself playing the rôle of Stiller perfectly with Sturzenegger, becoming part of a "Klischee einer menschlichen Beziehung". (319)

The attempt will be made below to demonstrate that rôle, cliché, and identity are closely related.

Just before Sturzenegger's arrival White has commented on the playing of the rôle, the rôle in which our companions cast us. He has

described how we are condemned to be what our companions see us to be, and how he has resigned himself to accepting this rôle: "Man muss imstande sein, ohne Trotz durch ihre Verwechslung hindurchzugehen, eine Rolle zu spielen, ohne dass ich mich selber je damit verwechsle." (317-318)

The disturbing thing about his meeting with the architect is that White seems to be becoming unconscious of the dichotomy of true self and rôle.

"Heft" V follows the pattern set by the previous "Hefte": the attempts by the authorities at identification are paralleled by White's reactions to the attempts and identification is confirmed.

6. Heft VI

"Heft" VI consists of White's confrontation with Stiller's past through Sibylle's account of her affair with Stiller. In reporting Sibylle's account White reacts at two points in such a way that the identification of White and Stiller is again confirmed.

She describes, through White's protocol, her first visit to Stiller's studio, her delight in the "Zauber des Provisorischen" (336), the "bullfight", with Stiller as the bull and herself as the torero. This casting Stiller finds appropriate for he acts as one who has felt the pain of the banderillas in his neck. He gives full details of his "Versagen", his failure in Spain, which Sibylle views simply as the result of making demands inappropriate to his personality. They spend the night together in a country inn. Her husband, Rolf, returns and delivers one of his lectures on a generous attitude towards marriage, "dass ein gewisses Mass von Freiheit in einer Ehe vonnöten ist" (363), thinking that she suspects him of some minor infidelity. When he discovers that it is she who has been unfaithful he throws the theory of calm aside and runs away to Genoa. There then follows her description of the end of her relationship with Stiller after an attempt at reconciliation with him and then with her husband, her departure for New York, her life of loneliness and freedom in New York, her new life there with her son Hannes, the terrible monotony of American life, and finally the arrival of Rolf and her reconciliation with him.

The descriptions take up and develop themes present both in the

previous reports on Stiller and in White's comments, reactions and stories: the theme of the rôle in the bullfight and in Rolf's theory of marriage; the theme of fleeing in Stiller's Civil War experiences and in the final stages of Rolf's and Sibylle's marriage; and the theme of "Versagen".

But those descriptions in White's note-book which betray most clearly the evident connection between White and Stiller, are those of the bullfight scene and of evening in New York.

At the beginning of White's report of the episode where the demonstration of bullfighting is given, Stiller is described as taking the rôle of the bull and Sibylle the rôle of the torero. The demonstration begins: "«Pass auf!» sagte Stiller, 'ich bin der Stier.'" (340) Sibylle has to imagine a bullfight being fought in the blazing sun. What she imagines or is to imagine is narrated by White: "Der Stier kommt in die Arena, und Sibylle musste sich vorstellen: ringsum die blendende Helle des besonnten Sandes . . ." (340)

White describes an actual bullfight instead of a demonstration of bullfighting, but through the description there appear short passages which describe Sibylle, who was to have played the rôle of the torero, but who now has become an observer of the bull's torment. At the points in the account where descriptions of Sibylle and descriptions of the bull are juxtaposed - the one described in the preterite and the other in the present tense - White would seem to be demonstrating, albeit unconsciously, that his primary concern is with the bull: "Sibylle

zog unwillkürlich ihren Hut ab; die Fontäne von pulsendem Blut, von purpurnem Blut, das nun über das schwarze Fell des keuchenden Tieres strömt, machte sie ganz nervös." (341) The use of the present tense would seem, too, to point to the strong connection in his mind between himself and the bull with the banderillas in its neck, and thus, indirectly with Stiller.

Through the device of describing the rôle which Stiller is playing rather than Stiller playing the rôle - rôle and player have become indistinguishable - White is, too, giving expression to his fear at the moment when he is writing. He, like Stiller after his failure in Spain, feels that he is a bull being tormented by those who would know who he is in reality. As becomes gradually clear throughout the novel, White becomes increasingly conscious of the danger that he may be forced to become "the bull", to identify himself with the rôle which he must alienate if he is to preserve the identity which he himself knows to be himself.

The device of the juxtaposition of passages written in two different tenses, the preterite and the present, is also employed in the description of Rolf and Sibylle's meeting in New York, where Rolf and Sibylle are described in the preterite tense and evening in Manhattan in the present:

'In welcher Richtung wohnst du denn?' erkundigte sich Rolf, und Sibylle zeigte ihm die Gegend, überall das Lichterspiel, die so unwahrscheinliche farbige Dämmerung über Manhattan, eine Attraktion, die wohl jeder Manhattan-Besucher kennt. [. . .] Man wundert sich, dass in dieser Tiefe da unten, deren Geräusch nicht mehr zu hören ist, in diesem Labyrinth

aus quadratischen Finsternissen und gleissenden Kanälen
dazwischen, das sich ohne Unterschied wiederholt, nicht
jede Minute ein Mensch verlorengent. (414-415)

And so the interchange between the narrative preterite and the descriptive graphic present continues throughout the description of evening in New York. White's primary concern is with the description of Manhattan.

Sibylle had suspected that Stiller was, in fact, in New York at the same time as she was. Here, verified in White's descriptions in "Heft" VII of his wanderings from New York westwards, further indications are given of coincidence of experience and, indirectly, of some kind of recognition of identity on White's part.

"Heft" VI has consisted of the confrontation of White with further details from Stiller's past. In the two instances discussed, White's method of reporting the evidence points to his identity with Stiller.

7. Heft VII

In "Heft" VII the authorities bring their process of identification through confrontation to an end with the court decision that White is Stiller. White gives further indications which confirm this identification.

"Heft" VII begins with White's visit to the dentist. The evidence for physical identification with Stiller is ambiguous, the issue being further confused by the young dentist's determination to find fault with the work of his predecessor, Stiller's dentist.

The Public-Prosecutor now takes the attitude that by commonly accepted standards White and Stiller are identical, and explains his theory of self-recognition, self-acceptance and unconcern at the possibly incorrect image which the world has of one.

The brothers, Wilfried Stiller and James White, visit the grave of their mother. Wilfried, of course, recognizes his brother, and they discuss their mother. The images which both have of their mother often do not coincide, but this need not necessarily mean that they are talking about two different mothers or that they are not in fact brothers, for in Stiller, the phenomenon of the images of the same person not coinciding is encountered on a number of occasions, for example, White has the impression while listening to the Haefelis, "dass zwei Söhne sich das Leben genommen haben, zwei ganz verschiedene Söhne, zu vereinigen nur dadurch, dass sich ein einziger Grund für ihren Selbstmord erfinden liesse." (313) He feels, e.g., too, on seeing Julika on the second afternoon on parole: "Das ist sie nicht!

Diese Frau hat mit der öden Geschichte, die ich in den letzten Tagen einigermaßen protokolliert habe, überhaupt nichts zu tun! Es sind zwei verschiedene Juliken!" (225)

The defending lawyer, who cannot understand why White is unable to accept identification with Stiller - this is a good enough reason for White - arranges further confrontations, this time with five of Stiller's friends who all confirm his identity. White comments on this: "Uebrigens sind sie durchaus uneinig, wer Stiller gewesen ist, dennoch tun sie so, als hielten sie mich für eine und dieselbe Person." (438)

White is called to the Public-Prosecutor's office to meet one of his alleged murder victims, the "Haaröl-Gangster", with whom Stiller had apparently had some disagreement over fees. It is now clear that the story of Schmitz's murder in Jamaica with an Indian dagger (30-31) had, too, been a kind of wish-dream fulfilment, just as, as suggested above, many of the other stories were.

Following the drive into the autumnal countryside and after the Public-Prosecutor has attempted in all friendship to persuade White to come to some kind of compromise with those who are identifying him with Stiller by at least admitting that on one level he is in fact Stiller, the lawyer continues with his policy of confrontation by arranging a meeting between White, Julika and Stiller's father in Stiller's old studio. While waiting for Julika and Stiller's father to arrive they are surprised by a travelling salesman. Neither Julika nor the father's presence nor the defence lawyer's speech on the

responsibilities of a Swiss citizen and husband cow White into submission. A confession is not forthcoming.

The end of this "Heft" and of "Stillers Aufzeichnungen im Gefängnis" is reached with the declaration by the Swiss court that Stiller and White are identical, and that the accused is to be fined a total of 9361.05 francs, and by Julika coming to his cell to take him away from prison.

For the outside world identity is proven: White is Stiller.

Stiller's reactions in this "Heft" are complex. After the visit to the dentist White summarizes his reactions in a postscript:

Vielleicht, ich frage mich, müsste man sich überall wehren, wo man verwechselt wird, und ich dürfte es keinem Empfangsfräulein durchlassen, dass sie mich als Herr Stiller verbucht; eine Sisyphos-Arbeit! Dann wieder glaube ich, es genügt vollauf, wenn Julika, sie allein, mich nicht verwechselt. (421)

White is prepared to accept that the world has a stultified image of him and is prepared to bear with it, provided that his wife recognizes him in his reality. The image must, however, be kept at a distance.

When White thinks of the Mexican "Totentag" in Janitzio (421-423) he is trying to put into operation, albeit unconsciously, just this device of alienation. White had noted some thirty pages previously (389) that he has to visit his mother's grave which he does in fact do (423ff). The description of the "Totentag" is an attempt to alienate his feelings on this visit.

After the visit itself, he is confused about his relationship to his mother and brother, as, as noted above, his and his brother's image

of the mother do not always coincide; he cannot be sure how he stands in relationship to Wilfried. Yet he has the feeling:

Und doch, in der Tat, ist er der einzige Mensch, bei dem es mir nichts ausmacht, wenn er mich, im Sinne eben einer klaren Sache, mit dem verschollenen Stiller verwechselt, also im Grunde missversteht. Was heisst denn Missverstehen? Freunde müssen einander verstehen, um Freunde zu bleiben; Brüder sind immer Brüder. (435)

and then immediately the contradiction: "Warum bin ich nie sein Bruder gewesen?" (435)

The imagery of crucifixion and stigmatism reappears in this "Heft". The image from White's dream (329) reoccurs: "Ihr Blick bittet mich dringend, nicht zu glauben, was sie mir schreibt, denn sie schreibt es unter Zwang, ihr Blick bittet mich, sie von diesem Zwang zu erlösen." Now (440), at his attempt to go to her, she has already betrayed him, and the German soldiers arrest him. He looks back at her, begging him not to believe what she has written, as they, and then he had forced her to write it. He is told death will be by crucifixion and is forced to crucify photographs of Julika.

In this dream, there is a multiplicity of images: the ambivalence of crucifying and being crucified as the reciprocal process of "Bildnis-Machen"; the imagery of the concentration camp; the letter (Stiller's letter to her in the tuberculosis clinic has now become hers to him). All these are closely connected with Stiller and Julika as we see them through the protocols and as we shall see them in the "Nachwort".

In White's long meditation on not being able to be alone, he gives further evidence on his identity with Stiller by way of parallels of

situation in which we know Stiller to have been in his youth; his resentment at his stepfather, stated as the wish-dream in the Bowery episode, appears again as his stepfather's: "Sieh, dein nettes Söhnchen" (442), reflected later in the confrontation in the studio in the old man's "ein netter Sohn" (494); the "heimatliche Strafe" (442) to pay for his desertion of the Motherland for Spain; his "Frühlingstage in einem öffentlichen Park voll Kinderwagen und voll Fremdsprache" (441) echoing Sibylle's descriptions (408-409) of her life in New York and her imagining that she saw Stiller in a New York park; his vain attempts to realize himself in clay and plaster and to find a kind of "Ersatzleben" in art; the incident at the Tagus ferry, the constant repetition of that anecdote about it when he returns to Switzerland; his boredom forcing him to marry this "Meer-tier" (444); and the impossibility of being alone in his marriage, on the voyage to New York or in California.

Such parallels, White can accept but he is unprepared for the world to see him as the Stiller who disappeared, i.e., to have an image ready-made for him. He is indeed willing to accept Julika's attitude towards her neurotic "Spanienkämpfer" as valid. He will declare his love for her and ask her if she could love him, for her love is the one means of "saving" him, as long as they can allow her "husband" to remain lost.

The lyrical passage on the autumnal countryside: "Es ist, als nehme alles Abschied von sich selbst." (461), too, is a parallel to Stiller's delight in the autumnal in White's portrait of him. (332-333)

White relives his first walk with Julika as Stiller.

White still refuses to make the required confession, which he says his angel has forbidden him to make. In the studio scene it is clear that White is being forced by that property of inanimate objects, which he refers to as their diabolical quality, to recall and to bring up associations. He finds himself being forced into repetitions, which he had imagined he had escaped by his life as White, forced by the wares offered by a peddler who comes and by the various objects already there.

White speaks of Julika as the "Verräterin". She had come expecting a confession ready for her; but what she does not understand is that a confession would be superfluous if she loved him. He refuses to take over all her husband's paraphernalia which is lying around the studio and proceeds to throw as much as possible out of the window, but then wonders if he has done the right thing, for now he has confirmed identification for the others, who recognize his right to destroy his own work as long as he doesn't injure anyone in the process. Julika accepts this and does not even stand up in amazement but simply looks at him: "Ihr Gesicht mit den ungemein schönen Augen ist unverwandelt. [. . .] Wartet sie darauf, dass ich mich entschuldige?" (497) He wishes again to strangle her.

When his stepfather arrives whom he would have had die on the Bowery, White weeps on recognizing him but will not admit that he has in fact recognized him and says: "Ich kenne dich nicht." (494)

"Heft" VII follows the pattern set by its predecessors: the authorities continue their attempts to identify the prisoner, White,

with Stiller until they reach a successful conclusion. White continues to deny that he is Stiller, but at the same time gives unmistakable indications that White and Stiller are the same person.

The main question raised in the mind of the reader by the attempts of the authorities at identification is whether identification can prove anything, dependent as it is upon a coincidence of images which are irrelevant to the reality of White.

This is a question which does not occur to the Swiss authorities represented by Dr. Bohnenblust. They consider that there are two alternatives open to the prisoner: he can either confess to being Stiller or prove that he is White.

Chapter II

MR. WHITE

Chapter II will deal with the reasons why the prisoner can accept neither of the alternatives mentioned at the end of Chapter I of this paper.

The first two sections of Chapter II discuss the reasons for the unacceptability of the first alternative: that of confessing that he is Stiller. The third section discusses the reasons for the unacceptability of the second alternative: that of proving that he is White.

1. Mr. White and the Angel

According to the account White gives (447ff)¹ of his journey across America from New York to California, he attempted suicide after this journey had been completed, but before his stay in Mexico. An indication of the exact location is given by his mention of the visit to him in hospital by Florence, the mulatto girl who lived next door to him. (500) Under the influence of drugs in hospital after his suicide attempt, Stiller experiences a state of timelessness and spacelessness. He feels terror, which he calls his angel (501), but for a moment he is in a position of freedom:

[. . .] eine ungeheure Freiheit: Alles hing von mir ab. Ich durfte mich entscheiden, ob ich noch einmal leben wollte, jetzt aber so, dass ein wirklicher Tod zustande kommt. Alles hing nur von mir ab, ich sagte es schon. N her bin ich dem Wesen der Gnade nie gekommen. Und dass ich mich, einer Gnade gewiss, zum Leben entschieden hatte, merkte ich daran, dass ein rasender Schmerz einsetzte. Ich hatte die bestimmte Empfindung, jetzt erst geboren worden zu sein, und f hlte mich mit einer Unbedingtheit, die auch das L cherliche nicht zu f rchten hat, bereit, niemand anders zu sein als der Mensch, als der ich eben geboren worden bin, und kein anderes Leben zu suchen als dieses, das ich nicht von mir werfen kann. (503)

In this moment, Stiller makes the choice of himself, the choice to which Kierkegaard refers in the passage in Entweder-Oder, which Frisch uses on the title page of "Stillers Aufzeichnungen im Gef ngnis":

Sieh, darum ist es so schwer, sich selbst zu w hlen, weil in dieser Wahl die absolute Isolation mit der tiefsten Kontinuit t identisch ist, weil durch sie jede M glichkeit, etwas anderes zu werden, vielmehr ausgeschlossen wird.²

¹ See also the Appendix to this thesis.

² S ren Kierkegaard, Entweder-Oder, trans. W. Pfl iderer and C. Schrepf. (Jena: Diederichs, 1922), II, 185.

Stiller is able to choose himself, the self outside, the image which the world has of him, and on which everyone is agreed, by being in the extraordinary situation of total isolation, of having been able to break off continuity from life through his suicide attempt. By his decision to continue life, continuity is taken up again and isolation broken. At the moment of decision to continue life, absolute isolation and deepest continuity are identical.

At the moment of the choice of self and life there awakens in him "die Leidenschaft der Freiheit",¹ the feeling that, as White himself says, "alles hing von mir ab." (503) The passion of freedom means fighting for the maintenance of the chosen self: "[. . . er] kämpft um diesen Besitz als um seine Seligkeit, und das ist seine Seligkeit."²

The chosen self may not, and does not in this case, bear direct resemblance to the Stiller his friends in Switzerland know, for this chosen self is the Stiller which only Stiller himself knows, and which he decides to baptize "Mr. White".

As mentioned above, this transition from Stiller to White takes place in California before White's visit to Mexico, from where he returns to Switzerland. It would appear then important to examine the Mexican episodes to determine what form the passion of freedom takes in these episodes.

¹ Ibid., II, 184.

² Ibid., II, 184.

2. The Mexican Descriptions

The second of the sections dealing with the unacceptability of the first alternative, that of confessing that he is Stiller, will discuss the descriptions White gives of Mexico and attempt to define what White understands by freedom.

The descriptions of Mexico are contained in four passages: 32-38, 45-49, 58-61 and 421-423.

The first description of Mexico is one of the Chihuahua desert. For White, the attraction of the desert is that there he can be alone as if in a dead world. Here, the only animate objects are the cacti:

Ich liebe die Wüste. Kein Vogel in der Luft, kein Wasser, das rinnt, kein Insekt, ringsum nichts als Sand und Sand und wieder Sand [. . .], und nie eine Wolke, nie auch nur ein Dunst, nie das Geräusch eines fliehenden Tieres, nur da und dort die vereinzeltten Kakteen. (32)

In the desert he was "traumlos und wach" (32); his vision was unobscured by the images of his guilt feelings or by his inability to be alone, the two things which had marked his life up to the time of the attempted suicide. (442ff) Is not his final despairing cry on being identified with Stiller: "Mein Engel halte mich wach." (505) a desperate cry of longing for a return to this condition of dreamlessness and waking?

White can stand above human existence and comprehend the improbability of our existence on earth, and realize that everything from which we live is the gift of a narrow oasis, "unwahrscheinlich wie die Gnade". (32) Again, White recognizes the affinity of human existence

with Grace as he did in the semi-coma after the suicide attempts. But White comes then in his journey across the Chihuahua desert to an oasis, and dares not ask himself about human existence on earth, but is glad to worry about the overheated jeep motor, and then to go out again into the desert where spaces are so immense that space seems no longer to exist. This is again a situation similar to that in the semi-coma: "[. . .] es war, als gäbe es keinen Raum mehr; dass wir noch lebten, zeigte uns nur noch der Wechsel der Tageszeit." (33)

White is conscious of his supreme position in the desert: "[. . .] ohne unsere sterblichen Menschaugen, die durch diese Wüste führen, gab es keine Sonne, nur eine Unsumme blinder Energie, ohne sie keinen Mond; ohne sie keine Erde, überhaupt keine Welt, kein Bewusstsein der Schöpfung." (34)

He will never forget the desert. The remains of the decaying ancient Mexican civilization, "die Gesichter, die schön sind wie aus einem verlorenen Paradies, fremd, ein allerletzter Rest von der grossen Stadt der Azteken" (35), amidst the squalor and disease of the market (36-37) fill him with melancholy. But White says that it was nevertheless beautiful.

The second Mexican passage (45ff) consists of the description of his life as an administrative adviser on a paradisaical hacienda, a very lucrative position, as it is open to bribery. This passage merges into White's story of the "Hacienda-Minister" who speculates in office furniture.

The third one (58ff) is largely concerned with describing the

destruction of a tobacco plantation by a volcano. As in the first one, White stands outside what he is describing: "Als einer, der kein Vieh zu retten hatte, stand ich auf einem Hügel und sah es mir an, wie die Lava kam." (60)

The fourth is his description of the Mexican "Totentag". (421ff)

What the first, third and fourth passages have in common is the great concern of the narrator for detail. His observations have a photographic quality, and there is detachment of the observer from that which is observed. The Public-Prosecutor says in the "Nachwort" when speaking of what he sees as Stiller's progressive inner liberation:

Aber wie jedermann, der bei sich selbst angekommen ist, blickte er auf Menschen und Dinge ausserhalb seiner selbst, und was ihm umgab, fing an, Welt zu werden, etwas anderes als Projektionen seines Selbst, das er nicht länger in der Welt zu suchen oder zu verbergen hatte. (538)

As will be suggested below, this statement of the Public-Prosecutor is only partially valid as a description of Stiller's situation as it appears in the "Nachwort", but it does coincide with the concept of the freedom of the observer in these three Mexican stories.

The description of his life on the hacienda is of a different variety and is an example of White's love for the fantastic tale and is similar to the tall story of the crocodile farmer told by the Public-Prosecutor in the "Nachwort". (528-529)

Freedom means for White the freedom to live the reality which he knows to be himself. This is possible only outside relationships with other human beings, for, as mentioned previously, behind every relationship there is the danger of the formation of an image which

may mean imprisonment for the one of whom it is made.

The prisoner is unable to accept the first alternative - that of confessing his identity with Stiller - because of the consequences of the encounter with his angel: he had been able to choose himself and then to live himself, and in so doing had experienced the meaning of freedom.

3. Mr. White and the Inexpressible

The third section discusses the reasons for the unacceptability of the second alternative, that of White's proving that he is, in fact, White.

When White's lawyer requests him to write down his life, he expects that White will prove exactly who he is. The lawyer expects facts and figures such as would appear on any police registration form: where and when he was born, where he has lived and when, the number of his children, etc. This information would presumably satisfy the lawyer since it could be verified. The lawyer is understandably annoyed when the prisoner tells him "Märchen":

Gegen Ende September steigt die grosse Verhandlung, und Sie erzählen mir Märchen - Märchen! - und damit soll ich Sie verteidigen?" (99) and Märchen! [. . .] statt dass Sie mir ein einziges Mal eine klare und blanke und brauchbare Wahrheit erzählen! (99)

White objects that he has no words for his reality. He understands that it is impossible for him to describe his real life, the life outside images, since through the use of a word as a symbol for some part of a living being that part is debased. Then, it, too, becomes a "Bildnis". The Public-Prosecutor asks, when speaking of the "Bildnis" of Julika which had appeared from the "Aufzeichnungen" whether there is indeed not something inhumane about attempting to portray any human being. (535) The same question might well be asked of the defence lawyer's request that White write down the truth of his own life.

The attempt was made in Chapter I of this paper to demonstrate

that White tries to express through metaphor the self he knows and his relationship to the image held of him by others: "Mich ausdrücken kann nur das Beispiel" (Tagebuch, 411) might stand as a motto over his attempts.

The lawyer is unable to understand that a life, which is real, cannot be expressed. The attempt to express it must form a "Bildnis", something dead which can never be identical with that life.

When faced by the alternatives of being declared identical with Stiller or of proving his true identity by telling his real life, Stiller finds that the latter cannot be told:

Man kan alles erzählen, nur nicht sein wirkliches Leben; - diese Unmöglichkeit ist es, was uns verurteilt zu bleiben, wie unsere Gefährten uns sehen und spiegeln, sie, die vorgeben, mich zu kennen, sie, die sich als meine Freunde bezeichnen, und nimmer gestatten, dass ich mich wandle, und jedes Wunder (was ich nicht erzählen kann, das Unausprechliche, was ich nicht beweisen kann) zuschanden machen. (83)

He has alternatives which are, in fact, not alternatives at all. He has to say only a single word and he would be "free", but that would be, in his case, tantamount to being condemned to play a rôle which would have nothing to do with his self, or to prove who he is in reality. But how is one to prove who one is in reality? He cannot do it. Does he, in fact, know who he is himself?

The prisoner who cannot express himself is condemned to live the rôle in which others have cast him.

Chapter III

DU SOLLST DIR KEIN BILDNIS MACHEN

The theme of the "Bildnis" or the image has been touched upon throughout the first two chapters of this paper. It seems apparent that the fear of the "Bildnis" lies behind White's refusal to identify himself directly with Stiller, lies behind his idea of freedom, his love of Mexico and lies behind his realization that it is impossible to express his real self.

But the "Bildnis" is a central theme, too, of the protocols which make up "Hefte" II, IV and VI of Stiller, which report on the relationship between Stiller and Julika before and during their marriage.

"Bildnis-Machen", making a graven image, means, for Frisch, creating an image for oneself or for anyone else of what a human being should be, and attempting to form oneself or anyone else to that image.

The first section of Chapter III of this paper will deal with the consequences for Stiller of forming an image for himself of what a man must be. He demands two things of himself: firstly that he must be a soldier, a man who can shoot; and secondly that he must be a man whose masculinity measures up to the norm set by society.

The consequences of this double "Selbstüberforderung" are a bad conscience and the image which he forms of himself as a failure.

The second section of Chapter III will deal with the reciprocal nature of "Bildnis-Machen" in the relationship of Stiller and Julika.

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1. Stiller's "Selbstüberforderung"

Sibylle reports a conversation which she had had with Stiller on what he called his failure in the Spanish Civil War. She had said to him: "Du schämst dich, dass du so bist, wie du bist." (353), and had continued: "Wer verlangt von dir, dass du ein Kämpfer bist, ein Krieger, der schießen kann?" (353) Stiller had made the mistake of trying to live up to an image of what a man should be - a brave soldier who can shoot - and then of reproaching himself because his actual conduct did not coincide with the image.

The Public-Prosecutor, too, takes up this theme:

Die weitaus meisten Menschenleben werden durch Selbstüberforderung vernichtet [. . .]. Zur Selbstüberforderung gehört unweigerlich eine falsche Art von schlechtem Gewissen. Einer nimmt es sich übel, kein Genie zu sein, ein anderer nimmt es sich übel, trotz guter Erziehung kein Heiliger zu sein, und Stiller nahm es sich übel, kein Spanienkämpfer zu sein. (424 - 425)

In this situation, the conscience, or what is imagined to be the conscience, can become "die kokette Stimme eines Pseudo-Ichs, das nicht duldet, dass ich es endlich aufgebe, dass ich mich selbst erkenne, und es mit allen Listen der Eitelkeit, nötigenfalls sogar mit Falschmeldungen aus dem Himmel versucht, mich an meine tödliche Selbstüberforderung zu fesseln." (425) He and White find the line from the second part of Faust: "Den lieb' ich, der Unmögliches begehrt"¹, an invitation to neuroticism.

Stiller regarded his failure in the Spanish Civil War to guard

¹ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Faust, Zweiter Teil. (Hamburg: Christian Wegner, 1949) l. 5488.

a ferry near Toledo and his shame at having to lie his way out when brought to task by his commissar as his "Verrat", his "Versagen". This is his "Niederlage in Spanien" to which he attributes his feeling of inadequacy as a man.

First of all, Stiller avoids telling Sibylle the full story of his adventures with the Russian rifle by demonstrating how a bullfight is fought. In this demonstration Sibylle plays the part of the torero and Stiller that of the bull: "Sie lachte über diese Rollenverteilung. Sibylle hatte gar kein Bedürfnis, einen Stier zu töten. Stiller fand sie durchaus in Ordnung, diese Rollenverteilung."

(340) He is frightened of the banderillas on the wall, for he feels that he has been a bull and has felt them in the back of his neck.

Through this demonstration, Stiller is trying to distance himself from his feelings of disgrace at his "failure" on the Tagus, although he does, in fact, tell the story later and answers Sibylle's questions on his reason for not shooting with:

Weil ich ein Versager bin. Ganz einfach. Ich bin kein Mann. (353)

Es war ein Verrat [. . .] eigentlich hätten sie mich an die Wand stellen sollen. (354)

Nun weißt du's [. . .] warum ich nicht geschossen habe. Wozu diese Anekdote! Ich bin kein Mann, Jahrelang habe ich noch davon geträumt: ich möchte schießen, aber es schießt nicht - ich brauche dir nicht zu sagen, was das heißt, es ist der typische Traum der Impotenz. (355)

As it is clear from the last extract, the feeling of having failed in Spain is closely connected with Stiller's feeling of

inadequacy in sexual relations. In the reports of the visitors to White, Stiller appears as the man who is perpetually excusing himself. From "Heft" II it soon becomes apparent that for Julika Stiller is someone always apologizing: for example, when Julika refuses to walk arm in arm with him from the theatre, he "entschuldigte sich für seine Zudringlichkeit, die ihm selbst widerlich wäre." (113) When Julika kept him standing an hour in front of the theatre, he excused himself because he had stood there. (119) On their country walks he excused himself because his knowledge of ballet was not sufficient to match Julika's chatter. (115) This feeling of general inadequacy and inferiority to Julika extends to every sphere; he even gets a "komisches Gewissen" (118) because he imagines that it is on account of his low income that Julika did not have a child, even though there is no sign, in fact, that she wants children.

Whenever he has reproached Julika for her unconcern for her health, he is tormented by his conscience and tries to make everything good again by apologizing profusely:

Stiller entschuldigte sich und hatte oft sehr nette Einfälle, etwas wiedergutzumachen, sei es mit einer Liebesspeise von Julika, die nur er zu kochen verstand, sei es mit einem seidenen Schal, da sie den früheren eben verloren hatte, oder mit Flieder, den er auf dem Weg zum Theater [. . .] irgendwo über den Zaun gestohlen hatte. (121)

Stiller indulges in perpetual self-denigration, sometimes in a sarcastic way, and sometimes in a pathetic:

Alles ist meine Schuld, [. . .] du brauchst dir keine Sorgen zu machen, meine Liebe, du fährst nun also nach Davos, du Armes, und ich bleibe hier in der Stadt, ich der Gesunde -

mein schlechtes Gewissen ist für dich das beste Ruhekissen. (127)

Wenn sie da ist, komme ich mir vor wie ein Öligler, verschwitzter stinkiger Fischer mit einer kristallinen Wasserfee. (141)

Stiller is disgusted by his own body. This disgust goes so far that he often imagines that he has some repulsive skin disease.

White comments:

Es ist anzunehmen, dass dieser unselige Mensch nicht oft, aber ab und zu, irgendwann nach der täglichen Dusche, die doch für den Augenblick reinigte, vor den Spiegel trat, um zu sehen, was Julika, seine kristallene Fee, abstossen musste, und sieh da, Stiller entdeckte eigentlich nichts, was ihn nicht selber abstieß. (142 - 143)

Stiller reproaches his wife, but most all himself, that Julika had never experienced sexual satisfaction with him, but had found her sexual gratification in the gaze of the ballet audience.

After her affair in Ascona, Stiller is the one who has to make things good:

Sie war sich keiner Schuld bewusst, die Stiller nicht seinerseits schon um ein Vielfaches überboten hätte, und also lag es eigentlich doch an ihm, alles zu versuchen, damit sie, die zu ihm zurückgekehrt war, glücklich würde bei ihm. (135)

Stiller has made the error of creating an image for himself of what he should be, of comparing his actual behaviour with it, and then of reproaching himself with not having lived up to the standards demanded by the image.

2. The Reciprocal Nature of "Bildnis-Machen"

The second section which will deal with the reciprocal nature of "Bildnis-Machen" in the relationship of Stiller and Julika is an attempt to describe the situation which comes into existence when the image which one forms of oneself is found pleasing by another and is exploited by him. Both Stiller and Julika have a self-image, each recognizes the other's self-image, finds it pleasing and proceeds to exploit it.

The attempt was made in Section I of this Chapter to define the consequences of Stiller's "failures". He feels that it is necessary to excuse himself at every turn.

The Stiller who is always excusing himself Julika finds pleasing:

Dabei gefiel er Julika wie kein anderer. [. . .] sie wusste, [. . .] dass Stiller sie in keiner Weise vergewaltigen würde; dazu fehlte ihm irgendetwas, und das gefiel ihr ganz besonders an ihm; [. . .] und es gefiel ihr, dass dieser Mann, [. . .] nicht im mindesten eine Entschuldigung ihrerseits erwartete, wenn sie ihn fast eine Stunde vor dem Theater hatte stehen lassen. (114)

Julika finds pleasure, according to White, in exploiting Stiller's fears for her own ends, for she imagines that this is the only way in which she can hold him. She feels inadequate as a woman, for she, too, has accepted a norm of what a woman should be, just as Stiller has accepted a norm of the man: "Ob zu Recht oder Unrecht, jedenfalls hatte die schöne Julika eine heimliche Angst, keine Frau zu sein [. . .] Sie traute sich offenbar nicht zu, einem wirklichen und freien Mann genügen zu können, so dass er bei ihr bliebe." (116) She has made

the same errors as has Stiller.

Just as Stiller's self-image was pleasing for her and just as she exploited it to make up for her own imagined shortcomings, so Julika's self-image is pleasing for Stiller and is exploited by him to give his own life meaning. Stiller demands that Julika must have children to be fulfilled as a woman, when, as mentioned above, she has no particular desire to have children:

Ein Kind, meinte Stiller, könnte Julika als Frau in einer Weise erfüllen, wie er es nie vermochte. Das war so ein Gedanke von ihm, der ihm nicht auszureden war, und er kam immer wieder mit dem Kind. Was wollte er denn von Julika? [. . .] War sie nicht erfüllt genug? [. . .] Stiller war rührend, aber verbohrt in seiner Meinung, Julika käme nicht zu ihrem vollen Leben. (118 - 119)

Stiller has, however, no right to determine what the "volles Leben" of any other human being is to be. Julika is frigid, and this Stiller refuses to accept. He is not prepared to accept that only in the ballet can she find sexual gratification. The stage and her costumes provide her escape from sexuality in any directly physical sense. After her affair with the "fliegende Reklameberater" (133) Stiller waits for her to return changed by this experience. Stiller had regarded her as his creature:

[. . .] im Grunde habe ich dich wahrscheinlich nie geliebt, ich war verliebt in deine Spröde, in deine Zerbrechlichkeit, in deine Stummheit, die es mir zur Aufgabe machte, dich zu deuten und auszusprechen. [. . .] Dich zum Blühen zu bringen, eine Aufgabe, die niemand sonst übernommen hätte, war mein schlichter Wahnsinn. (191)

When Sibylle sees the vase-like piece of sculpture which Stiller has made of his wife she is horrified:

Stiller [. . .] sagte: 'Das ist meine Frau.' Es war ein Kopf auf einem langen, säulenhaften Hals, eher eine Vase, als eine Frau, seltsam, und Sibylle war froh, dass keine Aeusserungen von ihr erwartet wurden. 'Ist das nicht furchtbar für deine Frau?' fragte sie immerhin, 'ich fände es furchtbar, wenn du mich so in Kunst verwandeln würdest!' (338 -339)

Stiller and Julika are the crucifiers of each other and are thus at the same time the crucified. White describes how he saw in his dream both Stiller and Julika showing everyone the brilliant red wounds on the palms of their hands. "Bildnis-Machen" is then a reciprocal process.

The Public-Prosecutor, too, is fully aware that "Bildnis-Machen" is reciprocal. He comments on White's protest at the image others have of him as Stiller:

Es ist ihm viel zu wichtig, wie wir ihn sehen, und gerade mit seiner bornierten Angst, von uns zu einer falschen Rolle genötigt zu werden, machte er zwangsläufig auch uns borniert. Er möchte, dass wir ihn 'frei' lassen; aber er selbst lässt uns nicht frei. Er gestattet uns nicht, ihn etwa zu verwechseln. Wer vergewaltigt wen? (536)

At the commencement of Chapter III it was stated that the fear of the "Bildnis" lies behind White's refusal to identify himself directly with Stiller, that it lies behind his idea of freedom, his love of Mexico and that it lies behind his realization that it is impossible to express his real self. In Chapter III the attempt has been made to delineate the complex pattern of image-making which dominated the relationship of Stiller and Julika before and during their marriage.

It is to this relationship, dominated by image-making, that White

returns when he comes back to Switzerland. The reason for White's return to Switzerland would be difficult to understand (unless we were able to regard White and Stiller as the two halves of a schizoid personality) if it were not in some way connected with Stiller's crime committed against Julika: that of exploiting Julika's self-image and of attempting to form her according to his image of what a woman should be.

As will be suggested in a later section, Stiller returns to Switzerland to face the image which exists of him and to attempt to make good his crime against Julika. He does, however, run the risk of having to surrender the identity which he himself knows, and thus to surrender his liberty.

Chapter IV

THE PUBLIC-PROSECUTOR

Chapter IV will consist of five sections: Section 1 will discuss the Public-Prosecutor's theory of freedom; Section 2, the Public-Prosecutor's view of Stiller; Section 3 will attempt to determine to what extent Stiller's development does in actuality follow the path towards freedom, outlined by the Public-Prosecutor's theory; Section 4 will describe the Public-Prosecutor's theory of marriage; and in Section 5 Stiller's and Julika's relationship after Stiller has left prison will be examined, and the attempt made to determine how far this relationship corresponds to the ideal of mutual acceptance, described in the Public-Prosecutor's second theory.

1. The Public-Prosecutor's Theory of Freedom

Frisch has the Public-Prosecutor state his theory of freedom twice in Stiller: firstly in his interpretation of his story about the roll of flesh-coloured cloth in Genoa (425-427); and secondly in the "Nachwort" with direct reference to Stiller's development as he sees it since Stiller's leaving prison.

In both passages the same path towards inner liberation is described. The first stage on this part the Public-Prosecutor calls "Selbsterkenntnis", self-recognition, but he emphasizes, "echte Selbsterkenntnis", true self-recognition. Self-recognition, if it is not genuine, can lead to lifelong melancholy at one's failure to measure up to a norm of behaviour. Those who recognize themselves have left a false rôle, but this in itself is not the way back into life. As an important part of self-recognition he sees "dumbness", that is the avoidance of the coquetry of exhibiting our weaknesses to other people, a coquetry which might possibly be pleasing to them, but cannot help us.

In the passage on self-recognition in the "Nachwort", the Public-Prosecutor describes it as the alienation of the earlier part of our lives: "Die Selbsterkenntnis, die einen Menschen langsam oder jählings seinem bisherigen Leben entfremdet." (537) But, he continues in both passages, self-recognition can be only a first step: "[. . .] aber es führt sie noch nicht ins Leben zurück." (426) "Viele erkennen sich selbst, nur wenige kommen dazu sich selbst auch anzunehmen." (425-426)

The second stage is "Selbstannahme", self-acceptance, which means loving oneself as one was created. This is the really difficult stage; for one must be prepared to leave behind one's resignation at not being what one would have liked to have been and be prepared to become what one is. Nothing is more difficult than this stage of self-acceptance. But there must follow this stage a third one which the Public-Prosecutor calls "Verzicht auf Anerkennung durch die Umwelt." (537)

This third stage the Public-Prosecutor sees as closely connected with self-acceptance and a necessary continuance of it:

Solange ich die Umwelt überzeugen will, dass ich niemand anders als ich selbst bin, habe ich notwendigerweise Angst vor Missdeutung, bleibe ihr Gefangener kraft dieser Angst. (427)

Solange ja ein Mensch nicht sich selbst annimmt, wird er stets jene Angst haben, von der Welt missverstanden und missdeutet zu werden. (536)

The third stage entails unconcern at the image the world may have of us. It cannot be identical with ourself, but this situation we must resign ourselves to and learn that misrepresentation through the world must be expected and accepted as inevitable. We cannot expect to be recognized by another in our reality. Even we do not ourselves know our own reality, but can at best live it.

The only way in which we can resign ourselves to not having this reality recognized by any other human being is through a fourth and final stage on the journey to freedom - the belief in some supra-human agency:

Ohne die Gewissheit von einer absoluten Instanz ausserhalb menschlicher Deutung, ohne die Gewissheit, dass es eine

absolute Realität gibt, kann ich mir freilich nicht denken,
[. . .] dass wir je dahin gelangen können, frei zu sein. (427)

In the "Nachwort", the Public-Prosecutor repeats his statement of the
final stage on the path to freedom:

Es [the fourth stage] wird nie möglich sein ohne die
Gewissheit, dass unser Leben von einer übermenschlichen
Instanz gerichtet wird, ohne wenigstens die leiden-
schaftliche Hoffnung, dass es diese Instanz gebe. (538)

Only then, according to the Public-Prosecutor, can freedom be
real.

2. The Public-Prosecutor's View of Stiller

The Public-Prosecutor propounds his theory of development towards freedom in two passages discussed above: in the first instance as an interpretation of his adventure in Genoa, and in the second instance as a discussion of Stiller's development as he sees it.

At the heart of Stiller's problem the Public-Prosecutor sees the former's "Selbstüberforderung":

Einer nimmt es sich Übel, kein Genie zu sein, ein anderer nimmt es sich Übel, trotz guter Erziehung kein Heiliger zu sein und Stiller nahm es sich Übel, kein Spanienkämpfer zu sein.

Wir sehen wohl unsere Niederlagen, aber begreifen sie nicht als Signale, als Konsequenzen eines verkehrten Strebens, eines Strebens weg von unserem Selbst. (424-425)

It is obvious that these statements point to a relationship between the theory which is given as a development of the concept of "Selbstüberforderung" and Stiller's own case. "Unsere Niederlagen" are in the Public-Prosecutor's mind Stiller's "failure" in Spain and in marriage.

The Public-Prosecutor continues after the discussion of the quotation from the second part of Faust by saying that he does not see Stiller's case as peculiar to him, but that there is something of himself and of his own acquaintances in it. Then follows the first presentation of the theories discussed in the first section of this chapter. It is again clear that it is Stiller's case that is being discussed indirectly, whether it be in the description of the parading of weaknesses as a coquetry, or in that of the melancholy of self-recognition.

To what extent this discussion and the direct analysis of Stiller's case in the "Nachwort" can be accepted as representing a true picture of Stiller's development will be discussed in a later section.

In the "Nachwort" the Public-Prosecutor regards Stiller as having recognized himself and as having progressed beyond the "Melancholie der blossen Selbsterkenntnis" (537):

Darüber war Stiller hinaus, glaube ich, schon als er in seine Verschollenheit ging. Er war im Begriff, den zweiten und noch viel schwereren Schritt zu tun, herauszutreten aus der Resignation darüber, dass man nicht ist, was man so gerne gewesen wäre, und zu werden, was man ist. (537)

According to the Public-Prosecutor Stiller had managed even this step of self-acceptance to a considerable degree before his arrest. But Stiller was not prepared to dispense with the world's recognition for his true self; he wished to convince everyone of his true identity. This wish the Public-Prosecutor finds childish.

The Public-Prosecutor has, too, the impression that Stiller has been approaching a stage on his path towards inner liberation where he could, through gaining some kind of idea of the absolute instance ruling over human life, resign himself to not being recognized in his reality. He had gained this impression from Stiller's "Verstummen" (538), from his detachment from people and things.

Er selbst fing an, in der Welt zu sein. Dies war mein Eindruck nach jenem ersten Besuch in Glien, übrigens auch nach seinen Briefen, sofern es nicht um Frau Julika ging. (538)

3. Stiller's Development and the Public-Prosecutor's Theories

If we are to regard the Public-Prosecutor's theories in any positive light, it would be unacceptable to regard the terms "self-recognition" and "self-acceptance" as referring only to the recognition and acceptance of an image, which, as has been pointed out, has nothing to do with the real self.

At no point can we claim to have been able to gain insight into what Stiller, outside the "Bildnis" which others have formed of him and which he has accepted, actually is. In the Mexican episodes after the attempt to commit suicide and the encounter with his angel, Stiller's self is indeed baptised "Mr. White". In these episodes, however, no attempt is made to describe Mr. White. If Frisch had done this, he would have undermined the idea on which the entire novel rests - the commandment: "Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen." Indeed, Mr. White is conceived of as an observer in the Mexican episodes.

The Stiller who appears in the protocols is nothing more than a "Bildnis", in a double sense: on the one hand, we have the "Bildnis" formed by Stiller's acceptance of the norms of behaviour which society finds acceptable, together with his measuring himself against them; and on the other, the "Bildnis" of him, formed by those visitors whose conversations are recorded in the protocols.

It is quite clearly justifiable that the Public-Prosecutor should speak of Stiller's case as one of "Selbstüberforderung". (423-427)
The attempt has already been made to show that the demands Stiller made on himself were inappropriate to him. By stating this we can gain,

albeit negatively, some insight into Stiller's personality and determine at least what he was not. Stiller, too, could gain the same insight by accepting provisionally the value of the norm and the "Bildnis" he himself made against it.

Perhaps the "Bildnis" can play a positive rôle in the process leading to the acceptance of the self. Stiller recognizes that he is not what society demands a man must be: a "Spanienkämpfer" and a man who measures up sexually to the cliché which society has of masculinity.

According to the Public-Prosecutor, self-recognition is not sufficient, for it leads in most cases to coquetry: "Wieviel Selbst-erkenntnis erschöpft sich darin, den andern mit einer noch etwas präziseren und genaueren Beschreibung unserer Schwächen zuvorzukommen, also in Koketterie!" (426)

Stiller, too, on his recognition of what he is not, practises a kind of coquetry. One gains the impression that his hesitation before telling his story of his failure in Spain was the hesitation of the circus artist before performing his act. This story is the first thing that Julika hears from him: "In der Tat, diese kleine Geschichte war sogar das allererste, was Julika aus seinem Mund vernommen hat." (182 His story became "seine Parade-Nummer" (185), with which he always has success in every gathering, except when Communists were present. Why else, asks White, would he have repeated his story so often?

When Stiller stops talking about the failure to shoot as the victory

of the human over the ideological, he still continues to parade his failure, this time directly as his "Niederlage in Spanien", in the conversation with Sibylle on her first visit to his studio (348-354), and in that with his wife in Davos on his last visit. (192-193)

As mentioned a number of times, his feeling of sexual insufficiency is closely connected with his feeling of having failed in Spain. Again, in the sexual sphere, Stiller recognizes himself indirectly, recognizes what he is not; but again, self-recognition leads to the exhibition of the failure.

Behind both of the last cited passages on his "Niederlage" there was the idea of sexual failure, and whenever Stiller speaks of his feeling of inadequacy one has the impression this is precisely the same self-conscious parading of failure as in the parading of his failure to shoot in Spain: "Ich habe eine wunderbare Frau, ich freue mich jedesmal auf das Wiedersehen, und jedesmal, wenn sie da ist, komme ich mir vor wie ein öliger, verschwitzter Fischer mit einer kristallinen Wasserfee." (128)

Stiller has certainly reached the stage of self-recognition, albeit in a negative way, as described above: "Darüber war Stiller hinaus, glaube ich, schon als er in seine Verschollenheit ging." (537)

By leaving for America, Stiller broke free from the situation where images are made. America was for Stiller the place where his relationships with other people were unstultified: "[. . .] ich verliebte mich in die Tochter eines konservativen Senators, die einen Cadillac besass, und wir badeten im Michigan-See, und ich fuhr weiter [. . .]" (449) Not even in the accounts of his relationships

with the mulatto, Florence, is there any indication of the network of images built up between Stiller and Julika.

We can safely assume that the absence of image-making in his relationships in America is a sign that Stiller has ceased to parade what he must see as his weaknesses. The point, however, at which the Public-Prosecutor's theory and Stiller's actual development part company is at the moment when Stiller has chosen himself and the passion of freedom has awoken in him.

It is significant that the Public-Prosecutor does not attempt any discussion of White's account of the encounter with his angel, but makes two indirect references to it. He states that, in his opinion, Stiller was ready after his disappearance to become what he is (537) and comments that: "Es half nichts, irgendein neues Leben anzufangen, indem das alte einfach liegenblieb." (539)

The Public-Prosecutor could have accepted Stiller's choice of himself, as White, as the self which lay beneath the images during his marriage with Julika, and of which Stiller could be only vaguely aware.

What the Public-Prosecutor could not have accepted would have been the resulting way of life to which the awakened passion of freedom impelled White. The Public-Prosecutor,¹ as the representative of the state or society in the novel, must regard freedom as a social ideal. White's concept, described in the section "The Mexican episodes" is a totally a-social one.

¹ The German word "Staatsanwalt" may be taken literally as the lawyer who speaks for the state.

The Public-Prosecutor is right when he describes self-acceptance as painful: "Meines Erachtens hatte Stiller, als wir ihn in der Untersuchungshaft trafen, diese so schmerzvolle Selbstannahme bereits in einem beträchtlichen Grade geleistet." (537) The pain of self-acceptance was the pain of deciding for life. White had spoken of pain as a sign of his rebirth: "Und dass ich mich [. . .] zum Leben entschieden hatte, merkte ich daran, dass ein rasender Schmerz einsetzte." (503)

It has already been suggested that White returned to Switzerland to defy the process of image-making which awaited him. The process, too, has been traced by which White refuses to accept his identity with the Stiller of whom all his visitors have the same image, and at the same time recognizes that by commonly accepted standards he is the same man.

It is, however, difficult to say how the Public-Prosecutor views the imprisonment, for he comments on Stiller's behaviour in attempting to convince everyone that he was not Stiller:

Bei aller Selbstannahme, bei allem Willen dazu, sich endlich unter die eigene Wirklichkeit zu stellen, hatte unser Freund nur eins noch gar nicht geleistet, nämlich den Verzicht auf die Anerkennung durch die Umwelt. Er fühlte sich ein anderer, mit Recht, er war ein anderer als jener Stiller, wofür man ihn sofort erkannte, und davon wollte er jedermann überzeugen; das war das Kindische. (537)

He had not yet reached the stage where he could view with unconcern the image others have of him. As mentioned previously, the Public-Prosecutor asks at one point how we can dispense with the recognition of our reality at least by that person who is nearest to

us. He answers his own question by stating that we cannot dispense with this recognition without the certainty that a supra-human instance exists or at least without the passionate hope that one does. He is in doubt whether Stiller ever reached this state.

What the Public-Prosecutor in fact means by self-acceptance is, it would seem, self-acceptance in a double sense: the acceptance of the fact that for others one may constitute a particular image which may have nothing in common with what one knows oneself to be, and the acceptance of that which one knows oneself to be; it is this latter variety of self-acceptance to which he refers as the "Willen dazu, sich endlich unter die eigene Wirklichkeit zu stellen". (537) The two must be kept apart. Stiller can, with the assistance of the angel, keep apart the image and the self he knows, but obviously the alienation of the image can break down if the forces imposing the image are powerful enough. This would seem to be the case with Julika and Stiller in the "Nachwort".

The Public-Prosecutor's theory of marriage as well as the theory of freedom has, too, as its basic idea this dual self-acceptance.

4. The Public-Prosecutor's Theories of Marriage

In his conversations with White on marriage, the Public-Prosecutor puts forward his theory of mutual acceptance, of "Offenheit" (262) in marriage which is the reverse of the approach determined by image-making.

White reports:

Zu den Voraussetzungen rechnet er unter anderen das beiderseitige Bewusstsein davon, dass wir kein Anrecht haben auf die Liebe unseres Partners; die lebenslängliche Bereitschaft für das Lebendige, selbst wenn es die Ehe gefährdet, also eine immer offene Tür für das Unerwartete, nicht für Abenteuerchen, aber für das Wagnis; in dem Augenblick, wo zwei Partner glauben, einander sicher zu sein, haben sie sich meistens verloren. (262)

Being sure of another person, stating one's rights over any part of another person, means image-making, for these exclude the "Lebendige", the "Unerwartete", and the "Wagnis", and are opposite to love.

A marriage must be self-contained:

Und wichtig scheint ihm auch der gemeinsame Mut gegenüber der Umwelt; ein Paar hat bereits aufgehört, ein Paar zu sein, wenn einer der beiden Partner oder beide Partner sich mit der Umwelt verbünden, um den anderen Partner unter Druck zu setzen. (262)

This is a situation which means on the one hand mutual protection and freedom from the fear of conspiracy, and on the other the possibility of mutual torturing with no way out.

But how difficult his theory is to put into practice is demonstrated by his own example in the story which he tells: "Seine kleine Geschichte mit dem fleischfarbenen Kleiderstoff in Genua" (266), the story of how he had run away from Zürich after he had discovered upon returning home from London that Sibylle had spent the night with Stiller.

He cannot understand where his marriage has gone wrong. He had attempted to build as much freedom as possible into it. His plan of independence in marriage may be perfect in theory or when it allows him freedom, but when it comes to the real test, when Sibylle rebels, the tension becomes too much. His feelings refused to be repressed. He is forced to rush away on the first train, or throw himself into work at the office like a slave or to expend his malice by causing confusion in the arrangements for moving into his new home.

We can only assume that Sibylle and her husband did reach some kind of equilibrium after their reconciliation in New York. During the period of Stiller's imprisonment, that is, during the whole of the first part of the novel, the Public-Prosecutor appears as a happily married man. He can laugh about the time of his estrangement from Sibylle: "Nun ja [. . .], in dieser Zeit waren wir beide sehr komisch, meine Frau und ich." (292) He can now convey his wife's regards to Stiller with complete sincerity and arrange for him to visit her in the maternity clinic.

What he says of Stiller in the marriage to Julika after his return is presumably what he himself had been successful in doing:

Ging es für Stiller nicht eben darum, das Vergangene in seiner Beziehung zu dieser Frau, das Sterile, das diese beiden verkettet hatte, wirklich aus der Welt zu schaffen, nämlich es nicht zu fliehen, sondern es einzuschmelzen in die neue lebendige Gegenwart? (539)

Sibylle regards these views with distrust as a man's views, even perhaps as a clever way out of difficulties. They are his lectures to which she answers with the female argument that life is not to be

solved with theories. She has her own argument against these theories: "Du hast mir keine Freiheit zu geben. Was soll das heissen? Ich nehme mir die Freiheit schon selbst, wenn ich sie brauche." (268) For Sibylle, her husband's attempts at keeping calm, of never allowing his emotions to come to words, but of sublimating them, are unacceptable. Her husband's theories, according to her, are the theories of a married bachelor, and in any case marriage cannot for her be ruled by theory: "Entweder ist die Ehe ein Schicksal, meine ich, oder sie hat überhaupt keinen Sinn, sie ist ein Unfug." (385) She rejects theories. They are meant for every man and every woman, and have no specific relevance to her.

Similarly, as in the case of her husband, Sibylle appears in the presence of the novel, during the actual imprisonment of Stiller, as happy. The only direct description we are given of her is that in the maternity clinic after the birth of her child, smiling. In the "Nachwort" she appears as the companion to her husband on their visits to Stiller in his chalet, and we again can only assume that she finds the marriage at least bearable.

5. Stiller in the "Nachwort"

Stiller's position in the "Nachwort" is made particularly difficult by the dual nature of his self-acceptance, further complicated by Stiller's recognition that he has committed the crime of image-making against Julika and by his attempts to make it good.

Stiller withdraws with Julika from Zürich, first to a hotel in Territet and then to his "ferme vaudoise" (514) in Glion. They are "ein schweizerisches Inland-Emigranten-Paar" (511), who are like Russians in Paris or German Jews in New York. It seems as if Stiller is determined to test the Public-Prosecutor's theory of marriage and at the same time the later stages of his theory of freedom by entering again into this potentially dangerous situation and by excluding external assistance.

There are signs in the earlier parts of the "Nachwort" that White is being kept alive by the angel. Stiller can write amusingly of his surroundings in Glion and his new occupation of producing imitation American Indian pottery to be sold as "Swiss pottery" to American tourists. There is hope that by regarding his life in Glion with ironical detachment, Stiller may be able to keep White alive within him.

Stiller describes his new love for life in the knowledge that death is at his heels: "[. . .] ich hänge am Leben wie noch nie, dann hat man so ein Gefühl, der Tod sei einem auf den Fersen, das ist natürlich, dieses Gefühl, ein Zeichen des Lebens." (516) This statement seems reminiscent of White's description of his decision at the point of death to choose life.

Stiller's attitude to the world about him, the Public-Prosecutor reports, has changed:

Sein Geist war mehr als bisher auf die Dinge selbst gerichtet, schien mir. So wie er früher doch nur von sich selbst redete, wenn er von der Ehe ganz allgemein, von Kegern, von Vulkanen und Gott weiss wovon erzählte, so redete er jetzt von 'seinen' Töpfen, von 'seiner' Drehscheibe, von 'seiner' Glasur, und von 'seiner' Könnerschaft sogar, ohne im mindesten von sich selbst zu reden. (525)

Stiller has reached a stage of "Verstummen":

Aber wie jedermann, der bei sich selbst angekommen ist, blickte er auf Menschen und Dinge ausserhalb seiner selbst, und was ihn umgab, fing an, Welt zu werden, etwas anderes als Projektionen seines Selbst, das er nicht länger in der Welt zu suchen oder zu verbergen hatte. (538)

In both these quotations the similarity between Stiller's attitude now and White's position in the Mexican episodes is striking. Similarly, the Public-Prosecutor's description (522f) of Stiller's "Schwyzerhüsli" in the midst of tourist Switzerland points to the same dis-association of himself from his surroundings.

The real test of whether White can in fact be kept alive comes in Stiller's relations with his wife. Stiller has to turn his barren past with his wife into a living present by moulding the past into the present. This, Stiller must do without surrendering Mr. White, but the dangers are great ones:

Eine gemeinsame Vergangenheit ist keine Kleinigkeit; die Gewöhnung, die sich bei jedem natürlichen Nachlassen unserer Kräfte einstellt, die Gewohnheiten, die sich auf Schritt und Tritt anbieten, können teuflisch sein. (539)

Julika's determination in "Stiller's Aufzeichnungen im Gefängnis" to prove her husband's identity and to obtain a confession from him, together with Stiller's "Bildnis" of her in the "Aufzeichnungen", bode

ill for any attempt they might make at living together without torturing each other. Also in Stiller's image of himself as Julika's murderer and in his determination to make good his "murder" lies a potential danger, for, as pointed out earlier, the situation of the person with a self-image can become unbearable if that image is open to exploitation by another.

As in the first half of the novel, the Public-Prosecutor's account of the process of image-making is one-sided and concerns only the crime committed against Julika. Stiller attempts to make good his crime by ensuring that Julika is comfortable; but, as the Public-Prosecutor comments, trying to make good his crime with charm costs Stiller nothing. It is too easy a way.

At the same time as Stiller tries to make up for his "murder" of Julika he continues his attempts to improve her. As pointed out previously, his attempt to fulfil her as a woman was just what had constituted his crime. Now he almost drives her insane with his idea that she should open her own ballet school in Lausanne: "Frau Julika war geradezu heftig, Stiller traurig, dass sie nichts von ihm annehmen wollte, weder ein Kissen noch seinen späten Glauben an ihre Künstlerschaft." (530)

Julika appears throughout the "Nachwort" as tortured by Stiller. Her typical plaint from the protocols is carried over into the "Nachwort":

Was will er denn von mir? (533)

Wie soll ich mich denn ändern! Ich bin doch so, wie ich bin.
Warum will Stiller mich immer ändern? (533)

Her face appears mask-like: "Ihre Miene erschien mir wie ein Erschrecktsein in Permanenz." (527) The Public-Prosecutor will never forget her face, completely disfigured and with the mouth hanging open as in an ancient mask.

When at the end of the "Nachwort" the Public-Prosecutor sees Julika on her death bed, he repeats the description which White had given of her after her first visit to the prison cell. White had said that he regarded her as if she were an object, a woman, any woman, and the Public-Prosecutor comes to the conclusion that Stiller had always regarded her as being dead. She had always been for Stiller the object to be perfected according to a pattern of his own making.

The Public-Prosecutor describes Stiller's efforts fittingly when he says:

Ein Mensch begreift, dass er sich an einem anderen versündigt hat und übrigens auch an sich selbst, und eines späten Tages ist man bereit, alles wiedergutzumachen - unter der Voraussetzung, dass der Mensch sich verwandelt. (554)

There is no way out for Julika and Stiller. Neither of them can change and since they never learn to love and to accept each other in what the Public-Prosecutor calls "Offenheit" they must torture each other until Julika dies in the Val Mont clinic and Stiller is left alone.

The Public-Prosecutor had given the piece of advice to Stiller:

Es gibt keine Aenderung [. . .], ihr lebt miteinander, du mit deiner Arbeit da unten im Souterrain, sie mit ihrer halben Lunge, so Gott will, und der einzige Unterschied: Ihr foltert euch nicht mit der irren Erwartung, dass wir einen Menschen verwandeln können, einen ändern oder uns selbst, mit dieser hochmütigen Hoffnungslosigkeit. . . . Ganz praktisch: Ihr lernt beten für einander. (566)

But Stiller answers: "Beten will gekonnt sein!" (566)

The Public-Prosecutor's theories had provided a compromise answer to the problem of freedom: the acceptance of the self as one knows it oneself - the residual self; together with the acceptance of the image which others have of one - the apparent self.

The theories are, however, of questionable validity, as one cannot be sure how effective they were in the case of the Public-Prosecutor and his wife - whether or not the two of them did reach what one can assume to be a reasonable degree of mutual acceptance through the practice of the theories. Even if one could accept their validity as a means to freedom for this couple, it would by no means follow that the same theories would provide a way to freedom for Stiller and Julika, for, as mentioned previously, the human being who is formed according to a theory is in danger of being turned into a "Bildnis" by another. The Public-Prosecutor would then be guilty of infringing the commandment which stands behind all of Frisch's works: "Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen." At best, the theories can be regarded as the compromise by which hope is raised that the imprisonment can be made bearable. For the man who cannot pray, this can, however, be of little comfort.

Stiller had experienced the freedom of being his real self. He, too, like Marion had "walked on the water and had glided back into imprisonment", but Marion would have been content with the knowledge that he had done this and not have tried to convince anyone that he had been himself. Stiller, on the other hand, tried to communicate his new being. In Marion's case the compromise is never questioned.

"Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen. Es sei mir genug, wenn ich allein es weiss: Einmal bin ich über das Wasser gegangen, ganz wirklich. Und niemals brauchte es wiederzukehren." (Tagebuch, 20)

For Stiller, this is a compromise which would have been attainable only through prayer.

CONCLUSION

In the writing of Stiller, it would seem that Frisch was faced by a complex of problems which are consequent to his choice of the commandment: "Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen" as the idea which forms the novel's core.

Like his character White, Frisch has been forced to the realization that reality can never be told, and that the nearest point words can ever come in the attempt to give expression to a thing is that of the "Bildnis". The word and the thing can never be brought into coincidence. This realization puts Frisch, as a writer, into the main stream of contemporary European literature, for at every turn one encounters the problem posed by the refusal of words and things to coincide, for example, in Hofmannsthal's Chandos-letter, in Musil's Die Verwirrungen des Zöglings Törless and Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften, in Rilke's Malte Laurids Brigge and Sartre's La Nausée, to name just a few works which could be part of an almost endless list.

Frisch is then faced by the problem posed by a situation where the relationship of things and words is determined purely subjectively.

He is faced, too, by the problem of having to write a novel which contains characters, and at the same time of having to avoid committing the crime of "Bildnis-Machen" himself by defining these characters.

Frisch has solved both problems by his choice of form for Stiller. By writing the whole first part of the novel as Stiller's diaries and protocols, the author has made it clear that nothing appearing in them can be considered to have objective validity. Everything in the diaries

and protocols is reported by the prisoner as he sees it, and even though the "Nachwort des Staatsanwalts" does alienate the diaries and protocols, it would be dangerous to accept it as having objective validity either. The "Nachwort" is the view of one man.

Through the device of writing the novel as consisting of the notes of two of its characters, the dual reality of the novel is removed from any commonly accepted idea of what constitutes reality. Thus, the value put upon each word is, too, removed to the realm of the subjective reality of whichever of the two narrators uses it, e.g., when White uses the word "murder", and says that he has murdered his first wife, the word must be seen in relation to everything else that he says, and not be taken at its face value. White chooses as his mode of expression the "Märchen" and the dream, for both are appropriate to a symbolic representation of reality. Both are parabolic means of expression, appropriate to Frisch's method of characterization, that of presenting a view of each of the principle characters through the eyes of one of their number. Through the latter device Frisch avoids defining characters and allows them to form at the focal point of the various perspectives. It is the Public-Prosecutor who finally attempts to give the sum total of all the views of Stiller by explaining what he sees to have been Stiller's development. Are we not right then in regarding the Public-Prosecutor with suspicion?

A necessary complement to the problem of the expression of reality is the problem of the expression of time. It has long been recognized that consciousness of time is purely subjective. Thomas

Mann has Hans Castorp in Der Zauberberg come to this realization, and a whole line of authors, from Proust to the contemporary French "nouveaux romanciers", have constructed their novels according to the recognition of inner time. Frisch has the problem of finding unity in a novel where each of the characters who is described and where each of the characters who do the describing has his own consciousness of time. Frisch overcomes this problem, too, by having all the reports of the visitors filtered through White's consciousness.

The form of Stiller and the problems dealt with by Frisch in the novel are thus complementary to each other.

APPENDIX

The events described in the novel having direct relevance to Stiller are listed below in chronological sequence:

Summer, 1936: Stiller in Spain, in action at Irun, Saragossa, and on the Tagus near Toledo.

End of 1936/beginning of 1937: Stiller's return to Switzerland, and the beginning of his relationship with Julika, and shortly afterwards his imprisonment for taking part in the Spanish Civil War.

End of 1937: his marriage to Julika.

3.9.1939: Stiller in the Swiss Army.

April, 1945: beginning of relationship with Sibylle, and shortly afterwards Julika's stay at Davos begins.

August, 1945: Stiller's visit to Julika in the clinic.

September, 1945: Julika's escape as far as Landquart after the death of the young Jesuit in the clinic; Stiller's exhibition in Zürich and his note to Julika from Paris. (Sibylle's husband becomes Public-Prosecutor.)

November, 1945: Stiller's attempted reconciliation with Sibylle in Pontresina (her new house ready; her confrontation of her husband in his office).

Few days before Christmas, 1945: Sibylle leaves from Le Havre for New York with her son Hannes.

Few days after Christmas, 1945: Stiller leaves from Genoa for New York.

Third week in January, 1946: Stiller's arrival in New York after his 18 day crossing and five days hiding during the dock strike in New York.

18.1.1946: Stiller with Hofer in the Bronx.

Between 1946 and 1951: Stiller's wanderings westwards through the U.S.A. as far as Oakland near San Francisco, and there his attempt to commit suicide.

(July, 1946: Sibylle in the Manhattan area of New York.

Mid-1948: Sibylle's reconciliation with her husband in New York and her return to Switzerland.)

1951 - Summer, 1952: Stiller in Mexico until sailing from Santa Cruz and return to and arrest in Switzerland.

September, 1952: the court decision on Stiller.

Winter, 1952: Stiller and Julika at Territet on the Lake of Geneva.

February, 1953: Stiller visited at Territet by the Public-Prosecutor and his wife.

Late Summer, 1953: Stiller moves to Glion.

October, 1954: Stiller visited in Glion by Public-Prosecutor and his wife.

March, 1955: Julika's fatal operation and the Public-Prosecutor's last visit to Stiller in Glion.

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