

in *Der junge Joseph*, when the older brother guides the little one through the fields. It is, of course, no more than an aside, but it seems to me one of the main burdens of an interpreter of literature to notice the consistency with which certain gestures and configurations appear in an author's work, and to ask *why* they reoccur. My answer to the question in this case: the wrist-clasp implies guidance, but guidance without constraint and oppressiveness, "a tactful and delicate" touch. I do not at any point indicate that this is the *only* "manual" contact between Joseph and Benjamin (after all, my article deals with the *Magic Mountain* and not with the Joseph stories); but it seemed to me noteworthy that this unusual guiding gesture appears between the two brothers in the flesh as it does in the Clawdia-Hans-Peeperkorn alliances. And it is "delicate" guidance here as there. Mr. Tucker in his quote, which he tries to use *against* me, offers proof *for* it. Joseph switches from the holding of hands to the "carpal" touch when the little one's hand gets "hot and clammy." That means: while still guidance, the clasping of Benjamin's wrist relieves oppressiveness, discomfort, constraint. To quote Mr. Tucker's pertinent quote: Benjamin, when so touched, "made his wrist limb," his hand and fingers can freely move, while Joseph shakes them back and forth. This is indeed, as I said—and only for this purpose the small aside was added—"leadership, loving, friendly, brotherly."

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To the Editor:

The significance of the numbers 3 and 4 in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* which Oskar Seidlin has demonstrated in such a fascinating and convincing way (*PMLA*, Oct. 1971) can be reinforced by examples from other chapters in the novel. In the chapter "Veränderungen" the numbers three and four are associated with Mme Chauchat. She leaves the sanatorium "nachmittags 3 Uhr" and the narrator speaks of "die . . . Möglichkeit, dass Frau Chauchat zu einem vierten Aufenthalt hierher zurückkehren were." In the same chapter the numbers 3 and 4 are used by Behrens in precisely the same significant manner as is pointed out by Mr. Seidlin. Behrens says to Hans Castorp: "In drei, vier Monaten sind Sie wie der Fisch im Wasser." Although this is a widely used "Redewendung," the symbolism of the fish and of water becomes apparent in connection with the numbers three and four (in Mr. Seidlin's words: "3 is the number of the trinity," "4 is the number of the earthly"). In the English translation this passage

reads: "In three or four months you ought to be fit as a fiddle"—and thus loses its deeper meaning.

In the chapter "Als Soldat und brav," Behrens speaks of Joachim's return to the sanatorium: "Dreiviertel Jahr lang hat er seinen Willen und sein Himmelreich gehabt"—thus using again the same symbolism. (Once more the English translation does not convey these subtleties: "Nine months he's had his heart's desire, and been living in a fool's paradise.")

In the chapter "Schnee," three references are made to "actual" time, two of which are especially worth mentioning. "Es war nachmittags um drei Uhr"—when Hans Castorp is about to get "lost." The second reference to time occurs when he is in danger of freezing to death: "Wie spät ist es denn?" "Und er sah nach der Uhr . . . es war halb fünf": that is to say, 4:30!

In the chapter "Das Thermometer," at a "Wendepunkt" in the novel, Hans Castorp takes his temperature for the first time at 9:36—"es war sechs Minuten nach halb zehn. Und er begann, auf den Ablauf von sieben Minuten zu warten." And shortly after seven minutes have elapsed, he takes the thermometer out of his mouth: that is to say, at 9:43! His temperature then is 37.6—which in terms of numbers—37 plus 6—adds up to 43!

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The Occasion of Swift's "Day of Judgement"

To the Editor:

Maurice Johnson's "Text and Possible Occasion of Swift's 'Day of Judgement'" (*PMLA*, Mar. 1971) adds to our knowledge of that poem and its curious textual history but also adds to our puzzlement. Johnson is cautious about claiming that Swift's subject is the sects, as the eighteenth century on his evidence supposed it to be. Yet the logic of his argument, that the occasion for the poem was the agitation in 1732–33 for the repeal of the Test Act, seems to commit him to a reading with consequences that he does not accept. Nor will most readers want to accept them. Surely the poem we have, in its received form, is what it seems to be: a satire on mankind, Jove's joke on everybody.

If the eighteenth century persistently read a satire on all as only a satire on some, we could explain the error as one of self-interest: satire is a mirror where we see every face but our own. And if Sir Harold Williams is right, that the version of "The Day of Judgement" published in *The Friends* was a product of "imperfect memorizing" (quoted by Johnson, p. 212), we might want to call the imperfect memorizing by another name: repression. On the other hand, Johnson's