

## THOMAS MANN AND THE ANCIENT ROMANCE\*

It would be sound to deliver a communication about Thomas Mann and the modern romance, discussing his relations with his contemporaries, for instance Hermann Hesse, Robert Musil and William Faulkner, or discussing the inspirations he owed to the romance of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and at any rate it would be worthwhile inquiring into the contribution he made to develop the literary genre of romance. At first glance it appears perhaps strange to put Thomas Mann in touch with the ancient romance, that is to connect a high point of modern fiction with the relatively modest beginnings of the romance in the Greek and Roman antiquity. Nevertheless, there are connections between the renowned romancer and the first formes of the romance founded by the Greek and Roman literature.

To begin with, we have explicit references to the ancient novel. In his essay *Meerfahrt mit 'Don Quijote'*<sup>1</sup> (1934), written after his first passage from Europe across the Ocean to the United States (19.-29.5.1934)<sup>2</sup>, we see Thomas Mann investigating Cervantes' work and trying to find influences of the ancient romance<sup>3</sup>.

This essay is composed in the shape of a diary, and indeed it is based on his *Tagebücher*<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, later notes of *Tagebücher* indicate the composition and care<sup>5</sup> of that «Feuilleton»<sup>6</sup>. «Montag den 13. VIII. 34»: «Vormittags Ex-

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<sup>1</sup> Th. Mann, *Gesammelte Werke in dreizehn Bänden*, Band IX: *Reden und Aufsätze 1 (= IX)*, Frankfurt am Main 1974<sup>2</sup>, 427-77. Cf. G. Potempa, *Thomas-Mann-Bibliographie. Das Werk*, mitarbeit G. Heine, Morsum-Sylt 1992. About *Meerfahrt mit 'Don Quijote'* cf. H. Lehnert, *Das Chaos und die Zivilisation, das Exil und die Fiktion: Thomas Manns 'Meerfahrt mit Don Quijote'*, in *Thomas Mann und seine Quellen. Festschrift für H. Wysling*, herausg. von E. Heftrich und H. Koopmann, Frankfurt am Main 1991, 152-72.

<sup>2</sup> *Thomas Mann, Teil II: 1918-1943*, herausg. von H. Wysling unter Mitwirkung von M. Fischer, München - Frankfurt am Main 1979, 674.

<sup>3</sup> W.R. Berger, *Thomas Mann und die antike Literatur*, in *Thomas Mann und die Tradition*, herausg. von P. Pütz, Frankfurt am Main 1971, 52-100, concludes: «Aufs Ganze gesehen, bleibt Thomas Manns Verhältnis zur antiken Literatur im wesentlichen auf den 'Tod in Venedig' und den Joseph-Roman beschränkt" (97) - what can be relativized. Few remarks about Apuleius' *Golden Ass* and Achilles Tatius cf. already *ibid.* 94 f. About *Der Tod in Venedig* cf. H.R. Vaget, *Thomas Mann-Kommentar zu sämtlichen Erzählungen*, München 1984, 170-200. About the Joseph romance and Egypt cf. A. Grimm, *Joseph und Echnaton. Thomas Mann und Agypten*, Mainz am Rhein 1992. T.J. Reed, *Thomas Mann and Tradition: Some Clarifications*, in *Critical Essays on Thomas Mann / I.M. Ezergailis*, Boston - Massachussets 1988, 219-37 dispenses with Greek and Roman authors.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Th. Mann, *Tagebücher 1933-1934*, herausg. von P. de Mendelssohn, Frankfurt am Main 1977, XX; 422-37.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.* 504-07, 517 f., 520-35, 538 f., 542-50, 555, 558, 560 f., 565, 567, 569, 576, 582, 586, 596, 726, 740. Cf. also 585 and 591. Cf. already 433.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 433, 504, 506, 517, 529, 531, 532.

zerpte und Notizen für 'Meerfahrt mit Don Quijote'»<sup>7</sup>. «Dienstag den 14. VIII. 34»: «Befabte mich wieder mit dem 'Feuilleton', das recht gut werden und eine willkommene Ergänzung zu dem Essayband abgeben könnte. Dennoch geschah die Beschäftigung damit nur zur vorläufigen Unterhaltung»<sup>8</sup>. «Donnerstag den 30. VIII. 34»: «Schönes Wetter. Ziemlich spät auf und mit der Familie gefrühstückt. Nachher Beschäftigung mit 'Meerfahrt': Verteilung des Stoffes. Der Gedanke ist mir jetzt angenehm, mir Bedenkzeit für das Politikum zu schaffen, indem ich erst das Feuilleton schreibe und dadurch den Novellenband komplettiere»<sup>9</sup>. «Freitag den 31. VIII. 34»: «Begann 'Meerfahrt' zu schreiben»<sup>10</sup>. The remark of «Montag den 24. IX. 34»: «Stehe in der Arbeit bei den antiken Beziehungen»<sup>11</sup> seems to suggest that Thomas Mann concerns himself with certain relations which Cervantes' *Don Quijote* has to the ancient novel.

Meanwhile, «Sonntag den 30. IX. 34», «rasch weiter gearbeitet im Aufsatz, das Vorbereitete verwendend. Es stehen fast 50 Seiten, und ich werde in Lugano nur wenig noch daran zu tun haben, weshalb doch vielleicht Joseph-Manuskript mitzunehmen»<sup>12</sup>. Thereupon Thomas Mann seized an opportunity to read from *Meerfahrt*, as he wrote on «Montag den 1.X.34»: «Übrigens brauche ich mit der Improvisation von 'Meerfahrt' nicht unzufrieden zu sein. Gestern Abend waren Bruno Frank und der kleine Tennenbaum zum Abendessen bei uns, und ich las nachher in meinem Zimmer die späteren Teile der Composition vor. Man war sehr unterhalten. Frank äußerte sich entzückt über die Buntheit des Stückes und fand nur die Aufzeichnungen über die griechischen Parallelen zu ausführlich»<sup>13</sup> - for which no classicist can blame the *poeta doctus*. In *Meerfahrt mit 'Don Quijote'* itself Thomas Mann acknowledges: «... ich bin gewissen Beziehungen des 'Don Quijote' zum spätantiken Roman auf die Spur gekommen...»<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 505.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 506.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 517.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* 518. Cf. *ibid.* 543: «Donnerstag den 11. X. 34, Lugano»: «Beendete heute Vormittag 'Meerfahrt mit Don Quixote'» (sic). Considering the cited notes of *ibid.* 518 and 543 it is not correct to date *Meerfahrt mit 'Don Quijote'* "zwischen dem 5. und 15. 9. 1934" (*ibid.* 740).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* 530.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* 533.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* 534 f. About further readings cf. *ibid.* 539, 542, 548.

<sup>14</sup> IX 452. Cf. 452-57. Th. Mann, *Tagebücher 1933-1934* (cf. note 4), 426 f. (425: «Dienstag den 22. V. 34, Dampfer Volendam») about Cervantes' *Don Quijote*: «Welch ein eigentümliches Monument! Seiner Zeit unterworfen im Geschmack, in der oft nichts als unterwürfigen und loyalen Gesinnung und im Dichterisch-Empfindungsmäßigen doch frei und kritisch über sie hinausragend. Das Humoristische als Wesenselement des Epischen. Das menschliche Mehrschichtige der beiden Hauptcharaktere ... Ein Buch, dessen dichterische Idee die anmuts- und würdevolle idealistische Narrheit ist, die jeder Entwürdigung trotzt ...»

After having remembered and mentioned the *Golden Ass* the day before, «yesterday» (IX 452; cf. 451), he points to two cases which struck him by the curiosity of their motives without knowing if they had already struck others. First thing he calls attention to the fictive suicide of brave, but poor Basilio in *Don Quijote* (8.4). At the moment when his beautiful beloved Quiteria is going to be married to the rich Camacho, Basilio throws himself into his sword and breaks down, covered with blood, but he is able, shortly after, to rise to his feet without being hurt. This incident is compared by Thomas Mann with a scene in Achilles Tatius in which Leucippe appears to be slaughtered, while her beloved Clitophon has to be a witness of the atrocity. But that deed, too, as the suicide of Basilio in Cervantes, proves to be fictitious. The ancient romancer had the device to make use of a stage dagger with a receding blade which could not wound the victim, and the blood flowed from an artificial belly filled with animal guts and blood and attached to Leucippe (3.21.1-5). In a similar way Cervantes saved his Basilio whose sword passed around his corpus through a blood-filled tube of sheet metal.

Thomas Mann suggests that Cervantes has derived this shocking motive from Achilles Tatius. He is not mistaken, and we have the pleasure to see the modern romancer comparing texts and arguing like a traditional scholar. At the same time he reservedly pretends to be a little conversant with this field of science by hinting at Erwin Rohde whose book about the Greek romance and its precursors is presupposed as a matter of course so that the title of the book is not mentioned<sup>15</sup>. Besides our interpreter confesses to have consulted Karl Kerényi's excellent book, as he says (IX 454: «... aus dem vorzüglichen Buch...»), about the Greek-Oriental novel literature<sup>16</sup>.

It might be obvious that Cervantes drew the motive of the fictitious bloody deed from Achilles Tatius. This view, proposed by Thomas Mann, can be confirmed by an additional aspect. Cervantes was well versed in the ancient romance. By his work *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda* he tried to stand comparison with Heliodorus' romance<sup>17</sup>, and he has modelled his poetry on Achilles Tatius, too<sup>18</sup>. In the Basilio episode Cervantes has apparently tried to surpass the false murder of Leucippe by extending the motive to a little novel of a wedding in which the bride is married at the last moment not to the unloved man, but to her lover by means of trick and intrigue.

<sup>15</sup> In *Tagebücher 1933-1934* (cf. note 4), however, 506: «Dienstag den 14. VIII. 34», Th. Mann observes: «Las nachher in E. Rohde's 'Griechischem Roman'». That is: *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*, first published 1876, now Berlin 1960<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> It refers to: *Die griechisch-orientalische Romanliteratur in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung. Ein Versuch*, Tübingen 1927 (= Darmstadt 1973<sup>3</sup>). Cf. already Th. Mann's letter to K. Kerényi from Küssnacht, 24. 3. 1934, in *Thomas Mann, Teil II: 1918-43*, 435 (cf. note 2): «Ihr Buch, das ich schon durchstudiert habe, ist mir eine Quelle glücklichster, wenn auch oft nur vager Anregung».

<sup>17</sup> T. Hägg, *Eros und Tyche. Der Roman in der antiken Welt*, übers. von K. Brodersen, Mainz 1987, 241-46.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *ibid.* 243.

In his essay *Passage with 'Don Quijote'* Thomas Mann reveals still another relation between Cervantes and the ancient romance, although he is not sure about the way of the tradition (cf. IX 457). The *Adventure of the Ass Braying* in Cervantes (8.8 and 10) reminds him of Apuleius (9.455) - with reason. In Apuleius' novel *The Golden Ass* Lucius who was transformed in a donkey repeatedly has or seizes the occasion to cry or, better, to bray<sup>19</sup>. Moreover, the ass of Apuleius is beaten continuously<sup>20</sup>, also in consequence of his cries. In Cervantes, however, Sancho Pansa is beaten, because he imitated the braying of an ass, and then they set him on his ass.

We can proceed on the assumption that Cervantes (1547-1616), almost a rival of the ancient romance, has known *The Golden Ass*, too (*editio princeps* 1469). In that case it would not be necessary to presume intermediate stages which Thomas Mann takes into account when asking whether Cervantes received the motives possibly via Italy and by Boccaccio (IX 457).

Our interpreting romancer, however, fails in exactly citing a Greek word: «katakremnezesthai» (9.457) is not quite a correct derivation from κατακρημνίζω, 'throw down a precipice' (*LSJ*). But that hardly counts at all. It is more noteworthy by far that Thomas Mann touched upon an important phenomenon of the ancient prose fiction: the illusion, realized by the fictitious murder of Leucippe. This phenomenon is called «Mystifikationspraktiken» (IX 454), practices of mystification, perhaps under the influence of Karl Kerényi's book.

In his lecture *Die Kunst des Romans*<sup>21</sup>, a lecture 1940 given to students of Princeton, New Jersey<sup>22</sup>, the German author is in his element. Who is master in writing romances can be allowed to advance masterly reflections on his genre, even if he boldly generalizes and sometimes takes theoretical risks. First he does not confine himself to single philological points, but considers the general development of the romance genre. When it is said that in Homer's country not until the Hellenism and Alexandrinism the prose romance is favoured (X 350) and when we are told about the peculiarities of mental biology (X 355), the question arises whether in this Princeton lecture of 1940 the cultural-historical approach of Ben Edwin Perry has become productive in some way or other. B.E. Perry graduated in Princeton (1920) to develop then into an authority on the ancient romance<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Apul. met.* 3.29.3; 7.3.3; especially 7.13.2; 8.29.4 f.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. for instance *ibid.* 3.28.4; 3.29.3; 6.25.4; 8.30.2.

<sup>21</sup> Mann 1974<sup>2</sup>, Band X, 348-62.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Thomas Mann, Teil II: 1918-1943*, 597 (cf. note 2). About the preparations of the novel lecture cf. also Th. Mann, *Tagebücher 1940-1943*, herausg. von P. de Mendelssohn, Frankfurt am Main 1982, 9, 16, 37, 48 f., 56-64.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. B.E. Perry, *The Metamorphoses Ascribed to Lucius of Patrai*, Diss. Princeton University 1920. Id., *The Ancient Romances. A Literary-Historical Account of Their Origins*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967. *Ibid.* 11 f. against «biological evolution» in literature; about the «Hellenistic period» cf. for instance *ibid.* 13; about the «Alexandrian age» cf. for example *ibid.* 175 f.

Thomas Mann's view of ancient prose fiction is rather extensive. In addition to the travel romance *The Marvels beyond Thule* and Achilles Tatius it includes Parthenius and, what is more, the fables of Aesopus (X 350). It seems questionable - to say the least - to integrate Parthenius within the romance genre. Besides we cannot agree to the opinion that Parthenius has founded the prose love romance. But then the novel of Achilles Tatius is aptly described to be unbound and boundless adventures (*ibid.*: «solche ungebundenen und uferlosen Abenteuer»). Apuleius' *Golden Ass* is highly appreciated as a brilliant performance of the world romance literature: «ein Glanzstück der Welt-Romanliteratur» (*ibid.*). By the way one might suppose Apuleius to have exercised influence on Thomas Mann's picaresque novel *Felix Krull*.

The ideas which are unfolded about the development of the romance genre are of especial importance. The ancient romance, as the lecture has it, contained possibilities (X 356: «trug Möglichkeiten in sich») that were realized in a long evolution from the late Greek and Indian fable-monsters (*ibid.*: «von den spätgriechischen und indischen Fabel-Monstren») to G. Flaubert's *Education sentimentale* and Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* (*ibid.*). The decisive principle in this process is the principle of 'Verinnerlichung' (*ibid.*), to be translated perhaps by 'spiritualization'.

After having underlined the long way to spiritualization Thomas Mann takes a remarkable view which may be essential to the history of the romance genre. He pleads that the German novel of education, Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* quoted as example, is nothing else than the «Verinnerlichung und Sublimierung» of the adventure novel (X 357). In the same way we are allowed to suggest with good reason: Thomas Mann's romances *Der Erwählte. Roman* and *Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull. Der Memoiren erster Teil*<sup>24</sup> are Verinnerlichungen and sublimations of the ancient adventure novel. Spiritualized and sublimed both of them seem to continue traditions of the ancient romance.

It would be worth-while considering possible influences which the ancient fiction prose might have exercised on the literary productions of Thomas Mann themselves. There is reason to suppose that these potential influences worked mediately by the way of connecting links in the narrative tradition. In the just mentioned novels, *Der Erwählte. Roman* and *Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull. Der Memoiren erster Teil*, there are apparently certain structures which remind of the ancient romance, concerning the action and the hero.

*Der Erwählte. Roman* (1951) retells the legend - or may we say novel?<sup>25</sup> -

<sup>24</sup> Mann 1974<sup>2</sup>, Band VII.

<sup>25</sup> In a letter of 29. 9. 1949 from California to the 'Weltbühne', that is Text no. 12 in: Th. Mann, *Tagebücher 1949-1950*, herausg. von I. Jens, Frankfurt am Main 1991, 666 f., Th. Mann speaks of his «Musik» which consists «zur Zeit in einem mittelalterlichen Legendenroman nach Harmann von Aue» (667). But see Th. Mann, *Tagebücher 1949-1950* (cf. this note above), 174: «P. P. Freitag den 3. III. 50», where he puts the question whether «'Der Erwählte' eine 'freie prosaische Neubearbeitung' von Hartmanns Gedicht ist» or a «'Legenden-Roman, dessen Handlung in den Hauptzügen dem Epos Hartmanns folgt'». Th.

of Gregorius which is transmitted in the *Gesta Romanorum* (81), in the Gregory poem of Hartmann of Aue and in other widespread tradition<sup>26</sup>. Not only by its incest motive, but above all by its fictitious manner of writing the Gregory legend resembles the *Story of Apollonius, King of Tyrus* (*Historia Apollonii regis Tyri*)<sup>27</sup> which, too, is contained in the *Gesta Romanorum* (153). The similarities between the Gregorius tale and the Apollonius romance seem to suggest relations of the Gregorius tradition to the ancient or rather to the Christian romance. Thomas Mann knew himself that the Gregory legend with its Oedipus motive sprang from antiquity<sup>28</sup>. Really, already when being a young man of nineteen he was well informed about that detail by the lectures of Professor Wilhelm Hertz about Courtly poetry he attended at the Technical University of Munich in 1894-1895<sup>29</sup>. Later on the story appeared to the modern author to present such vast narrative possibilities to the outspinning fantasy that he resolved «selber etwas daraus zu machen» (XI 687). In this respect he proceeded, as the ancient romance tried to do, and by dehistoricizing he shared another trend with the ancient romance.

*Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull. Der Memoiren erster Teil* (1954), too, seems to be in an old tradition which can be traced back to antiquity, via the Spanish picaresque novel of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and its German adaptation by Grimmelshausen. Thomas Mann himself allocated his *Felix Krull* to the adventure novel and especially to the picaresque romance which is assumed to be completed and surpassed by *Don Quijote*<sup>30</sup>. With regard to Cervantes who

Mann, *Selbstkommentare: 'Der Erwählte'*, herausg. von H. Wysling unter Mitwirkung von M. Eich-Fischer, Frankfurt am Main 1989, 17 (Th. Mann to Ida Herz, Pacific Palisades, 30. 5. 1948): «Es ist immer reizvoll, einen Stoff, der hundertmal in verschiedenen Jahrhunderten und Sprachen behandelt wurde, gewissermaßen auf seine letzte Form zu bringen». *Ibid.* 71 (Th. Mann to Maurice Boucher, Pacific Palisades, 29. 6. 1951): «... diese späte und gewiß letzte Version der oft erzählten Geschichte».

<sup>26</sup> Cf. H. Wysling, *Die Technik der Montage. Zu Thomas Manns Erwähltem*, Euphorion 57, 1963, 156-99. H. Wysling, *Thomas Manns Verhältnis zu den Quellen. Beobachtungen am "Erwählten"*, in P. Scherrer - H. Wysling, *Quellenkritische Studien zum Werk Thomas Manns*, Bern - München 1967, 258-324, 342-46; cf. especially 290-92: *Tradition und individuelles Talent*, with the testimonies. E. Hilscher, *Thomas Mann. Leben und Werk*, Berlin 1989<sup>11</sup>, 197-202. P. de Mendelssohn, *Nachbemerkungen des Herausgebers*, in Th. Mann, *Der Erwählte. Roman*, Frankfurt am Main 1980, 263-97, with further literature.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. the edition of G. Schmeling, Leipzig 1988.

<sup>28</sup> Mann 1974<sup>2</sup>, Band XI, 687-91: *Bemerkungen zu dem Roman 'Der Erwählte'*; *ibid.* 688 about the Oedipus motive.

<sup>29</sup> De Mendelssohn 1980, 265-67.

<sup>30</sup> Hilscher 1989, 212. Mann, *Tagebücher 1949-1950*, 294 f. about *Hochstapler*: «P.P. Sonnabend den 25. XI. 50»: «Hat meine Isoliertheit genug Menschen-Erlebnis aufgefangen, daß es zu einem gesellschaftssatirischen Schelmenroman reicht?». Cf. H. Wysling, *Narzißmus und illusionäre Existenzform. Zu den "Bekenntnissen des Hochstaplers Felix Krull"*, Bern und München 1982, especially 271-88. Cf. the remarks in a letter Th. Mann wrote to Max Rychner, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 1954, in Th. Mann, *Tagebücher 1953-1955*, herausg. von I. Jens, Frankfurt am Main 1995<sup>2</sup>, 686, 15.10.1954 note 2 (cf. *ibid.* 688, 17. 10. 1954 note 2) about «ein Buch ...: 'Der göttliche Schelm' [...]», that is: P. Radin - K. Kerényi - C. G. Jung, *Der göttliche Schelm. Ein indianischer Mythen-Zyklus*, Zürich 1954 (reprinted edition Hildesheim 1979). Th. Mann explains: «Es handelt sich um... eine archaische Vorstufe aller Schelmenromane,

wished to compete with the ancient novel the picaresque tradition including also *Felix Krull* can be retraced to ancient times. Already in Apuleius and previously in Petronius there are distinctive picaresques.

It is generally known that the action of an ancient novel consists in a long series of difficult and dangerous situations the heroes have to cope with, but defying all impediments the romance heroes or antiheroes overcome, and finally the novel has a happy ending. These patterns, handed down by the quoted intermediate stations, were differently adapted in *Der Erwählte* and in *Felix Krull*. Appreciating the literary tradition H. Wysling recognized: «Thomas Manns Texte können nach dem Handlungsgerippe, oft aber auch nur motivisch und thematisch auf 'Muster' und 'Reihen' zurückbezogen werden, ... der späte *Krull* auf *Simplicissimus*, *Faust* und den Hermes-Mythos<sup>31</sup>». The literary roots, indeed, go back till antiquity.

It would be tempting to compare conclusions of the research on *Felix Krull* with results achieved in the investigation of the ancient romance. From his point of view H. Koopmann observed: «... es geht für ihn (*Krull*) immer glatt und komplikationslos ab»<sup>32</sup>. «*Krull*, der alle Hindernisse so spielend überwindet»<sup>33</sup>. «Das Ende ist gut, wider alle Erwartung und Wahrscheinlichkeit», and «alles gelingt, was realiter niemals möglich war»<sup>34</sup>. Correspondingly the ancient romance excels largely «durch die Gestaltung einer... Abenteuerwelt, ... die nach einer Kette von erstaunlich leicht und schnell überwundenen Schwierigkeiten und Gefahren stets ein glückliches Ende garantiert, wie es in der... Realität... wohl kaum vorkommt»<sup>35</sup>. The happy ending is 'gattungsimmanent'<sup>36</sup>. *Mutatis mutandis* the common features cannot be disregarded.

The modern author, however, was not checked by the stereotyped action scheme which too often prevented the ancient novel from getting a higher aesthetic level. Under complicated social conditions and new communicative

und in seiner mythologisierenden Einleitung weist Kerényi auf die Entwicklung bis zu Rabelais, Spanien, *Simplicissimus*, *Eulenspiegel*, *Reineke Fuchs* - und *Felix Krull* geradezu hin. Man weiß nicht, was man tut, erfährt es aber gern, besonders wenn man soviel Wert darauf legt, wie ich, sich in einer festen, möglichst weit zurückreichenden Tradition stehend zu wissen». To this tradition belongs - according to Kerényi, *ibid.* 160 and 178 - also Petronius.

<sup>31</sup> H. Wysling, *25 Jahre Arbeit im Thomas-Mann-Archiv. Rückblick und Ausblick*, in *Internationales Thomas-Mann-Kolloquium 1986 in Lübeck*, Bern 1987, 374.

<sup>32</sup> H. Koopmann, *Der schwierige Deutsche. Studien zum Werk Thomas Manns*, Tübingen 1988, 156.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* 160.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* 162.

<sup>35</sup> H. Kuch, *Die Herausbildung des antiken Romans als Literaturgattung. Theoretische Positionen, historische Voraussetzungen und literarische Prozesse*, in *Der antike Roman. Untersuchungen zur literarischen Kommunikation und Gattungsgeschichte*, ed. H. Kuch, Berlin 1989, 24.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

relations Thomas Mann sovereignly formed his action integrating elements of a far-reaching literary tradition. But there is no doubt: The modern romances we have dealt with, *Der Erwählte* and *Felix Krull*, and the ancient romance have in common an essential narrative structure: a long line of actions and adventures - all surmounted - ending at last happily.

In connection with this structure there is still another distinct narrative device that is shared by those two modern novels and sweepingly by the ancient novel: the unity of youth and beauty attached to the heroes - a quality which was transmitted again by the intermediate links of the tradition. So, for instance, the figure of Felix Krull, Simplicissimus and the hero of an ancient romance seem to belong to one another. Notwithstanding the analogies and although assuming the traditional unity of youth and beauty Thomas Mann converted his heroes to sublimed and introspective personages, applying to his literary productions an enormous lot of psychology, irony, parody and humour.

Those common structures of the ancient and the modern novel can be pointed out here only along general lines, and further investigations have to supply the proposed suggestions in detail. If these ideas prove to be plausible, ancient narrative structures are apparently preserved by intermediate stages up to modern times in a rich intertextuality. So the ancient romance can be seen in a special case to be a precursor of the modern romance - a general problem recently raised by B. Reardon<sup>37</sup>. At all events the connection of youth, beauty, a series of overcome adventures and a happy ending fell in Thomas Mann's *Der Erwählte* and *Felix Krull* - provided with a new function - on fertile ground. By the eminent romancer those structural elements of the ancient romance<sup>38</sup> are shaped in an excellent form which scarcely reveals the origins.

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<sup>37</sup> B. Reardon, *The Form of Ancient Greek Romance*, in *The Greek Novel AD 1-1985*, ed. by R. Beaton, London - New York - Sydney 1988, 205-16, especially 214 f.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. *The Ancient Novel. Classical Paradigms and Modern Perspectives*, ed. by J. Tatum and G.M. Vernazza, Hanover - New Hampshire 1990. B.P. Reardon, *The Form of Greek Romance*, Princeton - New Jersey 1991. H. Kuch, *Zur Gattungsgeschichte und Gattungstheorie des antiken Romans*, *Eikasmos* 3, 1992, 223-33. *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, ed. by J. Tatum, Baltimore - London 1994. *The Novel in the Ancient World*, ed. G. Schmeling (forthcoming).