Symbols and Motifs

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Abstract and Keywords
This chapter takes a broader approach to the analysis of subjective temporal experience. It explores the ways in which particular images that have symbolic value or motifs that gain additional significance through their repetition further the sense of temporal movement across a text. The analysis focuses on Buddenbrooks, The Magic Mountain, Tonio Kröger, and includes a comparative analysis with Theodor Storm’s Immensee, which served as an inspiration for Mann. It builds on Genette’s terminology to suggest that there is a difference between shifts in temporal perspective and shifts in temporal location, both of which, it is argued, can be prompted by or encapsulated through symbolic images. The chapter also proposes the concept of ‘meta-muthos’ whereby a single image may contain the overall plot structure of a narrative in miniature and thereby have multidirectional temporal power, which complicates the reader’s sense of narrative time.

Keywords: Gérard Genette, analepsis, prolepsis, leitmotifs, Theodor Storm, meta-muthos, Ricoeur, multiple times, multiple perspectives

All art is at once surface and symbol.
"Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril."

"Those who read the symbol do so at their peril."

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Considering narrative temporal experience through the lens of symbolism gives a very different view of subjectivity, characterization, and time than a conventional discussion of plot succession and chronological shifts. It brings into focus tacit tensions between experience as constructed and as interpreted by characters, narrators, and readers, disclosing often surprising degrees of collusion and miscomprehension. This chapter explores the ways in which symbols can both prompt and encapsulate shifts in time. The objects for this discussion are Mann’s novels *Buddenbrooks* and *The Magic Mountain*, his novella *Tonio Kröger*, and Theodor Storm’s *Immensee*. 
The divergence between discourse time and story time operates inversely in *Buddenbrooks* and *The Magic Mountain*. *Buddenbrooks* tells the story of the decline of a prosperous, respected family spanning several generations over the course of some eight hundred pages. *The Magic Mountain*, however, depicts the story of one young man over the course of seven years, told across well over a thousand pages. *Buddenbrooks* encapsulates the death of an era through the view of one family, while *The Magic Mountain* ends in the ashes of the First World War but looks towards the birth of a new future. Similarly, *Immensee* and *Tonio Kröger* make a logical comparison. *Tonio Kröger* was, according to Mann, ‘Immensee transformed into the modern-problematic’ (‘ins Modern-Problematische fortgewandelter Immensee’) and he has his protagonist wistfully imagine himself away from reality with the thought of reading *Immensee*.¹ But it offers a worthwhile comparison not only with *Tonio Kröger* (p.92) specifically, but also with other works by Mann. Storm’s construction of a symbolically laden temporality provides an interesting general model of ways in which time can be constructed and manipulated through symbols and motifs, and in particular his method of prefiguration stands in significant contrast to Mann’s ‘leitmotif’ technique. The different context in which it was written (first published in 1849) also serves to broaden the frame of reference for this study. Although superficially similar with respect to plot dynamics, the general temporal perspectives of *Immensee* and *Tonio Kröger* are divergent: *Immensee* opens with old age retrospection, while *Tonio Kröger* depicts youthful anticipation, and the differences therein have inevitable ramifications on the subjective experience of fictive time; because *Immensee* presents the story through Reinhard’s memory, both the narrator and the reader have hindsight, whereas in *Tonio Kröger*, the protagonist and the reader remain unaware of future developments, and, consequently, symbols exhibit less power of prophecy. Part of this difference, moreover, pertains to the distinct contexts in which Storm and Mann wrote their respective stories.
The first two sections of this chapter examine the differences between shifts in perspective (where the character might recall a past experience, while remaining in the relative present) and shifts in actual temporal location (where a time-machine-style rupture takes the narrative to a totally different time in the past or future—a shift not possible in real life). I consider the ways in which such shifts can be prompted by symbolic images that cause a change in temporal direction. The third section offers a substitution of Genette’s concept of ‘prolepsis’ in narratives that do not exhibit deliberate shifts forward, but instead symbolically foreshadow future outcomes. The final two sections explore the temporal ramifications for wider webs of symbols that interact over time. The analysis of time in the light of symbolic images suggests that, in narrative, symbols continually have significance for the past, present, and future, and operate from multiple character perspectives at the same time.

Shifting perspectives: symbolic anticipation and retrospection
Genette establishes the concepts ‘prolepsis’ and ‘analepsis’ in order to ‘avoid the psychological connotations of such terms as “anticipation” or “retrospection” which automatically evoke subjective phenomena’. But there is a distinction in these works between shifts in temporal perspective and shifts in temporal location. A perspectival shift would involve the character remaining in the narrative present while recollecting the past or anticipating the future, whereas an actual shift in time disrupts the narrative chronology. Although, as Genette observes, they are undoubtedly subjective, anticipation or retrospection indicate changes in viewpoint rather than just location. Where these are prompted by symbolic images, it emphasizes the degree of overlap between character, narrator, and reader experience. A comparison of Mann’s *The Magic Mountain* and Storm’s *Immensee* demonstrates that the protagonists’ ostensible temporal standpoints are often diverted through symbolic echoes of the past or allusions to the future. The narrators and characters have fluctuating roles in the construction and interpretation of temporally powerful symbols. The reader, moreover, is often shown a temporal experience that operates beyond the consciousness of the character, but also, at times, the characters perceive temporally significant symbols that go beyond the frame of reference for the reader. These differing degrees of awareness have powerful effects on the presentation of subjective experience. As the characters remain unaware of an anticipated future, their concern with the past and stasis in the present is emphasized through contrast, while symbolic recollections to which the reader is not party allude to broader personal contexts, creating a complexity of character experience through a momentary symbolic image. In both works, the symbolic instigation of anticipation and retrospection also belongs to an intricate web of perspectival shifts, indicating a dominant concentration on the past or future, while simultaneously reaching across multiple temporal viewpoints.
The construction of anticipation through a symbolic image is particularly subtle when neither character nor narrator explicitly draws attention to potential supplementary import. In *The Magic Mountain*, Mann intimates the temporal significance of the symbolically laden passage in the ‘Snow’ chapter in part through its interaction with the closing episode in the trenches of the First World War. The temporal effect of this later episode is retrospective, as it allows symbolic completion of images constructed in the snow scene. But what is particularly powerful about Hans’s dream in the blizzard is the way in which it *anticipates* the explosive ending without forming a narrative mise en abyme or otherwise explicitly drawing attention to its own symbolic value (as occurs at other points in the novel, discussed below). In fact, across these works, this symbolic sequence in the snow is one of the few occasions when neither character nor narrator self-consciously articulates its metaphorical importance. Mann therefore constructs implicit indications of the dream’s relevance (p. 94) for future developments. Hans’s ignorance of the significance for futurity on this occasion underlines his general inability to consider the future, remaining emphatically fixated on a static present and its sluggish interaction with the past.
Having embarked on a skiing expedition in heavy snow, Hans finds himself stuck in a blizzard and seeks shelter by the side of a hut. Falling asleep, he has a dream vision that suggests the form of future developments and to which the closing trench scene refers through symbolic repetition. In the first part of the dream, Hans sees vibrant scenery, inhabited by beautiful ‘people, children of the sun and sea’ (482, adapted) (‘Menschen, Sonnen- und Meereskinder’ (740)). As the idealized beauty melts away, he stumbles upon a temple, where he witnesses two old hags dismembering and feasting upon a child (Eng. 485; Ger.745). Mann alerts the reader to the temporal ramifications of this binary opposition through symbolic references to earlier images. The image of the sea echoes preceding references to water, but where these earlier iterations were clouded by fog, mist, and dusk (e.g. 5, 29, 152) (‘Nebel’ (e.g. 14, 51, 236)), the dream view of the beach is brighter and clearer. Now the rain is ‘translucent’ (480) (‘der Regen war durchleuchtet’ (738)) and the sea is ‘sparkling with silver’ (481) (‘von Silberlichtern blitzend’ (739)). In the German original, there is a pun on the word ‘translucent’ where ‘durchleuchten’ suggests that the sun both ‘shone through’ and ‘x-rayed’ the rain, and the image of the lightning sparkle of the sea references the recurrent motif of the ‘crackling sparks of the X-ray chamber’ (469) (‘knatternden Blitzen der Durchleuchtungskammer’ (720)). The allusions to the X-ray room, where hidden sickness is exposed, suggest that Hans’s dream will also undergo a kind of examination and diagnosis, anticipating the discovery of symptoms of decay. The shift from the beautiful exterior in the first part of the dream to the deadly and disgusting interior of the temple in the second part of the dream thus foreshadows the novel’s overall decline. The way in which Hans’s experience of the war then corresponds to the symbolic construction of the snow dream corroborates the anticipation set up at this juncture.

As the narrator returns to the flatland and rejoins Hans in the final pages of the novel, now in the trenches of the First World War, the symbols enter into dialogue with those of the snow dream. In Hans’s imagination, the arch of ‘a rainbow stretched across a flank of the landscape’ (481) (‘ein Regenbogen spannte sich seitwärts über die Landschaft’ (739)) which lights up the sky with its bright colours, but the arch descends to earth and becomes barren in its wartime echo: ‘branching off from the road, a country lane, a rutted quagmire, winds up the
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...
In terms of shifting perspectives prompted by symbolic images, Storm’s *Immensee* provides an interesting contrast with the symbolic anticipation of Mann’s *The Magic Mountain*. *Immensee* is a work of retrospection. Currie observes that ‘narrative is generally retrospective in the sense that the teller is looking back on events and relating them in the past tense, but a reader or listener experiences these events for the first time, as quasi-present’. But the frame narrative in *Immensee* means that the reader is placed within the realm of retrospection from the outset: we are, in a sense, given hindsight from the start. Part of the creation of this retrospective standpoint pertains to the context in which Storm was writing, *(p.96)* as well as his own idiosyncratic response to this context. As I have argued in more detail elsewhere, the recent advent of photography informs the temporal structure of *Immensee*, and can be seen prominently in the opening passage. Alexander von Humboldt was purportedly the first German to have his photographic portrait taken when Louis-Jacques Mandé Daguerre presented his invention to the French Académie des Sciences and the Académie des Beaux Arts in early 1839. Gerd Eversberg suggests:

Storm is not responding […] to a new technical possibility, but rather he is searching for the means to visualize his specific writing style adequately. His modes of depiction are dynamic descriptions, acceleration, panoramic views, intricate spatial detail as well as scenic montages.

(Storm reagiert […] nicht auf eine neue technische Möglichkeit, sondern er sucht nach Mitteln, seine spezifische Schreibweise angemessen zu visualisieren. Seine Darstellungswesen sind die dynamische Beschreibung, die Zeitraffung, der Rundblick, die räumliche Detailgenauigkeit sowie die szenische Montage.)
Immensee can be seen both as a response to this new medium and as a progression beyond it; Storm emphasizes visualization by simultaneously describing space in detail and attempting to vivify potentially static images by filling space with dynamism. As Michael Minden says, 'Immensee takes up the challenge from the recently invented practice of photography to redeem by poetic description the inevitable discrepancy between the life of the mind and the narrative of a life.' The picture that prompts Reinhard’s melancholic return to times past in the opening scene encapsulates the story as a whole: the past is soberly framed and contained within this image just as it is contained within the frame narrative. In using this picture as a memory catalyst, Storm vivifies, temporalizes, and adds motion to a still object, as though countermanding the stasis of photography.
The main narrative in *Immensee* is an extended analepsis, which sees the protagonist, Reinhard, return in memory to his youthful love for and failed relationship with his childhood friend Elisabeth. Although the narrative consists of Reinhard’s personal and subjective recollection, it employs a more complex combination of Franz Stanzel’s ‘first-person narrative situation’ (‘personale Erzählsituation’) (where the reader sees ‘the portrayed world through the eyes of one of the characters in the novel, who nevertheless is not the narrator, but in whose consciousness the events are at the same time mirrored’ (‘die dargestellte Welt mit den Augen einer Romanfigur, die jedoch nicht erzählt, sondern in deren Bewusstsein sich das Geschehen gleichsam spiegelt’)) and Genette’s ‘external focalization […] in which the hero performs in front of us without our ever being allowed to know his thoughts or feelings’.8 Both descriptions are somewhat inadequate, as the novella employs a third-person narrator who largely does not have privileged access to Reinhard’s inner experiences, but instead often colludes in symbolic externalization of subjective feelings. As a work of memory, Reinhard also refers to times gone by within the overall recollection. Largely without explicit insight into his subjective interior, however, symbolic images tacitly echo times past without explicitly revisiting them. Tension is heightened and the ending is made inevitable as even the young Reinhard recalls the more recent past within his recollected distant past. This suggests a perspectival version of Genette’s ‘internal analepsis’, which refers to a narrative shift back to an earlier time within the main narrative.9 In this way, there are multiple points of retrospection, not just that of the frame narrative, and the work is therefore tinged throughout with melancholy.
One pivotal moment in the narrative employs several symbols that act as memory prompts, but also, when considered together, indicate the complex interworkings of temporality as influenced by symbols. The title of the chapter ‘A child appeared upon his path’ (‘Da stand das Kind am Wege’) suggests both the child to whom Reinhard gives his Christmas cake and, in a temporally significant sense, the reminder of childhood and home the Christmas parcel brings. Reinhard’s drunken flirtations with a ‘zither-girl’ (‘Zithermädchen’) are interrupted by the news that ‘the Christ-child’ (‘das Christkind’) has visited his student lodgings. He returns to his room to find ‘a hefty package’ on the table (p.98) (17, adapted) (‘ein mächtiges Paket auf dem Tisch’ (307)). At this juncture, several symbols take him back—in a perspectival sense—to the past, reminding him of Elisabeth. Three symbols have differing temporal effects that combine to create a complex memory catalyst: ‘the familiar little golden festive cakes’ (‘die wohlbekannten braunen Festkuchen’), ‘the little linnet’ (‘der Hänfling’), and the ‘stories’ (17–18) (‘Märchen’ (307–8)). Of these symbols, the ‘festive cakes’ make only this single appearance, the linnet is introduced here and gains increased symbolic value in a subsequent scene, and the stories hark back to the promise Reinhard made to Elisabeth as he left for university that he would go on ‘as before, writing stories for her’ (9) (‘wie sonst, Märchen für sie aufschreiben’ (299)). The images then can be placed—retrospectively, for we are not yet aware of potential reappearances—into the categories of symbols of the present (the cake), the future (the bird), and the past (the stories). But at this juncture, despite the reader’s ignorance of future narrative repetition, they all function as memory prompts for Reinhard. Elsewhere, I coined this effect ‘the temporal prism’ because one symbol or group of symbols has the power to refract time in multiple different directions simultaneously. The cake and its indications of a visit from the ‘Christ-child’ create an abrupt temporal disjuncture that recalls Reinhard swiftly from ostensible maturity at the pub to a proto-Proustian evocation of childhood through familiar sensory perception. Although he professes ‘he doesn’t come to me anymore’ (16) (‘das kommt nicht mehr zu mir’ (306)), the ‘visit’ from the ‘Christ-child’ provides less a sense of continuity from past to present than a perspectival shift back to childhood. It almost suggests that Reinhard can only be loyal
to Elisabeth in the mentality of childhood, placing it—like the stories he used to tell—within the unreal time of fairy tale. As this is the Christmas cake’s first and only appearance, the recollection it provokes is unique to Reinhard and is not shared by the reader. The same is not true, however, of the ‘stories’, which by this point have become a repeated motif rather than a single symbol. In a single image, they intertwine Reinhard’s devotion to Elisabeth with his agency as a creator, rather than mere observer, of action. Elisabeth’s reprimand about the lack of ‘stories’ thus both acts as a recollection of Reinhard’s love for and promises to Elisabeth, contrasting with his present distraction and emotional infidelity, and fills in the narrative ellipsis: Reinhard’s stories stopped just as the narration of his own story fell silent. This triggers a recollection both for the character and for the reader, referring (p.99) to a symbol previously present in the narrative, simultaneously reminding us of Reinhard’s affection for Elisabeth in the past, indicating its decline in the interim, and provoking its return in the future. In this instance in Immensee, it is a symbolic recollection specifically constructed and interpreted by the characters, which thereby discloses their subjective senses of time rather than, as in The Magic Mountain, a symbolic temporal link controlled by the distant narratorial voice. The third in this series of symbols, the finch that Reinhard had given to Elisabeth but that has now died, operates as a form of what Currie calls ‘rhetorical prolepsis’. This refers to the ‘anticipation of retrospection’ and Currie uses it specifically as ‘the anticipation of an objection and the preclusion of that objection by incorporating a counter-argument into the discourse’. But, here in narrative form, it constructs a symbol that, through its later repetition, acts as an emotionally charged memory catalyst with a context for characters and reader alike. It anticipates its later significance: symbolizing Reinhard’s neglected love for Elisabeth in its death at this point, the finch is soon replaced by a bird from Erich. In The Magic Mountain, Hans’s snow dream forms the basis of memory for the reader in its symbolic reference in the First World War, but this later reference is a narratorial imposition by the distant narrator, rather than indicating the patterns of Hans’s own memories. In Immensee, the image of the bird (among other things) provokes Reinhard’s return home to Elisabeth—in a sense both spatial and temporal; in its later iteration, the reader is able to share this allusion to times past.
These ‘recollective’ symbols indicate a multilayered temporal experience, where the characters are given points of past reference as yet unfamiliar to the reader. By juxtaposing these different symbols of memory, where the ‘stories’ echo a previous occurrence, the linnet anticipates a future reference, and the ‘festive cakes’ are an isolated image, Storm creates a pivotal moment infused with multiple perspectives. It allows one of the rare instances of insight into Reinhard’s inner emotions, implied not through narrative devices or externalized expression, but through the narrator’s momentary slip into subjective knowledge as Reinhard suddenly experiences ‘a relentless homesickness’ (18) (‘unerbittliches Heimweh’ (308)). Although Elisabeth does not specifically draw attention to their symbolic value, she acts as agent for the ‘recollective’ images that implicitly prompt Reinhard’s memory and explicitly precipitate his return home.

The comparison of symbols that give rise to perspectival shifts in *The Magic Mountain* and *Immensee* thus indicates the importance of frequency (p.100) and perspective. Symbolic images that have been seen before may act as reminders of former emotions for the character, as in *Immensee*, or can contribute to the infusion of symbolic import that anticipates the future, as in *The Magic Mountain*. Although the images discussed here are palpably symbolic in value in isolation, a substantial part of their temporal function is gained through repetition over time. This can be either literal repetition (as in the case of the repeated mention of Reinhard’s bird) or symbolic repetition (as in the implicit echo of images from Hans’s snow dream in the First World War trenches of *The Magic Mountain*). Although these symbols do not, in these instances, force an actual shift in temporal location, they subtly allude to the precariousness of temporal experience in narrative, where single moments exist not only in the present, but also simultaneously reach back to distant pasts or anticipate uncertain futures.

**Narrative manoeuvres: symbolic analepsis**
Having wished to avoid the subjective connotations of ‘anticipation’ and ‘retrospection’, Genette designates as prolepsis ‘any narrative manoeuvre that consists of narrating or evoking in advance an event that will take place later’ and ‘as analepsis any evocation after the fact of an event that took place earlier than the point in the story where we are at any given moment’.

The distinction notable in these narratives is that anticipation and retrospection precipitated by symbols offer a perspectival shift, indicating the characters’ subjective perceptions of time (or narratorial interpretations of temporal experience), while ‘prolepsis’ and ‘analepsis’ act as narrative time machines shifting the location of the narrative to a time before or after the main time frame. Analeptic returns are occasionally obvious in *The Magic Mountain*, for example, as the narrator details Hans’s past history as a way of constructing context and fleshing out character. But symbolic images also induce subtler incidents of narrative return, while simultaneously laying the foundations for multiple subsequent references across narrative time (as was visible in the perspectival retrospection in *Immensee*). There is, however, no such obvious instance of analepsis in *Buddenbrooks*. Even its subtitle, ‘The Decline of a Family’ (‘Verfall einer Familie’), bears testament to the forward (albeit downwards) trajectory of the novel. And yet, through the tacit links of repeated motifs over time, *Buddenbrooks* also exhibits an actual narrative return, rather than merely a perspectival shift. In *The Magic Mountain*, Hans holds an ambivalent role as agent over the symbolic images that help structure his personal temporality. In *Buddenbrooks*, an analysis of the symbolic analepsis discloses the surprising extent of narratorial involvement in subjective temporal experience. But what is not present in any of these narratives is a clear instance of ‘prolepsis’. Although symbols frequently elicit considerations and anticipations of futurity, the works do not exhibit specific temporal shifts forwards that are then also followed by returns, but simply occasional ellipses, whereby periods of time are left unnarrated. We witness instead the symbolic encapsulation of future outcomes in single images, the discussion of which forms the focus of the next section.
The sea motif in *Buddenbrooks*, whose image is explicitly repeated rather than implicitly echoed through later symbols, links two characters across a broad generational gap, altering the significance of their unique subjective experiences. But the specific manner of narration also creates an analeptic shift as the narrative does not merely recall but actually returns to times past. For both the young Tony Buddenbrook and, a generation later, her young nephew Hanno, the seaside holiday location of Travemünde holds a powerful attraction. The suspension of social constraints and respite from the tedium of everyday life and duty is mirrored in the slowed sense of time. Tony observes the strange stretching of time by the sea, where boredom is impossible:

‘It is remarkable how one cannot get bored at the seashore, Morten. Try lying anywhere else for three or four hours at a time, flat on your back, doing nothing, not even pursuing a single thought…’

(‘Es ist merkwürdig, daß man sich an der See nicht langweilen kann, Morten. Liegen Sie einmal an einem anderen Orte drei oder vier Stunden lang auf dem Rücken, ohne etwas zu thun, ohne auch nur einem Gedanken nachzuhängen…’).14
Herr Grünlich, Tony’s unsuitable suitor, whom she has recently rejected, personifies real time; that is, he represents collective time, divided into distinct measurements, enslaved to the demands of clocks and calendars. His arrival in Travemünde changes the balance of temporal symbols. The timeless motif of the sea is reduced and objectified into a ‘well-cut model of a ship under full sail’ (174) (‘sauber gearbeitete Modell eines Schiffes (p.102) unter vollen Segeln’ (163)) hanging on the wall. By contrast, Grünlich’s movements are described as ‘measured’ (177) (‘gemessen’ (167)) and he repeatedly asserts ‘that my time is limited’ (174, 177)—in the German original, this reads as ‘my time is measured’, making a pronounced echo with the movement (‘daß meine Zeit gemessen ist’ (163, 167)). This juxtaposition highlights the sense of timelessness afforded by the sea. Hanno, too, considers life beyond the seaside holiday an unthinkable prospect: ‘After the holidays! What a thought! And how far, far off in the grey distance lay everything that was beyond the holiday, beyond those four weeks!’ (714, adapted) (‘Nach den Ferien! War da überhaupt ein Gedanke? So wundervoll weit in graue Ferne entrückt war Alles, was jenseits dieser vier Wochen lag!’ (694)). The interaction of these two scenes, however, makes their individual temporal experiences more complex than independent readings might suggest. The shared image and manner of description of the intoxicating sea makes Hanno’s narrative act analeptically, taking us back to Tony’s experience five hundred pages earlier. The way in which these two scenes are narrated discloses the paramount role of the narrator in the construction of the analeptic motif.

As Tony leaves Travemünde, the description appears to be filtered through free indirect discourse (erlebte Rede):

Tony pressed her head into the corner of the coach and looked out of the window. The sky was covered with white clouds; the Trave broke into little waves that rushed out before the wind. Now and then drops of rain pattered against the glass. At the end of the front people sat in their house doorways and mended nets; barefoot children came running and looked curiously at the carriage. They were staying here... (179, adapted)
Nature echoes Tony’s despondency through pathetic fallacy, as the sky darkens, the waves—like Tony—are pushed away by the force of the wind, and rain connotes tears against the carriage windowpane. The image of the people framed in their doorways, framed once more by the carriage window, and the two-way objectification of sight as Tony views the barefoot children and they return her stare, continues the presentation of timelessness of the seaside shot, creating a ‘pictorial image’ (as discussed in Chapter 1). The people become a postcard view seemingly frozen in time, while Tony’s momentum in space indicates her progression in time. (p. 103) The stasis of the people outside the carriage is reiterated in the emphatic final sentence: ‘They were staying here...’ (’Die blieben hier...’) Although the emphasis placed on ‘They’ implicitly suggests that this is Tony’s voice, as the children are depicted in both physical and grammatical opposition to her, the reiteration of ostensibly subjective experience during Hanno’s departure undermines narrative authority:

Hanno pressed his head into the corner of the coach and looked [...] out of the window. The morning sky was covered with white clouds; the Trave broke into little waves that rushed back from the wind. Now and then drops of rain pattered against the glass. At the end of the front people sat in their house doorways and mended nets; barefoot children came running and looked curiously at the carriage. They were staying here...

(720, adapted)
(Hanno drückte den Kopf in die Wagenecke und sah [...] zum Fenster hinaus. Der Morgenhimmel war weißlich bedeckt, und die Trave warf kleine Wellen, die schnell vor dem Winde daher eilten. Dann und wann prickelten Regentropfen gegen die Scheiben. Am Ausgange der ‘Vorderreihe’ saßen Leute vor ihren Haustüren und flickten Netze; barfüßige Kinder kamen herbeigelaufen und betrachteten neugierig den Wagen. Die blieben hier… (700–1))

Not only do the natural world and local community respond in exactly the same way to Hanno as they did to Tony as she left Travemünde, but the narrator employs almost identical language for both descriptions. In their *Kommentar*, Eckhard Heftrich and Stephan Stachorski note the existence of the echo but we may add that the subtle differences between these passages have another effect on time. The sky clouds hover in the same way once more, but this time, the little waves rush back (‘daher’), whereas previously they rushed out (‘dahin’) under the force of the wind. This suggests that merely a second or so has passed in the intervening years. The people are still sitting in their doorways, and the children are still running by and staring inquisitively, but this time it is Hanno who returns their stare.
In one sense, it suggests that there is an underlying truth to the experience of timelessness on the intoxicating shore in Travemünde, authentically noted and experienced by both Tony and Hanno. But what it also indicates is that temporal experience is not merely filtered by the narrative voice, but is perhaps in fact constructed by the not-so-omniscient narrator. The deliberate intertwining of the two distinct episodes gives an overarching continuity to temporal sensation, while minimizing the significance of Tony and Hanno’s discrete experiences. We are reminded through the repetition of this description that a higher (p.104) continuity of lineage is more important than the individual components of the Buddenbrook family. This echo of Tony’s departure recalls her sacrifice—abandoning Morten and yielding to family expectation—suggestively anticipating inevitable future decline as Hanno too is painfully pulled away from happiness in a return to the tedious duty of everyday life. This narrative imposition refers us back to Tony’s experience a generation earlier, thus infusing Hanno’s painful departure with a deeper sense of pointless cyclicism. The almost identical description also renders this a narrative manoeuvre—rather than a purely perspectival one. Indeed, no subjective recollection is visible because the experience does not occur twice to the same character (as we shall see is the case with Hans in The Magic Mountain), but once to two characters in turn. It is therefore the narrator’s overarching perception of time that is given priority over the individual subjective temporalities of the characters. In this way, Buddenbrooks presents an actual narrative return to a past time through the shared description of the sea motif, disrupting the otherwise consistent forward flow (albeit one of decline).
The analeptic motif operates inversely in *The Magic Mountain*. Here it is the character rather than the narrator who self-consciously imposes a link between distinct times and experiences through the shared motif. The temporal effect of this imposition is therefore also somewhat different. As Hans’s attraction to and sexual encounter with another patient in the sanatorium, Clawdia Chauchat, symbolically references his childhood love for Pribislav Hippe, the analepsis illustrates Hans’s subjective perception of time, rather than the narrator’s construction of it. His initial dream about Hippe operates as a narrative manoeuvre that returns to a time before that of the main narrative. But it is prompted by symbolic images alluded to earlier in the novel. This particular narrative time machine is unusual in that the character’s consciousness moves with the analepsis: he reviews an experience from the past with the perspective of the present; in this respect, the dream is both a symbolic retrospection and a symbolic analepsis, simultaneously shifting narrative location and character perspective.

This early dream sequence interacts with Hans’s later dream-memory in a way that constructs several complex temporal strands. It lays the background to which the Hippe dream-memory is then able to refer through the repetition of symbolic images, once again indicating Currie’s perspectival ‘rhetorical prolepsis’. Due to its basis in past experience (rather than unconscious dream activity), however, this second dream-memory is an ‘external analepsis’ that moves back to a time before the main narrative. These two sequences therefore interact through symbolic echoes and thereby construct points of reference for the future, while also returning to a time before the principal narrative’s beginning. They construct intricate narrative manoeuvres that undermine superficial senses of stasis in the hermetic temporality of Hans’s mountain experience; although he might appear to put time on hold, a symbolic reading of the novel indicates much greater temporal flexibility.

Early in his stay on the mountain, Hans has a seemingly nonsensical dream about Clawdia:
And now as he dreamed on, it seemed to him that he was in the same schoolyard where he had spent his breaks between lessons for so many years, and he was just about to borrow a drawing pencil from Madame Chauchat, who also happened to be present. She gave him the reddish one, about half the normal length, in a silver holder, but at the same time she warned Hans in a pleasantly husky voice that he definitely had to give it back to her after class, and as she looked at him with her narrow, bluish-gray-green eyes set above broad cheekbones, he tore himself forcibly out of his dream—because he had it now and wanted to hold on to it: the person and situation that she in fact so vividly reminded him of. (88–9, adapted)

(Dann schien es dem Träumenden, als befinde er sich auf dem Schulhof, wo er so viele Jahre hindurch die Pausen zwischen den Unterrichtsstunden verbracht, und sei im Begriffe, sich von Madame Chauchat, die ebenfalls zugegen war, einen Bleistift zu leihen. Sie gab ihn den rotgefärbten, nur noch halblangen in einem silbernen Crayon steckenden Stift, indem sie Hans Castorp mit angenehm heiserer Stimme ermahnte, ihn ihr nach der Stunde bestimmt zurückzugeben, und als sie ihn ansah, mit ihren schmalen blaugrünen Augen über den breiten Backenknochen, da riß er sich gewaltsam aus dem Traum empor, denn nun hatte er es und wollte es festhalten, woran und an wen sie ihn eigentlich so lebhaft erinnerte. (140))

This creates a kind of analepsis that merges with the narrative present: although Hans returns to the schoolyard of his childhood, he is now with Clawdia from the relative present. But the illogical and, as yet, unelucidated import of the dream restricts its temporal significance. The final line indicates that it in part stems from a memory, but Hans then apparently forgets his realization (as with his later snow dream discussed above). It is therefore a combined analepsis, acting as a time machine returning to a past location, and retrospection, as Hans in some sense remains in the relative present but looks back to times past.
Its later echo is, however, a more obvious analepsis and one, furthermore, that returns to multiple pasts. Suddenly struck by a nosebleed while out walking, Hans stops to rest by a stream and experiences part dream, (p.106) part memory, recalling his childhood infatuation and romantic climax with the schoolboy Pribislav Hippe:

‘Excuse me, could you lend me a pencil?’

And Pribislav looked at him out of Kirghiz eyes set above prominent cheekbones and in his pleasantly husky voice and without any astonishment—or at least without betraying any astonishment—he said, ‘Glad to. But be sure to give it back to me after class.’ And he pulled a pencil from his pocket, in a silver-plated holder with a ring you had to push up to make the reddish pencil emerge from its metal casing. (120)

(‘Entschuldige, kannst du mir einen Bleistift leihen?’

Und Pribislav sah ihn an mit seinen Kirgisenaugen über den vorstehenden Backenknochen und sprach zu ihm mit seiner angenehm heiseren Stimme, ohne Verwunderung oder doch ohne Verwunderung an den Tag zu legen.

‘Gern’, sagte er. ‘Du mußt ihn mir nach der Stunde aber bestimmt zurückgeben.’ Und zog sein Crayon aus der Tasche, ein versilbertes Crayon mit einem Ring, den man aufwärts schieben mußte, damit der rot gefärbte Stift aus der Metallhülse wachse. (187–8))
Where Webber reads this exchange as a fetishized substitution for sexual consummation, the symbolic interaction between the two scenes also has significant temporal value. Webber notes that Clawdia’s pencil is ‘a fragile version of the original (half-length in the dream and barely usable in reality)’. But the specificity of its temporal placement is also significant. What Webber calls the ‘original’ pencil is only original in terms of the chronology of events, but not, crucially, in terms of narrative order. The reader is introduced, first, to Clawdia’s pencil and eyes, where the resemblance she bears to Hippe, particularly the similarity of their ‘Kirghiz eyes’ (‘Kirgisenaugen’), instigates Hans’s attraction to her, and the symbolic pencil prompts the realization of this resemblance. The echo of their voices (which are both ‘pleasantly husky’ (‘mit angenehm heiserer Stimme’)) solidifies this link linguistically and—like Hans’s experience—aurally. It is only later that the Hippe dream-memory retroactively elucidates the significance of Clawdia, her eyes, and her pencil. This time the dream analeptically returns to and recalls both the original incident from reality—the exchange with Hippe in the schoolyard—and the dream incident with Clawdia. Due to its recreation of the school experience, it creates a narrative return rather than just a subjective recollection, indicating a shift not simply in perspective, but also in chronological location.
Furthermore, the similarities and differences between the two dream scenes add to their temporal effect. The exchange with Clawdia lacks the immediacy of the Hippe episode. The dialogue with Clawdia is told through indirect speech, whereas Hippe is given a direct voice. The immediacy of the direct speech and the later chronological placement in the narrative further confuse the novel’s time frame. The Hippe incident prompts the Clawdia dream, but then the Clawdia dream prompts the recollection of the Hippe incident. The analeptic function of the symbolic image then is anything but a straightforward analepsis in Genette’s sense as ‘any evocation after the fact of an event that took place earlier than the point in the story where we are at any given moment’. In these scenes, symbols and motifs act as catalysts for temporal shifts in the narrative. But rather than simply prompting a narrative return to a time before the main time frame, the interaction of symbolic images across time constructs Hans’s narrative temporality early in his stay in the sanatorium as one of dramatic oscillation. As he acclimatizes to life on the mountain, his ‘time’, like his temperature, struggles to find equilibrium.
Buddenbrooks and The Magic Mountain offer divergent depictions of narrative analepses, while both indicate the shifting degree of narratorial and character agency in presentations of subjective temporal experience. Their symbolic shifts across time reflect the priorities of their respective plots. The analepsis encapsulated in Hanno’s departure from Travemünde that so specifically echoes that of Tony years earlier emphasizes the novel’s stress on collective Buddenbrook experience, where their lives are consistently subsumed into the family agenda and generational continuity. In The Magic Mountain, however, where adherence to the Bildungsroman genre entails a concentration predominantly on Hans’s development, the protagonist appears to reign free over his oscillating and confused temporal shifts. Chronological and narrative orders do not coincide, but instead priority is given to Hans’s subjective temporal movements. Yet this contrasts with his failure to anticipate the future, as, for example, in his inability to read (or remember) the symbolic import of his snow dream. The narrative manoeuvres that shift between Hippe and Clawdia demonstrate the way in which Hans’s sense of time is characterized by realizing significance after the fact, never being able to ‘see it coming’. Due to the priority given to his subjective temporal experience, where narratorial interpretation is less paramount (compared with Buddenbrooks or Immensee), the reader also, to an extent, remains ignorant of the specific form developments will take. This is, however, complicated (p.108) by the historical hindsight we as readers have about the approach of the First World War, a complication to which I will return in Chapter 5 on History.

Meta-muthos: the temporal microcosm
Although the selection of works discussed here do not include specific narrative manoeuvres to a time beyond that of the main story, certain symbolic images contain microcosms of the plot structure that allow intimations of likely future developments. Aristotle’s theory of muthos (plot) offers a useful way of considering these temporal microcosms. Aristotle says ‘it is the plot which represents the action. By “plot” I mean here the arrangement of the incidents.’ In Chapter 7 of his Poetics, Aristotle explains that ‘[w]ell constructed plots must […] not only be orderly arranged but must also have a certain magnitude of their own […] they must have length but must be easily taken in by the memory’. In the temporal microcosms visible in Buddenbrooks and Immensee, symbolically loaded images reflective of the work’s wider plot structure are precisely ‘easily taken in’. Furthermore, in his analysis of Aristotle’s Poetics, Ricoeur notes that the time of muthos is ‘the work’s time, not the time of events in the world’, which means that ‘the character of necessity applies to the events that the plot makes contiguous with each other […] Vacuous times are excluded. We do not ask what the hero did between two events that would have been separated in his life.’ In Buddenbrooks and Immensee, the scenes in which a single image symbolically indicates the logical character of the entire plot necessarily exclude the ‘vacuous times’ mentioned by Ricoeur (even those that are perhaps included in the wider narrative, not as ‘events’ in themselves, but as episodes indicating the passing of time or development of character). This therefore places emphasis on the remaining elements, indicating the nature of the plot as a whole. These images, which form microcosms of the overall plot, act as components of the plot themselves, while also being about the plot. I therefore term such images ‘meta-muthos’. They present a more nuanced, temporally specific version of a mise en abyme. Where a mise en abyme generally refers to a smaller version of the type of object within an object, the point about meta-muthos is that this smaller version does not just refer to a particular object or scene within a narrative, (p.109) but also contains the plot shape of the entire narrative, thereby giving it far great power of prophecy.
Moments of meta-muthos in *Buddenbrooks* and *Immensee* allow the reader—but not the characters—a form of prolepsis without an actual narrative time-machine shift forwards out of order. This enables the narrative to take ‘an excursion into its own future to reveal later events before returning to the present of the tale to proceed with the sequence’, but only in a symbolic sense, where the emotional but not the actual outcome is foreshadowed. At these moments, the images encompass the overall plot structure, symbolically intimating the stories’ probable futures. Although the characters in both works participate in the construction or interpretation of these symbols—often demonstrating awareness of wider ramifications—they remain largely unaware of their temporal significance as plot devices. This then indicates the subjective temporal experience of the individuals involved, while modifying the narrative perception of time for the reader. Where Hans in *The Magic Mountain* failed to react to his symbolic anticipation of the future in the snow dream, Tony and Hanno in *Buddenbrooks*, and, to a lesser degree, Reinhard in *Immensee*, demonstrate a surprising degree of agency in the symbolic indication of futurity in the creations of meta-muthos. These images therefore indicate the way in which characters may collude in, while remaining largely unaware of, the shaping of their own temporal experiences.

The family book, in which the Buddenbrooks record all significant life events, forms a prominent motif that recurs throughout the narrative: ‘the well-known large copy-book with the pressed cover, gilt edges, and different types of paper’ (‘das wohlbekannte große Schreibheft mit gepreßtem Umschlag, goldenem Schnitt und verschiedenartigem Papier’) resembles the ‘well-known’ (‘wohlbekannte’) family, with its ‘pressed cover’ (‘gepreßtem Umschlag’) of social constraint, externally ‘gilt edges’ (‘goldenem Schnitt’) and ‘different types of’ (‘verschiedenartige[n]’) family members (Eng. 184, adapted; Ger. 172). David Leon Higdon notes the temporal significance of the family tree in John Galsworthy’s *The Man of Property*, which he considers to be an example of the ‘straight line’ of ‘process time’. This also has relevance for the Buddenbrook family book. Higdon considers the ‘image of organic growth […] the most important structural motif in *The Man of Property*':
Today, when a reader opens a volume of *The Forsyte Saga*, he immediately encounters an elaborate family tree stretching from 1741 to 1926 with numerous open dates continuing on into the 1930s. The births, marriages and deaths of six generations of Forsytes stand before the reader emphasising the family’s movement ‘forward’ through time.  

The Buddenbrook family book, however, offers a more complex view of time than simply an emphasis on forward fluidity. As Higdon observes of the Forsyte family tree, the Buddenbrook book also represents ‘organic growth’ as it, like the family themselves, evolves over time. The organic, changing nature of the book means that the characters are able to participate in the ‘telling’ of events. On two notable occasions furthermore, it is used as an anticipation of the future rather than a record of the past. In this way, the characters assume the role of narrator by transcribing their own futures and predicting narrative developments. The family book acts as a médiathèque as it presents the overarching plot in miniature, while also forming part of the plot; in effect, it is a plot component about the plot as a whole.

In the first instance, Tony resigns herself to family duty by abandoning Morten Schwarzkopf in favour of Bendix Grünlich. In an anti-romantic gesture, she does not convey her decision at once to Grünlich or her parents, but instead turns to the family book. After staring at the empty space beneath her own name for some time, the symbolic representation of her as yet unwritten future, Tony:

> grasped [...] the pen, plunged it rather than dipped it into the ink, and wrote, with her forefinger crooked, her hot head bent far over on her shoulder, in her awkward handwriting that climbed up the page from left to right:

> ‘Betrothed, on Sept. 22. 1845, to Herr Bendix Grünlich, Merchant, of Hamburg.’ (185)

(ergiff [...] die Feder, tauchte sie nicht, sondern stieß sie in das Tintenfaß und schrieb mit gekrümmtem Zeigefinger und tief auf die Schulter geneigtem, hitzigem Kopf, in ihrer ungelenken und schräg von links nach rechts emporfliegenden Schrift: 

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‘...Verlobte sich am 22. September 1845 mit Herrn Bendix Grünlich, Kaufmann zu Hamburg.’ (174)

Tony assumes the role of narrator and transcriber of time. As she constructs the present through the narrative substitution of the event itself, she also participates in the symbolic prediction of the future. Her hesitant hand and her deflated posture bear witness to the inevitable character of her ill-founded marriage to Grünlich. Higdon observes that time in *The Forsyte Saga* is propelled by the departure and completion of life events, where

an engagement comes as the fulfilment of a courtship;  
marriage, especially a ceremony conducted according to Forsyte etiquette, as the culmination of an engagement;  
birth fulfilling a pregnancy; and death at the end of a life  
—preferably a long and profitable one.26

Although this observation works too with *Buddenbrooks*, Tony’s act in this instance prioritizes her transcription of the event over its actual occurrence, emphasizing her temporal agency, while allowing the symbolic signification of her attitude to participate in future prophecy.
Tony’s prophecy in narrative form is later echoed by Hanno. Just as her written enactment was symbolically laden, so too is his. But where Tony considers the blank space representing her future, Hanno’s eyes peruse the past. After little deliberation, and behaving in a characteristically ‘dreamy’ (‘verträumt’) and ‘thoughtless’ (‘gedankenlos’) manner, Hanno ‘made […] with the gold pen a beautiful, clean double line diagonally across the entire page, the upper one a little stronger than the lower, just as he had been taught to embellish every page of his arithmetic book’ (597, adapted) (‘zog […] mit der Goldfeder einen schönen, sauberen Doppelstrich quer über das ganze Blatt hinüber, die obere Linie ein wenig stärker als die untere, so, wie er jede Seite seines Rechenheftes verzieren mußte…’ (575)). When confronted by his angry father, Hanno’s pitiful defence is: ‘I thought—I thought—there was nothing else coming’ (597) (‘Ich glaubte…ich glaubte…es käme nichts mehr…’ (576)).

Hanno, too, employs the symbolic narrative act to anticipate his future. In both cases, the written prophecies are enhanced by the manner in which they are written. Tony’s resignation anticipates her dutiful but unhappy marriage, while Hanno’s childish, dreamy, thoughtless expectation that with him ends the Buddenbrook lineage foreshadows the way in which, when his typhus at the end of the novel reaches the ‘moment of decision’ (847, adapted) (‘Zeitpunkt der Entscheidung’ (830)), he implicitly just gives up on life.

The characters thus become their own narrators and, by attributing symbolic significance to their actions, give accurate predictions of the paths their futures will take. But this is enabled through the construction of narrative in miniature. The meta-muthos encompassed in this object includes the likely outcome of the narrative as a whole and therefore accurately anticipates the future. Although both characters act as agents (p.112) in the writing of their destinies, they remain unaware of the power of their symbolic attitudes to prophecy. The manner of their inscriptions signals to the reader likely futures, but the characters do not realize how their small gestures are already playing a role in the construction of these futures.
Three examples of meta-muthos are visible in Immensee that contrast with its exhibition in Buddenbrooks. Where Tony and Hanno Buddenbrook collude in the construction of their symbolic microcosms, but do not perceive the power of prophecy symbolized in their actions, Storm’s characters in Immensee specifically observe symbolic significance in seemingly innocuous images that they have not themselves created. At the same time, Reinhard’s reading of the symbolic mise en abymes shows a subtle variance from the symbolic reading we are perhaps encouraged to perceive. The instances of meta-muthos in Immensee therefore do not just indicate likely future developments, but, through their interaction, they also uncover the protagonist’s subjective view of the past.

Reinhard visits ‘Immensee’, where Erich and Elisabeth now live together, and one night he goes for a swim in the lake and attempts to reach an elusive water lily. He explicitly imbues this quest with supplementary significance. The symbolic water lily recalls both the recent and distant past, and the distinction between these two modes of recollection is central to the passage’s symbolic and temporal identity:

Just a stone’s throw from the shore he could make out the shape of a white water lily. All at once the desire seized him to see it from close by [...] Then suddenly the bed of the lake fell away, the water swirled over him, and it was some time before he came to the surface again. [...] Finally he had come so close to the flower that he could distinguish the silvery leaves clearly in the moonlight; but at that moment he felt suddenly as if he were entangled in a net [...] Everything suddenly seemed so uncanny in this strange element that he forcefully tore the mesh of the plants, and in breathless haste swam towards the shore. When he looked back from here at the lake the lily was, as before, far away and solitary out in the dark depths.—He dressed himself and went slowly back to the house. (36–7, adapted)
(Einen Steinwurf vom Lande konnte er eine weiße Wasserlilie erkennen. Auf einmal wandelte ihn die Lust an, sie in der Nähe zu sehen; [...] Dann war es plötzlich unter ihm weg, die Wasser quirlten über ihm zusammen, und es dauerte eine Zeitlang, ehe er wieder auf die Oberfläche kam [...]. Endlich war er der Blume so nahe gekommen, daß er die silbernen Blätter deutlich im Mondlicht unterscheiden konnte; zugleich aber fühlte er sich wie in einem Netz verstrickt; [...] es wurde ihm plötzlich so unheimlich in dem fremden Elemente, daß er mit Gewalt das Gestrick der Pflanzen zerriß und in atemloser Hast dem Lande zuschwamm. Als er von hier auf den See zurückblickte, lag die Lilie wie zuvor fern und einsam über der dunkeln Tiefe.—Er kleidete sich an und ging langsam nach Hause zurück. (322–3))

(p.113) Erich later asks Reinhard, ‘What the devil did you want with the water lily?’ (‘Was Tausend hattest du denn mit der Wasserlilie zu tun?’) and Reinhard’s reply could just as easily apply to Elisabeth: ‘I knew her [it] once upon a time [...] But that was long ago’ (37) (‘Ich habe sie früher einmal gekannt [...] es ist aber schon lange her’ (323); the German pronoun ‘sie’ retains greater ambiguity than the English ‘her’).

The most recent incident that this episode echoes occurs as Reinhard is caught in the rain, walking back to the house:

He sought shelter under a lime tree at the water’s edge, but the heavy raindrops soon beat through the leaves. Soaked through as he was, he resigned himself and set out slowly once more on his way home. It was almost dark; the rain was falling now with ever greater force. As he approached the evening bench he thought he could discern, between the shimmering birch trunks, a white-clad female form. [...] He thought it was Elisabeth. But when he quickened his pace to reach her and accompany her back to the house through the garden, she slowly turned away and disappeared in the dark of the side paths. (32, adapted)
(Er suchte Schutz unter einer am Wasser stehenden Linde; aber die schweren Tropfen schlugen bald durch die Blätter. Durchnässt wie er war, ergab er sich darein und setzte langsam seinen Rückweg fort. Es war fast dunkel; der Regen fiel immer dichter. Als er sich der Abendbank näherte, glaubte er zwischen den schimmernden Birkenstämmen eine weiße Frauengestalt zu unterscheiden. […] Er glaubte, es sei Elisabeth. Als er aber rascher zuschritt, um sie zu erreichen und dann mit ihr zusammen durch den Garten ins Haus zurückzukehren, wandte sie sich langsam ab und verschwand in die dunkeln Seitengänge. (319))

Not only is the imagery of a distant, but desirable, white figure palpably similar to the water lily, but the surroundings too imbue the two scenes with an added symbolic link. It is so wet in the rain that Reinhard is almost as drenched as in the lake; where the leaves form the deceptively calm surface of the lake, the trees form a dubious shelter as the rain falls through them. In both episodes darkness pervades, enhancing the silvery shimmer of the leaves on the lake, or the ‘shimmering birch trunks’ in the rain. Similarly, both form a narrative microcosm, where the overall plot is reduced into an image of unreachable desire. That Reinhard specifically reads significance into his search for the water lily, implicitly intertwining it with his desire for Elisabeth (which is indeed the symbolic cognate in closest proximity to this scene), indicates his subjective retrospective reading of their relationship. In his attempt to reach the woman in white, he is the active agent, who—despite difficult circumstances—apparently does all he can to attain her. It is Elisabeth, however; who responds with confusing signals, apparent ambivalence and eventual rejection.
But this quest for the water lily also echoes a previous instance of meta-muthos, where a symbolic image contains the plot progression in miniature and thus anticipates the ending. In their youth, Reinhard and Elisabeth embark on a search for strawberries that again holds explicit supplementary significance. Beyond the obviously erotic undertones of the desired fruit in the dense forest, the old man who sends the couple on the search explicitly expands it into a wider life-lesson. He warns ‘If you’re not clever enough, then you’ll have to eat your bread dry; that’s how it always is in life […] And now you’ve had more than enough good advice for one day; if as well you find some strawberries too, you will get through life as far as today is concerned!’ (10, adapted) (‘wer ungeschickt ist, muß sein Brot trocken essen; so geht es überall im Leben […] Und nun habt ihr für diesen Tag gute Lehren genug; wenn ihr nun noch Erdbeeren dazu habt, so werdet ihr für heute schon durchs Leben kommen’ (300–1)).

Just as with the water lily, the characters are aware of an added symbolic significance, although they fail to perceive the temporal ramifications of this significance. This creates a pattern of ‘prefiguration’. 27 John J. White suggests that mythological allusion (as will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 4) can act as kind of prefiguration by creating expectations of a structural or thematic echo of known mythic tales. He calls prefiguration without recourse to recognizable myths ‘internal prefiguration’, citing Tonio Kröger as an example:

[the] technique of internal prefiguration, allowing a character to appear early in the work and prefigure others who appear later, is well known to readers of Tonio Kröger. In this Novelle, the first dance acts as a prefiguration of the second one in Denmark. Hans and Inge are prefigurations of the Danish couple. 28
But although the first appearance of Hans and Inge in *Tonio Kröger* may prefigure the second, it does not inevitably point to it because it is not palpably symbolic of events yet to come; that is, when reading the first event, we do not have a sense that the incident will recur. The stronger temporal pull is instead the recollective quality of the second appearance: when the second dance and the apparent doppelgänger of Hans and Inge appear, they take us back to their first iterations. The same cannot be said for *Immensee*, however. Here, Storm employs ‘internal prefiguration’ to significant temporal effect. Part of this effect stems from the construction of the chronotope, where space is temporalized and time is spatialized (p.115) (to return to the words of Hubert Ohl, discussed in Chapter 1). In the late eighteenth century, Johann Gottfried Herder discussed the intertwining of time and space with reference to Kant’s epistemology, suggesting that every object or entity has a time of its own:

In effect every changing thing contains its own measure of its own times; this would be true even if nothing else were there; no two things in the world have the same measurement of time. My pulse, the step or flight of my thoughts is not a temporal measurement for others; the current of a stream, the growth of a tree is not a temporal measurer for all streams, trees and plants. […] We may say (simply and boldly) that at any time, there are infinitely many times in the universe; the time that we think of as a measurement for everyone and everything is just a relative measure of our thoughts, just as infinite space is for the entirety of all single spaces. Like infinite space, its companion immense time, as the measurement and the compass of all times, is an illusion.
(Eigentlich hat jedes veränderliche Ding das Maß seiner Zeit in sich; dies bestehet, wenn auch kein anderes da wäre; keine zwei Dinge der Welt haben dasselbe Maß der Zeit. Mein Pulsschlag, der Schritt oder Flug meiner Gedanken ist kein Zeitmaß für andre; der Lauf Eines Stromes, das Wachstum Eines Baums ist kein Zeitmesser für alle Ströme, Bäume und Pflanzen. [...] Es gibt also (man kann es eigentlich und kühn sagen) im Universum zu Einer Zeit unzählbar-viele Zeiten; die Zeit, die wir uns als das Maß Aller denken, ist bloß ein Verhältnismaß unserer Gedanken, wie es bei der Gesamtheit aller Orter einzelner Wesen des Universums jener Endlose Raum war. Wie dieser, so wird auch seine Genossin, die ungeheure Zeit, das Maß und der Umfang aller Zeiten, ein Wahnbild.)

Such temporalized spaces and spatialized times in Immensee are more complicated versions of Bakhtin’s ‘chronotope’. Bakhtin says:

In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the the movements of time, plot and history.

Chronotopic images in Immensee such as the forest with the elusive strawberries or the lake with the elusive water lily do not simply portray the interrelation of space and time as suggested by Bakhtin, or the multiplicity of times in multiple entities as identified by Herder; instead they also further a symbolically charged temporal momentum. It is because of their supplementary meaning that they move time in different, complex directions. It is on this tradition that Mann builds.
When Reinhard and Elisabeth search for strawberries, the surroundings are dense and impenetrable, just as their later echo in Reinhard’s quest for the water lily: ‘And into the forest they went, deeper and deeper, through damp, impenetrable shadows of trees’ (10) (‘Dann gingen sie in den Wald hinein, tiefer und tiefer; durch feuchte undurchdringliche Baumschatten’ (301)); ‘the cry of the falcons’ (‘das Geschrei der Falken’) anticipates the similarly disembodied sound of ‘a fish jumping’ (36) (‘das Springen eines Fisches’ (323)) in the lake; here, too, a watery context is metaphorically suggested as Elisabeth’s ‘lovely little head hardly swam above the tops of the bracken’ (11) (‘feines Köpfchen schwamm nur kaum über den Spitzen der Farrenkräuter’ (301)). On this occasion, the dynamic, the agency, and thus the sense of culpability, are somewhat different. Reinhard metaphorically promises fulfilment—both sexual and material—and Elisabeth passively follows him. This is *his* failure, rather than, as in the later scene in the rain, her decision. All three scenes echo the wider narrative structure, painfully repeating the construction of desire, attempted fulfilment, and inevitable disappointment. Through their interaction, they disclose Reinhard’s subtle self-mitigation and subjective temporal experience, as he remains unable to anticipate the inevitable failure of the future, or to realize his role in the failure of the past.
Symbolism is therefore central to the construction of future prophecy contained in instances of meta-muthos. It does, however, operate differently in Buddenbrooks and Immensee, and this difference again enhances wider perceptions of subjective experience and narrative priorities. In Buddenbrooks, the symbolic aspect of the microcosmic family book indicates not only the characters’ attitudes in the present, but also the likely form of their declining futures. Although the actual events of the meta-muthos scenes in Immensee do, like the Buddenbrook family book, depict the overall plot structure in miniature, the symbolism surrounding the event has an additional retrospective, rather than anticipatory, effect. In Storm’s novella, it symbolically links disparate times, thereby bringing into focus a comparison of early warning signals about the inevitably tragic nature of Reinhard and Elisabeth’s relationship with his own underlying assumptions about the cause for this decline. Meta-muthos functions mainly as a symbolic substitute for narrative prolepsis. In its encompassment of the principal aspects of plot, it includes the narrative’s emotional outcome. But the symbolic surroundings of these scenes have further temporal impact, either by implying causations for future developments or indicating—through links over time—subjective readings of the past.

(p.117) Webs of allusion: multiple times
Unlike Immensee, Mann’s novella Tonio Kröger largely employs Stanzel’s ‘first-person narrative situation’ (‘personale Erzählsituation’) (discussed above). Tonio Kröger is in effect Immensee turned inside out: Mann takes the broad plot structure of Storm’s novella, with the tale of the artist’s alienation and failed expression, and fleshes it out with a subjective interior, an interior that is not visible in Storm’s story. Although Tonio Kröger includes narrative ellipses much like Immensee, where large stretches of time are not narrated, there are few other significant temporal manoeuvres and the work follows a chronologically linear structure. The symbolic links enmeshed across Tonio Kröger, however, in fact undermine this apparent linearity and instead create subjective experience infused with multiple temporal perspectives. Part of the difference in temporal structure lies in the difference of context. Where Immensee can be seen to respond to the new medium of photography, combining spatialization and vivification in literary images, Mann’s
context of writing at the turn of the century shows an attempt to imbue stasis with temporality. Here too it is located in the medium of photography. Tonio is hurt by his friend Hans’s lack of interest in literature; Hans prefers to look at his books of horses: ‘The illustrations in them are really super [...] They’re instantaneous photographs, so you can see the horses trotting and galloping and jumping, in all positions—you can never see them like that in real life because they move so fast’ (142) (‘Famose Abbildungen sind darin [...]. Es sind Augenblicks-Photographien, und man sieht die Gäule im Trab und im Galopp und im Sprunge, in allen Stellungen, die man in Wirklichkeit gar nicht zu sehen bekommt, weil es zu schnell geht’ (250)). T. J. Reed suggests that the book to which Hans is referring might be Eadweard Muybridge’s *Animal Locomotion* of 1887, which depicted a series of photographs of horses ‘in all positions’ (‘in allen Stellungen’), changing slightly over time in order to convey a sense of movement. This shift from the static picture with which *Immensee* opens to a depiction of time through a series of snapshots exemplifies a wider shift in narrative temporalization from Storm’s writing to Mann’s. The model constructed by reference to Muybridge’s book suggests an overall mode for reading time in *Tonio Kröger*: time is told through a series of snapshots progressing over time through Tonio’s life. The use of symbolic images and repeated motifs furthers this temporal movement. Several symbols occur across the narrative (p.118) either through obvious repetition or through subtler shared description. Rather than, as in *Immensee*, simply standing for something else—a starkly obvious something else in most cases—the repeated symbolic images form a web of connection, thus imbuing each iteration with multilayered associations and occasionally also undercutting narrative authority.

When Tonio indicates the symbolic value of the walnut tree, his violin, the fountain, and the sea, he groups them together as several important components of his inner life and poetry. On later mentions, the images enter into dialogue with each other through the employment of symbolic similarity. First of all, Tonio suggests that these elements represent for him an escape from the real world and the harsh public gaze. In the acutely uncomfortable dancing class, he longs for the solace of his walnut tree, thereby creating an imagined parallel time:
Why, why was he here? Why was he not sitting at the window in his own room, reading Storm’s *Immensee* and occasionally glancing out into the garden where it lay in the evening light, with the old walnut tree and its heavy creaking branches? That was where he should have been. Let the others dance and enjoy themselves and be good at it!… (150)

(Warum, warum war er hier? Warum saß er nicht in seiner Stube am Fenster und las in Storms ‘*Immensee*’ und blickte hie und da in den abendlichen Garten hinaus, wo der alte Walnußbaum schwerfällig knarrte? Das wäre sein Platz gewesen. Mochten die anderen tanzen und frisch und geschickt bei der Sache sein!… (260))

By making his protagonist read *Immensee*, Mann constructs an explicit dialogue with Storm’s novella, while blurring the line between external and internal; the emphasis this places on *Immensee*’s fictionality ironically reflects back on *Tonio Kröger* and creates a further layer of interpretive possibility with the mise en abyme text within text. Tonio, moreover, repeatedly cites lines from a poem by Storm, thus creating a kind of refrain that recurs throughout the story: ‘I long to sleep, to sleep, but you must dance’ (149, 191) (‘Ich möchte schlafen, aber du mußt tanzen’ (259, 314)). And yet, through the subjective description he later gives to his symbols, Tonio undermines the dichotomy he has just set up. Far from representing the comforting opposite of the performative, exclusive, marginalizing dance class, his own symbols—his walnut tree, the fountain, his violin, and the sea—in fact merge with the dancers. His violin playing suggestively elicits a dancing response:

when he wandered round his own room with his violin (for he played the violin) and drew from it notes of such tenderness as only he could draw, notes which he mingled with the rippling sound of the fountain down in the garden as it leapt and danced under the branches of the old walnut tree…(139, my italics)
(p.119) (wenn er mit seiner Geige (denn er spielte die Geige) in seinem Zimmer umherging und die Töne, so weich, wie er sie nur hervorzubringen vermochte, in das Plätschern des Springstrahles hinein erklingen ließ, der drunten im Garten unter den Zweigen des alten Walnußbaumes tänzelnd emporstieg... (246, my italics))

At this moment the dominant time is that of violin playing while the walnut tree and fountain form the audience for Tonio’s performance. This is, however, not a single, specific occurrence, but a description of general habit, notably situated within daydreaming while walking home with Hans. Once again, Tonio’s symbols form an imagined parallel time, one, furthermore, that suggestively wishes to dominate, while in fact being relegated to imagination.

The sea then repeats this intertwining image of Tonio’s chosen symbols with the social threat encompassed in dancing. As he makes his voyage to Denmark, the sea assumes the disruptive role of dancing Inge, also preventing sleep, as in the repeated refrain from Storm’s poem:

Tonio Kröger lay down on the narrow bunk in his cabin, but could not sleep. The strong gale with its sharp tang had strangely excited him, and his heart beat anxiously, as if troubled by the expectation of some sweet experience [...] Clouds were racing across the moon. The sea was dancing.

(180, my italics)

(Tonio Kröger streckte sich in seiner Koje auf der schmalen Bettstatt aus, aber er fand keine Ruhe. Der strenge Wind und sein herbes Arom hatten ihn seltsam erregt, und sein Herz war unruhig wie in ängstlicher Erwartung von etwas Süßem [...] Wolken jagten am Monde vorbei. Das Meer tanzte.

(299, my italics))
Despite initially constructing an apparent dichotomy between the desirable but excluding society and the images of the sea, tree, fountain, and violin close to his heart, Tonio’s personifying description of these images indicates that they are more symbolically akin to the alienating society than he realizes. Due to the particular perspective of Tonio Kröger, with its use of ‘fixed internal focalization’ (an unwavering priority given to Tonio’s subjective view), Tonio is able, via the narrator, to link seemingly disparate images and their distinct temporal locations through the repetition of the dancing motif.\(^{32}\)

In this way, Mann creates a web of allusion, where distant times (both chronologically and across the narrative), spanning from childhood, through his return home, to the repetition of the dance in the Danish hotel, are combined. Hermann Kurzke observes the repetitive form of the novella’s plot, where each episode interacts with scenes elsewhere across the narrative, thus presenting an almost musical leitmotif structure:

> Leitmotifs will only be recognized as such through their repetition. Repetitions of prefigurative original situations thus shape the structure of Tonio Kröger [...] From this structure of repetition a certain kind of stasis emerges.

\(^{(Leitmotive werden als solche erkennbar durch Wiederholung. Wiederholungen von präfigurativen Ursituationen prägen infolgedessen die Struktur des Tonio Kröger [...] Aus dieser Wiederholungsstruktur geht eine gewisse Statik der Erzählung hervor.}^{33}\)
Kurzke notes the stasis that this leitmotif structure gives to the overarching narrative temporality, and the more minute linguistic continuities across apparently diverse symbols seemingly support this. But they also indicate Tonio’s development and increasing self-discovery. In the first dancing class, he longs to be elsewhere, but he eventually elects to return to the dance of his own volition later in life, coming to recognize the magnetism and artistic profitability of suffering and marginality. In this sense, the web of allusion subtly constructed through shared descriptions suggests an overriding continuity of narrative temporality, apparently indicating a lack of forward momentum, while in fact the interaction it opens up between distinct objects highlights Tonio’s changing attitude and thereby confirms a sense of progression.

Webs of illusion: confusing times
Symbols and Motifs

When symbolic networks across time indicate unarticulated emotional undercurrents, they sometimes shift from webs of allusion to webs of illusion. By this I mean that, rather than echoing previous parts of the narrative, symbolic images may instead indicate the characters’ confused senses of time and inability to distinguish between past, present, and future. In their approach to ‘Surface Reading’, Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus attempt to debunk the association of ‘surface’ with ‘the superficial and deceptive, with what can be perceived without close examination and, implicitly, would turn out to be false upon closer scrutiny’. This is particularly relevant for considerations of Immensee and Tonio Kröger as representatives of the traditionally and emphatically ‘symptomatic’ novella genre. As Webber observes, ‘access to the thinking of individuals faced with the crisis situations of Novelle narratives is typically absent, partial or switched to encoded forms’, and consequently, ‘the reader is placed in the position of analyst, aiming to reconstruct some sort of sustained narrative meaning out of the symptomatic evidence’. But at times, the symptomatic reading that is encouraged by the surface appearance of symbols can offer a distorted view of temporal experience. Symbols can thus ironically assume the ‘deceptive’ connotations of ‘surface’ mentioned by Best and Marcus. In these two novellas, and similarly visible in The Magic Mountain, the characters occasionally articulate, and the narrators often intimate, symbolic links over time, or symbolic modes of reading time, that disrupt general temporal cohesion and replace it with subjective temporal confusion. The eye and pencil motifs in The Magic Mountain do not just prompt narrative manoeuvres that oscillate between multiple times, past, present, and future, as discussed above, but, when their symbolic significance is constructed and recognized by Hans rather than the narrator, they also uncover his confused perception of time in the present. Moreover, the web of illusion in Immensee does not simply span the hermetic space of the narrative, but its intertextual interaction with Tonio Kröger recolours its apparent construction of symbolic timing. Temporal experience as shaped through symbolic images therefore has to be read as part of a wider whole. Considered in context, multi-perspectival attempts at ‘telling the time’ (by characters and narrators) can disclose internal contradictions.
For Hans in *The Magic Mountain*, these motifs create the illusion of temporal proximity, where in fact there is significant temporal distance. He cannot decide if he is attracted to Claudio because of the resemblance she bears to Hippe, ‘or maybe that’s why I was suddenly so interested in him’ (121) (‘oder vielleicht auch: habe ich mich darum so für ihn interessiert?’ (189)). As Hans orchestrates a flirtatious exchange of glances with Claudio across the dining room, the narrator articulates Hans’s conviction that, ‘if she thought him childish, she was mistaken’ (139) (‘wenn sie ihn für kindlich hielt, so täuschte sie sich’ (217)). But it is the image of the ‘Kirghiz eyes’ (‘Kirgisenaugen’), which are the object of this sexually charged exchange, that refers the reader back to Hans’s clearly ‘childish’ (‘kindlich[e]’) love for Hippe. The emotional consummation Hans senses as he finally has cause to interact with Hippe by borrowing his pencil in a school drawing class is emphatically childish in its setting and in its reliance on symbolic substitution of actual physical consummation. (p.122) Here, ‘Pribislav looked at him out of Kirghiz eyes’ (120) ‘Pribislav sah ihn an mit seinen Kirgisenaugen’, intertwining the allure of the eyes with childish flirtation (187).
Hans’s awareness of the pencil’s symbolic significance and his collusion in its construction further undermine any sense of forward momentum. Indeed, in the pivotal night of the carnival in the sanatorium, where traditional observance of social rules is suspended, the pencil makes a reappearance. Desperate to join in the sketching game that forms part of the festivities, Hans searches everywhere for a pencil. Finally, he encounters Clawdia, who, at his request, produces one. Hans responds, ‘You see, I knew it—I knew you’d have one’ (327) (‘siehst du wohl, ich wußte doch, daß du einen haben würdest’ (505)). At this juncture, his face is drained of blood: ‘He was pale as death, as pale as on the day when he had returned from his solitary walk, still splattered with blood, to attend the lecture’ (327) (‘er war totenbleich, so bleich wie damals, als er blutbesudelt von seinem Einzelspaziergang zur Konferenz gekommen war’ (504)). The pencil Clawdia offers is notably delicate, whereas ‘that pencil long ago, the first one, had been more straightforward, handier’ (327) (‘der Bleistift von damals, der erste, war handlich-rechtschaffener gewesen’ (505)). This explicitly compares it to Hippe’s original iteration of the pencil, while implicitly it recalls the early dream sequence with Clawdia through its resemblance to that version of the pencil. It indicates Hans’s uncannily accurate anticipation of the very type of pencil Clawdia would later give him. The familiar ‘du’ form on which Hans insists during ‘Walpurgis Night’ (‘Walpurgisnacht’) further recalls the childhood exchange he had with Hippe. Hans’s recognition of the pencil as a motif illustrates his collusion in temporal construction and his increasing inability to perceive distinct temporal periods. Dorrit Cohn observes the increasing stasis of Hans’s temporal experience: ‘for Hans approaching the end of his fictional life […] a long span of clock time increasingly corresponds to a small amount of experienced time; experienced time moves slower than clock time; clock time appears contracted, at the limit to zero’. But Hans’s symbolic readings of the eye and pencil motifs suggest that time appears almost to collapse entirely. He loses sense of the distinction between separate times, lured by the superficial similarity of his two lovers and by the literary device of the motif, and prioritizes subjective experience over narrative linearity.
A very different kind of temporal confusion is visible in *Immensee* and *Tonio Kröger*. Since Mann considered *Tonio Kröger* to be *Immensee* thrust (p.123) into modernity, he in effect offers us an intertextual interpretation of Storm’s novella, which has ramifications for the subjective temporal experience of both works. Like Reinhard in *Immensee*, Tonio Kröger does indeed experience the pain of unarticulated and implicitly unrequited love during childhood, first for Hans Hansen and later for Ingeborg Holm. Where Reinhard’s expression falls silent as he progresses into adulthood in *Immensee*, Tonio becomes explicitly aware that ‘his heart was dead and had no love in it’ (154) (‘sein Herz tot und ohne Liebe war’ (264)). Tonio’s inner, subjective view is the only one we are given throughout the narrative. We learn details of his superficial appearance indirectly as the text holds up metaphorical mirrors, as in the case of mistaken identity with the criminal upon his return to his home town after years of absence or through the implicit contrast with the blond-haired, blue-eyed Hans and Inge. It is as though Mann exploits the superficiality of Storm’s *Immensee* in order to flesh out the interiority of *Tonio Kröger*. *Immensee* offers what is visible to everyone but gives no privileged insight into the characters’ inner lives, despite the frame narrative of retrospection, suggesting—but not delivering—Reinhard’s personal recollection of the past.
Although Tonio, like Reinhard, experiences romantic rejection, he makes retroactive sense of it by deeming it artistically profitable. He sees literature as a curse that stems from a feeling of being ‘a marked man, mysteriously different from other people, from ordinary normal folk’, ‘a feeling of being apart, of not belonging’ (159–60), (‘in einem rätselhaften Gegensatz zu den anderen, den Gewöhnlichen, den Ordentlichen’, ‘das Gefühl der Separation und Unzugehörigkeit’ (272)). Indeed, his return to the visions of Hans and Inge in the Danish hotel is prompted by listlessness and a lull in artistic inspiration. He wishes to be marginalized and rejected once more in order to reap the creative gain; it does not even matter that the blond couple may not be Inge and Hans, but simply that they elicit the same mixture of longing and otherness that reignites Tonio’s heart: ‘Yes, it was all as it had been long ago, and he was happy as he had been long ago. For his heart was alive’ (192) (‘Ja, wie damals war es, und er war glücklich wie damals. Denn sein Herz lebte’ (315)). In terms of superficial plot, the stories follow an almost identical trajectory: childhood infatuation, growing maturity, return, reignition, rejection, and resignation. This apparent twist on the emotional undercurrent of Storm’s narrative suggests a new way of considering the symbolic resolution of Immensee.
Where symbols are necessary in Immensee to indicate unarticulatable emotional conclusions and thus ‘make sense’ of time, their intertextual correspondence with Tonio Kröger then modifies the ostensible meaning (p.124) of these closures. For Reinhard, symbols create a spurious resolution, retroactively inflecting the rest of the narrative with a subjective meaning that allows closure. But this restoration of order is temporary. The symbols undercut their own apparent meaning and alter conceptions of time intra-textually, before being modified once more intertextually by the rereading in Tonio Kröger. In the penultimate scene of Immensee, as Reinhard leaves Elisabeth for the final time, pathetic fallacy appears to mark the return of social order. Although Elisabeth ‘looked at him with lifeless eyes’ (‘sah ihn mit toten Augen an’), the world appears renewed as the lovers bypass social taboos and fail to express what would now be adulterous love: ‘Outside lay the world in the fresh light of morning, the dewdrops, hanging in the spiders’ webs, glistened in the first rays of sun’ (42) (‘Draußen lag die Welt im frischen Morgenlichte, die Tauperlen, die in den Spinngeweben hingen, blitzen in den ersten Sonnenstrahlen’ (327)). This puts Reinhard’s pain into perspective, symbolically suggesting hope for redemption and natural renewal. It is, however, then unsettled by the personal darkness in which he finds himself in the final scene with a return to the frame narrative in the relative present. Here, even the moon—the pale reflection of the ‘rays of sun’—‘shone no longer through the window-panes, all had grown dark’ (43) (‘schien nicht mehr in die Fensterscheiben, es war dunkel geworden’ (327)). The only hope for Reinhard is an acceptance of the dim and artificial light brought by his housekeeper, which again, in contrast to Tonio, emphasizes his passivity as a character and narratorial agent. Where Tonio is given explicit voice with which to work through and comprehend his suffering, Immensee allows only insinuations of social justification in the face of private misery.
But read in conjunction, the symbolic similarities of the works’ endings suggest an alternative reading of the tension between social resolution and personal resignation in *Immensee*. *Tonio Kröger* also (almost) ends in the private darkness of the hotel room: ‘Round about him there was silence and darkness.’ (193) (‘Um ihn war es still und dunkel’ (316)). This recalls Reinhard’s room at the beginning and end of the narrative—the location of his retrospection—which was similarly ‘cosy and quiet’ (the German ‘heimlich’ also has connotations of ‘secret’ as well as ‘homely’, 3) (‘heimlich und still’ (296)). The beginning of *Immensee*, which is also chronologically the end, shows the narrative analepsis prompted by Reinhard’s quiet utterance of “Elisabeth!” [...] And as he spoke, time shifted and he found himself once more in the days of his youth’ (4) (“Elisabeth!” [...] und wie er das Wort gesprochen, war die Zeit verwandelt—er war in seiner Jugend’ (4)). Tonio repeats this sense of cyclicity—both intertextually by continuing *Immensee*’s cycle and intratextually by returning in memory to the beginning once more—as he (p.125) ‘whispered two names into his pillow, whispered those few chaste northern syllables [...] He looked back over the years that had passed between then and now’ (192–3) (‘flüsterte zwei Namen in das Kissen hinein, diese paar keuschen, nordischen Silben [...] Er blickte zurück auf die Jahre seit damals bis auf diesen Tag’ (316)). Reinhard’s apparent despondency suggested through symbolism is perhaps, as with Tonio, nothing more than self-imposed romanticized suffering. Although *Immensee* ends at this juncture, *Tonio Kröger* then continues with Tonio’s letter to Liseweta, giving Tonio unchallenged narrative authority, and allowing a positive resolution.
The symbolic anti-resolution in *Immensee* retroactively tinges the narrative with a profound sense of tragic failure, confirming the melancholy inevitability set up by the repeated exhibition of *meta-muthos* discussed above. But Mann’s rereading that turns *Immensee* inside out and fleshes it with interiority in *Tonio Kröger* alters this symbolic significance and instead renders the darkness and isolation consoling and appropriate for the suffering artist. The tension between the social restoration of ‘normality’ and Reinhard’s personal loss, which indicates two disparate readings of time—one of renewal and one indicating long emotional shadows—creates a temporally confusing conclusion. But a co-reading with *Tonio Kröger* relieves—or perhaps furthers—this confusion, by suggesting that the symbolic discordance between Reinhard and the wider world is purely superficial and not demonstrative of the deeper interiority of subjective experience. This web of illusion is therefore constructed across separate texts rather than within a single narrative, as in Hans’s temporal confusions in *The Magic Mountain*. But it too indicates tensions between narratorial voice and character experience, as well as indicating the multiplicity of ways of reading symbolic time.

Conclusion
The consideration of symbols and motifs in this chapter signalled a move from character temporal experience to reader temporal experience. Images with symbolic import and motifs gaining significance through repetition over time represent narratorial devices that largely occur beyond the consciousness of the characters. The focus also involved a shift to a broader consideration of narrative structure, because such symbolic images commune with one another over time, and in so doing imbue the narrative with a richer mesh of relations. This mesh of relations serves as a model for the threefold temporal experience of life: what Husserl discusses as the competing tensions in the present of retention of past experience and (p.126) protention into the future, or Ricoeur’s narrative model of ‘refigured time’, ‘configured time’, and ‘prefigured time’.\textsuperscript{37} Detmers and Ostheimer suggest that Ricoeur’s model identifies a ‘relational-dynamic configuration of plot’ (‘relational-dynamische Handlungskonfiguration’).\textsuperscript{38} This kind of relational-dynamic configuration of plot is what we witness with the intermeshed web of symbolic images and objects. Rather than the complex and changing multiplicity of times and paces identified in Chapter 2 in scenes of performance, the symbolic images discussed in this chapter send time in multiple directions simultaneously. This adds further layers of nuance to existing models of temporal analysis in narrative: it suggests new versions of what Genette identified as prolepses and analepses, and complicates Bakhtin’s concept of the chronotope. Although novella theory has extensively discussed devices such as prefiguration, the analysis undertaken here demonstrates that symbols and motifs have much greater powers of temporal drive and dynamism than simply intimating possible emotional developments or potential plot echoes. Time in narrative not only moves at changing speeds according to changing perspectives, it also travels in multiple directions without explicit time-machine shifts to the past or future.
The reader’s sense of time in narrative is, then, informed not only by the undulating temporal experience of multiple characters, but also by literary devices that are able to recall the past, exist in the present, and anticipate the future all in a single moment. Chapter 4 turns to a larger form of prefiguration, one that is ‘external’ to the text (compared to White’s ‘internal prefiguration’, as evident in the symbols and motifs discussed in this chapter), whereby literary works make explicit or implicit reference to well-known mythic tales. The analysis considers the ways in which such references influence the sense of time passing, and what this may show us beyond the confines of mythopoetic narratives.

Notes:
(1) Thomas Mann, Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen, GkFA (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 2009), p. 116.

(2) Genette, pp. 39-40.

(3) Currie, pp. 29-30.


(9) Genette, p. 49.
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(10) Theodor Storm, *The Lake of the Bees*, trans. by Jonathan Katz (London: Hesperus Press, 2003), pp. 15–16 although the title is often translated, it is perhaps better known by the German version, so I will continue to refer to this; Theodor Storm, ‘Immensee’, in *Gedichte: Novellen, 1848–1867*, ed. by Dieter Lohmeier (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987), pp. 295–328 (304–6); all subsequent citations refer to these editions.


(12) Currie, p. 31.

(13) Genette, p. 40.


(16) Genette, p. 49.


(18) Genette, p. 40.

(19) Aristotle, p. 25.

(20) Aristotle, p. 31.

(21) Ricoeur, i. 39.

(22) Currie, p. 29.


(24) Higdon, p. 17.

(25) Higdon, p. 17.
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(26) Higdon, p. 17.

(27) See also Wickerson, ‘Refracting Time’.


(30) Bakhtin, p. 84.


(32) Genette, p. 189.


(34) Best and Marcus, p. 4.


(36) Cohn, p. 204.

(37) Husserl, p. 38; Ricoeur, i. 53.

(38) Detmers and Ostheimer, p. 21.

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