

TUNNELVISION?: HOFFMANN'S AND TIECK'S GUIDE INTO MADNESS

by

ANJA PREIS

(Under the Direction of Heide Crawford)

ABSTRACT

Works of Gothic fiction have distinguished themselves through a unique use of narrative perspectives, which evoke uncertainty as well as contingency in the narrative. In German Gothic fiction, numerous short stories and novels apply similar narrative strategies. In this thesis, I will analyze, contrast, and compare the Gothic narrative strategies in works by E.T.A. Hoffmann and Johann Ludwig Tieck, as these are two of the most prolific German Gothic writers. By analyzing E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann* and *Das öde Haus* along with Tieck's *Liebeszauber*, I will examine how the narrative techniques employed in these works by Hoffmann and Tieck impact the perspective of the reader. The goal of this thesis is to show how the narrative strategies in the dark Romantic stories evoke feelings of horror, terror, and anxiety not only in the protagonist, but also in the reader.

INDEX WORDS: Gothic, Romanticism, Horror, Terror, Uncanny, Supernatural, Narrative Strategies

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ANJA PREIS

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ANJA PREIS

Major Professor:	Heide Crawford
Committee:	Marjanne Goozé
	Alexander Sager
	Norbert Eke

Electronic Version Approved:

Suzanne Barbour
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
May 2016

DEDICATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

[Eben] darin besteht der Probirstein des echten Genies, daß es für jede verwegene Fiction, für jede ungewöhnliche Vorstellungsart schon im voraus die Täuschung des Zuschauers zu gewinnen weiß; daß der Dichter nicht unsere Gutmüthigkeit in Anspruch nimmt, sondern die Phantasie, selbst wider unsern Willen, so spannt, daß wir die Regeln der Aesthetik, mit allen Begriffen unseres aufgeklärten Jahrhunderts vergessen, und uns ganz dem schönen Wahnsinn des Dichters überlassen; [...]. (Tieck 1964, 61)

What is normal? What is possible? What is reality and does everyone experience it the same way? Is there such a thing as the supernatural or does the supernatural only exist in our imagination? Life, human existence itself, is full of mystery, opposing perceptions, theories, appearances, creatures, and inexplicable occurrences. People have had different ideas of what is possible and where to draw a line between the natural and the supernatural; the understanding of what is to be considered normal and what is socially accepted has changed (Vieregge 46). Especially during late Romanticism, many writers focused on the dark side of human life and the inexplicable (Pikulik 24). In the German territories, just like in other parts of Europe, Romanticism followed the age of Enlightenment. Whereas philosophers and writers of the Enlightenment believed reason and education to be key concepts, and wanted “die Dunkelheit [‘aufklären’] und Licht [...] schaffen” (Stephan 226), “Stimmung und Erlebnis” (Frenzel 300) dominated Romanticism. One part of Romanticism focused particularly on the dark side of human life – dark Romanticism or Romantic Gothic: “Romantic Gothic deals with the tormented

condition of a creature suspended between the extremes of faith and skepticism, beatitude and horror, being and nothingness, love and hate [...]” (Thompson 33). This kind of dark Romanticism, according to Simone Stölzel, should be perceived as a “Beschreibung einer Geisteshaltung [...], die aus einem besonderen, von Zweifel und Ambivalenz gekennzeichneten Weltempfinden herrührt” (Stölzel 37). Her explanation of dark Romanticism focuses on doubts and ambivalence that authors faced and addressed in their literary work. Works of fiction of that time show an interest in “das Abgründige, Abseitige, Geheimnisvolle” (Stephan 226). These ideas can mostly be found in works of Gothic fiction.

Works of Gothic fiction have distinguished themselves through a number of common features, and especially through a unique use of narrative perspectives and strategies, which allow for a psychologization of the protagonists, while evoking uncertainty as well as contingency in the narrative. In German Gothic fiction, commonly referred to as *Schauerliteratur*, numerous short stories and novels apply similar narrative techniques in an effort to evoke a sense of uncertainty. Even though they often feature an authorial narrative perspective that could offer information on the protagonists’ surroundings and all things affecting the protagonist as well as his or her thoughts, wishes, and desires, the reader is mostly provided with a narrow, often obstructed, point of view. The reader often times is guided through the story together with the protagonist, meaning that the reader’s point of view is generally limited to that of one character. Reader responses to these particular works and the way the readers are led through the narrative will be the central focus of this analysis.

The main goal of this thesis is to show that the guiding nature of the narrator not only addresses the readers’ imaginations and their willingness to believe in the elements and workings of the supernatural, but also allows for a number of interpretations by different readers. In his

essay, "Seeing Things: Gothic and the Madness of Interpretation," Scott Brewster explains that the madness commonly observed in the protagonists of Gothic stories "lies in the reading" (493). This means that the reader is made part of the madness in his limited perspective. This connection between the psychological state of characters in a story and the readers will serve as a foundation for this analysis.

In the following, I will focus on three short stories: E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann* and *Das öde Haus*, and Ludwig Tieck's *Liebeszauber*. These three stories share distinct features in terms of their plots and their narrative perspectives. The main motif these works have in common is the protagonists' voyeuristic staring through a window. This voyeurism is the source of romantic attachments of the male protagonists to young women in the stories. Windows in these works appear to alter the protagonists' perceptions of what lies behind the windowpane. They trigger the imagination and as a result, the boundaries of reality become increasingly blurry. The protagonists' gazes through these windows cause them great distress and challenge their perceptions of reality. Readers of these stories must follow the protagonist's gaze, drawing the reader into the protagonist's madness. While the three short stories share a great number of similarities in regard to symbols, motifs, and narrative techniques, *Das öde Haus* offers a different narrative situation than *Liebeszauber* and *Der Sandmann*, keeping the reader at a distance instead of drawing him or her into the story. The following analysis will focus on the different reader responses to *Das öde Haus*, which in turn will further underline my main argument about the guiding nature of the narrators in *Liebeszauber* and *Der Sandmann*.

For the purpose of this thesis, I will focus my analysis of these stories on the main elements of horror and terror in Gothic fiction, Freud's concept of the uncanny, and also on elements of the supernatural, which occur in various forms in the three stories discussed here.

Most works of Gothic fiction share elements that evoke feelings of horror or terror. According to British Gothic fiction author Ann Radcliff, horror “contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates [the faculties]” (146), meaning a person’s ability to think clearly and react to the given situation is altered. Additionally, Andrew Smith points out that “[horror] has an explicitness that overwhelms, or negates, the imagination” (182). Horror elements in a narrative most commonly portray explicit scenes of physical or psychological torture of one or more characters, the purpose of which is for the reader to experience this horror with the protagonists, drawing the reader closer into the story.

Ann Radcliffe described terror in her essay *On the Supernatural in Poetry* as something that “expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life;[...]” (Radcliffe 149). The reader only receives suggestions of supposedly threatening events in the story and the reader’s imagination is required to fill in the gaps which Gothic tales offer. Furthermore, “descriptions of hairbreadth escapes,[...], the chilly touch of fear,” and also the obscurity in shadows and suggestions create a feeling of terror in a narrative (Varma 88, 102). Varma also states that “to suggest is to stimulate [the reader’s imagination] by the intimation of a grandeur or a terror beyond the compass of words” (103). Compared with what has been explained as instances of horror, terror does not force a character, and with him the reader, into a scene of explicit cruelty and violence. Instead, a potential threat is presented through a multitude of different inexplicable noises, suggestions, and beliefs.

Tzvetan Todorov points out that a text is uncanny “[if] [the reader] decides that the laws of reality remain intact and permit an explanation of the phenomena described” (17). The phenomena mentioned by Todorov are phenomena of the supernatural. In his essay *Das Unheimliche*, Sigmund Freud analyzes different parts of *Der Sandmann* and explains their

uncanniness. This essay has been discussed and criticized at length elsewhere, which is why I will focus my attention on one main point Freud made, without attempting to psychoanalyze the characters. Freud focuses on different aspects in *Der Sandmann*, which make the story uncanny. He mentions the ambiguity between animate and inanimate objects (Olimpia) (Freud 308), the doppelgänger motif (Coppelius/Coppola) (309-310), animism (subconscious and infantile fears) (307, 314-315), death itself, the fine line between reality and the supernatural, and most importantly, the uncanny effect of involuntary repetitions (311-312).

My analysis will focus on the last aspect of the uncanny mentioned here, because it is an especially instrumental cause of anxiety in the protagonists and by extension in the reader. These involuntary repetitions, as Freud mentions, are associated with a feeling “das überdies an die Hilflosigkeit mancher Traumzustände mahnt” (311). This helplessness, the feeling of not having any control over one’s own life makes these repetitions uncanny.

An additional aspect of Gothic fiction that impacts feelings of horror, terror, and the uncanny in these narratives is the presence of supernatural beings or occurrences. The Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘supernatural’ as something “[belonging] to a realm or system that transcends nature, as that of divine, magical, or ghostly beings; attributed to or thought to reveal some force beyond scientific understanding or the laws of nature; occult, paranormal” (OED s.v. supernatural).

By analyzing the three stories in regard to elements of horror, terror, the uncanny, and the supernatural, I will show how these elements mostly affect the protagonists, who share a great number of similarities. The depiction of the protagonists is dependent on the narrative perspectives employed by the stories, causing the reader to experience the events of the narratives with the main characters. The analysis of the narrative strategies employed by

Hoffmann and Tieck is based on reader response theory and will serve as the final part of the analysis of this thesis.

The theoretical background for an analysis of the narrative perspectives and effects on the reading is based on Franz Karl Stanzel's *Theory of Narrative* (1984 [1979]), which examines different narrators as well as points of view, Eberhard Lämmert's *Bauformen des Erzählens* (1955) on the construction of narrative texts and also Scott Brewster's essay "Seeing Things: Gothic and the Madness of Interpretation" (2012). Additionally, I will base my analysis on reader response theory, in order to explain Gothic horror narrative perspective's effect on the reader.

Franz Karl Stanzel differentiates among three different narrative situations: figural, authorial and first-person narration. I will examine the authorial narrative situation and first-person narration as they apply to *Liebeszauber*, *Der Sandmann*, and *Das öde Haus*. The authorial narrative situation is marked by a third person narration whose narrator remains "outside the world of character" (Stanzel 5) and operates from an "external perspective" (5). As a result, the narrator can be classified as omniscient and at the same time unreliable, because he can freely choose among different perspectives and he can also choose which information to omit. An authorial narrative perspective also allows for an internal perspective at times as an authorial narrator not only has insight into his own thoughts, but also into the thoughts of other characters in the narrative. Stanzel elaborates on narrative perspective by mentioning that "the term point of view in narrative terminology is used in two contexts [...]: to narrate, [...], and to experience, to perceive, [...]" (9). Moreover, he mentions that these functions "can overlap" (9). This suggests that experience and perception refer to a character in the story, because an authorial narrator is not part of the narrative, and can thus focus on a character in a way that allows the reader to

experience the narrative from a character's point of view as it is explained by the narrator. Applying Stanzel's theory to the concept of how a reader is guided through a work of fiction, Daga Sanda points out that in an authorial narrative situation, "die Leserlenkung durch das direkte Eingreifen des außenstehenden Narrators in die fiktionale Welt [erfolgt]" (Sanda 26). She adds that the narrator's judgments guide the reader (27).

Stanzel explains the first-person narrative situation in the following way: "[The] first-person narrator is a character of [the fictional] world just as other characters are. The world of the characters is completely identical to the world of the narrator" (4). When the narrator is a character in the narrative, his or her perspective is limited compared to the perspective of an authorial narrator. Stanzel also mentions that first-person narration and an authorial third-person narration have "a personalized narrator in common, [...]" (17). In regard to an authorial narrator, that means that he usually zooms in on one character, narrating large parts of the story from a personalized perspective. The unreliable nature of the authorial narrator has already been established, but in the first-person narrative situation, Sanda explains it is up to the reader to decide "ob er die Figur als glaubwürdig oder unglaubwürdig betrachten soll" (Sanda 27). The reader is "auf die Blickrichtung einer Figur angewiesen, aus deren Sicht die fiktionalen Handlungen wiedergegeben werden" (27).

Whereas Stanzel focuses on the different narrative situations and points of view, Lämmert discusses various components and forms of linkage in a literary text. For the purpose of this thesis, I will focus on the most important arguments made in Lämmert's analysis in regard to *Liebeszauber*, *Der Sandmann*, and *Das öde Haus*. Lämmert discusses the different ways in which parts of a story are linked. One such approach of linking parts of a story is "korrelative Formen der Verknüpfung" (correlative form of linkage, translation mine) (Lämmert 52). He

points out that this sort of linkage is used to show “thematische Gleichstimmigkeiten oder Kontrast der Begebenheiten in verschiedenen Schichten des erzählten Geschehens” (53). This means that one part of a story is repeated or contrasted in a similar fashion later in the narrative. An example is the relation of motifs, such as the reoccurring carnival masks in *Liebeszauber*. Another way in which parts of a story can be connected are “konsekutive (kausale) Formen der Verknüpfung” (consecutive form of linkage, translation mine) (Lämmert 56). These are often found in suspenseful novels: “[Die] Pointe [besteht] darin, daß die Kausalzusammenhänge des Gegenwartsgeschehens erst am Schluss durch das Nachholen einer Vorzeithandlung aufgedeckt werden” (56-57). The main focus here is on the timing of the revelation of the main problem/mystery. Another important component of works of fiction discussed by Lämmert are flashbacks in a story. He analyzes the different functions they have depending on where in the work they appear: “Jeder Erzähler gibt durch eingefügte Erinnerungen, Urteile, Erklärungen, Vergleiche an gewissen Stellen ausdrücklich Gelegenheit zur Übersicht einzelner Geschehensphasen” (100). The two kinds of flashbacks I will use for my analysis are called “aufbauende Rückwendung” (constructive flashback, translation mine) (104) and “auflösende Rückwendung” (resolvent flashback, translation mine) (108). The former is an “Ausweitung der Gegenwartshandlung durch Hineinnahme von Vergangenheit” (102). Lämmert points to introductions of narratives as examples of this kind of flashback. The narrator can decide whether he wants to introduce the reader directly or indirectly to the characters and the plot (104). The resolvent flashback stands in direct contrast to the constructive flashback, because it mostly manifests itself at the end of the narrative: “Durch die Aufdeckung bisher ungekannter Ereignisse oder Zusammenhänge [...] löst sie die Knoten der Handlung auf, glättet die Konflikte oder macht sie begreiflich” (108). Even though both of these strategic devices are flashbacks,

their positions in the text determine their function. The constructive flashback opens the narrative and presents the reader with an important issue that will be of even greater importance later in the story, while the resolvent flashback concludes a work of fiction and resolves the mysteries that the narrative created.

The field of reader response theory addresses the way in which readers process a work of fiction. Since this is a broad topic, I will limit my remarks to a general understanding of it as it applies to the stories discussed here. When reading a novel “the reader recognizes and either accepts or rejects the literary conventions, thoughts and social systems contained in the text, and processes and accommodates all of these as if he/she were following a discernible set of instructions” (Snelgrove 118). Snelgrove’s argument emphasizes two important points. First, the understanding of a text is highly individual. Social systems vary and an understanding of them not only entails certain expectations, but is also limited to the geographical as well as social environment and upbringing of each person. Second, the reader chooses to accept or reject the story. Whether or not one wants to identify with the represented world is up to each reader, which in turn affects his or her reaction to and interpretation of the text: “Our experience of the text, [...], the way we process the structures and negotiate transitions, would seem to be what constitutes or provides for variations in response” (119). In her analysis, Snelgrove also mentions two sets of forms that can be found in a story: “determinants (the facts contained in the text) and the indeterminants (the text’s potential for realization) [...]” (119). According to her, it is the mix of those “that conditions the interaction between text and reader” (119). The first argument can be applied to the content level of the story. The second argument deals with the arrangement of different structural elements. The use of these structural elements are linked to the narrator of the

story, because the narrator determines the representation of events. He is, moreover, in the position of guiding the reader into a distinct understanding of the story.

Elements of horror, terror, the uncanny, and the supernatural are cleverly woven together in these stories by E.T.A. Hoffmann and Ludwig Tieck. The reader has no choice but to be drawn into the madness.

2. GOTHIC FICTION AND THE SUPERNATURAL

Since Horace Walpole wrote the first Gothic novel *The Castle of Otronto* in 1764, many other writers set the focus of their works on the dark side of human existence, exploring fears, anxieties, and the workings of the human psyche. Shortly after the establishment of the English tradition of Gothic novels, a number of German and American writers followed. The peak of German *Schauerliteratur* can be set at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century (Murnane 10-11), during the literary period of Romanticism. The most famous works in the German tradition, which featured Gothic elements, are fairy tales, in particular the stories collected by Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm. Their fairy tales often use an element of horror for educational purposes. Moreover, “[for] the German Romantics, the fairy tale was the ideal literary form to depict the boundaries between the real and the supernatural [...]” (Labriola 325). Simone Stölzel adds a connection between the general themes of fairy tales and works of dark Romanticism. She explains that “[das] Thema der Einsamkeit, der Verzweiflung, des Ausgeliefertseins an ein grauenvolles, monströses Wesen, das ursprünglich aus Märchen und Mythen stammt, in den schwarzromantischen Texten aber ins Alpträumhafte verschoben wird” (Stölzel 284). This can be interpreted in two different ways. First, works of dark Romanticism often depict even more explicit scenes of violence than fairy tales. Second, nightmares, and in accordance with them people’s subconscious fears are addressed in works of Gothic fiction. Both arguments are true for works of these kinds of stories. In the following, I will analyze Gothic elements, the supernatural, and the uncanniness evident in *Liebeszauber*, *Der Sandmann* and *Das öde Haus*.

In Tieck's *Liebeszauber*, there is one outstanding moment of horror. The story focuses on the shy, introverted Emil, who is in love with his neighbor across the street. The story is set during the carnival time in Germany, and Emil, who just returned from a costume ball, is looking through a window in order to observe the young woman who lives across the street. He has been in the habit of doing that over a period of time and has fallen in love with her. That night, however, he does not only see the young woman and the girl, who is her adopted child, but also an elderly woman, Alexia. What Emil witnesses next is a scene in which the young child is sacrificed: "Die Alte zuckte murmelnd das Messer und durchschnitt den weißen Hals der Kleinen. Da wand sich hinter ihnen etwas hervor,[...]. Ein scheußlicher Drachenhals wälzte sich [...] aus der Dunkelheit" (Tieck 1985, 227). This scene depicts a profoundly explicit scene of cruelty. For Emil, as well as for the reader, the degree of violence is not left to the imagination. The narrator offers no way out; we are forced to witness the sacrifice with Emil. This horrific event has a great effect on the protagonist. At the sight of the dragon, he faints and stays unconscious for several hours, also losing his memory. Alice Kuzinar points to Emil's helplessness in this scene: "The romantic visionary [Emil] is cut off from what he sees, unable to master what passes before his eye" (226). A similar degree of horror appears again at the end of the story. In the second part of the narrative, which starts with Emil's wedding to the woman he had fallen in love with in the first part of the story, similar motifs reoccur. Emil's friend Roderich convinces the guests at the wedding to dress up as horrible "Fratzen" (Tieck 238), which brings back the image of the carnival, an event that was repulsive to Emil. In addition, the main characters are the same, as Emil's bride is the young woman he admired earlier in the story and Alexia is with her as well. Emil, having lost his memory, does not know that the young woman he is about to marry is the same woman he used to stare at from his apartment and who

participated in the sacrifice of the little girl. When he, once again, spies on her in her bridal suite and finds her in a position similar to that of the night of the sacrifice, his memory comes back and he realizes whom he is marrying. This image triggers the horrible feelings he experienced the night of the sacrifice. At this point, Emil involuntarily relives parts of that night and in sheer terror caused by the uncanniness of this scene, he kills his wife and the old woman, who had sacrificed the girl.

Hoffmann's protagonists Nathanael and Theodor also have to witness horrific events. Nathanael, the main character in *Der Sandmann*, is a university student. He is convinced that he saw the doppelgänger of a person from his childhood, Coppelius, whom he believes to be highly dangerous and his father's murderer. This doppelgänger's name is Coppola. The first moment of horror narrated in *Der Sandmann* occurs when Nathanael is still a child. He knows that his father and Coppelius are connected through a mysterious business that is kept secret. Nathanael connects the bedtime story of the sandman with Coppelius. When Nathanael was a child, he was always sent to bed whenever Coppelius came to their house at night and Nathanael's mother told them: "“der Sandmann kommt, ich merk es schon”" (Hoffmann 8). One night, Nathanael decides to go see what it is his father and Coppelius are doing. Unfortunately, he is discovered: "Da ergriff mich Coppelius, [...], riß mich auf und warf mich auf den Herd, daß die Flamme mein Haar zu sengen begann [...]" (Hoffmann 13). While Emil in Tieck's *Liebeszauber* was only a witness of the scene of horror, Nathanael is actually in it; he experiences it. In a similar manner as Emil, he also faints as a result: "“aber alles um mich her wurde schwarz und finster, ein jäher Krampf durchzuckte Nerv und Gebein – ich fühlte nichts mehr”" (14).

Later in the story, Nathanael falls in love with a woman whom he initially only sees through a window and with the help of a small telescope, sold to him by Coppola. Her name is

Olimpia und they finally meet at a ball where he dances with her all night. At the peak of Nathanael's admiration for Olimpia, he decides that he wants to marry her. Her father, one of Nathanael's university professors, has already declared that he has no intention of interfering with Nathanael's plan. For that reason, he goes to see her, only to find her in a most distressing situation: "Der Professor hatte eine weibliche Figur bei den Schultern gepackt, der Italiener Coppola bei den Füßen, die zerrten und zogen sie hin und her" (Hoffmann 40). Nathanael has to realize that it is his beloved Olimpia the two men are tearing apart. Eventually, Coppola captures her and Nathanael sees that "Olimpias toderbleichtes Wachsgesicht hatte keine Augen, statt ihrer schwarze Höhlen; sie war eine leblose Puppe" (41).

The two scenes described here show Nathanael as a victim. The story, however, concludes with him as a perpetrator, as the source of horror. After he recovered from the shock of seeing his beloved torn apart, he and his former fiancée Clara, are happy together again and go for a stroll through town. They climb up a tower where Nathanael pulls out his small telescope and seeing Clara through it, he once again and immediately enters into a delirium: "aber bald glühten und sprühten Feuerströme durch die rollenden Augen, gräßlich brüllte er auf, wie ein gehetztes Tier; [...]" (Hoffmann 44). After his inner transformation, he tries to throw Clara off the tower, creating a scene of horror by trying to murder his fiancée.

Theodor, the protagonist of *Das öde Haus*, does not witness a sacrificial ceremony or the destruction of the girl he loves, but he also walks into a scene that terrifies him. Just like Emil and Nathanael, Theodor falls in love with someone he believes he sees through a window. Throughout the story he tries to control his obsession to see the woman whose arm he saw through the window. Unfortunately, his emotions overwhelm him and he ends up running into the house she lives in. There he is greeted by a woman who believes him to be her bridegroom:

“‘Willkommen süßer Bräutigam’, trat sie mit ausgebreiteten Armen mir entgegen – und ein gelbes, von Alter und Wahnsinn gräßlich verzerrtes Antlitz starrte mir in die Augen” (Hoffmann 184). In this scene, Theodor feels trapped and is overwhelmed by what he is facing. He believed a young, beautiful woman was being held captive in that house; instead, it is an ugly old woman who seems to be mentally handicapped. He is saved from this scene by the elderly male housekeeper, who punishes the woman with beatings: “Nun hört’ ich die zischenden Hiebe der Peitsche und das Jammergeschrei der Alten” (Hoffmann 185). In a similar manner to the scene in which Nathanael walks in on Professor Spalanzani and Coppola tearing apart Olimpia in *Der Sandmann*, Theodor comes face to face with the terrifying counterpart of the beautiful woman he saw. All these scenes are examples of Gothic horror. Elements that evoke a feeling of terror are also most prominent in works of Gothic fiction in general and in *Liebeszauber*, *Der Sandmann* and *Das öde Haus* in particular.

In Tieck’s *Liebeszauber*, instances of terror are limited. As has been pointed out previously, the narrative is set during the carnival season in Germany. This season in itself offers ground for extraordinary occurrences: people dress up, disguises are the order of the day. This makes it possible for people to hide, which in turn makes room for other people’s imaginations to wonder what might be behind the masks. In Tieck’s story, two masked figures enter Emil’s apartment: “Jetzt schallten Fußtritte die Treppe herauf, die Tür, ohne daß man anklopfte, eröffnete sich, und herein traten zwei bunte Masken mit widrigen Angesichtern [...]” (Tieck 213). The sound of people approaching the protagonist hurriedly, without announcing themselves and also hiding their faces suggests a potentially threatening situation for Emil. Something else that can evoke terror for Emil is the carnival music. The reader learns that these sounds have always made him unhappy. He compares them to “Gespenster, Larven und Furien”

and they cause him “die Empfindung des Ekels und des Abscheus” (Tieck 215). The idea of being at the mercy of these sounds and the people who are actually enjoying them is terrible for Emil.

In contrast to the rather limited occurrences of terror in *Liebeszauber*, Hoffmann’s *Sandmann* is full of suggestions and uncertainties. In the opening letter, Nathanael writes to his friend Lothar to tell him about “[dunkle] Ahnungen eines gräßlichen mir drohenden Geschicks [...]” (Hoffmann 7). With these words, he directly mentions the fear of the unknown that is caused by a premonition. Nathanael then continues by telling the story of Coppélius, his concept of the terrifying sandman, and how, as a child, he always knew that Coppélius was coming: “Wirklich hörte ich dann jedesmal etwas schweren langsamen Tritts die Treppe heraufpoltern; das mußte der Sandmann sein” (8). These footfalls serve to remind him of the horrible story he had heard about the sandman. Nathanael’s sister’s nanny told him the story about the sandman and, in his mind, Nathanael connected this story with Coppélius’s visits. Nathanael also points out that Coppélius’s “Umgang mit dem Vater fing an meine Fantasie immer mehr und mehr zu beschäftigen [...]” (9-10). He admits that his anxiety related to Coppélius is at least partly created in his mind, his imagination. Even though Coppélius is a ghost from his past, Nathanael is reminded of him by the Italian eyeglass salesman, Coppola, whom Nathanael meets years later when he is grown up and has left his hometown to study at a university. Coppola tries to sell him a weatherglass and his appearance immediately reminds Nathanael of Coppélius. All the negative ideas and assumptions are transformed from one person to the other by believing that the two of them are actually the same person: “Er war anders gekleidet, aber Coppélius’ Figur und Gesichtszüge sind zu tief in mein Innerstes eingepägt, als daß hier ein Irrtum möglich sein sollte” (Hoffmann 16). Nathanael is sure of the fact that the man who abused him and killed his

father has come back into his life. As the reader learns later in the story when Coppola tries to sell Nathanael something else, Nathanael shows an intense reaction: “Nathanael fühlte sich im Innersten erbeben; [...]” (30-31). His mental connection between the two men is reinforced as Coppola tells him that he, this time, does not want to sell him a weatherglass, but “sköne Oke” (“schöne Augen”) (31). Nathanael believes that Coppola is trying to sell him eyes, the eyes that Coppelius, and by extension the sandman, in the horrible story Nathanael knows about him, steals from children if they do not go to sleep right away. Coppola’s facial features as well as his profession are enough for Nathanael’s imagination to make him feel a similar anxiety to that associated with Coppelius. Coppola and the potential threat connected with him cause a feeling of terror in Nathanael.

In *Der Sandmann*, there is one more character who causes identical and at the same time contrasting feelings in Nathanael. During the ball, when he first starts to dance with Olympia, he notices something out of the ordinary: “Eiskalt war Olympias Hand, er fühlte sich durchbebt von grausigem Todesfrost, [...]” (35). Even though he actually is in love with Olympia, she scares him and he does not know why. Later in the story, Nathanael kisses her and when he notices that her lips are just as cold as her hand was, he is reminded of a legend: “die Legende von der toten Braut ging ihm plötzlich durch den Sinn; [...]” (36). Considering the end of the story, it is clear that his instincts are at work in this scene. Olympia’s unnatural body temperature suggests that there must be something wrong with her; it is, however, unclear to Nathanael what exactly it is. Once again, Nathanael encounters a situation that frightens him without there being an actual identifiable threat. The scenes from *Der Sandmann* serve to show that there are instances in the narrative that cause anxiety in the protagonist by suggesting potential harm rather than actually putting Nathanael in a situation of horror.

Theodor in *Das öde Haus* also faces several instances of terror, one of which in his case is clearly connected to something supernatural. After he believed he saw an arm through the window of the house that caught his attention immediately upon his arrival in Berlin, Theodor cannot help but stare into the window. He inquires about the house and hears of a legend connected with it. The confectioner from the store that is connected to the house tells him that “[nur] zwei lebendige Wesen hausen darin, ein steinalter menschenfeindlicher Hausverwalter und ein grämlicher lebenssatter Hund” (Hoffmann 166). He also mentions that he hears “seltsame Klagelaute” and “scharren und [...] rumoren” (166). Despite the fact that he believes there are only a dog and an old man living in the house, he points out that he heard “offenbar die Stimme eines alten Weibes, [...]” (166). The uncanniness of these sounds have a great effect on the confectioner. He explains: “mir standen die Haare zu Berge” (167). The feelings of terror in this scene are created by the uncertainty of what lies behind the walls of the house. While Theodor is told the story about the house, the old housekeeper who lives in it enters the confectioner’s shop, orders different things and utters “der Satan schmiert seiner Braut Honig ums Maul – puren Honig” (168). The idea that there must be a woman living in the house is further supported by this remark. At the same time, the negative associations with her are enforced, too, as the housekeeper denounces her as the devil’s bride. The entire story sounds especially bizarre to Theodor, because he is so sure he saw the arm of a young woman in the window. As a result, he is increasingly interested in the house and keeps on watching it. When he realizes that his constant observation of a window might be frowned upon by other people walking by, he purchases a pocket mirror. He sits down on a bench and watches the window over his shoulder by looking in the mirror. People notice him and one man warns him of pocket mirrors “die so häßlich lügen” (Hoffmann 175). The importance of this warning becomes clearer

to him later when he sees the image of the girl he believes to have seen through the window, in the mirror without even being anywhere near the house: “Alle meine Pulse stockten, mein Innerstes bebte vor wonnigem Grauen!” (176). Here he sees the image of someone he is attracted to, which causes a pleasurable sense of terror. At the same time, however, it is terrifying to see someone’s image in the mirror if that person is not there. What is suggested, to a certain degree, is the omnipotence of this image of a person that causes an ideal the protagonist has about the mysterious woman in the house/in the mirror.

Theodor, the only protagonist analyzed here who acts self-critically, notices that seeing this image in his mirror poses a potential threat to his psyche and seeks help from a doctor. In a similar manner as the story the confectioner tells Theodor about the house (the people who live in it, and the frightening sounds coming from it), Theodor is presented with another tale filled with terrifying occurrences: when the family history of the old woman in the house is explained. Her name is Angelika and she is in an unexplained, but dangerous relationship with a group of gypsies, one gypsy lady in particular. When the gypsies are about to be deported, Angelika threatens to kill herself: “Damit schwang die Gräfin ein spiegelblankes Messer in den Lüften und sank ohnmächtig nieder” (Hoffmann 190). It is never explained how Angelika got to know the gypsy lady, but soon after the incident and right before her sister’s wedding, Angelika moves into the old house in Berlin that Theodor describes. There she starts to lead a very isolated existence and grows old there with only the old housekeeper to keep her company. Angelika and her sister Gabriele fell in love with the same man, whom her sister eventually married and with whom she had a daughter. This daughter disappears until one day the gypsy lady brings back Gabriele’s baby. At this part of the story, Gabriele takes the baby from the gypsy “aber in diesem Augenblick kugelt diese um, wie eine leblose Puppe” (Hoffmann 192). The story becomes a

setting for a feeling of terror because of the mysterious occurrences surrounding the gypsy. It is inexplicable how she could fall dead like a doll and it is also unclear why or how Angelika became associated with the gypsies in a way that would make her sacrifice her own life for them. The reader learns later “daß Angelika in furchtbaren Wahnsinn geraten sei [...]” (192), which is suggested to be linked to her relationship with the gypsy. Once again it is Angelika, the old woman living in the house, who is surrounded by mystery and danger to her psychological condition. As in *Liebeszauber* and *Der Sandmann*, instances of terror in *Das öde Haus* are created through uncertainties and suggested threats. In Theodor’s case, all of these instances revolve around one person, the woman living in the house he seems magically drawn to.

Elements associated with involuntary repetition of events and images combine in these stories to create a feeling of the uncanny. Tieck’s story *Liebeszauber* is divided into two parts. The first part introduces the reader to the main characters, tells about Emil’s brief visit at the carnival festivity, focuses on the sacrifice of the young girl, and describes the appearance of the dragon, which Emil witnesses. In the second part of the story, which starts with Emil’s wedding, similar motifs reoccur. At this point, Emil involuntarily relives parts of that night and in sheer terror caused by the uncanniness of this scene, he kills his wife and the old woman, who had sacrificed the girl. The repetition of similar motifs and the familiar feelings associated with them cause the catastrophe of the story.

In *Der Sandmann*, there are several involuntary repetitions. The connection made by Nathanael between Coppelius and his apparent doppelgänger, Coppola, is one such repetition. Another is the reoccurring maddening effect the telescope has on Nathanael’s perception. Before Coppola sold the telescope to Nathanael, the latter had a comparatively negative opinion of Olimpia: “Clara im Herzen, blieb ihm die steife, starre Olimpia höchst gleichgültig und nur

zuweilen sah er flüchtig über sein Kompendium herüber nach der schönen Bildsäule, das war alles” (Hoffmann 30). Upon his purchase of the telescope, he can see Olimpia more clearly: “Es schien, als wenn nun erst die Sehkraft entzündet würde; immer lebendiger und lebendiger flammten die Blicke“ (32). In fact, his perception of her changes drastically and he develops an extreme affection for her: “Nathanael lag wie festgezaubert im Fenster, immer fort und fort die himmlisch-schöne Olimpia betrachtend“ (Hoffmann 32). Stefan Ringel comes to the same conclusion: “[das] Fernglas verändert seine Wahrnehmungsweise: erschienen Olimpias Augen ihm zuvor starr und tot, so werden sie nun lebendig” (217). He forgets about his fiancée over this newfound obsession, and cannot focus on anything but Olimpia. When he witnesses her destruction in horror, Nathanael loses his mind. He attacks the professor while screaming “Hui-hui-hui! – *Feuerkreis* – *Feuerkreis!* dreh dich *Feuerkreis* – lustig – lustig!- Holzpüppchen hui schön Holzpüppchen dreh dich –” (Hoffmann 41). After this incident, Nathanael is back home, with Clara taking care of him. Things seem to go well until one day the two of them decide to climb up a tower, leading to another scene of horror. Nathanael and Clara enjoy their view until Nathanael takes out his telescope, looks at Clara through it, loses his mind anew, and attempts to throw her off the tower. After she is saved by Lothar, Nathanael again shouts: “*Feuerkreis* dreh dich – *Feuerkreis* dreh dich” (45). The telescope alters his perception of his surroundings, causing his violent behavior. Whereas Emil in *Liebeszauber* at first witnesses violence and then, after being confronted with a similar scene, acts as the aggressor, Nathanael appears forced to repeat a similar kind of brutal behavior, because of his use of the telescope. He becomes an uncanny figure in the repeated process of using the telescope. The reader never learns how exactly this device functions to have this effect on him. Was it manipulated by Coppola in one way or another or is the source of evil to be found within Nathanael?

In *Das öde Haus*, instances of involuntary repetitions are similarly linked to an optical tool. In *Der Sandmann*, the telescope was a tool of enhanced seeing that brought about feelings of horror. In *Das öde Haus*, a different tool, a mirror brings about moments of terror. Theodor, upon his purchase of the mirror, not only voyeuristically spies on the people in the house, but he also sees the reflection of the woman he believes lives in the house in his mirror, when he is at home alone (Hoffmann 176). The effect the mirror initially has on Theodor is similar to that of the telescope in *Der Sandmann*. Theodor feels somehow stunned, because of the picture the mirror makes him see: “Mir war es, als lähmte eine Art Starrsucht nicht sowohl mein ganzes Regen und Bewegen als vielmehr nur meinen Blick, den ich niemals mehr würde abwenden können von dem Spiegel” (173). At this point of the story, Theodor consults a psychiatrist. Robert McFarland points out that “[as] he stares into the mirror, his mind intrudes into his visual process as his own fear, lust and childhood experiences emerge and shape his perception of reality” (496). The childhood experiences McFarland mentions refer to a story Theodor was told when he was still a child. In a similar way as Nathanael’s fear was established, Theodor’s nanny told him that if children looked into a mirror at night, they would see a sinister face staring back at them. Her tale had a great influence on him: “Einmal glaubt’ ich ein Paar gräßliche glühende Augen aus dem Spiegel fürchterlich herausfunkeln zu sehen, ich schrie auf und stürzte dann ohnmächtig nieder“ (Hoffmann 173). As a child, the eyes that looked back at him seemed so real that he lost consciousness. As an adult, he still cannot bring himself to say that what he saw in the mirror could not possibly be true: “noch jetzt ist es mir, als hätten jene Augen mich wirklich angefunkelt” (174). Theodor is sure that his perception is accurate, but this time, as an adult, he notices that he needs to seek medical help. This incident shows the connection made by Theodor between his obsessive glances into a mirror (as a child and again later as an adult) and the

appearance of someone else's features in that mirror. An occurrence that frightened him as a child continues to have an effect on him as an adult. Theodor partially relives a terrifying scene from his childhood when he looks into the mirror and sees a young woman's face. What makes this part of the story especially significant is that it is Theodor himself who brings about the uncanniness connected with his staring into the mirror. Immediately after he notices the fantastical effect the mirror has on his entire being and especially his eyes, he is mentally transformed into his younger self as he remembers his nanny's tale about mirrors. The reflection of the woman he believes to have seen in his mirror appears one more time in the story. This time it is an actual character in the narrative. After Theodor seeks medical help to end his obsession with the house and the woman living in it, he and many others visit the house of Graf P. and there he sees her again: "Ich führe meine Dame zu dem offenen Platz, der sich uns darbietet, schaue sie nun erst recht an und – erblicke mein Spiegelbild in den getreusten Zügen, [...]" (Hoffmann 186). Seeing her, however, does not have the same effect on him anymore, as he eliminates supernatural forces as a source for what he perceived.

The scenes described of horror, terror, and the uncanny are often linked to the appearance of an element of the supernatural. Whereas in Ludwig Tieck's story there is one outstanding example of a supernatural creature, the dragon, Hoffmann's protagonists and the reader are presented with people or dolls that have immense potential to challenge our understanding of what is real and what is supernatural. Christoph Daxelmüller explains the connection between magic, science, and the supernatural: "Das Magieverständnis der Romantik fußte, [...], auf den im 18. Jahrhundert gängigen Konzepten des Übersinnlichen. Doch zugleich trat im 19. Jahrhundert [...] eine neue 'vernaturwissenschaftliche' Theorie hinzu" (Daxelmüller 37). With this, Daxelmüller explains that the concept of magic was broadened in the 19th century in a way

that gave way to supposedly scientific theories about the workings of magic. Instances of the supernatural, especially in Hoffmann's stories, appear like magical workings. Theodor in *Das öde Haus* and Clara in *Der Sandmann* try to find scientific explanations for what is happening. In *Das öde Haus*, magnetism plays an important role for Theodor in his search for a plausible understanding of the phenomena surrounding him. Clara in *Der Sandmann* uses psychological theories to calm Nathanael down and to help him forget his fears of Coppélius/Coppola.

In Tieck's *Liebeszauber*, Emil sees a dragon that appears during the sacrifice of the young girl. After the girl's throat is cut, the dragon comes up from behind to lick her blood:

Da wand sich hinter ihnen etwas hervor, das beide nicht zu sehen schienen, sonst hätten sie sich wohl eben so inniglich wie Emil entsetzt. Ein scheußlicher Drachenhals wälzte sich schuppig länger und länger aus der Dunkelheit, neigte sich über das Kind hin, das mit aufgelösten Gliedern der Alten in den Armen hing, die schwarze Zunge leckte vom sprudelnden roten Blut, und ein grün funkelndes Auge traf durch die Spalte hinüber in Emils Blick [...]. (Tieck 227)

Whereas Alexia and the young woman Emil is in love with do not seem to react to the dragon, Emil is highly affected by it. What is most remarkable in this scene is the dragon's connection with Emil's gaze. The blazing eye of the fantastical creature finds a direct path to the protagonist's eye, while no other character in the story is affected by its presence. This links the element of the supernatural to the protagonist's visual perception.

Similarly, the supernatural characters in Hoffmann's works are also connected to the eyes of the protagonists Nathanael and Theodor. In *Der Sandmann*, Nathanael encounters two ambiguous figures throughout the narrative: Coppélius and Coppola. The reader and the protagonist are left in the dark as to whether or not these are the same person. The feeling of

terror aroused by what Nathanael perceives to be Coppelius's reincarnation in the first encounter is caused by Coppola's intrusion into his life. Coppelius and Coppola both have a connection with Nathanael's eyes or his fear of losing them. Coppelius poses a threat to his eyes because of the tale Nathanael heard from his sister's nanny. She put the idea into Nathanael's head that the sandman "ist ein böser Mann, der kommt zu den Kindern, wenn sie nicht zu Bett gehen wollen und wirft ihnen Händevoll Sand in die Augen, daß sie blutig zum Kopf herausspringen, [...]" (Hoffmann 9). Since Coppelius's arrival is always linked to Nathanael's mother telling him to go to bed, Nathanael makes the sleep-sandman-eye-association with Coppelius. This association is justified when he spies on his father and Coppelius, is discovered, and Coppelius threatens to take his eyes (13). Later, Coppola sells Nathanael the telescope, which makes him see Olimpia in a different light and which also makes him go mad twice. Coppelius and Coppola become uncanny when Nathanael transfers the negative associations he has of Coppelius onto Coppola. Up to the point of Olimpia's destruction, Coppelius and Coppola do not appear simultaneously. This changes when Nathanael enters Professor Spalanzani's apartment with the intent of proposing to Olimpia:

Es waren Spalanzanis und des gräßlichen *Coppelius* Stimmen, die so durcheinander schwirrten und tobten. Hinein stürzte Nathanael von namenloser Angst ergriffen. Der Professor hatte eine weibliche Figur bei den Schultern gepackt, der Italiener *Coppola* bei den Füßen, die zerrten und zogen sie hin und her, streitend in voller Wut um den Besitz. (Hoffmann 40, emphasis mine)

In this scene, Nathanael hears Coppelius's voice and sees Coppola. The narrator, however, puts no greater emphasis on the fact that both of Nathanael's antagonists are mentioned. After this horrific incident, only Coppola is mentioned until the very end of the story, when Coppelius

watches Nathanael jump off the tower. Coppelius/Coppola become one figure, omnipresent in Nathanael's life from his childhood to young adulthood, not aging, and always causing disastrous situations. They appear to Nathanael as a supernatural being with a destructive agenda.

Aside from Coppelius/Coppola, Olimpia represents another supernatural figure in *Der Sandmann*. Initially, Nathanael and the reader only see her through a window. At the ball, only Nathanael dances with her while everyone else perceives her as inanimate. This is pointed out to Nathanael by his friend Siegmund. He tells Nathanael that Olimpia "auf seltsame Weise starr und seelenlos erschien" (Hoffmann 37). He also calls her a "Holzpuppe" and "Wachsgesicht" (37). Nathanael, however, is convinced that she fell in love with him, which would speak for her being a human. He says: "Nur mir ging ihr Liebesblick auf und durchstrahlte Sinn und Gedanken, [...]" (38). For Nathanael, there is no question that everyone else is simply not capable of seeing in her what he sees: "Der Blick ihres himmlischen Auges sagt mehr als jede Sprache hienieden" (39). Her glance is all he needs to perceive her as a loving human being. His eyesight is yet again connected to a figure in the narrative whose actual existence as a living being is highly ambiguous. In contrast to the connection between Coppelius and Coppola, her nature is clear when she is torn apart. What makes her supernatural, however, is the fact that she seemed so real to Nathanael that he believed she was attracted to him and that he fell in love with her. The ambiguity of her being animate or inanimate makes her seem supernatural. In sum, Coppelius/Coppola and Olimpia constitute supernatural elements in *Der Sandmann* because of their ambiguous existence and their effect on Nathanael.

In *Das öde Haus*, it is the house itself and its residents or, more specifically, Theodor's idea about who lives in the house that is potentially supernatural. The house has an inexplicable

power to draw Theodor's attention to it: "[Doch] weiß ich selbst nicht, wie es kam, daß bei dem öden Haus vorüberschreitend ich jedesmal wie festgebannt stehen bleiben und mich in ganz wunderliche Gedanken [...] verstricken *mußte*" (Hoffmann 162, emphasis mine). He describes it as a house "das auf ganz wunderliche seltsame Weise von allen übrigen abstach" (162). Even though he watches the house thoroughly, he points out that he initially never saw a "menschliches Wesen darin" (162). The house itself is described in a way that, as Torsten Voß points out, the protagonist and the reader assume, "dass dieses Haus ein Geheimnis verbirgt, dass in ihm irgend etwas Sonderbares geschehen ist [...]" (118). Theodor seeks an explanation for the house and talks to someone who explains that it just belongs to the confectionery store next door. This explanation does not satisfy him, so Theodor continues his observation: "[His] fantasy is aroused by the absolute lack of reliable information about the building" (McFarland 497). What follows are several occurrences that nourish his interest further. One day "[eine] Hand, ein Arm kam zum Vorschein" (Hoffmann 164-165). Seeing this hand causes a "sonderbar bänglich wonniges Gefühl" (165). Following this instance, he enters the confectionery store to inquire about the house and the people living there. He then wonders how the story about the housekeeper and the dog could possibly be related to the beautiful arm he had seen: "Der Arm saß nicht, konnte nicht sitzen an dem Leibe eines alten verschrumpften Weibes, der Gesang nach des Konditors Beschreibung nicht aus der Kehle des jungen blühenden Mädchens kommen" (Hoffmann 169). Theodor, not being able to find an explanation for all he has seen and heard, believes the housekeeper to be a "Hexenmeister" and "Zauberkerl" (170). A passer-by tells him that what he sees in the window is just a painting of a woman, but Theodor does not believe him. The appearance of the hand, which he links to a beautiful young woman, seems to him to be in terrible distress: "Ich weiß es, die schwarze Kunst ist es, die dich befangen, du bist die

unglückselige Sklavin des boshafte Teufels, [...]” (170). He uses words that are related to magical rituals and thus identifies the house as supernatural. During the following days he continues to see the arm or the sparkle that he believes comes from a diamond on her hand. His observations eventually lead to the appearance of her reflection in his mirror, which, from an outside perspective, is also supernatural. How could the picture of someone he has never seen appear in his mirror when he is nowhere near the house? This reflection, however, is strongly connected to his ideas about the house and its inhabitants. His desire to meet the woman he believes to be trapped in the house eventually grows so strong that he intrudes into the house and sees a woman who is the opposite of what he expected to see, the elderly woman who is beaten by the housekeeper. Later in the narrative, her family story is revealed, and the house loses its supernatural potential. In the end, the house itself poses a threat to Theodor’s conception of reality. McFarland goes so far as to say that “Theodor loses his identity for a moment, and the line between him and the secret of the house fades away” (496). It is Theodor who actually makes the house unreal. This explanation, however, only works if the reader believes that the arm and hand Theodor saw were nothing but a painting, and if one rejects the idea of any magical interference.

3. EMIL, NATHANAEL, AND THEODOR: EXTRAORDINARY MINDS OR OVERLY SENSITIVE DREAMERS

The previous analysis of Gothic elements in *Liebeszauber*, *Der Sandmann* and *Das öde Haus* revealed a great number of similarities among the works. A similar observation can be made about the protagonists Emil, Nathanael, and Theodor.

Reading all three stories, one notices early on that the protagonists do not just share similarities in their personalities, but they also share a passion for storytelling or creative writing. Ulrich Scheck points out that Romantic tales often “combine prose with poetry” (Scheck 101), and this is true for these stories. Andrew Webber comes to the conclusion that “[it] is clearly not by chance that the fantastic heroes are so often cast as artists, poets, or musicians [...]. Like their creator, they are engaged in seeing their way to a truer sense of real life through its aesthetic simulation” (Webber 118). Especially Emil and Nathanael are trapped in situations where they only see their very own version of reality and truth, leading to catastrophes for both of them. They both write poetry, while Theodor becomes the narrator of his experiences with the old house. Theodor, who reflects on himself as well as the people around him, constantly interrupts his own story to clarify his understanding of his listeners’ potential reception of his tale. He asks rhetorical questions like ““schelten deine Freunde dich nicht mit Recht einen überspannten Geisterseher”” (Hoffmann 164). He is the only protagonist who reflects on his own work and who also seeks medical help after his friends tell him that there must be something wrong with him: “Meine Freunde hielten mich für krank und ihre ewigen Mahnungen brachten mich endlich dahin, über meinen Zustand, so wie ich es nur vermochte, ernstlich nachzusinnen” (Hoffmann

177). Theodor tries “das von ihm hypersensibel aufgespürte Wunderbare des öden Hauses sowie der Frau, die er darin sieht, rational zu begreifen” (Schmidt 183). Even though he willingly gives in to the thrill of the supernatural, he, in the end, needs to come up with a scientific solution for what he experiences.

Nathanael in *Der Sandmann* acts differently. Ursula Lawson points out that “[since] Nathanael possesses a poetic imagination, his experiences are crystallized in symbols which become a progressively destructive power in his life” (Lawson 51). As far as Nathanael is concerned, Coppelius and Coppola stand for death and destruction, which is why Coppola’s appearance causes him anxiety. Lawson also adds that the destructive power lies in his inability to accept other people’s opinions and as a result he becomes less and less attached to them (Lawson 51). Nathanael perceives his fiancée’s concerns to mean she is not taking his intuition seriously. He accidentally writes a letter to her instead of his friend Lothar, in which he talks about Coppola, Coppelius, and about their influence on his life. She tries to calm him down and find a reasonable explanation for what he saw, but he does not like her interpretation. In contrast to Theodor in *Das öde Haus*, Nathanael rejects Clara’s concerns for his wellbeing and dismisses them by telling Lothar not to help her reason with him about occurrences affecting Nathanael (Hoffmann 20). Clara worries even more about Nathanael when he reads a poem to her, which is set on their wedding day with Coppelius stealing her eyes, and in which Nathanael compares Clara’s eyes to death. After she tells him to burn “das tolle-unsinnige-wahnsinnige Märchen” (28), he reacts in a very emotional way and calls her a “lebloses, verdammtes Automat” (28).

Tieck’s protagonist Emil also faces a situation with his friend Roderich, in which the latter accuses him of having abnormal ideas about certain issues. Whereas Emil perceives the carnival music as something horrible, Roderich believes that Emil wants “das Natürlichste,

Unschuldigste und Heiterste von der Welt unnatürlich, ja gräßlich finden” (Tieck 215). Roderich also diagnoses Emil with “Nervenschwäche” (215). Emil is enraged by Roderich’s opinion, but he chooses not to say anything in his own defense: “Er hatte es nun schon aufgegeben, sich jenem mitzuteilen, auch schien der leichtsinnige Freund gar keine Begier zu haben, das Geheimnis zu erfahren, [...]” (216). Even though Emil does not openly attack Roderich’s opinions about his character, he dismisses them in a similar manner as Nathanael. These two writers are caught up in their own understanding of the world and do not consider the attitudes of others toward their behavior.

The protagonist’s ability for self-reflection is the only difference between Theodor, and Emil and Nathanael. In other respects, the descriptions of their characters resemble one another. In *Liebeszauber*, Emil is described as “[tief] denkend,” “menschenscheu,” “von reizbarem und melancholischem Temperament” (Tieck 210-211). These character traits are repeated throughout the narrative, making a clear distinction between him and his friend Roderich, who enjoys all the things Emil despises. Moreover, Emil appears to perceive himself as being superior to those who do not recognize the horror in the sounds of the carnival music: “Wahrlich, man möchte über die Ungläubigen lächeln, mit deren Imagination sich Gespenster und grauenhafte Larven, samt jenen Geburten der Nacht nicht vereinigen lassen [...]” (215). By believing himself and his negative perception of the sounds of the carnival music as being superior, since he can only laugh at the people who do not make the same connection between the sounds and ghosts and other uncanny creatures, Emil is susceptible to supernatural occurrences and he will not let other people’s opinions interfere with his understanding of the situation. He is highly sensitive and analyzes his emotional reactions to certain things like the carnival music.

Nathanael's character is presented indirectly, in the sense that the reader has to evaluate his actions and attitudes towards specific events or people. Taking Nathanael's first letter to Clara into consideration, he can be described as superstitious, since he believes Coppola to be Coppelius and a source of disaster in his life. The way he talks about Clara and how much he misses her and thinks about her indicate that he is an affectionate person. He calls her his "holdes Engelsbild" (Hoffmann 7) and mentions that he thinks about her as well as his friend Lothar "täglich und stündlich" (7). Nathanael's later attachment to Olimpia makes him seem eminently passionate. Within a short amount of time he is addicted to seeing her and after one night at a ball with her, Nathanael decides that he wants to marry Olimpia. One day the curtains in her room are closed and he cannot stand not being able to watch her, so he hurries over to the professor's and Olimpia's house "getrieben von Sehnsucht und glühendem Verlangen [...]" (Hoffmann 33).

Furthermore, Clara's rejection of his poem, in which he expresses his deepest fears, and his reaction to her disgust show that he is overly sensitive and emotional. The fact that he obsesses with Coppelius's/Coppola's actual and potential influence on his life present the reader further with his sensitivity. Much like Emil, he dismisses other people's opinions and values his own understanding of a person or situation a lot more. Clara becomes a lifeless doll to him because she does not share his emotions in connection to his poem and his belief about Coppelius's/Coppola's role in his life. Moreover, Nathanael perceives his understanding and perception of Olimpia as superior to his friend Siegmund's. Siegmund warns Nathanael about the strangeness in Olimpia's appearance and behavior, but Nathanael is convinced that it was simply only he who could see her loving glances towards him. These character traits make Nathanael, just like Emil, the kind of person who is susceptible to supernatural occurrences, as he does not

listen to the reasonable explanations offered by his friends about the events that affect him. He is also highly sensitive, letting his emotions dominate his life. Emil and Nathanael allow their imaginations and superstitions to make them believe in supernatural occurrences. They do not question their understandings or perceptions. In their world, supernatural occurrences are possible because of their wild imaginations. This imagination is helpful for their work as authors; in their lives, however, it leads to a disrupted perception of the world around them.

Theodor shares many personality traits with Emil and Nathanael that make him sensitive to the supernatural. Theodor's friends describe him as someone who has "jene Sehrgabe" (Hoffmann 160) "jener sechste bewunderungswürdige Sinn vermag an jeder Erscheinung, sei es Person, Tat oder Begebenheit, sogleich dasjenige Exzentrische zu schauen, zu dem wir in unserem gewöhnlichen Leben keine Gleichung finden [...]" (159-160). That means that Theodor is the sort of person who is willing to let himself be influenced and who believes in ideas that are beyond our common understanding of reality. He inquires deeper into the nature of things and is willing to broaden his horizons, which partly resembles Emil's and Nathanael's persistent beliefs in their own ideas, for example Nathanael's belief in Coppelius' omnipresence. Theodor, however, is able to reasonably consider what is happening to him and does not let the supernatural take over his mind. However, he can be influenced by the supernatural just like Emil and Nathanael. Emil is influenced by the appearance of a dragon, Nathanael by Coppelius/Coppola and Olimpia, and Theodor by an old house. Theodor's inquiries into the origin of the house and its residents further demonstrate his investigative and curious nature. In a similar manner as Nathanael and Emil, Theodor becomes easily attached to his perception of a young woman behind a window. Just like Nathanael, he is drawn to her image and becomes very passionate about it. In the mornings, he hurries "voll Unruhe und Sehnsucht nach der Allee"

(Hoffmann 171) where the house is located to see whether she is at the window. Theodor is very interested in everything that is outside the boundaries of what is commonly considered to be normal. He actively investigates these kinds of occurrences, but at the same time manages to keep a distance from them. In the end, he is the only protagonist who survives the instances of horror, terror, and the uncanny supernatural. Nathanael and Emil, however, cannot be described as actively seeking the inexplicable. Uncanny people and things come their way and they are not able to keep these at a distance. In fact, Emil and Nathanael struggle with the impact that the supernatural has on their lives, and eventually their minds can no longer differentiate between the people who try to help them and their delusions: Emil kills his bride and Alexia; Nathanael tries to murder Clara and ultimately commits suicide.

4.NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE IN *LIEBESZAUBER*, *DER SANDMANN*, AND *DAS ÖDE*

HAUS

In addition to common motifs found in Gothic fiction, the narrative techniques employed in these stories are fundamental to the creation of an atmosphere of horror. A main goal of these works is to scare the reader or to draw him or her into the story in a way that makes the reader feel the anxiety of the protagonist. In order to do that, the reader should be able to put him- or herself into the position of the protagonist. The following analysis discusses the narrative strategies employed in *Liebeszauber*, *Der Sandmann* and *Das öde Haus* in regard to the reader's response.

In Tieck's *Liebeszauber*, the reader is presented with an authorial narrative perspective and accordingly with an omniscient narrator. The narrator's omniscient nature gives him the ability to guide the reader in different directions. After having introduced the protagonists in *Liebeszauber*, the narrator's perspective shifts to Emil, providing the reader with a poem Emil wrote that represents his innermost feelings. The narrator reports Roderich's feelings as well as Emil's, and as an external narrator he reports Emil's state of mind in the beginning of the narrative in the same manner in which he introduces Roderich, who first appears in the story in disguise. Starting with Emil's first poem, the narrator allows the reader insight into what Emil is feeling. The point of view zooms into Emil's creative mind and away from the perspective that provides a general overview. After Emil finishes writing his poem, Roderich arrives at Emil's apartment. The reader, here, is presented with Emil's perspective on the action, as the narrator mentions "[jetzt] schallten Fußtritte die Treppe herauf [...]" (Tieck 213). Only someone who is in the apartment can perceive this noise. The perspective changes immediately afterward when

the narrator presents the dialogue between Roderich and Emil. Continuous shifting back and forth between an outside perspective on the events of the story and Emil's perspective on specific occurrences constantly change the narrator's, and by extension, the reader's point of view. On the one hand, the narrator gives the reader hints and insights into characters' thoughts, conveying pieces of information that other characters in the story do not have. On the other hand, the reader is often limited to Emil's account of events, for example during the night of the sacrifice of the young girl and the appearance of the dragon. The reader, for instance, learns early in the story that the young woman Emil is in love with and stares at through his window is also in love with him: "Er wußte nicht, daß sie eben so trunken zu ihm hinüber spähte, und ahndete nicht, welche Wünsche sich in ihrem Herzen bildeten, welcher Anstrengung, welcher Opfer sie sich fähig fühlte, um nur zum Besitz seiner Liebe zu gelangen" (Tieck 217-218).

At this point in the story, the reader not only gets an insight into her emotions and wishes, but the content also suggests possible outcomes of events later in the work. It is, however, important to note that the narrator only describes her feelings to the reader. The reader is not put into the position of actually experiencing parts of the story with her. The fact that she is not an experiencing character in Tieck's work is further emphasized by the omission of her name. By adding the hint at the high degree of her determination to start a relationship with Emil, the narrator thus increases the reader's anticipation concerning the following events of the story, creating suspense, and a feeling of mystery. Following the narrative preview, the narrator shifts his point of view to Emil, allowing the reader to follow him through the streets of the city and witness with him the conversation between the old woman, Alexia, and two men during their transaction of mysterious lights. Like the protagonist, the reader is left in the dark about the purpose of this encounter, as the narrator sets a limit to the perspective of Emil and the reader.

These examples serve to underline the twofold use of the concept of point of view. Whereas the narrator lets the reader experience certain events of the story together with Emil, he only tells the reader about the young woman's feelings, serving here as a guide for the reader. He determines the focus of the reader's attention in regard to the story by omitting information.

Considering Lämmert's analysis of links within a work of fiction, it is evident that a correlative form of linkage is used here. The main similarity between the first and the second part of *Liebeszauber*, aside from the protagonists, is when Emil witnesses his loved one barely dressed and accompanied by Alexia. Finding himself in a similar situation, Emil's memory of the night of the sacrifice comes back, which eventually leads him to murder his bride and Alexia. The same scene offers a resolvent flashback. In this case, it is not the reader who gains insight into a mystery that was built up throughout the narrative, but Emil. The flashback causes him to regain his memory.

The supernatural element in *Liebeszauber* is the dragon that appears during the young girl's sacrifice, entering the scene from the background. The narrator, however, manages to turn him into the main element of this particular scene: "ein grün funkelndes Auge traf durch die Spalte hinüber in Emils Blick und Gehirn und Herz [...]" (Tieck 227). The dragon serves as a link between the events in the young woman's apartment and Emil, the observer. The gaze they share metaphorically pulls Emil into the action: "Es ist das Auge als Spiegel der Seele, die von diesem Blick getroffen wird, und es ist die Entäußerung der eigenen Seele, die im Blick des Tieres auf das Auge des Begehrenden zurückstrahlt und es blendet – zuletzt das Herz" (Brüggemann 100). What the reader can only gather from this part of the story and the outcome of Emil's unconsciousness and loss of memory, is that, in order for the love spell ("Liebeszauber") to work, he had to be made part of the scene. The reader knows that the young

woman loves Emil and that she would take great pains to establish a relationship between the two of them. Moreover, the reader, together with Emil, overheard Alexia's conversation with the two men in the churchyard about magical rituals. This leads to the conclusion that Alexia served as an aid for the young woman to make Emil love her and be with her. In conclusion, the role of the supernatural element in *Liebeszauber* is to connect Emil, who is on the outside, with the events on the inside during that particular night.

It is up to the reader to interpret the actual use and importance of the events surrounding the supernatural element in the story. In his essay on "Images and Counter-Images: Quotations of Forms and Genres in Tieck and E.T.A. Hoffmann," Andreas Böhn suggests that Tieck's "use of literary forms" results in "a disorientation of the reader in his or her search for a coherent image of the represented world in the text" (124). According to Böhn's analysis, the element of the supernatural is introduced by the narrator to disorient the reader. Up to this point in the story, the events described could be imagined in the real world. With the appearance of the dragon, however, the reader, along with the protagonist, is looking through a window that shows a world of supernatural horror. As Roger Paulin points out:

Liebeszauber suggests, in the terms of the story, that we may, today, look in at a window from outside and experience reality and fantasy as one vision of horror; or that there are moments, never able to be suppressed in the subconscious [...] where a world more terrible than our own imaginings can intervene in our real, everyday life. (Paulin 199)

The narrator guides the reader through Emil's story and with the use of the perspective gained by looking through a window, makes the protagonist and the reader question reality and forces the reader to fill in the blanks. In order for this scene to fit into the story, the narrator has to be

authorial, external to the story, and omniscient. While, according to Stanzel, the authorial narrative situation originates in the “primal motivation of all narration, to make the fictional world appear as reality” (Stanzel 17), it actually is used by Tieck to make the reader question reality. The supernatural is only seen through a window from one character’s point of view, presented to the reader by an unreliable narrator. It is up to each individual reader to make sense of the events. André Vieregge comes to a similar conclusion. He mentions that everyone has a different impression of reality: “Dazu kommt, dass jeder Mensch durch die bewusste oder unbewusste Auswahl dessen, dem er seine Aufmerksamkeit widmet, eben diese bereits bewertet” (39). In regard to tales of the supernatural, he adds

Oftmals nimmt der Rezipient nur anhand der Tatsache, dass es sich bei dem Wiedergabemedium um einen Roman handelt, eine auf Fiktion basierende Erzählung an. Wäre derselbe Plot als Bericht einer Tageszeitung erschienen, hätte kaum jemand einen Zweifel an ihrer Authentizität gehabt. (Vieregge 40)

This means that the reader is not only limited to one perspective on the supernatural events, but every reader is also biased by his or her conception and understanding of reality and the context in which the supernatural is presented. The effect of the story relies completely on each individual reader, or to use Achim Küpper’s words “[der] Text legt mehrere Lösungsmöglichkeiten nahe, gibt aber für keine von ihnen eindeutige ‘Beweise’” (17).

E.T.A. Hoffmann employs diverse narrative situations and narrators in his story *Der Sandmann*. Stefan Ringel points out that “[ganz] offensichtlich erhebt E.T.A. Hoffmann in ‘Der Sandmann’ die unterschiedlichen Sichtweisen auf die Realität zum zentralen Thema der Erzählung” (199). The manifold points of view are presented with varying degrees of importance, based on the length of the passages described or their presentation from the different

perspectives of various characters in the work, and the way in which the reader is guided through the narrative. The short story commences in epistolary form: one letter from Nathanael to Clara (originally meant to be sent to Lothar), one letter from Clara to Nathanael, and the last letter from Nathanael to Lothar. By their very nature, these letters are, of course, first-person narratives. The point of view and, by extension, the character's thoughts and feelings, are limited in each letter to its author. At the same time as the reader becomes aware of Nathanael's deepest fear and the source of this fear, the reader is also presented with a constructive flashback. Nathanael remembers something that happened when he was a child. It is important for him and the flow of the story to mention the tragic events from his childhood in order to make the reader understand why Coppola's appearance has such a great impact on him. The reader is immediately presented with a mystery, and at the same time also with a first-person narrator, who, taking his psychological state into consideration, is unreliable. By positioning Nathanael's testimony at the beginning of the work, thus giving the reader no basis from which to judge, one is led to perceive Nathanael's account as valid and true, true at least to him. In the same manner as the reader is allowed to look inside the protagonist's mind, the reader also gets to know Clara. Her letter to Nathanael is the only instance in the story, in which Clara's personality is shown instead of described to the reader. She is given a voice, offering the reader a second understanding and explanation of the events surrounding Nathanael. The two letters display contrasting conceptions and approaches of what Nathanael believes to have experienced or seen. Greater emphasis is placed on Nathanael's account, because his letters have the most detailed information. His letter is more than twice as long as Clara's and he is allowed to rationalize his initial statements in a second letter. All of this suggests that the reader is meant to value Nathanael's statements more than Clara's, drawing the reader into the questionable reality of

Nathanael's perception of the world. The reader is left in and taken even further into this world in the subsequent parts of *Der Sandmann*. Barbara Elling comes to a similar conclusion: "Thematisch wird dem idealen Leser der Philister [Clara] als negatives Bild entgegengehalten. Der Leser, Teil der Gesellschaft, soll sich mit dem Künstler [Nathanael] identifizieren [...]" (Elling 555-556). The narrative situation changes drastically from an epistolary novel to an authorial narrative perspective with a narrator who directly addresses the reader: "Hast du, Geneigteter! wohl jemals etwas erlebt, das Deine Brust, Sinn und Gedanken ganz und gar erfüllte, alles andere daraus verdrängend?" (Hoffmann 21). The narrator addresses the reader's emotions, trying to explain a particular feeling in a particular situation: "Eine Distanzierung ist dem Leser kaum möglich, er wird stark in das Geschehen einbezogen, [...]" (Steinecke 1985, 960). The narrator creates a feeling of empathy in the reader for Nathanael, which makes the reader more likely to be aware of Nathanael's accounts of the events. The narrator also tries to create a sense of reality, by comparing his story to a portrait and also referring to Lothar as his friend:

Nimm, geneigteter Leser! die drei Briefe, welche Freund Lothar mir gütigst mitteilt, für den Umriß des Gebildes, in das ich nun erzählend immer mehr und mehr Farbe hineinzutragen mich bemühen werde. Vielleicht gelingt es mir, manche Gestalt, wie ein guter Portraitmaler, so aufzufassen, daß Du es ähnlich findest, ohne das Original zu kennen, ja daß es dir ist, als hättest Du die Person recht oft schon mit leibhaftigen Augen gesehen. (Hoffmann 23)

The distance between the reader and the text decreases, pulling the reader into the story and Nathanael's world. Lothar Pikulik, however, mentions "[wenn] Hoffmann Wirklichkeit schildert, dann nur, um die Wirklichkeit zu verfremden, [...]" (Pikulik 23). The sense of reality declines as

the reader is increasingly put into the position of evaluating Nathanael's perceptions, which seem like dreams rather than realistic reports. After addressing the reader, the narrator begins describing Clara. The contrast between Nathanael's and Clara's personalities is further enhanced and the narrator comments on Nathanael's first letter: "Recht hatte aber Nathanael doch, als er seinem Freunde Lothar schrieb, daß des widerwärtigen Wetterglashändlers Coppola Gestalt recht feindlich in sein Leben getreten sei" (Hoffmann 25). This comment, once again, verifies the protagonist's perception and anxiety. The narrative perspective changes again after the description of Clara, another conversation between her and Nathanael about Coppola/Coppelius, and the aforementioned unfortunate disagreement between them about Nathanael's poem. The narrator himself remains authorial; the point of view, however, switches to Nathanael. The reader is with him back in Nathanael's apartment, which had burned down before his arrival. This leads to him moving into a new apartment across from Professor Spalanzani's house. The narrative perspective does not change anymore until Nathanael dies. Coppola's second appearance, and Nathanael's growing affection for Olympia are shown from his perspective. The reader, in a similar manner as in *Liebeszauber*, looks through the telescope and the window at Olympia. No other character's perspective of Olympia is described until the night of the ball. The reader does, however, get a detailed description of Nathanael's emotions: He was "festgezaubert" (Hoffmann 32), "getrieben von Sehnsucht und glühendem Verlangen" (33), "ging mit hochklopfendem Herzen" (34), "entzückt" (34), "kaum vermögend einige Worte zu stammeln" (35), "in Nathanael's Innerm glühte höher auf die Liebeslust" (35), and "[er] hätte jeden, der sich Olympia näherte, um sie aufzufordern, nur gleich ermorden mögen" (Hoffmann 35).

After Nathanael purchases the telescope, the entire story revolves around Olympia and Nathanael's obsession with her, until the very end when he returns home to Clara and dies soon

thereafter. While Clara is mostly described by the narrator, the reader voyeuristically gets to know Olimpia through Nathanael's eyes. For the reader, it is difficult to evaluate what is actually happening around Nathanael. Only Siegmund provides the reader with a different idea about Olimpia: "Wunderlich ist es doch, daß viele von uns über Olimpia ziemlich gleich urteilen. Sie ist uns – nimm es nicht übel, Bruder! – auf seltsame Weise starr und seelenlos erschienen" (Hoffmann 37). The omniscient narrator does not offer an explicit explanation about her either; he confuses the reader further. The narrator mentions that other people at the ball seemed to laugh at Olimpia, but "man konnte gar nicht wissen, warum?" (35). Malcom Jones points out that "[this] is not the voice of a narrator with serious pretension to 'objectivity' and detachment" (82). The narrator's comment appears comical or even sarcastic and seems to be a rhetorical question or one that he could easily answer for the reader. The reader, however, is left in the dark as to why everyone at the ball is laughing at Olimpia. Even at the very end of *Der Sandmann*, there is no clarification of the events or the origin or agenda of Coppelius/Coppola. In a similar way as in *Liebeszauber*, the reader is left to fill in the gaps. Hartmut Steinecke explains: "Hoffmann maß sich nicht an, die Grenzlinie zwischen Gesundheit und Krankheit, Normalität und Wahnsinn zu ziehen, weil er an keine klare Grenze glaubt. Seine Erzählweise überlässt dem Leser diese Aufgabe, selbst über diese Fragen nachzudenken" (Steinecke 1985, 958).

At first glance, Hoffmann's *Das öde Haus* appears to work in a similar manner as *Der Sandmann* and Tieck's *Liebeszauber*. However, *Das öde Haus* is harshly criticized by Hoffmann, when he states "das öde Haus taugt nichts" (Hoffmann qtd. in Steinecke 1985, 1002). One difference between Nathanael and Theodor is that Theodor acts differently in the face of the supernatural entering his world. He succeeds in overcoming the influence of the

inexplicable in his life and the fact that he is the only protagonist in these three works who lives at the end and lives to tell his story.

Steinecke points out: “Verschiedene Merkmale verbinden *Das öde Haus* mit dem *Sandmann*. Die Eingangserzählung des zweiten Bandes zeigt wie die des ersten, wie und warum sich eine fixe Idee in einem fantasiebegabten Menschen, einem Dichter festsetzt und wie sie sich entwickelt” (2004, 300). Here Steinecke points to the positioning of the two works in the collection *Nachtstücke*. *Der Sandmann* is the opening story in the first part of *Nachtstücke*, while *Das öde Haus* is the opening story in the second part of *Nachtstücke*. While *Der Sandmann* commences in epistolary form, inviting the reader into the thoughts of one particular character, *Das öde Haus* features a discussion among a group of friends as an opening scene. The story, much like *Liebeszauber*, starts out with an authorial narrative situation. The narrator can be described as omniscient because he is able to report statements made by Lelio, Franz, and Theodor. While the main focus of the first part of the story is on the discussion among the characters about the extraordinary, the narrator introduces the reader to the discussion. This discussion serves as a frame narrative, since it opens and closes the story. Whereas in *Der Sandmann* the reader is directly addressed by the narrator, the narrator in *Das öde Haus* simply summarizes what the characters in the following part of his narrative are discussing: “Man war darüber einig, daß die wirklichen Erscheinungen im Leben oft viel wunderbarer sich gestalteten, als alles, was die regste Fantasie zu erfinden trachte” (Hoffmann 159). The narrator manifests himself in the story through this comment. Since the comment is not framed by quotation marks, it is distanced and put onto a different level from the actual conversation following it, introducing a narrator who is outside the world of the characters. After the discussion, the narrative perspective changes to a first-person narrator. The main part of the story is told from

Theodor's perspective, as it is he who reports about what happened to him the previous summer. The reader's perspective is limited and we follow Theodor through the streets of Berlin. As the narrator, Theodor frequently interrupts his own account to clarify for his listeners that he realizes how unbelievable his story sounds (see also McFarland 495). In a similar manner as the narrator in *Der Sandmann* addresses the readers directly, the narrator in *Das öde Haus* addresses his audience. According to Kazue Sato "[diese] Anreden bringen den Leser in die Gegenwart des erzählenden Ichs zurück und hindern den Leser, sich in Empathie mit dem erlebenden Ich zu begeben" (Sato 139). This is an important difference between *Der Sandmann* and *Das öde Haus*. In the latter story, the reader is constantly kept at a distance, while the narrator in the former work draws the reader into the world of the protagonist. Overall, there is one additional level of narration in *Das öde Haus*. In Sato's essay "Anführungszeichen und Erzählkomplexe in E.T.A. Hoffmanns 'Das öde Haus,'" on the use of the different kinds of quotation marks in Hoffmann's short story and their relation to the different levels in the narrative, he concludes: "Somit gibt es hier drei Erzählebenen: die des auktorialen Erzählers, die Theodors und die der Figuren in der Erzählung Theodors" (138). Moreover, Sato mentions that for the reader it becomes increasingly difficult to tell the different levels apart (145). Theodor not only interrupts the flow of his story, he also adds lengthy accounts of different characters: his nanny telling him a tale about people in the mirror (Hoffmann 173), a doctor who explains the effect of magnetism (179-181), an elderly man who explains that people who are affected by a psychological disposition, like love, are prone to fall victim to the wicked supernatural (182-184), and Graf P. as well as Doktor K. who explain Angelika's/Gabriele's/Edwine's/Edmonde's story. Graf P./Doktor K., the elderly man, and the doctor narrate on the same level as Theodor. Theodor does not introduce them in any way; they are part of his story. The reader appears to be in the

same room with Theodor, listening to the accounts of the other characters as if they were telling us their stories. They, for a short while, take Theodor's place as first-person narrators. The point of view switches to these characters; the narrative situation, however, does not change.

In a manner similar to *Liebeszauber* and *Der Sandmann*, the protagonist's view, and by extension the reader's view, is partially restricted to what lies behind a window and is also distorted by an optic device – a mirror. Much like Nathanael does with his small telescope, Theodor uses a lorgnette to see the woman behind the windowpane more clearly. While the devices seem similar, their effects are not. The lorgnette does not change Theodor's perception. However, later in the story Theodor also buys a mirror. The mirror has a similar effect as Nathanael's telescope, as Schmidt points out: “[ein] von einem italienischen Händler erworbenes optisches Instrument spielt in beiden Fällen eine entscheidende Rolle dabei, in den Helden Begeisterung für eine weibliche Gestalt zu entfachen, [...]” (Schmidt 182). The reader is, in both works, presented with a device through which the protagonists look and both devices have a maddening effect on the viewer. In Nathanael's case, it never becomes clear whether or not the telescope really changed his perception or whether everything he believed to have seen was simply in his imagination. What the reader is presented with in *Das öde Haus*, however, is a resolute flashback as well as a consecutive form of linkage. The mystery that was built up throughout the story concerning the old house is solved in the end. The reflection of the woman who appeared in Theodor's mirror, however, is not explained. Theodor does not appear scared or alarmed by what had happened by the end of the story. Doktor K., to whom he went for help when the strange instances first occurred, later explains the final parts of the story and once again mentions the mirror to Theodor: “Übrigens mag ich jetzt nicht verhehlen, daß ich mich mit Ihnen in magnetischen Rapport gesetzt, ebenfalls das Bild im Spiegel sah. Daß dies Bild Edmonde war,

wissen wir nun beide” (Hoffmann 193). Even though the mystery itself is not solved, for the reader and also for Theodor this instance of the supernatural does not have a frightening effect anymore, simply because another character saw the same picture. Nathanael’s vision through the telescope remains mysterious; Theodor’s vision, however, becomes uninteresting because it is an experience shared by two characters, with no effect on the narrative itself. Theodor does not go mad, the doctor does not either, no one is scared. How it was possible for them to see her reflection in the mirror is insignificant. The suspense that was built up throughout the work is dissolved, Theodor and the reader are presented with the story of the house and its inhabitants. There is closure. The reader’s imagination does not have to fill in any gaps left by the text.

The main differences between the guidance of the reader by the narrator in *Das öde Haus* as opposed to *Der Sandmann* and *Liebeszauber*, are the gaps which the reader has to fill in. In *Liebeszauber* and *Der Sandmann*, the narrator does not offer a solution to the mysteries. In Hoffmann’s case, it is in fact known that he made significant changes to the figure of Coppélius/Coppola in the first draft of *Der Sandmann* in order to make the text more ambiguous in later drafts: “sodass die spätere Druckfassung auf den Leser sehr viel verunsichernder und uneindeutiger wirken muss als die erste Fassung. [...] Die überarbeitete Fassung verweigert demnach bewusst eine endgültige Klärung und Interpretation des Geschehens” (22-23). Nothing of the sort is known about Tieck’s *Liebeszauber*. Yet, the story does not offer an explanation for the dragon that made Emil go mad. Whereas Theodor in *Das öde Haus* and the reader learn the solution to the mystery that involves the house, the other stories do not work the same way. *Liebeszauber* and *Der Sandmann* guide their readers through most parts of the story, showing them people and events through the eyes of the protagonists, and allowing the reader to fill in the gaps the texts leave open.

In regard to reader response theory, in Tieck's *Liebeszauber*, and Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann* and *Das öde Haus*, the determinants in the story told by the narrator are, for example, their depictions of character traits and general indications of locations and interactions between characters. Indeterminants are realized through the narrators' use of potentially real or supernatural accounts, so that the role of the supernatural constitutes the elements that decrease the texts' "potential for realization" (Snelgrove 119).

In his essay "Seeing Things: Gothic and the Madness of Interpretation," Scott Brewster analyzes the relation between the psyche of the reader and the interpretation of a Gothic text. He states that "reading madness in Gothic fiction involves 'a willingness, a desire to enter into the delusional systems of texts, to espouse their hallucinated vision, in an attempt to master and be mastered by their power of conviction'" (30). Here, Brewster points to the fact that readers of Gothic texts start reading the stories with certain expectations. At the same time, in order to be affected by a text, a reader must be open to what is presented and be willing to let the narrator guide him or her through mysteries and the supernatural. Also "analysts/interpreters may 'see things' in texts that are the product of their own desires, fantasies, delusions." (31) With this, he emphasizes the individuality of each reader/interpreter. In *Liebeszauber*, *Der Sandmann*, and *Das öde Haus*, the reader is presented with characters who suffer from psychotic episodes: Emil sees a dragon and in the end of the story becomes a murderer; Nathanael believes in the omnipresence of Coppelius, believes that a doll fell in love with him, and commits suicide; and Theodor thinks he can see a woman's reflection in his mirror, a woman whom he has never seen. The narrator never labels the protagonists as lunatics; however, Emil's, Nathanael's, and Theodor's behaviors can be interpreted as madness in the text if the reader chooses to do so. The reader's predispositions either reject the madness in the text or pull the reader into the madness

of reading. Each reader, when presented with gaps in a text, will fill these gaps according to his or her own understanding of the world, the fictional world presented, and also depending on his or her perception of the characters described in the story. Other literary scholars have made similar analyses. Lothar Pikulik, for example, states about Hoffmann as a narrator:

Die Gespaltenheit der Welt ist nicht nur eine Eigenschaft der Welt selbst, sondern gründet auch in der Wahrnehmung des Menschen, der sie betrachtet – manchmal scheint Hoffmann sagen zu wollen: *nur* im Betrachter. Beschränkt sich die Wahrnehmung auf die normale empirische Sinneserfahrung und das rationale Begreifen, so erscheint die Welt auch nur als normale, alltägliche Wirklichkeit. Geht sie dagegen über die Empirie hinaus, [...], so enthüllt sich die Welt als wunderbares Traum-, als Fantasiereich. (Pikulik 28)

How one perceives the world and the worlds in fiction is dependent on the individual's life experiences. According to this theory, the interpretation of a text is highly subjective, leaving it open to the reader to understand things that are not explicitly stated, but in Gothic fiction the narrator directs the reader's perspective in a way that causes the reader to experience the story through the protagonist's perspective while at the same time using an authorial omniscient narrator, which mostly offers even more perspectives on the events described. This causes contingency in the narrative and the reader has to decide what he or she believes to be true: the character's accounts, or the comments made by the narrator or other characters.

Gerhard Schulz points to the psyche of the characters in the story as the basis for the interpretation of supernatural occurrences: “[Das] Teuflische in [den Versucherfiguren] hängt ganz subjektiv vom Blickpunkt der betroffenen Personen innerhalb einer Erzählung ab; es wird nicht von anderen Personen geteilt, und die Leser müssen sich ihr eignes Urteil bilden” (158).

“Versucherfiguren” in the works discussed here are Alexia and the dragon, Coppelius/Coppola, and the old house itself and the people in it. The protagonists interpret the influences of the characters/objects and decide to what degree they will allow them into their lives. This means that readers base their evaluation of real and supernatural on the interpretations the characters make in the narrative, but not every reader will do this to the same extent.

Works of Gothic fiction guide readers through a story in a way that makes the reader accountable for filling in the gaps offered by the texts. It also depends on each individual reader whether or not he or she is willing to accept occurrences that cannot be explained. Finally, Scott Brewster’s conclusion is evident in the three works discussed: “The madness we find resides in us: madness in Gothic lies in the reading” (39).

5. CONCLUSION

The goal of this thesis was to analyze the narrative techniques in three works of Gothic fiction in order to demonstrate the narrator's guiding nature, which results in a multitude of possible interpretations of these texts. Furthermore, an analysis of the reader's willingness to engage in the stories and the reader's acceptance or rejection of the works' supernatural elements were a major concern. Ludwig Tieck's *Liebeszauber* and E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann*, and *Das öde Haus* operate on the fine line between natural and supernatural, and normal and abnormal. These stories are excellent examples of this analysis of Gothic fiction, due to their numerous resemblances in regard to symbols, motifs, and most importantly the narrative techniques employed in them. *Das öde Haus*, moreover, served to show how slight differences in the composition of a narrative can modify the outcome with respect to the reader's response.

In their narrative techniques, *Liebeszauber* and *Der Sandmann* resemble one another in that they feature an authorial narrator that zooms in on the protagonist through most parts of the story, limiting the reader's perspective greatly. Both stories offer plenty of gaps in the text and no final solution to the question of what is real and what was only happening in the protagonist's imagination. While *Das öde Haus* makes use of the same symbols and motifs, its narrative situation is different from the other stories. Here, the reader does not need to fill in any blanks left by the story. The reader is not drawn into the story, but is kept on the outside. The narrator does not address the reader, but rather his friends whenever he interrupts his accounts. Making the story interesting for them is his main goal. The story itself interacts less with the reader and

therefore the reader does not have to engage in it to the degree he or she does in the other two stories.

But what does this analysis mean for the study of Gothic horror novels? The appeal of these stories is their ability to draw the reader into the fear and anxiety experienced by the protagonists, so that the reader can feel and experience similar emotions through these works of fiction. Readers' emotional reactions to the story are the main goal. This analysis has shown that an authorial narrative perspective with a limited point of view can connect the reader with the story, but at the same time the feeling of madness in these stories depends on the reader's perception of it.

This thesis focused only on three short stories. Further analyses can investigate Gothic stories from different centuries and decades in regard to narrative strategies and show whether the findings of this thesis can be applied more broadly. Also, empirical studies that analyze readers' reactions to these stories and their perceptions of the protagonists could further reinforce the arguments made here. Considering that the human psyche is a main concern in Gothic stories, it is profoundly fascinating to analyze and compare readers' psychological understandings of these texts in the context of the authorial narrator's guiding techniques. Such an analysis would show a connection between the effect of the world of fiction and the real world. To further emphasize the connection between fiction and reality in Gothic stories, Todorov's statement that a story becomes uncanny to the reader if he or she determines that the occurrences in the story could also happen in the real world is especially poignant. Empirical studies of the actual impact a narrator can have on the reader make the analysis of Gothic stories even more meaningful.

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