

Magnetized Men
Constructing Masculinity through Somnambulism in the Works of German Romanticism

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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The Ohio State University
2011

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Abstract

A frequently occurring trope in Romantic literature, somnambulism, or sleep walking, was understood as a condition of women. Literary depictions of male somnambulism have generally been interpreted in one of two ways: either as indicative of a feminized male subject or as a universal experience that can be read as a metaphor for political and social issues. I investigate the potential of literary male somnambulist to temporarily destabilize contemporary gender polity. I argue that this ultimately constructs minority masculinities against which the hegemonic ideal is formed. Using the critical approach of gender studies, informed by the works of Robert Connell and Pierre Bourdieu, I examine literary works by Heinrich von Kleist, Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, E.T.A. Hoffmann and Karl Leberecht Immermann within the context of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century medical theories and eighteenth century conceptions of gender. I show that in these texts the motif of male somnambulism is used to examine factors that shape male/male interaction including homosocial bonding, homoeroticism and military culture. Through a study of male somnambulism my dissertation contributes to current discussions of eighteenth-and nineteenth-century cultural and gender studies.

Dedication

For my parents, Jeanne and Matt, my family and Benjamin.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my adviser, Barbara Becker-Cantarino, for her professional and emotional support as I wrote my dissertation. I would like to thank my committee members, John Davidson and Bernd Fischer for their work as readers and their helpful comments and criticisms throughout the process.

I would also like to thank the Marbach Deutsche Literaturarchiv, who provided me with a small grant to research magnetism in the Cotta Archiv. The friendly and knowledgeable staff, as well as the extensive library holdings, made my time there not only productive, but also enjoyable.

My project could not have been completed without the help of several colleagues, including Erin, Addie, Shannon, Kevin and Chris, who provided me their expertise as editors and readers.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Younkin Success Center ABD group, under the direction of Shonali Raney, Dianne Wong, and Siri Hoogen. The members of this group supported me through the intellectual struggles, insecurities, setbacks and successes that are inherent in a PhD program. I am grateful for their help and wish them success in their own academic and professional pursuits.

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Introduction

„Der magnetische Somnambulismus sey eine höchst seltene Erscheinung...die angeblichen magnetischen Einschläferungsmittel (...) wirken nur auf wenige Personen, namentlich, was das Verdächtige sey, meist nur auf Kinder und Frauenzimmer, ja mit Sicherheit nur auf kränkliche, reizbare, ohnedieß schon in abnormem Zustand befindliche Personen jenes Alters und Geschlechtes, fast nie auf erwachsene Männer, außer wenn sie durch Krankheit geschwächt und angegriffen sezen, nie oder wenigstens kaum merkliche auf gesunde kräftige Männer (Munke).¹

In *Der Somnambulismus* (1839), Friedrich Fischer attempts to summarize and evaluate the over forty-year history of animal magnetism. Beginning with the works of the physician Anton Mesmer, animal magnetism was a theory of healing that attributed illness to the incorrect flow of invisible fluids. From this initial theory developed a variety of diverse medical and spiritual movements that sought to examine the capacity of one individual to influence the psychological and physiological state of another through the power of thought, imagination, and life force.

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theorists such as Fischer, Schubert, Gemlin, Kerner and others broadly defined somnambulism as a trance-like state that a select number of animal magnetic patients were able to achieve. Once in this state, a somnambulist exhibited a wide variety of remarkable abilities including diagnosing

¹ Quoted in Fischer's *Der Somnambulismus* (1839, 69).

illness and clairvoyance. Somnambulism became a point of interest for many practitioners of animal magnetism. Doctors and intellectuals published a wealth of information on somnambulism during the early nineteenth century. Different theories emerged, each with its own understanding of the relationship between body and soul during somnambulism, as well as the role that imagination and the supernatural played in this state.² A recurring discussion in these publications centered around defining those characteristics which caused someone to be an ideal candidate for somnambulism. It is striking that, despite the diversity of magnetic theories, practices, and objectives, the characteristics of an ideal somnambulist remain fairly consistent. The opening quotation is taken from a section of the second volume of Fischer's *Der Somnambulism* entitled “Die Somnambulistischen Dispositionen”. Descriptions such as Fischer's are echoed in almost all treatises of animal magnetism and somnambular behavior. Repeatedly somnambulists are identified as women, children, and those individuals prone to physical and psychological weakness. Women were believed to make the ideal somnambulists, and indeed the historical record indicates that the majority of somnambulists were women. It was believed that those characteristics responsible for femininity: namely, impressionability, sensitivity, and an excess of passion, were the same characteristics that made an individual prone to somnambulism. Fischer's definition identifies somnambulists first as women, and with men only in so far as they exhibit those characteristics associated with women. Somnambulism was femininity in its most extreme expression.

² These schools of thought will be identified and described in more detail in Chapter One.

Fischer's definition of somnambulism is also revealing with regard to the lengths to which it goes to exclude representatives of normative masculinity from the pool of potential somnambulists. Accordingly, all women and children are potential candidates for somnambulism without additional justification. In order for Fischer to conceive of a male somnambulist, even theoretically, a variety of qualifiers have to be added.

“Erwachsene Männer” are summarily excluded with the qualifier “nie”. Moments in which men are susceptible to somnambulism have to be further qualified as anomalies, such as when men are weakened by illness. So crucial is this distinction, that it bears repeating in the final clause, in which Fischer reiterates that the magnetism of healthy and strong men, in other words those representative of the masculine ideal, is next to impossible. The rhetorical measures that are used to qualify male somnambulism and define it outside of normal, healthy male behavior is indicative of the threat that male somnambulism posed to the contemporary hegemonic ideal of masculinity.

Given the degree to which the impossibility of male somnambulism was argued, and the consistency of these claims across various branches of animal magnetic and somnambulism studies, it is noteworthy that accounts of male somnambulism exist within literary texts between 1780 and 1830. The following dissertation sets out to uncover the significance of male somnambulism with regard to Romantic notions of gender, specifically masculinity. If medical texts couldn't even consider the possibility of a male somnambulist, that is to say a somnambulist who embodies hegemonic ideals, then what significance do literary instances have for the construction of masculinity? How is the masculinity of these somnambulists constructed through their interaction with their

magnetist? What effect does this have on aspects of contemporary masculine culture such as friendships between men, military culture, heterosexual and homosexual eroticism?

This dissertation sets out to examine the construction of masculinity in early nineteenth-century German texts through the literary motif of somnambulism. I will read instances of literary somnambulism within the context of contemporary views of masculinity in order to examine how questions of masculinity is raised through, as well as negotiated through, images of somnambulism. Where then does this leave male somnambulists? How does the experience of somnambulism construct masculinity of men who previously were considered representative of the masculine ideal? How does the experience of somnambulism influence the subjectivity of the male somnambulist as well as his interactions with other men? In short, how does the social interaction mediated through somnambulism shape masculinity? In exploring such questions, I hope to broaden our understanding of the gendered implications of nineteenth century somnambulism, which has historically focused on questions of femininity. In addition, I will trace a set of literary motifs which articulate the crisis of masculinity experienced in early nineteenth-century Germany.

This line of questioning has been overlooked in readings of masculine somnambulism. Generally speaking, instances of male somnambulism are read in the secondary literature according to political or psychological contexts, in which the male experience is equated with a universal, human experience, and appears therefore as ungendered. Instead, issues of gender arise typically when the somnambulist is female.

In these instances themes such as feminine sexuality, subversion of feminine norms and issues of feminine passivity are addressed. But what if we were to examine male somnambulism using the same line of questioning with which gender studies approaches female somnambulism in Romantic literature? What if we acknowledged the same erotic metaphors and potential for gender subversion in masculine somnambulism as gender studies has already done for feminine somnambulism? It is my belief that such an approach would shed light both on the gendered nature of somnambulism and on contemporary understandings of hegemonic masculinity alike.

In order to examine more closely masculine somnambulism, the following work will examine the treatment of masculinity and somnambulism in four major works: Kleist's *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, Hoffmann's *Der Magnetiseur*, Fouqué's *Magie der Natur* and Immermann's *Der Karneval und die Somnambule*. These works were selected for several reasons. For one, they all depict, either first-hand or through the perspective of a narrator, the experience of a male somnambulist. Secondly, they all embed somnambulism within the context of masculine culture by addressing its relationship to factors such as military culture, heterosexual eroticism, and homo-social bonds. The connection of military culture and somnambulism will be of particular importance, given the significant role that military service played in the Romantic area, as well as the frequency with which this motif arises in the history and literary depiction of animal magnetism and somnambulism. Thirdly, each text presents a slightly different somnambular interaction. Kleist's text depicts natural somnambulism, which occurs spontaneously and without the catalyst of a magnetist. *Der Magnetiseur* contains an

instance in which an older man magnetizes a young baron in a military academy. In Fouqué's work we have an example of a female magnetist and a male somnambulist, which constitutes a type of “double taboo” in terms of gender roles. Finally, Immermann's text presents a kind of magnetic -erotic triangle, in which erotic and magnetic influences appear to flow between both men and the woman. Such a range of somnambular possibilities presents diverse possibilities for the influence of somnambulism on masculinity. In addition, these works offer a wide range of affective approaches to magnetism, including both Gothic motifs and satire.

In the following introduction, I will lay out the terms of my investigation. The first section provides an overview of present-day scholarship addressing the motif as well as a justification for approaching somnambulism through the lens of gender studies. The next section will outline the theoretical approach to masculinity that will inform my close readings. This will lead into a discussion of the gaze, and a consideration of how theoretical discussions of the gaze can be of use when examining the gender dynamics within literary somnambulism.

1.1 Animal Magnetism or Mesmerism: The Problem of Terminology

The terms “animal magnetism” and “mesmerism” occur frequently in medical discussions of Mesmer's and related theories in the field of *Seelenkunde*. There is currently some debate among literary and cultural scholars as to which of these terms is most appropriate to describe both Mesmer's theories and those that developed from Mesmer's work. Some have proposed that animal magnetism refers to the scientific

medical discourse, while mesmerism was a term used by the romantics and incorporating mystical elements. Others have contended that this division of terminology is ahistorical, and that both terms were used in medical and literary contexts. My research found that, although both terms do appear in medical and literary works on animal magnetism, there is a general tendency in the medical literature to use the term animal magnetism over mesmerism. There is not enough consistency, however, to draw a strict distinction between the two terms.

In his seething criticism of Mesmer himself, Christoph Wilhelm von Hufeland refers in his “Erste Vorlesung: Schicksale dieser Wissenschaft“ (1797) to the healing practice of Mesmer as „die Wunderkraft des Magnetismus aus Imagination, Nervenreiz und Sinnlichkeit” (34). In this quotation, we see an association between animal magnetism and “mineral magnetism,” the former constituting an attraction that originates, according to Hufeland, in the imagination and senses.³ Hufeland uses the phrase “magnetism” to mean the theories of Anton Mesmer. In *Fragmente aus dem Nachlasse eines jungen Physikers* (1810) Ritter likewise uses “thierischer Magnetismus” while “Mesmerismus” does not appear in the text.

Similarly, C.A. Von Eschenmayer's *Versuch die scheinbare Magie des thierischen Magnetismus aus physiologischen und psychischen Gesetzen zu erklären* (1816) uses the term *thierischen Magnetismus* throughout the text to refer to the theories of Mesmer and the theoretical and practical work that developed from it. The term mesmerism does not appear in the text. He maintains this consistent terminology in his

³ Mesmer would argue throughout his entire career against this claim, insisting that animal magnetism was an attraction caused by all-pervasive fluids and not created by the mind.

later work “Psychologie”, using “thierischer Magnetismus” (which he shortens to “Magnetismus”) as a term encompassing all theories that trace their roots to Mesmer. Likewise, mesmerism also does not appear as a term in K.E. Schelling's 1806 *Ideen und Erfahrungen über den thierischen Magnetismus*. Although by this time animal magnetism had grown beyond the original theories of Franz Anton Mesmer, Schelling still employs the term “thierische Magnetismus” to refer to Mesmer's theories as well as developments in the field.

The most notable exception to this trend in usage occurs in Mesmer's published works. When Karl Christian Wolfhart published Anton Mesmer's theories in 1814, for example, the book was titled *Mesmerismus: oder System der Wechselwirkungen, Theorie und Anwendung des thierischen Magnetismus als die allgemeine Heilkunde zur Erhaltung der Menschen*. Both terms appear in the title and are used simultaneously within the text.

As for the literary texts under investigation, the terminology is once again inconsistent. My first and earliest text, *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, makes no explicit reference either to animal magnetism or mesmerism. While *Magie der Natur* uses the term Mesmerismus, both Hoffmann's *Magnetiseur* and Immermann's *Der Karneval und die Somnambüle* use the term “animal magnetism” or “magnetism” for short.

Modern scholars of literary and cultural studies find themselves faced with the same confusion with regard to terminology as those early theorists. Most examinations of animal magnetism and mesmerism in these fields acknowledge the terms as

interchangeable. When we examine their usage more closely, however, we see that slight differences in meaning do arise.

Robert Darnton was the first to assert in *Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France* (1968) that both mesmerism and animal magnetism were concurrent terms for Mesmer's discovery. Refuting the claim of Bernhard Milt that the term Mesmerism was an invention of the nineteenth century, Darton argues that, in the 1780s, the French terms *mesmerisme* and *magnétisme animal* (also shortened to *magnétisme* were synonyms (ix). Having asserted that these two terms are equivalent, Darton explicitly chooses Mesmerism as the English term for both *magnétisme animal* and *mesmérisme* (ix). Animal magnetism appears in Darton's text only in reference to Mesmer's own use of the term.

It is already apparent from the subtitle that Maria Tatar's *Spellbound: Studies on Mesmerism and Literature* (1978) gives preference to the term mesmerism over animal magnetism. Having said that, both terms appear in the text, with “animal magnetism” occurring more frequently in discussions of Mesmer's actual theory and practice and “mesmerism” referring to literary (particularly Romantic) discussions of the healing practice. This distinction is not made explicit, however, and in fact Tatar equates the two terms in her introduction. She gives priority, for example, to the term mesmerism, defining “animal magnetism” as “Mesmer's own name for his discovery” (3). In the index, however, animal magnetism is the preferred term: the entry on mesmerism reads only “see Mesmer: theory of animal magnetism” (288). Later in the introduction, however, Tatar identifies the scope of her project as “one aspect of nineteenth-century

psychology – animal magnetism, or mesmerism...”(x). Here, in the context of psychological theories, the term “animal magnetism” is emphasized by its placement in the sentence, and mesmerism is a secondary term. In the end, there is no firm division of these terms in *Spellbound*, only a loose association between mesmerism and Romanticism that does not exist between the latter and “animal magnetism.”

Similarly, Adam Crabtree's annotated bibliography *Animal Magnetism, Early Hypnotism, and Psychical Research, 1766-1925* (1988) gives preference to the term animal magnetism, as indicated by the title, but defines it as a synonym for mesmerism. In his “Glossary of Terms” the entry for “mesmerism” reads “Used as the equivalent of animal magnetism”(xxv). Likewise, in the introduction the term animal magnetism precedes the parenthetical phrase “also called 'mesmerism'” (ix).

In *Animalischer Magnetismus oder Aufklärung* (1991), Anneliese Ego asserts that the two terms appeared simultaneously in both French and German contexts and that only during the Romantic period did a slight difference in meaning develop. The term *Mesmerismus* was used in France alongside the term *magnétisme animal* in the 1780s, thereby refuting claims that mesmerism is a much younger term (xvi). The term *Mesmerismus* appeared around 1780 in Germany as well, and referred not only to the theories of Mesmer, but was used more generally to refer to any of the strands of animal magnetism, not only the works of Mesmer himself (Ego xvi). Ego explains that “Puysegurs Methode konnte damit ebenso gemeint sein wie die magnetischen Versuche eines durchreisenden Scharlatans oder eben tatsächlich Mesmers Lehre“ (xvi). It wasn't until the nineteenth-century, and more specifically in the time of Romanticism, that,

according to Ego, the term Mesmerism came to be used as an umbrella term for many strands of magnetic healing (xvi). “Es ist daher, wenn der Begriff 'Mesmerismus' fällt, üblicherweise weniger von Mesmers Konzept als vielmehr von seinen romantischen Variationen die Rede“ (xvii). Ultimately, Ego employs *Mesmerismus* to denote the original theories and practices of Mesmer (xvi). She refers to the magnetic theories of Puysegur as „Puysegurismus“ and she uses the more general term magnetism, as in “Heilmagnetismus” or “Magnetopathie” to refer to animal magnetism in all its forms (xvii).

Katherine Weder initially equates “thierischen Magnetismus” and “Mesmerismus” in *Kleist's magnetische Poesie: Experimente des Mesmerismus*. After her first reference to “thierischen Magnetismus” she writes “oder- nach seinem 'Entdecker' Franz Anton Mesmer – so genannten Mesmerismus” (7). She later makes a distinction between Mesmerismus, which she uses to identify “jene spezifische Wissensvariante,... die sich zwischen 1775 und 1840 konstituiert und reformuliert [hat]” (7) and “thierischen Magnetismus”, which denotes the similarities between the pull of positive and negative magnetic attractions, and the relationship between magnetist and somnambulist. In practice, however, Weder uses these terms more or less interchangeably.

Working in the field of psychology, Alan Gauld's *A History of Hypnotism* (1995) addresses only briefly questions of literary and artistic depictions of animal magnetism. This could account for the fact that he does not take on this debate regarding mesmerism, animal magnetism and the distinct relationships this term may or may not have with Romanticism. Alan Gauld vaguely states in his introduction “I have used the terms

'animal magnetism' and 'mesmerism' more or less interchangeably, although the balance of usage between them gradually shifted somewhat from the former to the latter” (xvi). Gauld's comments suggest that he views the terms as historically bound, and perhaps that the shift from animal magnetism to mesmerism that occurs in his own writing is meant to reflect a shift in usage historically. This is only speculation, however, since the issue is not addressed in his work.

One can conclude from this survey of terminology that, during the period under investigation, there is no consensus as to whether or not there is a difference in meaning between *thierische Magnetismus* and *Mesmerismus*. There is also no consensus among modern-day scholars as to the difference in these terms. I have chosen, therefore, to use the term “animal magnetism” which I occasionally shorten to “magnetism”. This decision is justified by the fact that *thierischen Magnetismus* occurs more frequently than “mesmerismus” in both my literary and medical corpora. The generally accepted German term for one who practices magnetism was *Magnetiseur*, a term borrowed from the French. I have simply translated this as “magnetist”.

2.0 Theorizing Somnambulism and Gender

Somnambulism, as defined by eighteenth-century theorists as well as Romantic authors, was a state of altered consciousness between being awake and being asleep. Somnambulists were those who could enter this state either naturally or with the help of a magnetist. Somnambulists possessed abilities not normally found during sleep. As we will see later, the repertoire of somnambulists' abilities was diverse, ranging from sleep

walking to clairvoyance.⁴ Since the late-eighteenth century practitioners of animal magnetism, or magnetists as they were called, were particularly interested in identifying and studying these abilities, many of them worked intensely with their somnambulists. It was not uncommon for magnetists to perform experiments on somnambulists in front of others and to lecture and publish their findings. Part spectacle, part science, the practice of magnetism could be found in hospitals and universities as well as private salons. By 1807, animal magnetism and somnambulists' experiments were at the high point of their popularity in Germany, drawing the attention not only of physicians, but also authors, artists, and the educated middle class.

The theories and experiments of magnetists were embedded in the class and gender politics of the era. Late eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century German theories of magnetism insisted that magnetism would only be effective when there was an inequity of intellectual strength respective to magnetist and patient. The magnetist played an active role in the relationship, exerting energy and will on the subject. The role of the somnambulist, in contrast, was viewed as primarily passive, as an object receptive to the energy of the magnetist. This power differential shares striking similarities to Wilhelm von Humboldt's theories of gender, which attribute the same characteristics to male and female forces respectively. Indeed, there has been a tendency among scholars of literary and cultural studies, including Jürgen Barkhoff, to view animal magnetic theory as an articulation of contemporary concepts and gender norms.⁵

⁴ Although sleep walking was one of the potential abilities of a somnambulist, many somnambulists did not walk in their sleep. Somnambulist should therefore not be confused with *Schlaf-* or *Nachtwandler*. The distinction between these terms will be taken up in greater depth in chapters one and two.

⁵ See Barkhoff (2005) especially pages 19-20.

The gendered overtones of animal magnetism were acknowledged and addressed by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theorists, as were the sexual implications of this typically male/female form of interaction. Eighteenth – and nineteenth-century critics picked up on the sexual overtones of the act, voicing concerns over the potential for sexual abuse. The practice of animal magnetism involved close physical contact between a man and woman, often taking place in a secluded area known as a “crisis room.” Concerns regarding sexual abuse were heightened by the fact that the body and mind of patient undergoing a magnetic treatment was said to be under the complete control of the physician. Taken together, the seclusion of the practice and helplessness of the patient caused many critics to speculate as to what was really going on behind the closed doors of the crisis room. When examining the history of animal magnetism, one finds that it is intertwined with discussions of gender roles, accusations and denials of sexual abuse, and discussions of sexual morality.

Given that historical discussions of animal magnetism were immersed in discussions of gender and sexuality, it is not surprising that twentieth- and twenty-first century examinations of literary magnetism and somnambulism have often focused on similar topics. Such engagements with literary somnambulism have tended to view eighteenth- and nineteenth-century medical theories of somnambulism as reflective of contemporary gendered expectations. Within this context of literary somnambulism, the primary concern is the extent to which depictions support or subvert the societal gender expectations of the era in which it was written.

Although the term somnambulist applies to one individual, somnambulism was generally achieved within a relationship typically between a somnambulist and a magnetist. Even instances of so-called “natural” somnambulism took place within the context of a magnetist/somnambulist relationship, in which the magnetist directed, recorded and guided the abilities of the somnambulist. Somnambulism was therefore constructed by – and in turn worked to construct – other social structures, including power structures and the structure of hegemonic masculinity.

This line of argumentation is articulated in Tatar's discussion of E.T.A. Hoffman in her text *Spellbound*, the earliest exploration of literary somnambulism across the works of multiple Romantic authors. Although *Spellbound* does not focus primarily on questions of gender, gender studies theory does inform many of Tatar's close readings. Of particular importance here is her examination of somnambulist/magnetist power dynamics and their influence on gender. Her readings of Hoffmann's *Der Magnetiseur* and *Der unheimliche Gast* conclude that the power relationship between the somnambulist and magnetist lead to the domination and exploitation of women (133, 150). This model of examining literary somnambulism as a gendered power dynamic that ultimately works to the detriment of women has been influential on subsequent gendered readings of these fictional texts.

Jürgen Barkhoff has published several insightful works on literary somnambulism, examining, among other questions, the extent to which literary depictions of somnambulism support or subvert contemporary gender roles. His earliest discussion of magnetism, *Magnetische Fiktionen* (1995), offers an in-depth look at the

use of this literary motif during early and late Romanticism, although it touches only briefly on questions of gender.⁶ When questions of gender construction are addressed, such comments are limited to illustrations of how somnambulism re-enforces gender roles. It is not until his article “Geschlechteranthropologie und Mesmerismus” (2005) that Barkhoff embarks on an examination of gender in animal magnetism and its subversive potential. Working in the tradition of Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*, Barkhoff examines animal magnetism as a performative activity that creates and reinforces gender roles. He focuses on literary accounts of female magnetists, male somnambulists, and figures that blur the gendered lines by combining gendered characteristics of each. In addition Barkhoff is the first to examine male/male relationships within this context. His treatment of male somnambulism begins to address questions of masculinity and homoeroticism that will be of interest here. In his discussion of Hoffmann's *Der Magnetiseur*, for example, Barkhoff reads the experience of the male somnambulist first within the discourse of demonic possession, and then briefly in the context of military culture. Barkhoff then touches on questions of homoeroticism when he writes:

Bereits diese Verknüpfung von militärischer Befehlsstruktur, telepathischer Gedankenspionage, suggestiver Einflussnahme und magnetischer Abhängigkeit auf zunächst gleichgeschlechtlich-homoerotischem Terrain wertet die Beziehung im Rapport skeptisch um (26).

Barkhoff mentions only briefly a constellation that emerges repeatedly within literary depictions of animal magnetism and somnambulism, one that is structured by military culture, unequal power relationships between men, and homoeroticism. He suggests a

⁶ See, for example, Barkhoff's treatment of *Kätchen von Heilbronn* in *Magnetische Fiktionen*.

potential for homoeroticism, only to set this motif aside in favor of the more traditional male/female magnetic dichotomy. In his reading of Hoffman, homoerotic elements are significant for Barkhoff only insofar as they represent within the text a variety of potentially harmful motives behind the acts of the magnetist. The male/male encounter foreshadows, in Barkhoff's reading, the text's second instance of magnetism: Alban's magnetism of Marie. This shift in focus leaves many questions regarding somnambular relationships between men unanswered. How does this initial male/male magnetic encounter work to construct masculinity within the text? How is the homoerotic terrain constructed and articulated in this encounter? Finally, what is inherently homoerotic about the act that remains obscured in both within the literary text and within critical responses to the text?

What the works of Tatar and Barkhoff have in common is their focus on male/female relationships in somnambulism and their emphasis on constructions of femininity. Historically, readings of literary somnambulism through the lens of gender studies have favored discussions of femininity over questions of masculinity. There are, undoubtedly, multiple reasons for this trend. The first is not specific to examinations of literary somnambulism, but to gender studies as a whole; namely the tendency in gender studies to overlook the questions of masculinity in favor of investigating femininity. The male subject has tended to be excluded from discussions of gender, given his privileged position within society as representative of the human subject. Ironically, the conflation of "man" with "human" has caused the invisibility of man as a gendered individual. In

his introduction to *The Making of Masculinities*, Harry Brod summarizes this problem succinctly when he writes:

The over-generalization from male to generic human experience not only distorts our understanding of what, if anything, is truly generic to humanity but also precludes the study of masculinity as a specific male experience, rather than a universal paradigm for human experience (2).

The neutrality which masculinity claims in the name of universal human experience results in a position of power over other marginalized genders. Once the masculine order has achieved the appearance of neutrality, it maintains dominance by exempting itself from gendered discourses. Pierre Bourdieu writes, “The strength of the masculine order is seen in the fact that it dispenses with justification: The androcentric vision imposes itself as neutral and has no need to spell itself out in discourses aimed at legitimating it” (9). In other words, by removing masculinity from discussions of gender and power, scholarship insures its continued dominance. This invisibility accounts for masculinity's privileged place in gender, for, as Sally Ribison (2000) writes, “what is invisible escapes surveillance and regulation, and, perhaps less obviously, also escapes the cultural marking that distances the subject from universalizing construction of identity and narrative of experience.”⁷ In examining male somnambulism, I hope to dislodge the experience of men from the gender neutral category of “human”, and to begin to discuss how the male experience of somnambulism constructs the individual's masculinity.

The centralized location of the female somnambulist in both medical and literary texts of the early 1800s provides another explanation for the superficial treatment of

⁷ Also quoted in Isabel Karremann *Männlichkeit und Körper* (18).

masculinity within somnambulism. Constructions of femininity within magnetic treatment have undoubtedly been a fruitful line of questioning given the unique social role that this position gave women during the heyday of animal magnetism. Bettina Gruber's *Seherin von Prevost*, for example, has argued for the subversive potential of the female somnambulist figure. Gruber reads the accounts of Justinus Kerner, a famous magnetist who recorded his sessions with Friederike Hauffe, a talented somnambulist under his care. During their sessions, Kerner's somnambulist claimed to travel to a distant spiritual realm, which she described in detail during her trances. The somnambulist's subversion of socially accepted gender roles, according to Gruber, lies in her access to knowledge hidden from the magnetist. The somnambulist's agency and access to knowledge that is inaccessible to the magnetist successfully inverts the power dynamic typical of the doctor/patient (or male/female) relationship. This in turn undermines the image of the magnetist as "machtvoll manipulierenden Mannes" (Gruber 163).⁸ In Kerner's work among others, the physician is recast in a more passive role, in which he "merely" receives and records the experiences articulated by the patient. Furthermore, the amnesia that a somnambulist experienced after her session protected her from being persecuted for any gender inappropriate acts she committed while under magnetic influence. Since the somnambulist was not accountable for actions preformed during the altered state, she could transgress gender norms without fear of persecution.

⁸ Gruber attributes this stereotype to an earlier form of magnetism practiced by Mesmer himself, and maintains that, by the time of Romanticism such ideas were "*so gut wie ohne Realitätswert*" (163). Gruber asserts that the understanding of somnambulism that objectifies the female patient returns in the work of psychoanalysis (181). This line of argumentation concludes that psychoanalysis incorrectly conflated literary representations the domineering magnetist and passive somnambulist with the actual practice of animal magnetism, an error which caused subsequent generations of scholars to misread the true power dynamic inherent in animal magnetism (163).

Although Gruber makes a convincing claim for the subversion of traditional feminine roles in *Seherin von Prevorst*, she does acknowledge the limitations of her claims. For example, the fact that the physician is solely responsible for recording the session means that the account is ultimately his reflection on the events (93). Gruber also realizes that her conclusions are not necessarily true of all medical and literary depictions of somnambulism.

Daß dieses Verhältnis nicht dem herkömmlichen entspricht, ist evident: Es bringt, im Unterschied zum klassischen Mesmerismus und (wie es scheint) im Unterschied zur sich historisch durchsetzenden literarischen Darstellung des Magnetismus, den Patienten in eine starke Machtposition gegenüber seinem Arzt (88).

I agree that not all depictions of somnambulism exhibit the potential for gender subversion that Gruber finds in Kerner's texts, I feel that her conclusion here is overstated. Although Gruber's text offers insightful readings of *Seherin von Prevorst* by challenging traditional interpretations of the somnambulist/magnetist relationship and its embedded power dynamic, her conclusions raise several questions. Her argument, for example, that Kerner himself viewed his position in the magnetic/somnambulist relationship as one of passive author is problematic. Many authors attributed their work to another source, claiming to be recording the accounts of another. This was a common practice, for example, in Gothic literature⁹, which would frequently begin with a forward

⁹ While it might seem inappropriate to draw parallels between the structure of fictional and non-fictional texts, I feel that this comparison is justified given the blurring between these text types that occurred in the early nineteenth century. Gruber herself analyzes the way in which Kerner's text engages literary discourse, examining its comic elements and its relationship to *Unterhaltungsliteratur*.

explaining the author's role as the mere scribe of another's experience.¹⁰ Such introductions could serve the function of distancing the author from the subject and thereby, potentially, attribute greater legitimacy to the text. If this was the motivation behind Kerner's self-identification as the editor of the text, then it would be an effective way of hiding the influence he had over the production of the text.

In addition, Gruber's conclusions should not be used to make generalizations about the entire body of animal magnetic medical literature. Gruber herself rejects such generalizations, acknowledging that the individual case studies under investigation "kein spezifischer Wert als paradigmatischer Geschichte zugewiesen" and that through her treatment of the material she hopes that "die Rekurrenz bestimmter Phänomene (Verhältnis Arzt-Patientin, Verlauf) durch Vergleich belegen als auch durch die Darstellung einer Einzelgeschichte des Besondere wenigstens Auswahlweise zu seinem recht kommen lassen" (85). Her readings of Kerner and other animal magnetists should be kept in the large context of animal magnetism, in which many inconsistent and often conflicting theories developed over the lifespan of the phenomena. Although I find much of her work on Kerner convincing, it does not seem to apply to texts such as Schubert's *Nachtseiten der Naturwissenschaft*. In this text Schubert explicitly states that the magnetist's becomes the will of the somnambulist "jenes Zustandes ihr Wille mit dem des Magnetiseurs nur einer zu seyn" (214). Likewise, Eschenmayer claims that in a state of somnambulism, "Die Somnambüle hat für sich weder eine reine Erkenntniss – noch

¹⁰ The first edition of *The Castle of Otranto*, for example, begins with such an introduction, presenting the text a translation of a sixteenth century text. Horace Walpole, the true author and not the translator of the text, apologized for this deception in the second edition.

Willenseite mehr..." (68). Ritter makes the most explicit comment about the passivity of the somnambulist when he writes "Weiter interessant ist, wie sich hier guter und böse Wille des Magnetiseurs, an der Somnambüle ausnimmt. Sie ist ganz dem Willen des Magnetiseurs unterworfen" (81). The somnambulist's will is suppressed completely by the will of the magnetist. These excerpts illustrate that the passive somnambulist and active magnetist roles were still widely accepted in the medical literature around 1800. Literary somnambulism varies significantly in its depiction of magnetic power relationships, and therefore no accurate generalization can be made regarding the subordinate position of literary somnambulists vis-a-vis their magnetists.

Examinations of somnambulism such as Gruber's have made important contributions to the discussion of early nineteenth-century female gender roles. What seems to be under-investigated at this point are the relationships between men that develop through and as a result of the magnetist/somnambulist interaction. A practice embodied in the male-dominated field of medicine and performed almost exclusively by men and often in the presence of other men, somnambulism, in both its literary and medical representation, expresses a preoccupation with men and questions of masculinity. By limiting the line of questioning to literary depictions of male/female magnetism (regardless of which person is exerting dominance over the other), many types of male/male interaction are underexamined. We overlook many masculinities constructed from these marginalized positions: the male somnambulist magnetized by a man, the man or men who are observing the procedure (and for whose benefit somnambulism is being performed), the man whose fascination with the somnambulist or magnetist (or both)

constitutes a somnambulism all its own, and finally the man whose mind is penetrable and vulnerable to magnetic attacks.

Those readings which have examined the role of men often overlook the experience of men *as men*, choosing either to place them squarely in the category of “feminine” within the gender binary, or universalize their experience – conflating the construction of masculinities with the human experience at large. Readings of Kleist's *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, for example, have tended to fall into the category of the latter. Here the protagonist's somnambulism and the relationship that it creates with other male characters is frequently reduced to a metaphor for larger political questions – such as the role of obedience and will within the monarchy.¹¹ Homburg's somnambulism is also embedded in questions of accountability and will in contemporary medical discussions.¹² While issues of accountability and political hierarchy do play a significant role in this drama, these themes must also be examined in the context of gender. Political structures and questions of accountability in the text are not gender-neutral objects of study; rather they inform and construct conflicting masculinities in the narrative. Homburg's somnambulism can serve then as a motif for uniting the narrative's discussion of political hierarchies and its construction of masculinity.

A notable exception to the tendency to exclude questions of masculinity is Stephan Schindler's treatment of animal magnetism in *Eingebildete Körper* (2001). Using a psychoanalytical approach, Schindler reads literary magnetism as a way of externalizing those sexual desires deemed deviant by society, thereby causing them to

¹¹ An excellent example of this type of reading can be found in Schmidt (2003).

¹² See for example Wilhelm 1994 (97).

appear as the result of outside influences. Although the application of psychoanalysis on fictitious characters in order to reveal their so-called unconscious desires is problematic, Schindler's focus on elements of non-hegemonic masculinity opens new questions involving the relationship that is forged between masculinities during animal magnetism.

In exploring masculinity through textual instances of male fragility, my work is indebted to Isabel Karremann's *Männlichkeit und Körper* (2008). Examining eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English texts, Karremann looks at literary moments in which male bodies fall short of the standards of normative masculinity. She posits that these moments will undermine the body/mind division in which hegemonic masculinity is based. It is only after the hegemonic ideal is subverted that the male body becomes visible as a gendered body. The visible male body is one that is undisciplined, sick, and frail. It reveals “was im Innern dieser Realitätsentwürfe verborgen bleiben sollte: dass auch der Mann nicht in reinem Bewusstsein, purer Willenskraft und transzendtem Geist aufgeht, sondern mit einem schwachen, verletzbaren, sterblichen Körper behaftet ist”(14). Making male corporeality visible unhinges the illusion of the purely intellectual nature of male existence asserted at the time. Ultimately such depictions of male corporeality blur the gender distinction between male (mind) and female (body) that developed during the Enlightenment era- a distinction in which masculine domination is based (17). Viewing the male body also inverts gendered positions of viewing, which assume a male viewer and a female object (21). Thus, for Karremann, the textual depiction of the male body threatens masculine domination and gender stability in two ways: first, by undermining the position of privilege that men hold as invisible viewer of

the female body, capable of “seeing without being seen” (43), and secondly by presenting the male body as weak, penetrable, sickly – in short, as an object of objectification. Moments in which men are confronted with their own corporeality appear, according to Karremann, as „Momente der Furcht, der Verunsicherung, der Bedrohung für die Männlichkeit und die Realität, las deren Machtzentrum sie sich entwirft“ (14). A crisis of masculinity results from the visibility of the male body, which becomes visible only in these moments. I will argue in close readings that male somnambulism is another such moment of masculine crisis because it depicts the male mind and body as weak, impressionable, penetrable, and passive. Such a male body defies the model of normative masculinity. In order to examine non-normative male bodies and the masculinities they construct, we must first develop theoretical models capable of describing the nuanced relationship of various masculinities within a text. In the next section I will lay out the theories of masculinity that inform my close readings and shape the dissertation.

3.0 Theorizing Masculinity

The tendency in the works of Barkhoff, Tatar, and others to examine masculinity in terms of the male role vis-a- vis the female role echoes Michael Kimmel’s assertion that masculinity is reactionary, constructed in response to the female gender (123). At the core of this approach to gender is an assumed male/female binary. These readings are supported by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theories of gender that posit a binary in which men and women are defined as embodying opposite, biologically determined, gendered traits. By focusing exclusively on the male/female relationships created through somnambulism, Tatar and Barkhoff’s readings of somnambulism have

reconstructed the same gendered constructions inherent in the nineteenth century gender binary. The “blind spot” of contemporary gender theory remains in many of these modern literary interpretations, namely the de-gendering of male/male interaction.

Viewing gender as the result of social construction, I am working in the theoretical vein of two sociologists, whose work in gender construction emphasizes social relationships – Pierre Bourdieu's *Masculine Domination* (1998) and Robert Connell's *Gender and Power* (1987). In his discussion of masculinity, Bourdieu asserts the importance of male/male relationships. He describes manliness as “an eminently relational notion, constructed in front of and for other men and against femininity in a kind of fear of the female, first in oneself” (53). The group of men observing those acts intended to construct masculinity serves the primary role of legitimizing and approving the masculine ideal. This will be a theoretical lynch pin in my close readings, as it is exactly these male/male relationships I wish to examine. In many of the texts under discussion, somnambulism occurs in front of, and for the benefit of, male spectators. These examples of somnambulism become highly stylized forms of social interaction sharing numerous similarities with initiation ceremonies. They are organized around rights and knowledge that is not available to all members, drawing a line between the “in group” and the “excluded group” that runs along gendered lines. As Bourdieu posits, initiation ceremonies provide a key example of the social interactions necessary to construct masculinity and his theories will therefore be of particular importance for my discussion. His examination of male initiations shows how the interaction between male participants forges bonds of masculinity, while those excluded from the ritual support and

reproduce the male ideal. Instances of public or semi-public magnetism exhibit similar gendered dynamics. They involved a variety of hegemonic male roles including the role of male bystanders, the presence of the male medical professionals, as well as the male somnambulists. In addition, the role of those in the “excluded group” re-enforce the masculine ideal.

Where Bourdieu's theories fall short, for my purposes, is his reconstruction of a binary gendered system. Although he acknowledges the exclusion of certain men from the ideal masculinity, such as his discussion on the ostracism of fatherless men from certain initiation rights, he ultimately groups such masculinity in the category of femininity. (24-25) What is lacking from Bourdieu's work is terminology for identifying and theorizing groups of men that are not in line with prevailing concepts of masculinity.

In order to theorize the position of such marginalized masculinities I turn to Connell's seminal text *Gender and Power*. In this work, Connell theorizes the relationship of an ideal masculinity (which he terms “hegemonic masculinity”) and marginalized, subordinated and conflicting masculinities. The term hegemonic masculinity is derived from the theory of hegemony that Gramsci posited in his examination of Italian class relations. Connell draws upon Gramsci's definition of hegemony as “a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond contests of brute power into the organization of private life and cultural processes.” (Connell 184) Connell adapts this theory of social ascendancy in order to theorize gender. Just as a particular class reaches ascendancy over others, so too does a specific form of masculinity achieve a dominate position. Hegemonic masculinity can be defined

as a masculine ideal that is held up in a particular socio-historical context against which other masculinities and femininities are defined. Hegemonic masculinity is also the masculine ideal that informs gendered structures in all other aspects of society including division of labor, structures of power, religious doctrine and mass media (Connell 184). In this way, hegemonic masculinity maintains its dominance through what Bourdieu refers to as “symbolic violence”. Symbolic violence describes the ways in which the dominated are controlled through a series of systems that are presented as natural and neutral. Symbolic violence is “a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims, exerted for the most part through the purely symbolic channels of communication and cognition...recognition or even feeling” (1). Hegemonic masculinity is the gender model that forms the basis of political and social institutions. When these institutions exert a dominating effect on marginalized gender models, the dominating effect is hidden through apparent neutrality. Thus, hegemonic masculinity can dominate other gender models without the use of direct force.¹³

The medical field exemplifies one such aspect of society that is shaped by hegemonic masculinity. The medical profession in the eighteenth century was exclusively male, and as a result, the theories and practices the profession developed assumed a male subject position. As a result, the practice of medicine became synonymous with the man practicing medicine, and thus the gendered position of the doctor was obscured. Medicine, and the biological theories that the field posited, were developed from the perspective of hegemonic masculinity, exerting a dominating

¹³ This is not to say that hegemonic masculinity precludes violence, merely that violence is not necessary for hegemonic domination.

influence on marginalized gender models and thus bringing the contemporary understanding of biology in line with its own subject position. We can see in the medical practice of somnambulism, therefore, the type of “symbolic violence” against women and marginalized men that both Connell and Bourdieu discuss.¹⁴

Connell stresses that hegemonic masculinity does not need to represent the characteristics and personalities of the majority of men at a given time. In fact, the hegemonic masculine model is often only a “fantasy figure” propagated in the media and at the foundation of social policy (184). Although the majority of men in a given socio-historical context may not behave in a way that embodies the hegemonic ideal, there is “a large measure of consent to its ideals” to allow it a privileged place in the collective identity (184). Another key characteristic of hegemonic masculinity is its relational nature. Hegemonic masculinity does not exist a priori, but rather is constructed through the social interplay of various masculinities and femininities. The relation of hegemonic masculinity to other gendered positions is crucial to its own identity, and therefore hegemonic masculinity “does not mean total cultural dominance, the obliteration of alternatives,” (184) indeed the existence of alternatives is crucial to the maintenance of its domination. This would seem to correspond to Bourdieu's understanding of masculine construction, when he argues that the exclusion of certain men, as well as women, from initiation ceremonies gives these acts their power in creating a dominant masculinity (24-25). One can use Connell's terminology to articulate the position of the other masculinities identified by Bourdieu.

¹⁴ Bourdieu uses the term symbolic violence specifically. (1) Connell does not use the term, but describes similar situations in which violence is invisible and embedded in the organization of society.

I am working under the premise that the somnambulist/magnetist relationship constitutes one such social interaction which contributes to the construction of the hegemonic masculine ideal, as well as subordinated masculinities and femininities, through suppression and domination. There are two key advantages to working with Connell's model of gender relations. First, it provides terminology for articulating a plurality of constructed genders, thus moving away from the binary male/female model. Gender is relational and should be viewed not as two autonomously homogenous categories (male/female) but rather “as configurations of practice within social relations that operate, not just between men, but also between men and women and between women and women at any one historical moment” (Howsen 57). Connell develops terminology for masculinities that is capable of both describing the gendered positions that emerge from male/male social interaction, while still being fluid enough to account for individual variance. There are several broad groups of masculinities that emerge from such social interaction including complicit masculinities – a term he uses to account for masculinities that benefit from the hegemonic ideal, even if they do not embody that ideal entirely; protest masculinities, marginalized masculinities and subordinate masculinities. At the same time, he acknowledges that subordinate masculine identities are often ill-defined, since achieving hegemony “may consist precisely in preventing alternatives gaining cultural definition and recognition as alternatives, confining them to ghettos, to privacy, to unconsciousness” (186). He also theorizes, however briefly, the position of women within this social relationship. “Emphasized femininity” is the term he uses to refer to a specific form of femininity defined by its orientation around principles of

hegemonic masculinity as well as “accommodating the interests and desires of men” (183). As for the other femininities, he subsumes them into a larger group defined by “strategies of resistance or forms of non-compliance” as well as those femininities defined by “complex strategic combinations of compliance, resistance and cooperation” (184).

A second advantage gained from Connell’s theories is the emphasis on the socio-historical context in which gender is constructed. Since hegemonic masculinity is constructed through social relations within a particular cultural context, material and social forces can alter these relations and thus alter gender dynamics. Such a model can account for changes in gender relationships that result from economic, social, and political changes. It also emphasizes the temporary nature of any gender relationship, illustrating that gender is bound to the social climate of its time. At any given historical moment, gender “can only represent the configurations of practice emergent from the milieu of social relations that incorporate and organize power” (57). Shifts in the organization of power will thus result in a shift of gendered dynamics.

Connell's model does present us with some theoretical shortcomings and limits to its application, as recent works on masculinity studies have illustrated.¹⁵ He is exceptionally vague regarding how this hegemonic ideal can be identified. This criticism is voiced most recently in Juanita Elias and Christine Beasley's examination of hegemonic masculinity in the context of globalization. Elias and Beasley (2009) point out that Connell does not discuss how the “legitimation of gendered power occurs” thus

¹⁵ See Howson (2006), Tosh (2004), Elias & Beasley (2009).

making it difficult, if not impossible, to “assess which masculinity is the hegemonic one” (288). This results in studies that specify “the types of men” who seem to have a legitimizing role (288). This slide from hegemonic ideal to the attributes of specific men is problematic because it leaves us unable to separate hegemonic ideals from the personality traits of those men who exert a dominating influence on a given society (286). I agree that the lack of theory regarding how to identify the hegemonic ideal is problematic for the reasons Elias and Beasley put forth. My goal in examining male relations, however, is not to identify through literary examples which masculinity depicted in the text is the hegemonic one for its respective society at large. Such an approach would lead to over-generalizations and historical inaccuracies. Instead, I am adapting Connell's paradigm only in so far that it assumes that some masculinities are constructed as marginalized when in contact with other masculinities. The nature of the dominant masculinity is constantly in flux, and a set of hegemonic masculine characteristics can only be defined within the context of a particular instance of social interaction. I do not propose a hegemonic ideal that is valid for the period under consideration, but merely wish to examine how somnambulism, as experienced by a man, shifts the power embedded in social dynamics so as to construct (if only temporarily) marginalized masculine positions.

Another criticism of Connell's work addresses his simplification of homosocial relations. John Tosh, in his contribution to *Masculinities in Politics and War*, argues that homosocial relations should play a larger role in Connell's theories, since these constitute the “activities that men practice and specific masculine virtues that they uphold that have

nothing to do with the maintenance of patriarchal control” (54). I do agree that male/male interaction is key to the construction of masculinity, although I disagree with Tosh's assertion that such practices exist outside of patriarchal control. In *Between Men* Eve Sedgwick posits that homosocial interactions are crucial to the maintenance of patriarchy:

We can go further than that, to say that in any male-dominated society, there is a special relationship between male homosocial (*including* homosexual) desire and the structures for maintaining and transmitting patriarchal power: a relationship founded on an inherent and potentially active structural congruence. (25)

Homosocial interactions are not exempt from patriarchal power, as Tosh would suggest, but rather fundamental to the continuance of the patriarchal system. For this reason, any discussion of hegemonic masculinity should include a discussion of homosociality.

Sedgwick goes on to describe how women are positioned as objects through which men negotiate their relationships. She theorizes this relationship through the model of the erotic triangle. According to her, there is a homosocial element that serves as the foundation of every erotic rivalry. Sedgwick writes that “the bond that links the two rivals is as intense and potent as the bond that links either of the rivals to the beloved” (21). Typically, then, the choice of rival is made prior to the choice of romantic partner (21). Even relationships that appear to focus exclusively on male/female interaction, such as heterosexual erotic relationships, have at their core homosocial bonds. Using this paradigm we can begin to theorize how women are positioned as objects that connect and unite men through homosocial bonds. This model will be useful for examining instances of magnetism in which the female somnambulist is positioned in such a way as to facilitate relationships between the male magnetist and the male observer.

1.2 Dissertation Overview

Each of the following chapters focuses on a literary work in which the experience of a male somnambulist plays a significant role. The first chapter offers a brief overview of the contemporary medical theories on somnambulism and animal magnetism.

Biographical research indicates that the Romantic authors under examination all had some interest in contemporary medical theories of somnambulism as well as connections within the medical community. It is therefore important to understand these phenomena within their medical context before examining their literary manifestations. Chapter One begins with the early works of Mesmer and traces the development of animal magnetism into the mid nineteenth century. Chapters Two through Five are each organized around a work of a particular author: Kleist, Hoffmann, Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, and Immerman respectively

Chapter Two examines *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, a drama in which the title figure undergoes automatic somnambulism prior to an important battle. This chapter will take up the issue of somnambulism as a mode of transmission at odds with the hegemonic masculine ideals of control and discipline. Working with theories of communication proposed in John Peter's *Speaking into the Air* (1999), I will examine the way in which somnambular transmission is coded by the early nineteenth century as a mode of communication inappropriate for men. The chapter will then examine the alternative modes of communication posed in the text and the way in which the protagonist is reconfigured according to the hegemonic ideal.

The third chapter offers a reading of Hoffmann's *Der Magnetiseur*. This text employs somnambulism as a Gothic motif, associating moments of male somnambulism with an affective atmosphere of horror and dread. It is unique in its depiction of male somnambulists, as it contains early in the narrative a scene in which male/male magnetism is depicted as an erotic encounter through metaphors of penetration and domination. Despite the blatant homoerotic overtones, this instance of male/male magnetism has been read historically in non-gendered terms. I will examine the homosocial and homoerotic moments that are constructed through somnambulism. Such moments undermine the hegemonic ideal, subverting gendered assumptions and reconstructing the male somnambulist as a marginalized masculinity.

Chapter Four looks at another Gothic inspired text containing somnambulism, Fouqué's *Magie der Natur*. *Magie der Natur* is the only text under investigation in which a woman magnetizes a man who subsequently becomes a somnambulist. It is also one of the few female -authored texts in German Romanticism which takes up the motif of somnambulism. My reading examines the effect of somnambulism on masculinity by looking at its influence on both the male/female and male/male relationships within the text. I examine the influence that somnambulism has on the male protagonist's masculinity, and the subsequent cultural resources that he uses to reconstruct his identity so that it is in line with the hegemonic ideal. Bourdieu's theory of initiation rituals and the role these rituals play in normalizing masculinity will inform my reading, as will Uwe Frevert's work on the gendered significance of dueling.

Finally, Chapter Five examines Karl Lebrecht Immermann's *Der Karneval und die Somnambüle*. Immermann is an author who has long been positioned at the border of the Romantic and Realist movements. His realist satire *Der Karneval* engages with motifs and discourses of Romanticism, offering a critical and often times humorous look at the magnetist movement of the early eighteenth century. A far cry from Kleist's *Prinz von Homburg*, *Der Karneval* exposes animal magnetism's potential for deception and manipulation, and paints a picture of a young student mesmerized by a phony magnetism. At the same time, the text examines other, legitimate forms of mental influence including love, deception, and con-artistry, and the way in which they influence gendered behavior.

Chapter 1: Somnambulism and Animal Magnetism: Medical Historical Context

„Schlafen und Wachen darf man nicht als schlechthin entgegengesetzte Lebenserscheinungen betrachten, sondern nur als verschiedene Stufen, die der thierische Körper in dem allgemeinen Organismus einnimmt.“ Fischer (1805) 278

The late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries witnessed a fascination with trances, sleepwalking, interaction with the spirit world, and altered states of awareness. The popularity of Mesmer, and his work on animal magnetism, swept through Europe igniting even more research into the connection between the mind and the body and the relationship of each to the external world. Practitioners of animal magnetism published numerous journals, case studies, and lectures showcasing their methods as well as the unique abilities of their somnambulists.¹⁶ A lively debate surrounding the exact cause of these abilities and the conditions under which they best manifested themselves emerged, which in turn challenged philosophers, authors, and physicians alike to consider larger questions regarding the mind and its connection to the body. From 1807 to 1820, the

¹⁶ Barkhoff categorizes medical accounts of somnambulism, such as those published by Gmelin, as some of the first case studies – a genre he believes began with animal magnetism. Several convincing studies have analyzed the narrative elements that structure these case studies, illustrating how this genre in the context of animal magnetism blurs the boundaries between medical and literary texts. (see Barkhoff (2001), Gruber (2000), Kollak (1997), Peters (1990)).

German practice of animal magnetism reached a high point in Berlin, influencing not only the medical field, but also the literature of German Romanticism.

The medical study of somnambulism and animal magnetism complicated the understanding of sleep and its relationship to wakefulness. Sleep is not the absence of wakefulness, as Fischer alludes to in the opening quote, rather the relationship of one state to the other can take the form of numerous gradations. It is at the mid point of the consciousness spectrum that we find somnambulism (Fischer 279). In this historical context the term “somnambulism” referred to a state similar to sleep marked by a heightened state of awareness and strange, almost supernatural, abilities.¹⁷ It was believed that a state of somnambulism could be brought about in an individual either naturally as the result of illness or through the practice of animal magnetism.¹⁸ According to contemporary definitions, somnambulism was related to, and shared similar characteristics with, other altered states of consciousness such as sleep walking (*Schlafwandeln*) and speaking in one's sleep (*Schlafreden*). *Schlafwandeln*, also known as *Nachtwandeln*, is defined as a person who walked while he or she was asleep. In his influential lecture on animal magnetism entitled “Von dem thierischen Magnetismus und einigen ihm verwandten Erscheinungen” (1808) Gotthilf Heinrich von Schubert regards the ability to walk in one's sleep as nothing spectacular, often referring to these

¹⁷ Some studies sought to de-mystify the powers of somnambulists with the theories of animal magnetism. Such studies often respond to popular misconceptions surrounding somnambulists by acknowledging supernatural discourse in their titles, as we see in Eschenmayer's “Versuch die scheinbare Magie des thierischen Magnetismus aus physiologischen und psychischen Gesetzen zu erklären”.

¹⁸ It is important to note that the patient undergoing animal magnetism did not always enter a state of somnambulism, (Matthaei 582) and that certain individuals were especially prone to somnambulism while others were not.

individuals as “gewöhnliche Nachtwandlern“ (Schubert 222). *Schlafreden*, or talking in one’s sleep, could also occur in normal sleep. Both *Schlafwandeln* and *Schlafreden* were identified by contemporary medical literature as possible symptoms of somnambulism, but were not the defining characteristics. In many cases the degree of the patient’s symptoms was the trait that differentiated a somnambulist from a *Nachtwandlern* or *Schlafredner*. Abilities such as perceiving objects even with eyes closed (209), sensitivity to metal (208), and increased ability to remember past events (208) were thought to be shared by somnambulists, certain *Nachtwandlern*, as well as individuals who were awake. For Schubert, what separates the somnambulist from the *Nachtwandler*, *Schlafredner* and normal sleeper, is that these common abilities of a somnambulist are “in einem ganz vorzüglichen Grade erhöht und verfeinert” (209).

Certain defining abilities were attributed solely to somnambulism, and are common to case studies on somnambulism. According to Schubert the characteristics that set somnambulism apart from *Schlafwandeln* or *Schlafreden* are the following: the ability to look into one’s own body or the bodies of others (210); the ability to predict the course of one’s illness or the illness of others (211); the ability to enter into rapport with others (214); premonitions of death (218); ability to write while sleeping (218); and speaking to the dead (219). Although this might strike the modern reader as a bizarre set of symptoms to be attributed to a single cause, all of these abilities were related in the minds of late eighteenth-and early-nineteenth century physicians by their theories of the human body and its connection to the world through animal magnetism.

This section will give a brief overview of the medical discussion of somnambulism in Germany around 1800. I will first present a summary of Mesmer's theories of animal magnetism and their relationship to the concept of somnambulism. I will then trace the development of these theories into the early nineteenth century, focusing on G.H. Schubert's *Ansichten von der Nachseiten der Naturwissenschaft*, a series of lectures given in 1808 in Dresden. There is biographical evidence to suggest that several romantic authors, including Kleist and Hoffmann attended Schubert's lectures.¹⁹ I will supplement this work with several other publications on animal magnetism including works by F. Fischer, C.A. von Eschenmayer, K.E. Schelling, and J.W. Ritter as well as selections from medical publications such as *Jahrbücher der Medicin als Wissenschaft*. Taken together, these texts will provide the medical context necessary for an examination of literary somnambulism. Only after examining the medical context can we begin to examine the extent to which literary somnambulism reflected, challenged, and undermined the medical discourse.

1.0 Mesmer and Animal Magnetism

Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815) was a German physician who developed and practiced the medical theory of animal magnetism. Mesmer's theory were rooted in the belief that there exists a universal fluid which connects all matter in the universe. In addition to connecting all matter to each other, the fluid also penetrated all solid matter, thereby creating its cohesion. When the fluid flowed properly within and through the

¹⁹ Examinations of Kleist's experience with magnetism can be found in Thomas (1959), Tatar (1971) and Huff (1992).

individual, he or she was healthy. Disease, therefore, was caused by a blockage, which in turn prevented the flow of the universal fluid.

In order to heal the individual, the physician would transmit his own animal magnetic influence over the patient, causing the fluid in the body to re-align and the blockage to be removed. Transmission of the universal fluid from magnetist to patient could be accomplished in three primary ways: passes of the magnetist's hand; contact with a magnetized object; and contact with a *baquet*. A *baquet* was a large tub filled with magnetized water and pieces of magnetized metal. Metal rods protruded from the tub, often times with pieces of rope attached to them. Groups of patients would attach the ropes to their bodies, or touch the rods depending on the construction of the *baquet*, thereby allowing the fluids to reach the infected body parts. The *baquet* was developed by Mesmer in part as a response to the high demand for animal magnetic healing. Unable to care for all the patients individually, the *baquet* enabled more efficient group healing. Although individuals from diverse social backgrounds were healed at clinics such as Mesmer's, the facilities were often segregated according to social class. Mesmer's Paris clinic, for example reserved one *baquet* for the poor. (Gauld 5) But the *baquet* was not the only device used for large-scale group healing. Mesmer frequently magnetized trees and free standing pools in town centers for the poor. (Gauld 5) Sick individuals would attach ropes to the tree and tie them around the affected areas of their body to receiving the magnetic haling. *Baquets* and magnetized trees were popular tools of early magnetist's, although they lost some popularity among later practitioners, who placed

little importance on Mesmer's fluidic theories. The development away from fluidic theories towards other theoretical explanations for animal magnetism will be discussed later in the chapter.

In a successful healing, the transmission of fluid from magnetist to patient would result in the patient undergoing a crisis. The crisis was brought about when the fluid exerted by the magnetist was acting with a force proportional to the interior state of the patient, causing the fluids inside the patient to realign. (Mesmer 103) During crisis, the patient's senses were often extended beyond the confines of their physical body, allowing them to "extend to any distance and in all directions" and making all of nature accessible to them. (112) This heightened awareness could manifest itself in a variety of characteristics including, but not limited to, clairvoyance and the ability to diagnose illness.

Although it may seem fantastic to modern day readers, Mesmer's theory of a universal fluid was in line with contemporary understanding of the natural world. The existence of animal magnetic fluids was one in a long discussion of "natural forces" that connected the individual to nature thereby effecting health and illness.²⁰ The theories of animal magnetic fluids were also similar to theories of electricity, galvanism, and gravity that circulated at the time. Galvani's bio-electric experimentation, for example, posited the

²⁰ For an in depth discussion of medical theories of "natural forces" that predate and influenced Mesmer, see Feldt's unpublished dissertation *Der Begriff der Kraft im Mesmerismus: Die Entwicklung des physikalischen Kraftbegriffes seit der Renaissance und sein Einfluss auf die Medizin des 18. Jahrhunderts* (1990).

existence of invisible currents that pulsed through the body.²¹ Mesmer viewed animal magnetic fluids as a similar force but with a larger sphere of influence. Given these similarities, it is not surprising that the experience of being magnetized was frequently described both in medical and literary texts as an interaction with electricity. The language of electricity intertwines with discussions of animal magnetism, an overlap that seemed supported by somnambulists own accounts of the magnetic experience. Patients in a state of somnambulism would often claim to see *magnetische Funken* (D.R.B 70) emanating from the magnetist's body, or feel a wave similar to electricity go through their body (71). The use of electric metaphors in literary depictions of animal magnetism is especially apparent in the works of Kleist.²²

In addition to engaging with contemporary discourse in the natural sciences, discussions of animal magnetic fluid and their influence on the human body also resonated with religious discourses of demonic possession. In the illuminating work *Hypnosis and Will* (1988), Lawrence and Perry trace the development of “pre-hypnosis” theories from demonic possession through Freud and beyond. They conclude that symptoms of demonic possession, somnambulism and hysteria are consistent across all three conditions. Common symptoms of these states include “brutal muscular spasms, convulsive crisis, areas of skin analgesia, and nymphomania (indicated through insensitivity of the vaginal mucosa).” (27) In addition to sharing common symptoms,

²¹ Darton (1968), Ernst Benz (1977) survey in depth the intellectual predecessors of Mesmer.
²² See Weder (2008), and Tatar's chapter on Kleist in *Spellbound*.

Lawrence and Perry demonstrate that the demographic of infected individuals is consistent across social/historical contexts. Young women were believed to be the group most susceptible to possession, somnambulism and hysteria.²³

Despite similarities in symptoms between these three conditions, the underlying cause, as well as the moral and legal implications for each “disorder”, varies from one era to the next. Lawrence and Perry identify five shifts that occurred in the societal response to these symptoms, resulting in different attitudes towards the effected person.²⁴ One such shift was prompted by Mesmer's encounter with Father Gassner, a priest and spiritual healer who was famous for the exorcisms he preformed (28). Given the similar symptoms of Gassner and Mesmer's patients, as well as the similar characteristics of their healing, animal magnetism was frequently conflated with exorcism.²⁵ Mesmer was called in by authorities to determine the validity of Gassner's claims to spiritual healing (Benz 30). After observing Gassner's practice Mesmer wrote a report in which he concluded that Gassner was achieving medical cures, but not through the exorcism of demons. Instead he attributed Gassner's successful healings to the work of animal magnetism. He claimed that Gassner had been performing animal magnetic healings

²³ For further discussion of femininity and madness see Elaine Showalter's *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980*.

²⁴ The five historically bound interpretations of these symptoms are: (1) the 15th/16th century in which the individual exhibiting these symptoms was thought to be possessed by their own choice (27); (2) seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century in which the effected person was believed to be possessed against their will (28); late eighteenth-century in which the individual's symptoms were viewed as a gift from God (28); the conflict between Mesmer and Father Gassner in which secular grounds for the behavior were posited (28); and the „discovery“ of artificial somnambulism in which the effected person represented both rational and magical explanations (28).

²⁵ For further discussion of Mesmer and his interactions with Gassner, see Benz (1977) and Lawrence and Perry (1988).

without realizing it (Benz 30). The ailments from which the patients had suffered had been of a magnetic, and not demonic, nature. Through this report Mesmer attempted to separate himself from the religious discourse with which his practice was frequently associated and confused. The Gassner-Mesmer conflict marked a new era in the development of *Seelenkunde*.²⁶ Laurence and Perry see this moment as marking the „onset of rationalism“ and „decline of magic and superstition“ with regards to the investigation of somnambulist traits (28). It is important to note that this shift was not permanent nor did it represent a complete break between animal magnetism and what Laurence and Perry refer to as „magical“ and superstitious thought. As Crabtree has illustrated, within several branches of animal magnetism, magical and spiritual elements remained fundamental principles for explaining both the workings of animal magnetism and the manifestation of somnambulist abilities.

Mesmer himself realized the similarities between the state of magnetic somnambulism and older accounts of possession and other mysterious phenomena, claiming that the individual's abilities during crisis have been “known throughout all ages under various names, particularly under the name of ‘somnambulism’” (Mesmer 113). Mesmer believed that animal magnetism could be used to explain supernatural occurrences, which had been previously “distorted, hidden or masked in mystery” due to lack of knowledge (113). Everything from oracles and witchcraft to contemporary

²⁶ For further discussion of animal magnetism and its relationship to possession see Spanos and Gottlieb (1979). Regarding animal magnetism and its relationship to psychoanalysis see Crabtree (1993), and Tatar (1979).

theories of convulsions and demonic possession could actually be explained, according to Mesmer, as variations of “the condition called somnambulism” (113). Subsequent theorists of animal magnetism would emphasize the connection between animal magnetism and older forms of healing in an attempt to contextualize and thereby legitimate what many considered a threatening new idea. In Schellings „Ideen und Erfahrungen über den thierischen Magnetismus“ (1806), for example, he claims that magnetism is „so alt, als die Natur selbst“ (8) and gives evidence of magnetism in early societies including Roman culture and in Asia (5-6). He insists that contemporary doctors have not “discovered” magnetism but have merely “ihn öffentlich zur Sprache gebracht und weiter ausgebildet haben” (8). At the same time, Schelling wishes to distance magnetism from its past, associated with unenlightened *Mystik* of earlier eras (162). To combat this, he contextualizes animal magnetism within contemporary scientific theories such as galvanism, insisting that both phenomena draw from the same universal laws of nature. This tendency to both insist on the timelessness of magnetism, as well as contextualize it within contemporary scientific theories and modes of experimentation can be found in the works of Mesmer, Schelling, and many other animal magnetic theories.

With regards to somnambulism, Mesmer explained the abilities of the somnambulist as the result of “impressions received directly by the ‘internal’

sense”(124).²⁷ This „sixth sense”, as he called it, was present in every human, but did not normally have direct access to the outside world. In a healthy individual, impressions of the outside world were made accessible to the internal sense through the external senses and through language. Animal magnetism provided the medium whereby the internal sense could have direct access to the outside world (97, 124). Mesmer vehemently rejected any assertion that these abilities were supernatural, blaming ignorance and superstition as the cause of this misinterpretation (113).

Since somnambulism is the result of a heightened internal sense, Mesmer viewed it as a state that is merely an exaggeration of a natural ability. He went so far to claim that in both magnetic and normal sleep the individual experiences a heightened connection to nature. The only difference between the two states lies in the ability of the former to verbalized his or her experiences (123). Animal magnetism, then, provided a tool with which to intensify and verbalize this experience. The tendency of somnambulism to manifest itself through animal magnetic healing was due to the general ability of animal magnetism to heighten sensory experiences. The somnambulist state, brought about by a crisis, has a tendency to “reestablish harmony in all of the organs and viscera” as well as producing the “inseparable effect of ‘perfecting the sensations’” (127). Mesmer goes on to compare this process to chemical properties

²⁷ This idea is repeated in later works of magnetism in the concept of *Sinnlichkeit*. Schelling, for example, maintains that the relationship of our senses to the outside world (*Sinnlichkeit*) is nothing more than a form of magnetization (11). *Sinnlichkeit* is the relationship between our senses and the outside world, which involves a reciprocal exchange of „Kraft“ (11).

In short, man's faculties are made evident through the effects of magnetism in the same way as the properties of other bodies are unfolded through the methods in chemistry, of using graduated heat (127).

Animal magnetism reveals the innate ability of the internal sense by perfecting the workings of the internal organs.

The unique relationship between magnetist and somnambulist that allowed the transmission of animal magnetic influence is addressed by Mesmer in his discussion of rapport, a concept which was of primary importance to Mesmer's successors. Mesmer defines rapport very broadly as the connection between the individual and all other substances beyond him/herself, which is created by means of the senses (111). The senses enable us to be in rapport with the world around us by giving us access to certain types of matter (118). Each sense is specialized in such a way that it can place the individual in rapport with only one type of matter (ex: the ear provides access to changes in air, the eyes to changes in light, etc) (111). It is through the internal sense that individuals can enter into rapport with others. Rapport allows individuals to transmit impressions directly from the internal senses without the use of language, which Mesmer believed confused and distorted knowledge (97). Rapport offers the possibility of perfect communication through the direct transmission of impressions (97). Through rapport it is possible for the movements of the thoughts "in the mind and within the substance of the nerves" to "independently extend, without the help of air or ether, to unlimited distances and can 'immediately' relate to the internal sense of another individual" (121). As a

result, “the will of two persons can communicate with each other through their internal sense organs” (121). This “reciprocity between two wills” is what is referred to in the term “being in rapport” (121).

What is particularly interesting about Mesmer’s definition of rapport is that he does not make rapport contingent on an unequal power dynamic between magnetist and somnambulist, which is the case in later definitions by other physicians. Mesmer’s theories of rapport emphasizes “reciprocity between two wills”, a formulation that we do not see in the works of other magnetists. On the contrary, as we will see in the following section, Schubert, Fischer, Ritter and Eschenmayer all attribute acts of will only to magnetists, and depict somnambulists as passive vessels. This is not to say that a power inequity between magnetist and somnambulist did not exist in the practices of Mesmer, but rather that it is not thematized in his theoretical works to the extent that it is in writings of later theorists.

Since its conception animal magnetism had been conflated with somnambulism, a fact that Mesmer laments at several points in his publication:

On account of having exposed my method of curing too lightly to curiosity and to contradiction, the imitators of my method have caused many accusations to be leveled against it. Since that time, somnambulism has been confused with magnetism; with thoughtless zeal and exaggerated enthusiasm, people have wished to prove the reality of the one with the astonishing effects of the other. In part, the object of this dissertation, which is going to be read, is to prevent a similar error (91).

Somnambulism remained, for Mesmer, a by-product of the healing process that was explainable using the theories of animal magnetism. Mesmer expresses irritation with

those who attribute the abilities of somnambulists to religious or other supernatural causes. Combating prejudice and superstition is one of the goals of his later publications. As the practice of animal magnetism and case studies of somnambulists spread, many physicians turned away from Mesmer's theories of animal magnetism and focused more closely on instances of somnambulism and the phenomena of rapport.

2.0 Puysegur and Rapport

Theories of animal magnetism and somnambulism changed drastically with the work of Mesmer's student Armand Marie Jacques de Chastente, Marquis of Puysegur. Puysegur trained with Mesmer in Paris and was a member of the animal magnetic group the Society of Harmony. His own theories of animal magnetism followed the basic tenants of Mesmer's magnetism, but attributed less importance to magnetic fluid and greater importance to the disposition of the physician, on his "will to do good" (Crabtree 116). Puysegur's approach to somnambulism shifted the medical discourse away from fluidic theories to questions of mental suggestion and influence. In addition, Puysegur was the first to closely examine the state of somnambulism, which Mesmer found of no importance, and its implications for healing. He is therefore credited with having "discovered" magnetic sleep (38). While examining his somnambulist, Victor Race, he observed five characteristics that would become the defining traits of somnambulism.²⁸

Crabtree defines these traits as: "a sleep-waking kind of consciousness, a 'rapport' or

²⁸ Victor Race is the most famous male somnambulist, one of the few men whose case study is still cited today.

special connection with the magnetizer, suggestibility, (...) amnesia in the waking state for events in the magnetized state, (...) [and] a notable alteration in personality” (39). Puysegur explained rapport as a direct connection between the nervous systems of the magnetist and the somnambulist, which resulted in the latter to bond completely with the magnetist, making individual thought and will on behalf of the somnambulist impossible (41). The somnambulist could only interact with the world through the magnetist, becoming an extension of the will (and body) of the magnetist (41). This unique relationship between magnetist and somnambulist was emphasized again and again in theories of animal magnetism and also caught the imagination of Romantic authors. We will later explore the gendered implications of this relationship of dominance.

Puysegur argued that the only way magnetism was possible was through the will of the magnetist. In his treatise *Du magnétisme animal*, Puysegur writes:

There is only one way always to magnetize usefully: that is strongly and constantly to will the good and the benefit of the ill person, and never to change or vary the will...The magnetic action is directed and sustained by a firm will to relieve the sufferings of the ill person... (Crabtree 50)

This emphasis on the positive will of the magnetist was used later to defend against accusations of moral impropriety. When accusations of sexual abuse surfaced, many practitioners of magnetism argued that such a thing was impossible. A magnetist could not force a somnambulist to perform immoral acts, since such immoral thoughts would make magnetization impossible. As we will see later, physicians protected themselves

against such accusations by arguing that the will to do moral harm would nullify the magnetic rapport and the patient would no longer be under the control of the magnetist.

Puysegur's theories of rapport and somnambulism included discussion of what would be later termed the unconscious. Puysegur believed that in every individual there was a part that was kept hidden, a consciousness that was not accessible in the normal waking state (Crabtree 47). During somnambulism the individual could access this hidden part and reveal information he/she was not aware of in the waking state (47). The process of articulating this hidden information proved therapeutic for many of Puysegur's patients.

Puysegur's theories soon became more influential than Mesmer's. It was Puysegur's brand of animal magnetism, not Mesmer's, that was imported into Germany in the 1780s (Lawrence and Perry 116). Ideas of rapport and somnambulism helped shape subsequent branches of animal magnetism, including work of magnetic spiritualists such as Jung-Stilling.

3.0 Animal Magnetism in Germany

Puysegur-ian magnetism, with its emphasis on rapport and somnambulism, was the form that entered Germany in 1780 and shaped the further development of magnetism in Germany. The geographic center of animal magnetism shifted at the end of the eighteenth century from France to Germany as influential magnetists such as Schubert and later Kerner published books and gave lectures on their theories. Attitudes towards

both the person Mesmer and his works varied greatly from one theorist to another. Some German magnetists attributed the “discovery” of animal magnetism to Mesmer, who they viewed as slightly misguided. Schelling, for example, defends Mesmer against claims that he was a Charlatan, claiming that he, along with other early magnetists, were persons of „Stand, Reichtum und Talent“(159), virtues of a man of status. In his “Erste Vorlesung: Schicksale dieser Wissenschaft“ (1797) Hufeland, on the other hand, characterizes Mesmer as a pompous Charlatan (38) who was influenced not by „unsichtbaren Kräften“ but rather „unsichtbaren Obern“(34). Hufelands characterization of Mesmer presents him as a man motivated by financial gain. Hufeland emphasizes that Mesmer sold and profited from his remedies (34) and criticizes the dues that Mesmer charged students to enter his secret society (38). It was only thanks to the French commission, which included Benjaimin Franklin, that cleared away the “Der Nebel” surrounding magnetism, so that “nun von dem ganzen Blendwerk weiter nichts übrig geblieben” (38). Despite his criticism of Mesmer, Hufeland does not dismiss the entire theory of magnetism. Instead he wishes to re-evaluate it using more scientific methods.

Having departed from the works of Mesmer, and aligned themselves more closely with the theories of Puysegur, there emerged in Germany various branches of magnetism. These different branches were divided primarily by the theoretical emphasis of their models. Crabtree identifies the three major movements of magnetism in Germany as Spiritualist Magnetism (119), Sympathy Magnetism (120) and Magnetic Magic (chpt 10). While it is helpful to identify these different orientations towards magnetism, one should

not take these categories as absolute. There was a fair amount of overlap between the various magnetic schools of thought and traces of one movement can often be found in the works of another. I introduce Crabtree's system of categorization in order to illustrate differences between various strands of animal magnetic. However, many of the magnetic theoretical texts under investigation here will fuse elements of numerous strands.

Spiritual Magnetism was a strand heavily by both Mesmer and the spiritualist Emanuel Swedenborg (Crabtree 119). Spiritualism asserted the soul's independence from the body and its ability to influence other beings through non-material means (119). The emphasis in this practice was on the experiences of the somnambulist, who they believed could travel to the spiritual world and bring back information about these realms. The role of the magnetist was de-emphasized, transforming him into “more a midwife for mysticism than a healer of physical ills” (120). The decreased role of the magnetist marks a departure from both Mesmer's fluidic theories and Puysegur's notion of rapport. Proponents of this movement include Johann Heinrich Jung-Stilling, whose work *Theorie der Geister-Kunde* (1808) articulated theories from this perspective

Theories of animal magnetism that focused on issues of Sympathy were romantically oriented as they sought a unified theory of nature (Crabtree 120). This branch of magnetism had significant influence in Germany. Sympathy was believed to be the force that bound all living things to one another and to nature. Theorists believed that humans had the ability to influence the way that sympathy acted on and between

them. Crabtree explains that through magnetism, practitioners believed that “a healthy individual can induce a sympathetic response in an ill person that may restore him to health” (121). Johann Rahn's *Über Sympathie und Magnetismus* (1789) and Friedrich Hufelands *Über Sympathie* (1811), are examples of work written in this vein.

The theories Eschenmayer puts forth regarding Aether in „Psychologie“ is another example of a world view that sought unity in all aspects of nature. Aether, he maintains, is the highest and purest substance “höher als alle physische Potenzen. Er übertrifft an Reinheit, Feinheit und Intensität selbst das Licht“ (Eschenmayer 249). This all encompassing substance flows in and out all bodies, uniting them to one another (249). It also unifies the characteristics of magnetism (Durchdringung) and of Light (Erleuchtung) (249) into one substance.

Elements of Magnetic magic can be found in magnetic writings across many branches. Magnetic magic was also grounded in a desire for a theory of nature that viewed all things as interconnected. This desire for an interconnected natural philosophy was embedded within the German Romantic movement, and therefore magical aspects of magnetism found support among Germany's romantic authors (Crabtree 190). It departs from Sympathy based magnetism with its interest in the occult and supernatural. Theorists of magical magnetism believed that good and bad spirits battled one another within the psyche (Crabtree 212). Good spirits caused health and healing, while bad spirits were responsible for illness (212). Each individual is “intruded upon by both combatants in the cosmic battle” throughout their life (212). The role of animal

magnetism, according to magical magnetic theories, was as a weapon against evil spirits (212). The work of Justus Kerner is an excellent example of magical magnetism. For Kerner, the role of the magnetist was to use his animal magnetic influence to help induce good spirits to aid the patient, or to drive the bad spirits out himself (201). We see in Kerner's theories of animal magnetism a return to the idea of possession and echoing of earlier spiritual theories of illness predating Mesmer.

Elements of magnetic magic can be found in Hufeland's *Ueber Sympathie* (1811) and the works of Jung-Stilling. In addition, Eschenmayer was heavily influenced by magnetic magic. Eschenmayer, a co-editor of *Archiv für den thierischen Magnetismus* (1816), was interested in the occult and greatly influenced by nature philosophy of Schelling (Crabtree 192). Despite the influence of magnetic magic and the occult on Eschenmayer's theories, ultimately he did not believe that magnetism was supernatural, attributing, much like Mesmer, somnambulist abilities to an awakening of abilities that followed laws of nature (Crabtree 192). He explained clairvoyance, for example, as the somnambulist's ability to perceive patterns and predict their outcome in the same way that astronomer's predicted the movement of planets (192). By functioning at the level of a “universal soul” the somnambulist could overcome time and space as well as the distance between past and future (192). In „Psychologie“ he remarks that, through somnambulism „wird Entfernung und Zukunft der Gegenwart gleich, und Raum und Zeit sind auf relative Weise wenigstens aufgehoben“ (Eschenmayer 262). We can see from

these examples that magical magnetism had a noticeable influence on the theories of many magnetists, even if their theories were not as extreme as those of Kerner.

Having provided an overview of the magnetic trends in early nineteenth-century Germany, I will now focus my attention on several influential works that were made public in Germany at this time. One such text is Schubert's *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft*. With this text, Schubert intended to correct the erroneous theories of animal magnetism's first practitioners, including Mesmer, whom Schubert feels over-stated, confused, and misunderstood the powers and limitations of animal magnetism. Schubert relies heavily on the published case studies of Gmelin and Heineken, whose modern magnetic practices he separates from the „lächerlich“ practices of early animal magnetists (Schubert 202). He is also concerned by what he views as the resurgence in un-scientific uses of magnetism (203), and the potential for magnetic powers to be misused (205).

Schubert defines animal magnetism in the following passage:

Der sogenannte thierische Magnetismus gründet sich auf die Attraktion einer fremden leiblichen Macht, die den Leib des magnetisch Behandelten anzieht, ihn der eigenen Seele in gewissem Maße entnimmt, so daß die Seele wie im Traum des Schlafes oder wie im Sterben von der Befangenheit ihres Leibes freier wird. (201)

Missing from this definition are Mesmer's theories of universal fluid. Animal magnetism is defined here solely by its ability to attract other objects, similar to the concept of rapport. Schubert explicitly describes the attraction during animal magnetism as the

exertion of one individual's power over the other. Whereas Mesmer speaks of a reciprocity between two wills, Schubert depicts a "lieblichen Macht" that is able to insert itself into the body of a recipient. His rapport is a complete union of the two individuals' will and thoughts. This union is not one of equality, but rather the recipient gives up individual thought and becomes an extension of the magnetist. Through rapport it appears as though "ihr (the somnambulist's) Wille mit dem des Magnetiseurs nur einer zu seyn" (214).

A similar situation is presented in Eschenmayer's (1816) theory of rapport. Here too the somnambulist is emptied of her will, and filled with „Indifferenz oder Neutralität," a state which allows her to internalize the will of the magnetist. All the magnetist's „Gedanken und Entschlüsse...in dem Bewusstseyn der Somnambule sich nachbilde" (68 1816). The somnambulist is void of her own will having "weder eine reine Erkenntnis – noch Willenseite mehr..." (68) enabling the "Wille des auf sie einwirkenden Mannes" to become "alles für sie" (69). Similar to the passages by Schubert, Eschenmayer emphasizes the passivity of the female subject and the activity of the male magnetist. This is indicated not only through the repetition of the word "Wille" but also in the choice of verbs. While the man is *einwirkenden*, extending an active force of over the woman, the women can only imitate, through *nachbilden*, the thoughts and will of the man. Eschenmayer argues that this dependency of the somnambulist on the magnetist explains why somnambulists will often feel the same emotions as their magnetists.

Alle Beobachtungen stimmen darin überein, daß die traurige oder frohe, exaltierte oder deprimierte Gemüthsstimmung sich schnell bei der Berührung in die Person fortpflanze, ja sie geben sogar an, daß gleiche Gedanken und Entschlüsse erweckt worden, daß gerade da, was im Augenblicke die Seele des Magnetiseurs beschädigte, in dem Bewußtseyn der Somnambüle sich nachbilde. (241)

The emotions are transferred into the somnambulist and reconstituted there. These belong therefore not to the somnambulist, but rather the magnetist. The emotions and thoughts that are created in the *Seele* of the magnetist, are merely transported (*fortpflanzen*) and copied (*nachbilden*) by the somnambulist, who, in this instance, has no will, thoughts or emotions of her own.

In his discussion magnetic rapport, Schelling (1806) introduces the metaphor of the yoke. He describes the connection of the magnetic patient to his or her magnetist as a yoke that the patient must bear. If the rapport between the two is friendly „so verträgt sich diese fremde Joch gut mit der Art der Existenz des Dings, welches diese Joch tragen muss, und es wird dasselbe, statt aufgerieben zu werden, vielmehr verstärkt“(17). By equating the patient with a yoked animal, the dependency of the patient on their magnetist is emphasized. This complete and controlling influence over the patient is idealized by eliminating any negative consequences such as fatigue and insisting on the restrictive powers of this relationship (17).

In his *Fragmente* (1810), Ritter takes this assertion a step further, not only emphasizing the medical necessity of the (female) somnambulist to sacrifice her will in the process of magnetism, but presents the relationship between magnetist and somnambulist as both beautiful and spiritual. Ritter asserts that in sleep, be it normal or

magnetic sleep, both the *Wille* and *Gewissen* fall away resulting in a sense of physical well being. Ritter writes that with the omission of the will, “das größte leibliche Wohlbehagen eintritt” (81). The somnambulist is now “ganz dem Willen des Magnetiseurs unterworfen” and finds physical pleasure and comfort in this state (81). Her own will is replaced by the will of the magnetist. Ritter celebrates this form of healing,

Und ist es nicht herrlich, das Heilung möglich ist, dadurch dass die Kranke allen Willen aufzugeben genötigt ist, dass er ihr wirklich wegfällt, und dagegen die Verbindungsmöglichkeit fremder Willkühr mit ihrer Unwillkühr eintritt? (83)

The replacement of the somnambulist’s will with that of the magnetist is described here as magnificent (*herrlich*). He further celebrates this (unequal) union between magnetist and somnambulist by comparing animal magnetism to romantic love. Both animal magnetism and romantic love require that one party gives itself completely to the other. In both situations we find the „Aufgeben alles Willens wieder, und die nämliche Wiederkunft eines neuen, reineren“ (84). The active party (the man/magnetist) reaches a point at which the passive party’s (the woman’s/somnambulist’s) needs are his only will, a moment in which he desires “nur für die Geliebte, und um der Geliebten willen” (84). It is only through the purest of thoughts and the noblest of intentions that the magnetic healing will be successful (82).

Given the power dynamic inherent in these theories of animal magnetism, the practice of magnetism became intertwined with contemporary gender roles. In his influential treatise on the nature of gender difference, Humboldt asserts that „*alles*

Männlich zeigt mehr Selbsttätigkeit, alles Weibliche mehr leidende Empfänglichkeit“

(293). Masculine and feminine roles in animal magnetism reflect these basic tenants of masculinity and femininity. After being emptied of conscious thought, the somnambulist, according to Eschenmayer, is filled with “Indifferenz oder Neutralität” and becomes a type of empty vessel, which in turn can receive the magnetist’s will, leaving her in a state in which “die Wille des auf sie einwirkenden Mannes alles für sie geworden“

(Eschenmayer 69). Eschenmayer begins his description of rapport with a discussion of the relationship of man to woman:

Was heißt sich in Rapport setzen? Das geistige Verhältniß des Weibes zum Manne ist: daß das Weib den Mann an Gefühlseinheit, der Mann das Weib an Verstand und Willen überweigt. Plan und Tat gehören dem Mann, aber in Triebfedern, die aus dem Gefühl abstammen, ist das Weib kräftiger. (...) Das ogranische Verhältniß des Mannes zum Weibe ist: daß das Weib an Rezeptivität, der Mann an Energie überweigt.

Barkhoff correctly identifies parallels between this passage and Humboldt’s text.

Eschenmayer attributes to men *Tat*, *Plan*, *Verstand* and *Willen*, all of which illustrate the agency and *aufklärend* disposition that Humboldt attributes to men. (Humboldt 301)²⁹

The woman, in contrast is described in the paragraph above with passive and sentimental attributes of *Gefühl* and *Rezeptivität*, which mirrors Humboldt’s definition of woman as „mehr zur Rückwirkung bestimmt“(293). Men are described in both texts as possessors

²⁹ Barkhoff also identifies these parallels between Eschenmayer’s text and Humboldt’s. See Barkhoff (1995) pg 19.

of *Energie* while the women is the recipient.³⁰ Rapport, then, becomes the interaction between two individuals, whose characteristics are defined and limited by Humboldt's conception of masculinity and femininity. Rapport mirrors the relationship that was thought to be "natural" between men and women, with each party embodying the characteristics inherent to the gender. Eschenmayer's description of magnetic gender roles, for example, reads as though directly taken from Humboldt's *Über den Geschlechtsunterschied und dessen Einfluss auf die organische Natur*. Eschenmayer writes, „Das organische Verhältniß des Mannes zum Weibe ist: daß das Weib an Rezeptivität, der Mann an Energie überwiegt“ (146). The same sentiment is expressed in Humboldt's text:

Denn der ganze Charakter des männlichen Geschlechts ist auf Energie gerichtet; dahin zielt seine Kraft, seine zerstörende Heftigkeit, sein Streben nach Außenwirkung, seine Rastlosigkeit. Dagegen geht die Stimmung des weiblichen, seine ausdauernde Stärke, seine Neigung zur Verbindung, sein Hang die Einwirkung zu erwidern und seine holde Stätigkeit allein auf Erhaltung und Daseyn (294).

The association of masculinity with energy and femininity with passivity and sensitivity in Eschenmayer's theories of somnambulism is a clear reflection of Humboldt's gender ideology.

What was perceived as a natural difference between the genders was rooted in the different functions of their genitalia. Eschenmayer describes how one need only examine

³⁰ Comapire to Humboldt: "Denn der ganze Charakter des männlichen Geschlechts ist auf *Energie* gerichtet" (308) and "Dagegen geht die Stimmung des weiblichen, seine ausdauernde Stäre, seine Neigung zur verbindung, sein Hang, die Einwirkung zu erwidern, und seine holde Stetigkeit, alein auf Erhaltung und *Dasein*" (Humboldt 308).

the sex organs in order to find the ultimate examples of feminine receptivity and masculine energy (146). This state of balance between receptivity and activity is necessary in order for rapport to be established. The magnetist could not exert his animal magnetic force on to the somnambulist unless the latter was a passive receptacle.

Given the natural disposition among women towards passivity, according to contemporary gender ideology, women made the best somnambulists. Eschenmayer writes,

Nach den Erfahrungen zu urteilen ist die Einwirkung vom Mann auf das weibliche Geschlecht die stärkste. Frauenzimmer vor, während und nach ihrer Entwicklungs-Periode, so wie auch hysterische und mit Nerven Empfindlichkeit begabte Frauen, scheinen am empfänglichsten zu seyn (1816 37).

Schubert makes a similar observation

Reizbare und kränkliche Personen vom anderen Geschlecht, besonders solche, welche an unheilbaren Nervenkrankheiten leiden, sind für die Anwendung des Magnetismus am geschicktesten, weil dieser zugleich heilsamer auf sie wirkt als alle Mittel (205).

Both excerpts identify a predisposition among women, especially those women suffering from mental disease, to be susceptible to animal magnetism. It is their sensitivity (*Empfindlichkeit*) and their excitability (*Reizbarkeit*) that make them prone to the influence exerted on them by the magnetist. It is exactly these feminine traits in excess that make them ideal somnambulists, but also categorize them as ill.³¹

³¹ In *The Female Malady* Showalter argues convincingly that, throughout the late eighteenth-and nineteenth-centuries, mental illness was perceived by the European medical community as a feminine alignment.

The attitude towards the possibility of male somnambulism was relatively consistent among theorists of animal magnetism. Healthy, bourgeois men, by virtue of their psychological and physiological Kraft, were incapable of being magnetized. In *Psychologie* Eschenmayer discusses magnetism of the same sex (including therefore male-male magnetism) and concludes that it is only possible in instances in which „die magnetisierende Person an Kraft und Willen die stärkere seyn müsse“(237). He gives two examples; one of a man magnetizing a thirteen year old boy and the other of a woman magnetizing her daughter (237). Since the boy is thirteen, his susceptibility to animal magnetism can be explained by his age, children being viewed in the same category as women, and his position of passivity and weakness visa-vi the magnetist. Male somnambulists did exist, but were generally the exception. In the medical literature, men susceptible to somnambulism were often feminized, separated from normal healthy men by social status or the strength of their constitution. „Geringer scheint die Einwirkung des gleichen Geschlechts zu seyn und nur da statt zu finden, wenn das Alter oder die Kraft der Nervenstimmung und des Willens verschieden ist“ (Eschenmayer 1816 37). We see a clear line drawn between the young, mentally healthy men on whom magnetism is not effective, and those older, mentally ill, or weak men who are susceptible.

Fischer expands the demographic of potential somnambulists slightly, but still maintains many of the distinctions listed above, claiming that magnetism is generally effective:

... nur auf Kinder und Frauenzimmer, ja mit Sicherheit nur auf kränkliche, reizbare, ohnedieß schon in abnormem Zustand feinsinnliche Personen jenes Alters und Geschlechtes, fast nie auf erwachsene Männer, außer wenn sie durch Krankheit geschwächt und angegriffen seyen, nie oder wenigstens kaum merkliche auf gesunde kräftige Männer (69).

Healthy, strong men, i.e. those who embody the hegemonic masculine ideal, are not prone to somnambulism. Those men who are susceptible, namely the sick, excitable and weakened, Fischer places in the same category as women and children. Not all theorists equated ill men with women and children is not consistent in all the literature, however. It appears, at least in the works of Eschenmayer, that even men weakened by illness maintain a physical and mental advantage over women, making the magnetism of a sick man by a women unlikely. In *Psychologie* Eschenmayer considers this point: „Ob männliche Nervenkrankheiten durch den Magnetismus des Weibes geheilt werden können, zweifle ich sehr, und kenne keine Erfahrung dafür“ (236). Eschenmayer indicates, within the hierarchy of sensibility, men, even those who are sick with diseases frequently attributed to women, are still less impressionable than women. Such distinctions are crucial to examining the male experience of magnetism.

Out of the interest in and development of animal magnetism grew an interest in so called “natural somnambulists,” those individuals who could enter a somnambulism without the aid of a magnetist. Such figures occur in several of the texts discussed in subsequent chapters, and offer a unique object of study for those interested in the intersection of somnambulism and gender. A natural somnambulist would seem to undermine the gendered power dynamic inherent in the magnetist/ somnambulist

relationship, providing an autonomous somnambulist that did not require rapport with a magnetist. When we turn to the medical texts, however, we find that this is not the case. In an article entitled “Beobachtung eines von selbst entstandenen schlafwachenden Zustandes” (1822) the author (referred to with the initials DRB) records the case study of one such patient. Although she is a “natural somnambulist” she still binds herself to others through rapport. Her experience of the world is limited to the individuals with whom she is in rapport, so that she can only receive stimuli when alerted to its presence (73). Similarly, Fischer (1805) also limits instances of natural somnambulism to ill individuals, claiming that somnambulism at its very root was a “niedrigere Lebensstufe des höhern Organismus” that could manifest itself without the aid of a magnetist in ill individuals (180). Each of these forms is rooted in illness, however, and not viewed as ability natural to the somnambulist.

Medical accounts of natural somnambulism seem to defend themselves against the possibility of an inversion of the somnambulist/magnetist power dynamic. Although the subject is not under the direct power of the magnetist, she or he continues to be described in passive terms. In his accounts of natural somnambulism, Eschenmayer seems to acknowledge a shift in power between doctor and patient in the case of natural somnambulism, when he writes “Ist es einmal so weit, so ordnen die Somnambülen alles selbst an, was ihrem Zustande tauglich ist und der Arzt wird blosser Zuschauer”(40).³² Here the somnambulist takes control of her illness transforming the doctor into no more

³² Weder notes a similar sentiment in the work of Görres and other theorists (55).

than a passive audience. This subversive potential is quickly undermined however, and by the next page Eschenmayer emphasizes the importance of rapport even within instances of natural somnambulism. He suggests that even the natural somnambulist is in fact under the influence of an unintentional rapport with the physician, the evidence of which he finds in the patient's increased sensitivity to the physicians in her midst. She receives a "wolthätige Kraft" from the two doctors, despite the fact that neither of them intended to have this effect (40). In addition, the patient claims to have seen energy radiating towards her, a symptom common to magnetic somnambulists. To follow the logic, if the somnambulist could see the energy radiating towards her, then it follows that the power behind the somnambulist state was emanating from outside the somnambulist's body. Therefore natural somnambulism, like magnetic somnambulism, was the result of rapport with another person. Eschenmayer concludes that the natural somnambulist must be under the influence of a man's will:

Mir scheint es, dass die innere Nerven-Entzweiung oder auch die Entzweiung des Seelenorgans mit der geistigen Region nur durch eine fremde Vermittlung, durch Einströmen eines organisch-geistigen Agens, das durch den festen Willen des Mannes getrieben wird, ausgeglichen werden müsste (41).

Even in the case of the natural somnambulist, the catalyst for her state is the will of a man. The power that is acting on her is foreign to her, and enters into her. The verb „einströmen“ calls to mind penetration, once again transforming the woman into the passive receptacle of male energy. It would appear that the medical texts of the time left

little room for female agency, basing their medical theories on a gender ideology that relegated women to the passive role of receptacle.³³

5.0 Sexual Abuse and other Scandals

“By far the most interesting of these cases which have yet occurred in the practice of Animal Magnetists, are those in which the patients have been females, and pregnancy one of the results. This curious effect, at one time, made magnetizing a highly popular operation.” *The Lancet* (1829)³⁴

When one reviews the medical and literary texts on somnambulism, there appears to be a strong connection between somnambulism and sexuality. This is due in part to medical theories, which drew parallels between magnetism and intercourse. The most direct comparison of the two is described by Eschenmayer in *Psychologie*:

Es (Magnetismus) ist eine geistige Zeugung. Wie in der organischen Zeugung das Gefühlvermögen abwärts tendiert in die Geschlechtsorgane, und in Verbindung mit den organischen differentialen von Samen und Eychen den Keim eines neuen organisch-geistigen Lebens hervorbringt, wodurch die Seele sich in eine Zeiterscheinung einbildet, so geht im Magnetismus die Tendenz von dem Generationsystem aus, vergeistigt sich in ihrem Verlauf durch die Seelenvermögen, und endigt durch die geistige Zeugung der Phantasie, wodurch die Seele mit der Kraft ihres unendlichen Exponenten sich in eine Ewigkeitserscheinung einbildet, was aber nur auf Momente und unter außerordentlichen Umständen möglich ist. (263)

³³ A counter-argument to this position can be found in Gruber's *Seherin von Prevorst*. She identifies moments of agency in the acts of female somnambulists.

³⁴ Quoted in Lawrence & Perry (149).

The text tries, on the one hand, to remove the sexual implications, by referring to magnetism as a “geistige Zeugung”. The sexual language of the passage draws over comparisons between magnetism and sex, however. The flow of energy from one body to another, the combination of separate organic matter and the creation of a new entity result in a description of magnetism articulated through the language of sexual reproduction. Kluge takes this parallel a step further when he describes intercourse as “ein auf bestimmte Organe beschränkter Magnetismus“ (Kluge 307), and Gmelin’s thoughts on procreation:

Die Begattung ist im Grunde nichts anderes als theierischer Magnetismus: er unterscheidet sich von dem eigentlich sogenannten durch nichts anderes, als durch die Teile, aus welchem der Neveräther aus, und in den anderen Teil überströmt.³⁵

The relationship of two partners during intercourse is described in this passage as identical to the flowing of animal magnetic fluid in animal magnetism. Additional evidence of this can be found in Eschenmayer’s definition of rapport, which is seamlessly intertwined with a discussion of sexuality. After attributing the pentacle of masculinity and femininity to the male and female sex organs respectively, Eschenmayer concludes that „Dieser Gegensatz nimmt alle übrige in sich auf und auf ihm beruht mehr oder weniger der organische Rapport“ (146). Rapport, like intercourse, requires the involvement of two polar opposites, defined by masculine and feminine characteristics.

³⁵ Barkhoff (1995) pg 251. Quoted from Eberhard Gmelin, Über Thierischen Magnetismus. In einem Brief an Herrn Geheimen Rath Hoffmann zu Mainz. Tübingen 1787, 112.

In addition to the metaphorical connection between magnetism and sex, another factor, namely the numerous sexual scandals surrounding the practice of animal magnetism, combined sexuality and magnetism in the minds of many of its critics. Since it was first practiced by Mesmer, animal magnetism raised concerns regarding its potential abuse. Some magnetists addressed the misuse of animal magnetism and sought to distance themselves from such activities. Schubert, for example, alludes to dark deeds done in the name of mesmerism “Ich will nicht von einem noch schlimmeren Mißbrauche jener Entdeckung sprechen, welchen die Verdorbenheit und Sittenloßigkeit der Zeit und der Gegenden, in welchen man zuerst Gebrauch davon machte, alsbald herbeiführte.“ (203) In Matthaei’s article in *Archiv für medicinische Erfahrung* he argues that the advantages of animal magnetism far outweigh the instances of abuse, „so kann Mißbrauch eines Mittels einen rechten Gebrauch nicht verdrängen“(592). The close proximity of the male magnetist with the female somnambulist, the concealed crisis rooms in which the female patient would receive individualized attention from the magnetist, and the control the magnetist extended over his patient, raised concerns about the potential for abuse.³⁶

Explicit eroticism in the practice of animal magnetism was strictly taboo (Barkhoff 21). Many theoretical works around 1800 emphasized that a pure mind was a prerequisite for successful magnetism. Barkhoff argues convincingly that the repetition of the purity theme in animal magnetism does more to emphasize the inherent eroticism

³⁶ I will address specific instances of deception and abuse in the fifth chapter.

than to protect against it, “Gerade diese Beteuerungen aber zeigen ex negativo, wie hier eben doch ungewollt die dem magnetischen Rapport eingeschriebenen erotischen Bemächtigungsphantasmen der Männer explizit gemacht werden.” (Barkhoff 21)

Physicians practicing animal magnetism tried to counter these accusations by developing theories regarding the beneficial influence of positive, moral thoughts. Treatises on magnetism often include comments on the need for magnetists to be morally upright, virtuous, and educated in the medical sciences. Ritter, for example, includes such claims in his case study. Like many practitioners of animal magnetism he insists on the moral intentions of magnetists, claiming that the healing effects of animal magnetism can only be induced if the practitioner’s intentions are pure and moral. He asserts that positive thoughts on behalf of the magnetist brought about positive reactions within the patient’s body while evil thoughts and intentions would cause about negative reactions in the patient (82). There is little doubt that such theories were a reaction against accusations of (sexually) inappropriate conduct on behalf of the magnetist. Theories such as Ritter’s were meant to counteract these accusations by using scientific reason to eliminate the possibility of sexual misconduct. Despite such attempts to disprove accusations of misconduct, rumors continued and sparked the imagination of many authors. The motif of the sexually deviant magnetist can be found in many literary texts that address somnambulism. This motif will be discussed at length in subsequent chapters.

In addition to accusations of sexual abuse, critics of animal magnetism were concerned that unbridled access to the mind of a somnambulist may result in the

revelation of familial or national secrets. In *Du magnétisme animal* (1825) Rostan is the first to acknowledge the potential legal problems associated with magnetism (Lawrence and Perry 147). Magnetism could be used, according to Rostan, to elicit confessions and force the somnambulist to reveal personal secrets (147). “Might not a magnetizer rob the subject of important secrets and use them to his advantage? Do we not know that the well being of families is often dependent upon a secret pertaining to particular circumstances?...”³⁷ As is indicated in this quote, vulnerability brings with it the potential invasion of privacy, on which the intimate domestic sphere was based. Similar concerns were voiced regarding the well being of the state. Unbridled access to the mind of a government official, for example, could result in leaking government or military secrets, thus jeopardizing the welfare of the state.

Accusations of deception, both intentionally orchestrated hoaxes and unintentional self-deception, have accompanied the practice of animal magnetism since its debut. The invisible nature of the animal magnetic fluids made the verification of their existence difficult, leaving both critics and supporters of animal magnetism to draw their own conclusions regarding the force behind these (seemingly) miraculous cures. Among the early literary responses to animal magnetism are those that satirized the practice, depicting magnetists (and often times somnambulists) as practitioners of deception that feed on the naiveté and ignorance of those who were sympathetic to animal magnetism. While some satires offered a harsh criticism of the potential dangers

³⁷ Quoted in, and translated by, Crabtree (90).

of such abuse, others provided lighthearted and often comical approaches to their criticism.

6.0 Conclusion

What started as a healing practice, intended to restore balance to the organs, developed into numerous theories, examining diverse aspects of physical, psychological and spiritual existence. Animal magnetism grew beyond Mesmer's own vision into, among other things, a medium for communication, a tool for sexual seduction, as well as a channel for accessing the spirit world. With the potential to unite personal experience with the larger world and re-integrate humanity with nature, animal magnetism resonated among many Romantic authors.

In the following chapters I will examine literary depictions of somnambulism, many instances of which are embedded in discussions of animal magnetism. The literary motif of somnambulism is distinct from the medical practice, even though the two do overlap. While literary somnambulism often references, both expressly and implicitly, medical theories and documents, it also moves beyond the medical discourse. Literary depictions of somnambulism merges elements from various schools of magnetic thought, creating somnambular traits outside of the repertoire presented in case studies, and experimenting with gender dynamics that are either absent or suppressed in the writings of medical magnetists. Literary somnambulism offers a point of convergence between medical and social understandings of gender, which provides a productive space in which to negotiate contemporary gender ideology.

Chapter 2: Military Discipline and Masculine Communication: Heinrich von Kleist's *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*

Many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century magnetists understood somnambulism as a mental state that was able to reveal the inner state of the subject. Rapport, which connected the somnambulist with the magnetist, enabled a way of understanding the other that was viewed as more direct, and ultimately more effective, than language alone. Eschenmeyer, for example, remarks that during somnambulism “was im Augenblick die Seele ihres Magnetiseurs beschäftigte, in dem Bewusstseyn der Somnambule sich nachbilde” (65). The merging of two minds that is made possible through rapport also allows transmission of thoughts between the parties. Knowledge of the other person's body as well as their thoughts could be transmitted through this bond - often times across great distances and without the use of language. In this way, somnambulism presented a state of complete revelation and was believed by many to be a mode of communication.

In this chapter I explore the communicative potential of somnambulism in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* and its implications on masculinity. In Kleist's drama I read rapport, the connection between the somnambulist and the magnetist, as a media of communication. This line of argumentation follows the theories of both Mesmer and

Schubert, who examined the communicative potential of somnambulism, theories which will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

In this chapter I assert not only that rapport is used for communicative purposes in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, but also that this form of communication is one that threatens the masculinity of the subject. Rapport is constructed as a communicative media that threatens the hegemonic masculine ideal, which was based in self-control and suppression of emotions and passions. This non-verbal communicative mode is contrasted in the text with written communication in the forms of personal letters, petitions, and marching orders. Rapport, established through somnambulism, and the written word are presented in the drama as mutually exclusive, the latter requiring a degree of discipline and self reflection that is incompatible with the former. Although written communication is ultimately chosen in the text as the preferred communicative mode, there is a sense of loss for the potential of communicative rapport.

In reading *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* at the intersection of masculinity and communication, this chapter draws on several theoretical frameworks. Contributions to masculinity studies, especially Mosse's *Nationalism and Sexuality* will shape the discussion of contemporary Prussian masculine ideals. Mosse's theory of respectability and its relationship to the formation of a masculinity based in self discipline illustrates that concealment (through discipline) constitute the foundation of early nineteenth-century masculinity. In addition, Mosse's discussion of masculinity theorizes masculinity's relationship to military service, a discourse which is of primary importance

in the drama. In order to discuss somnambulism as a communicative medium, an aspect of Kleist's drama that is unique to literary depictions of somnambulism, I will examine discussions of communication in the theoretical works of Mesmer and Schubert. The possibility of pre-verbal communication, which is expressed both directly and indirectly in the work of these theorists, is conducive to Kleist's own philosophy of language, as is presented in his essay "Über die allmähliche Verfertigung der Gedanken beim Reden."

As a mode of communication, somnambulism would seem to offer an alternative mode of communication that brings the communicative message in line with the physical experience. Ultimately, however, the text illustrates somnambulism's inability to do just that.

1.0 Prinz Friedrich von Homburg: Review of Scholarship

Both *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* and *Kätchen von Heilbronn* engage with animal magnetic theories and have therefore resulted in numerous readings of these dramas within the context of contemporary medical discourses.³⁸ Biographical sources reveal Kleist's interest in animal magnetism and somnambulism, as well as his personal contact with some of the leading magnetists of his time. Herminio Schmidt's (1978) examination of Kleist's work in the context of contemporary natural science reveal his ties to Schubert, as well as his participation in the scientific communities in Jena, Halle, Leipzig, and throughout Germany (14). Biographical evidence indicates that Kleist attended a presentation of a somnambulist and display of the somnambulist's talents in

³⁸ Weder (2008), Schott (1999), Barkhoff (1995), Wilhelm (1994), Peters (1990), and Tatar (1978) are notable examples, which will be discussed throughout the chapter.

the autumn of 1807 (26). Although Schmidt does not specifically discuss the influence of animal magnetism on Kleist's work, he does address the influence of related, and often intertwined, scientific discourses including mineral magnetism and electricity. Many of those individuals examining mineral magnetism and electricity were also experimenting with animal magnetism. This connection is beyond the scope of Schmidt's text, and remains unexplored. Weder and Tatar further explore the interplay between mineral and animal magnetism in Kleist's work.

Early receptions of *Prinz von Homburg* were often critical of Kleist's use of clairvoyance, dream-states, and other mysterious phenomena associated at the time with somnambulism. Heinrich Gustavo Hotho (1827) and Solger (1817) both pointed to somnambulism as the drama's main weakness. Solger criticizes the way in which "die eigentliche Handlung in eine fremde, geistige oder wunderbare Welt zu versetzen" and the drama's overall "Hang zu dem willkürlichen Mystizismus, der am Ende mehr interessant als wahr und tief sein will" (Hansen 49).³⁹ Hotho finds "das Verhältniß nämlich des träumenden Hellsehns und des verständigen wachen Bewußtseyns" to be the „Schwäche“ of the text. These motifs, Hotho argues, present an ahistorical picture of Homburg and also detract from what he feels is at the core of the, namely, the question of subordination (Hansen 48).⁴⁰ Hegel goes so far as to say that elements such as „Magische, Magnetische Dämonische, die vornehme Gespenstigkeit des Hellsehens, die

³⁹ Quoted from Solger's letter to Tieck, 4.10.1817 (Sembdner 227)

⁴⁰ Quoted *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik* (1827): 86-92.

Krankheit des Schlafwanderns“ have no place in art (49). Hegel specifically mentions *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* as an example of those works, in which these „dunkeln Mächte“ cause “die Poesie in das Nebulose Eitle und Leere hinübergepielt” (Hansen 49).⁴¹ Modern receptions of *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* have acknowledged the way in which the motif of somnambulism re-enforces the motif of subordination in the text. Since the relationship between magnetist and somnambulist was one of domination and subordination, reading the motif of societal subordination through somnambulism has proved a productive connection.⁴²

Tatar’s treatment of Kleist in *Spellbound* is the first to focus on animal magnetism in the drama. Tatar bridges the gap between Kleist’s interest in electricity and his exploration of animal magnetism, tracing a shift away from the former and towards the latter. In her reading, Tatar discusses the depiction of somnambulism as a counter to self control. Only after gaining control over himself can the prince cease his somnambulism and re-integrate himself into society (116). This insight will provide a useful starting point from which to discuss the role of control in constructing masculinity, as well as the power of somnambulism to undermine self control and therefore masculinity.

Uffe Hansen's „Prinz Friedrich von Homburg und die Anthropologie des Animalischen Magnetismus“ (2006) takes issue with what he feels are misguided readings of the drama in the context of animal magnetic theory. He harshly criticizes works such as Barkhoff (2003), claiming that Kleist scholars have demonstrated “selbst

⁴¹ For a closer examination of the drama's early reception see Hansen (2006) especially pages 48-49.
⁴² Wilhelm (1994) is an example of such a reading.

kein sonderliches Interesse an der damaligen Literatur über den Somnambulismus” (58).

Hansen blames this disinterest on the part of the scholars for the inaccurate application of animal magnetic theory. More specifically, Hansen finds the application of Mesmer and Schubert to Kleist's works to be highly problematic, as Mesmeric theories, according to Hansen, are no longer relevant in the time of Kleist, and Schubert is merely a marginal figure in the history of animal magnetism.⁴³ Instead, Hansen emphasizes the works of Eberhard Gmelin, Puysegur, Johann Heineken, and Johann Nathanael Pezold (54). I disagree with the stance that Hansen takes against examining the influence of Schubert's works on Kleist. Given that Kleist attended Schubert's lectures, and maintained a personal correspondence with Schubert, one can conclude that Schubert's theories had significant influence on Kleist's own ideas of animal magnetism, somnambulism and related phenomena. In addition, it is erroneous to assume that those theorists who had the largest influence in the medical practice of animal magnetism also had the most significant influence on Romantic authors. Hansen's conflation of literary and medical treatments of animal magnetism and somnambulism constitutes the key weakness of his reading of *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*. The author has, without a doubt, an in-depth understanding of the nuances of animal magnetic theory, which leads to innovative close readings. At the same time, I feel he adheres too much to the medical texts, drawing on them to account for every inconsistency within the text's treatment of somnambulism and animal magnetism. This seems to run the risk of overlooking Kleist's unique contribution

⁴³ It is interesting to note that, despite his objection to Schubert's influence on Kleist, he himself does reference Schubert in his own close reading of *Prinz von Homburg* (see page 63).

to the literary depiction of somnambulism and animal magnetism, an element of the drama that is emphasized in Barkhoff's work.

Weder's examination of *Prince Friedrich von Homburg* in Kleists *Magnetische Poesie* (2008) continues Tatar's earlier line of questioning, focusing with greater detail on the interaction of the literary text with contemporary theories of both animal magnetism and mineral magnetism. Drawing parallels between the drama and theoretical works by Hufeland, Schubert and others, Weder argues convincingly that, while the figure of Homburg does share many characteristics of famous somnambulists, as presented in the medical literature at the time, the drama should not be interpreted as a case study (371).

In addition, Weder reads the drama in the context of contemporary legal discussions surrounding the accountability of the mentally impaired.⁴⁴ The question of personal accountability in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* had been discussed elsewhere, and was seen as a major theme in the drama.⁴⁵ Weder expands on this discussion, examining the theme of personal accountability in the context of contemporary medical and legal texts. It was at the beginning of the nineteenth- century that the question of mental competency was raised in connection with legal accountability. As a state in which the subject was believed to have no control over his or her actions, somnambulism posed a unique legal dilemma. Weder cites the 1806 *Allgemeines Criminalrecht für Preußische Staaten*, which takes up the issue of limited accountability due to diminished mental capacity. This document states that, in instances in which the individual accused

⁴⁴ This connection to legal discourse is discussed briefly in Wilhelm (1994) 97.

⁴⁵ See for example Wilhelm (1994) 97.

of a crime demonstrates “Verwirrung oder Schwäche des Verstandes,” the individual should undergo a medical examination to establish legal accountability (Weder 354). Schmidt-Hannisa illustrates that early questions surrounding the accountability of somnambulists for illegal acts committed in the somnambular state paved the way for what would later become the insanity defense. Likewise, medical texts discussing somnambulism and *Nachtwandlung* in the early 1800s also began to speculate the legal implications of these states. Here, Weder examines Hoffbauer's *Psychologie* (1808), which complicates the issue further by taking into consideration whether or not the somnambulist or *Traumwandler* is aware of his or her condition. According to Hoffbauer, only those individuals who are aware of their sleep disorder, but do nothing to protect themselves and those around them, can be held legally responsible for their actions in the altered state (Weder 356). A later example of this debate can be found in *System der Psychisch Gerichtlichen Medicin* (1827) which appeared in the medical journal *Medicinisch-chirurgische Zeitung*. The article considers the accountability of a somnambulist or *Traumwandler* and concludes “daß keine Handlung eines Nachtwandlers in den Bereich der Zurechnungsfähigkeit komme“ (81).

Weder argues convincingly that the debate surrounding the legal accountability of somnambulists is addressed in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*. In the fifth scene of the final act, Weder claims that Homburg's legal responsibility is questioned based on the assertion that he was not in control of his mind during the time of his illegal actions. She argues that the text places responsibility (albeit temporarily) on the Kurfürst himself,

whose manipulation of the prince's mind resulted in an unconscious transgression.

Somnambulism is presented at this moment as a state of decreased mental capacity, one in which the individual cannot be held accountable for their actions.

Another work that is of particular relevance here is Hans-Jakob Wilhelm's "Der Magnetismus und die Metaphysik des Krieges" (1994). Wilhelm addresses questions of somnambulism and the military, illustrating how somnambulism is perceived as an ideal moment in which to mold the individual in accordance to the will of the state.

Somnambulism, which is characterized by the loss of will and complete dependency on the magnetist, is also a moment of complete suggestibility. Thus, Wilhelm concludes, somnambulism is a state in which the individual can be molded according to Fichte's goals, so that "er gar nicht anders wollen könne, als du willst, daß er wolle." (Fichte quoted in Wilhelm 95) Wilhelm concludes that the relationship between teacher and student in Fichte's theories mirrors that of magnetist and somnambulist in Schubert's discussion of animal magnetism. The prince's somnambulism enables exactly this form of education at the hands of the state. It also complicates his role as military leader who is still subordinate to the Kurfürst's orders.

In addition to these pedagogical aims, Wilhelm's reading illustrates the use of somnambulism to articulate the correct relationship between individual and state. Homburg's individual experience as a somnambulist represents, according to Wilhelm, "ein allgemeiner Somnambulismus, eine Gemeinschaft, die nichts Geringeres als ihre Freiheit verteidigen will" (91). In this quotation we see the equation of the prince's own

experience as a male somnambulist with the experience of society in general. Male somnambulism becomes representative, in Wilhelm's reading, of a society's desire for political independence, a desire that must be brought in line with the will of the state (91). Weder also interprets rapport between Homburg and the Kurfürst as a model for the ideal relationship between state and individual: one in which the individual voluntarily binds himself to the state (375). According to Weder, this utopian relationship never comes to pass in the text. The political ideal is undermined by the fact that the prince is not willingly attaching himself to the state, but rather being controlled and manipulated by other parties (376).

In universalizing the experience of the prince, equating it with the experience of the nation, both Weder and Wilhelm run the risk of overlooking the gendered nature of Homburg's experience. The effects of the prince's somnambulism on his own masculinity, and by extension his place within masculine society, cannot be addressed once the figure of the prince is read as the "human experience". As Brod has pointed out, by equating the male subject with the human norm scholarship runs the risk of "systematically excluding from consideration what is unique to men qua men". Not only does this distort our understanding of "what is truly generic to humanity" it also prevents "the study of masculinity as a specific male experience, rather than a universal paradigm for human experience" (2). In my reading of *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* I will analyze the way in which the protagonist's somnambulism is a masculine experience. In doing so, I move away from an analysis that equates Homburg's

somnambulism with somnambulism in general, and explore the effect that it has on constructions of masculinity within the text. I will begin my reading by examining the evidence of Homburg's somnambulism and then discuss, in the next section, the motif of communication and its implications on masculinity in the drama.

2.0 Somnambulism in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*

Kleist's *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* opens with an instance of somnambulism. Friedrich is described as a “Traumwandler” in the text, a term that is closely associated with both somnambulism and animal magnetism during the late eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century. Since this term plays a key role throughout the drama in characterizing Homburg, I will provide a brief look at the development of the term, and its usage in eighteenth and nineteenth-century medical discourse.

The terms *Traumwandler* and *Somnambule* both referred to an individual in a state between sleep and wakefulness, although the usage of these terms is inconsistent among medical and theoretical texts. Some theorists such as Schubert, Kluge and much later Fischer, believed that *Nachtwanderung* and *Somnambulismus* were two related but separate states between wake and sleep. Kluge, for example, claims that the „Schlaf des Nachtwandlers” is only gradually different from magnetic sleep. According to Kluge sleep can take one of three closely related forms, “als gewöhnlicher Schlaf, als Schlaf des Nachtwandlers und als magnetischer Schlaf” (317). Each of these sleep states „in der innigsten Verbindung mit einander steht und nicht sowohl der Art, als vielmehr nur dem

Grade nach verschieden sind, so wird die Betrachtung des gewöhnlichen Schlafes der des magnetischen vorangehen müssen“ (317). The key difference, according to Kluge, between the *Traumwandler* and the Somnambulist is that the former is brought about organically „durch innere Veranlassung“ and the latter is brought about „von aussen durch Kunst“ (314).

While Kluge differentiates *Traumwandler* and Somnambulist on the basis of internal and external catalysts respectively, Schubert believes that the same internal force brings about both states. Both *Somnambule* and *Traumrederin* are driven by „derselben inneren Notwendigkeit, nach demselben bewußtlosen und blinden Triebe“ (24). Unlike Kluge, Schubert (1808) attributes the source of both *Nachtwandlung* and Somnambulism to unconscious drives and effects. A *Nachtwandler* displayed several characteristics similar to somnambulism including the ability to notice (bemerken) things the subject cannot see (Schubert 209), increased ability of the senses (207) and greater clarity in speech (207). The *Nachtwandler* was often viewed as an inferior condition that was not to be confused with the higher level of existence obtained through somnambulism. Schubert, for example, contrasts the Somnambulist (*magnetische Schlafenden*) with what he refers to as the „gewöhnliche Nachtwandlern“ (222), thereby establishing a kind of hierarchy between the two states. Such distinctions occur repeatedly in contemporary medical texts.

There are, however, theoretical texts that use the terms *Nachtwandler* and *Somnambule* as synonyms. The definition for “Mondsüchtige” in Zedler's *Universal*

Lexikon (1739) begins with a list of synonymous terms including “Monsüchtige, Nacht-Gänger, Nacht-Wanderer, *lunaticus*, *Nostambulo*, *Nostambulus*, oder besser Somnambulus“ (1110). Similarly in *Von den Träumen und Nachtwanlern* (1784) Justus Christian Hennings writes that *Nachtwandler* “führen auch den Nahmen Schlafwanderer, Schlafgänger, Schlaflauster, Nachtmänner” (370). To this list of terminology he adds the following footnote, „Auch gehören dahin die Nahmen: Noctambuli, Somnambuli, Noctivadentes, Noctivagantes, Errones, Ambulones...“ (370). Judging by this grouping of terms it would appear that, for Hennings, somnambulism is the foreign term for *Schlafwander*. By this time the term *Monsüchtige* has become outdated. Hennings refers to it only briefly, remarking that „Ferner heißen sie (Traumwandler) Mondsüchtige, Mondslechtige, weil verschiedene geglaubt haben, der Mond habe einen Einfluß in die Handlung der Nachtwandler“ (370). Hartman also equates the two providing the term *Somnambule* in brackets after *Nachtwandler* (81).

One can see from these examples that there was no consensus regarding whether or not there was a difference between *Nachtwandler* and Somnambulism, and if so what that difference might be. If we turn to *Prinz von Homburg* we see several of these terms used to describe the prince. The variety of terminology reflects the inconsistency that pervaded the medical discourse. By combining several terms to characterize the prince’s condition, the text reflects, as Weder has argued, different perspectives in eighteenth-and nineteenth-century *Seelenkunde* (332). Nowhere is this more apparent than in the opening act. The prince is labeled a *Nachtwandler* in the opening scene, reference is

made to the moon, thus harkening back to the concept of a *Mondsüchtiger*, and at the same time the prince demonstrates characteristics of somnambulism. As the prince sits in the garden weaving a wreath, Graf Hohenzollern, along with the Kurfürst and other members of the court, approach quietly. They observe the sleepwalker, speculating as to the cause of his condition. Natalie and the Kurfürstin believe the prince is ill and want to send for a doctor (648). The Hofkavalier insists that the prince is healthy and that the somnambulism is nothing more than a “Unart seines Geistes” (648). The stage directions describe Homburg's state as “halb wachend, halb schlafend”, echoing Hufeland's *Über die Sympathie*, in which he refers to somnambulism as “ein Mittelzustand zwischen Schlaf und Wachen” (124).⁴⁶ His open shirt and exposed chest visually represents his receptivity to nature and the forces around him (Weder 334). Although I agree with Weder's interpretation, I believe there is another interpretation of these terms. “Nachtwandler” and “Mondsüchtige” could also be read as an attempt to emphasize the connection between this mysterious phenomenon and night. Given the literary importance of nighttime to the Romantics, particularly as a time of mystery, it is possible that Kleist chose those terms in order to create an atmosphere of mystery in the text.

According to Graf Hohenzollern's diagnosis of the situation, the prince is acting out his dream in the garden. His actions during somnambulism are “seiner eigenen Nachtwelt gleich” (648). Within his own dream world, the prince is initially immune to

⁴⁶ Although Weder draws an explicit connection between Kleist's phrase and the description of somnambulism in Hufeland, other scholars have identified Homburg's “halb schlafend, halb wachend” condition as indicative of somnambulism. See Weder (329) and Tatar (1978), 112.

external stimuli. He does not, for example, notice the approaching group of people, nor is his attention drawn to the approaching candles. So deep is the prince's somnambulism that Hohenzollern remarks “Der ganze Flecken könnt in Feuer aufgehn, Daß sein Gemüt davon nicht mehr empfände, Als der am Finger trägt“ (648).⁴⁷

The Kurfürst's encounter with the somnambular prince resembles the experimentation that routinely took place on somnambulists, a connection that Weder explores in her reading.⁴⁸ The Kurfürst approaches the situation with “der Neugier eines experimentell Verfahrenen Wissenschaftlers“ (Weder 330), probing the young man in order to determine “wie weit er's treibt” (Kleist 649). Like the medical practice of somnambulism, the Kurfürst uses the prince's moment of vulnerability and suggestibility to access information about the workings of his inner self. Somnambulism offered the opportunity for skilled magnetists to access and interpret information that was normally inaccessible to the patient in a waking state. In the practice of medical somnambulism, brought about or overseen by a magnetist, the magnetist used this opportunity to access a wide variety of information ranging from the condition of the somnambulist's (or other's) interior organs, to information about the spirit realm.⁴⁹ The Kurfürst wishes to uncover information regarding the prince's mental state, or “was dieses jungen Toren Brust

⁴⁷ For Hansen, the prince's obliviousness indicates a deep level of somnambulism, which is later juxtaposed with a lighter somnambular state (59). It is in this lighter state of somnambulism that the Kurfürst is able to interact with the prince and suggestibility is therefore possible (59).

⁴⁸ Weder illustrates the similarities between the experimental somnambulism in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* and the somnambular experimentation on Käthen in *Käthen von Heilbronn*.

⁴⁹ The type of information solicited by the magnetist varied depending on the theory of animal magnetism and somnambulism to which he subscribed. For example, followers of spiritual magnetism would be more likely to inquire about religious matters.

bewegt?” information to which the Kurfürst would not have access while the prince was awake. If this phrase is taken more literally then the Kurfürst's question suggests penetration of the prince's body as well as his mind. This suggests a parallel, once again, to medical somnambulism. Physicians would use the abilities of their somnambulists to “see into” their bodies in order to examine their internal organs. Like a telescope enables one to see far away objects, so too could a somnambulist provide an extension of the physician's senses and enable them to see into the bodies of others. The Kurfürst's question mirrors this language. He too wants to “see inside” the prince and uncover the truth of his internal state.

When read in the context of somnambulism, the Kurfürst's actions can be understood as a desire to uncover the prince's internal physical state, where *Brust* refers to a section of the physical body. There is another potential understanding of *Brust* within the context of German literature. *Brust* was often used to refer not to the body part but as a metaphor for the soul. An example of this can be found in Goethe's *Maillied* (1771). These readings are not mutually exclusive. By looking into Homburg's body, the Kurfürst can also see into his soul. Mental penetration and physical penetration co-exist in this relationship of rapport.

Not only does the Kurfürst's inquiry provide further evidence of the prince's somnambulism, it also opens questions about the communicative potential of this state. I agree with Hansen's conclusion that this exchange can be understood as a moment of wordless communication typical to somnambulism

Im Lichte des damaligen Verständnisses des Somnambulismus läßt sich das Verhalten des Kurfürsten als eine momentane Hineinziehung in die somnambule Sphäre des Prinzen verstehen, von der unterschwellig wortlosen Kommunikation mit dem Somnambulen herbeigeführt. (Hansen 64)

By entering the prince's "innere Brust", the Kurfürst has direct access to the source of the prince's actions. Mesmer asserts that such access to knowledge, especially the transmission of an object's properties, is a form of communication (97). While words "distort knowledge" and thereby prevent communication, direct access to an object's properties constitutes perfect communication (97). This is the situation in moments in which two individuals are connected through rapport. If a physician could gain access to the internal state of the somnambulism, many theorists speculated that the magnetist could also have access to the patient's thoughts. This communicative potential is developed throughout Prince von Homburg and will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter.

The magnetist's power to read the mind of his/her patient was a source of concern for many critics of animal magnetism, and a point of fascination for Romantic authors. If a physician could read the thoughts of their patient, could they not also manipulate them? And what, the argument followed, would prevent the physician from abusing this power? Although eighteenth- and nineteenth-century physicians insisted that this power could not be used to detrimentally manipulate the patient, this did not alleviate critics' concerns, nor did it dissuade authors from creating abusive magnetist figures in their texts. The most famous example of the evil magnetist in German literature is the figure of Alban in

Hoffmann's *Der Magnetisuer*, which I will discuss at length in the following chapter.

Although *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* does not present the reader with an evil magnetist, it does address the potential harm that can result from manipulating a somnambulist.

The Kurfürst decides to approach the prince and interact with him, in order to learn what he can through the Homburg's somnambulism. The prince, who had previously been unaware of the presence of the others now acknowledges the Kurfürst by blushing (“Der Prinz errötet”) and making eye contact (11). This brief interaction indicates the presence of rapport between the prince and the Kurfürst, therefore marking the Kurfürst as a magnetist. In instances of natural somnambulism, as discussed earlier, it was not uncommon for a rapport to develop between the somnambulist and a magnetist, even if that magnetist was not the catalyst for the somnambular state. Eschenmayer (1816) goes so far as to suggest that even natural somnambulism is in actuality the result of an unidentified (and perhaps unintentional) rapport with a magnetist (41). Just as the prince's somnambulism is naturally occurring, so too does the Kurfürst appear to have natural magnetic abilities. Although the Kurfürst was not the cause of the prince's somnambulism, he still exhibits several characteristics of a magnetist.

One such characteristic is the Kurfurst's ability to extend this rapport to other objects and people. In the practice of animal magnetism, fluid was often transferred onto everyday objects. Case studies have recorded the successful magnetization of a variety of objects, including the teacup experiment that Mesmer performed for the commissioners

of the *Société Royale de Médecine* (64). In other experiments, banquets, metal rods, and even trees were endowed with animal magnetic fluids so as to facilitate large-scale healing. Furthermore, the extension of animal magnetic fluids would enable the transference of rapport from the magnetist to the object. The somnambulist would then feel the same sensitivity and attraction to the magnetized object as he or she felt through the rapport with the magnetist. So strong was the rapport between patient and magnetized object that, when it was brought into the vicinity of the somnambulist, these items would induce physical reactions and could even bring about a state of somnambulism.⁵⁰ By the early nineteenth-century the theories of magnetic fluids were believed to be secondary to rapport. Rapport, however, was still believed to be transferable from magnetist to object.

The Kurfürst is able to extend the rapport that he has with Homburg to specific objects and people, such as the laurel wreath, the chain, and Natalie.⁵¹ Once this influence is transferred, these objects and people are in rapport with the prince, thus explaining the magnetic pull they seem to have over him throughout the text. Prior to this transference of rapport, the prince was unaware of Natalie, and only perceived the presence of the Kurfürst. It is through the extended rapport that the Kurfürst is able to draw Homburg's attention to Natalie. When the princess takes the wreath, for example, the stage directs Homburg to “folgt ihr” with “ausgestreckten Armen” (649). The prince is drawn to the

⁵⁰ Mesmer often preformed such experiments with magnetized objects. See Darton's discussion of Mesmer's healings, 64.

⁵¹ It is important to note that the text gives no indication that the Kurfürst is aware of their rapport, or his ability to control it.

princess through the pull of rapport, an attraction that will continue throughout the drama. The rapport is then transferred from Natalie to her glove, which Homburg grabs instead of the wreath. The glove is mentioned repeatedly in the drama and has a profound effect on Homburg. After the Kurfürst and his entourage have retreated to the castle, Homburg stands in the garden clasping the glove to his forehead (650). Even after Hohenzollern has revived Homburg, his gaze is drawn toward the glove as he “betrachtet den Handschuh, den er in der Hand halt” (652). The prince throws the glove to the ground, but the stage directions reveal its continued hold over him, “Sie (Homburg und Hohenzollern) wollen gehen; der Prinz stutzt, kehrt sich um, und nimmt den Handschuh auf (653).” The glove pulls him back physically to the scene of the somnambulism, and mentally to the events of the “dream”. During the pre-battle briefing the glove is mentioned repeatedly. While trying to write the Feldmarschall's orders, Homburg is distracted by the glove, as he “nimmt den Handschuh aus dem Kollett, “sieht bald den Handschuh, bald die Prinzessin an“ (660) and then drops it to the ground in order to get Natalie's attention. His entire interaction with the glove reaches a climax once Natalie picks it up and places it on her hand. In this moment the prince “steht, einen Augenblick, wie von Blitz getroffen da“ (662). The lightening metaphor serves as a symbol for somnambulism, and indicates a re-entrance into somnambulism. A “Stück des Traums, das ihm verkörpert ward” (718), the glove is presented in these scenes as responsible for re-aggravating the prince's somnambulism and acting as a catalyst for his altered state. In this way the glove is evidence of the rapport between the Kurfürst and Homburg,

which is transferred by the Kurfürst to Natalie and the subsequent objects with which she comes into contact.

If we view the encounter between the somnambulist Homburg and the Kurfürst in the opening scene in terms of somnambular experimentation, then the role that the Kurfürst plays controlling and recording of the experiment shapes the power dynamic between magnetist and somnambulist. Unlike the prince, who remembers only aspects of the encounter, and then only filtered through dream logic, the Kurfürst both gathers and maintains control over the outcome of the experiment (Weder 367). He uses the information he gathers to inform his military decisions the next day. He also prevents any of the witnesses from sharing this information with the prince himself, thereby controlling the spread of information. As Weder has pointed out, this control of information ensures the Kurfürst's continued control over his experimental subject (367). He assumes the masculine position of power in the magnetist/somnambulist relationship, which is re-enforced through a display of hegemonic masculine traits including strength and reason. The prince is therefore cast in the more passive position of the somnambulist. Through their interaction, therefore, the somnambular prince is constructed in terms of marginalized masculinity *vis-a-vis* the Kurfürst.

Soon after the magnetized object is presented to the prince, the entire scene dissolves into one of panic and fear. Weder describes the scenes as an experiment gone awry (342). The Kurfürst and his party attempt a rapid retreat from the approaching somnambulist. Panicked exclamations such as "Höll und Teufel" (Kleist 650) and

“Geschwind! Hinweg!” (Kleist 650) are uttered as the group rushes to the castle. The princess utters “Nein, nein!” which could be read in one of two ways: either as a response to the Hofkavalier’s question - namely that it was not the Kranz that the prince grasped - or an utterance of fear directed at the approaching prince. The ambiguity adds to the fear of the scene. The panic and fear reach a fevered pitch and language breaks down as sentences are reduced to confused fragments and questions go unanswered.

Hohenzollern’s attempt at defining the prince’s state breaks off at “Er ist – “ and remains incomplete. The Kurfürstin, confused by Hohenzollern’s utterances, wonders who it is that he is naming, but does not receive an answer. Meanwhile Homburg’s aggressive grasp towards Natalie and the wreath spark additional panic and confusion as the object of the prince’s grasp is still unclear. The scene comes to an abrupt close as the Kurfürst is rushed into the castle. The door “fliegt rasselnd...zu” (650), indicating the force and speed with which the door was closed. The prince is alone once more in the garden.

The fear surrounding the Kurfürst’s encounter with the prince has often been overlooked in the readings of this scene, but provides insight into understanding the role of somnambulism in the text. While sitting quietly, creating a crown, the prince poses no threat to the Kurfürst or his entourage, and elicits only surprise, curiosity, and mocking. The situation spirals out of control only after the prince vocalizes his desires. During their hurried retreat, the prince calls out to the Kurfürst, calling him by his first name and as “Mein Vater!”. Such an utterance is inappropriate, both because it is a blatant disregard for protocol, and as an inappropriately direct expression of what he desires,

namely marriage to Natalie and social advancement. His desire for personal glory, as well as his erotic desire for Natalie, is articulated through his gestures and utterances while in the somnambulist state. It is a fear prompted by a transgression, specifically the prince's direct communication of his passions.

This initial encounter between the somnambular prince and the members of the court depicts, through a negative example, contemporary notions of masculinity. It is in this scene that ideal masculinity is defined in terms of one's control over their passions as well as the ability to redirect such desires towards military ambition. Such a construction of masculinity corresponds to Mosse's discussion of gender roles in *Nationalism and Sexuality*. Mosse describes the wars of liberation as the era in which "the ideal of manliness came into its own"(7). The national ideal of masculinity was founded in the notion of respectability, which meant a "freedom from sexual passion" as well as "the sublimation of sensuality into leadership of society and the nation" (13). Sexual passion was suppressed and the suppressed energy re-cast into leadership and nationalism. The ideal masculine patriot was one who brought under control his sexual passions and re-directed his energies toward political goals. Evidence of this re-casting can be seen in the Kurfürst's final comments to the prince in act one. The Kurfürst warns the prince that "Im Traum erringt man solche Dinge nicht!" and offers another mode of communicating his desires, namely "In dem Gefild der Schlacht / Sehn wir, wenn's dir gefällig ist, uns wieder!" (650) It is not through the direct expression of his desires, expressed through somnambulism, that he will be able to obtain them. Rather his desire for Natalie and

fame can only be fulfilled by the suppressing of erotic energy. These passions must be transferred into productive military action on the battlefield. By choosing another mode of articulating desires, namely expressing them indirectly through military action and funneled through military discourse, the communication of those desires becomes indirect and therefore appropriate.

We have seen in this reading of *Prinz von Homburg* that Homburg's somnambulism is at odds with the hegemonic ideal of masculinity. As a somnambulist, his interaction with the Kurfürst positions him in an emasculated position of passivity and subordination. The framework of somnambulism is used in the narrative in order to portray Homburg's passions, thus undermining the contemporary masculine ideal of control and self discipline. The marginalized gender position that Homburg assumes is further articulated in the text through metaphors that engage discourses of femininity. One such instance occurs in the opening scene in which the Hohenzollern compares the prince's behavior and that of a vain woman. As the Kurfürst and Hohenzollern watch the *Nachtwandler* from a distance, Hohenzollern remarks:

Schade, ewig schade,
Daß hier kein Spiegel in der Nähe ist!
Er würd, ihm eitel, wie ein Mädchen, nah'n,
und sich den Kranz bald so, und wieder so,
Wie eine florne Haube aufprobieren (649).

Such vanity is associated with a young girl, and is not the appropriate behavior of a

prince. It illustrates a pre-occupation with the self, which is at odds with the soldier's call to serve king and country. Likewise, the prince is blushing, an attribute frequently ascribed to women which further emphasizes his feminine characteristics. The image of the prince, priming himself in front of a mirror, characterizes him as feminine, thereby representing the feminine position attributed to somnambulism.

When Hohenzollern wakes the prince from his sleepwalking state and feigns ignorance of the events that just transpired. What follows is a revised retelling of the somnambular encounter, one that casts the prince in the role of the active male, and not the passive feminized somnambulist. When confronted by Hohenzollern, Homburg is clearly ashamed of his sleepwalking, and in a comment to himself remarks "Daß mich die Nacht verschläng! Mir unbewußt im Mondschein bin ich wieder umgewandelt!" (652)⁵² The use of the word "wieder" implies that Homburg is a habitual sleepwalker and that he is aware of his condition.

In an attempt to hide his peculiar, and shameful sleepwalking, the prince invents the following excuse:

Vergib! Ich weiß nun schon. Es war, du weißt, vor Hitze,
Im Bette gestern fast nicht auszuhalten;
Ich schlich erschöpft in diesen Garten mich,
Und weil die Nacht so lieblich mich umfing,
Mit blondem Haar, von Wohlgeruch ganz triefend,
Ach! Wie den Bräutigam eine Perserbraut,
So legt ich hier in ihren Schoß mich nieder (653).

⁵² Forces of nature are held responsible for Homburg's somnambulism, providing further evidence that his somnambulism is naturally occurring and not magnetically induced. The reference to the moon echoes Hohenzollern's initial diagnosis of the prince's state "Der Mondschein ihn gelockt, beschäftigt sich träumend, seiner eigenen Nachwelt gleich" (648).

The prince re-casts his passive sleepwalking into the discourse of erotic love. In his version of events, he intentionally and actively sought out the garden. He embraced it as a man would his lover, and laid his head down as a bridegroom in the lap of his bride. The sexual references in the passage- the transformation of night into a beautiful woman, the erotic overtones of his nocturnal wanderings, as well as the emphasis placed on the intentionality of his actions – all these elements are produced in an attempt to assert his masculinity in the face of evidence of his sleep walking. Hohenzollern continues the charade, insinuating that Homburg has had a male erotic adventure. After listening to the prince's account of his dream, and inquiring about the glove, Hohenzollern laughs, saying

Schelm, der du bist, mit deinen Visionen!
Wer weiß von welcher Schäferstunde, traun,
Mit Fleisch und Bein hier wachend zugebracht,
Dir noch der Handschuh in den Händen klebt! (656)

Hohenzollern's remarks credit the prince with a sexual rendezvous, thereby re-writing the prince's passive role of sleepwalker into the active, and decidedly more masculine, role of seducer. His comments continue the motif of eroticism displayed in the prince's account above. Although he knows the truth, Hohenzollern offers the prince an alibi, one that will allow him to reclaim his heroic masculinity. The prince, however, is appalled by his accusations, proclaiming "Was! Mir? Bei meiner Liebe-?" (656) but Hohenzollern cuts him off, responding "Ei so, zum Henker, Was kümmerts mich?" (656) and quickly changes the subject. By heading off the prince's denial of a romantic encounter,

Hohenzollern has refused the prince any further opportunity of undermining his own masculinity. Hohenzollern plays this role throughout the text, attempting to protect the Prince from making a fool of himself by transgressing social, often sexual, norms.

Although the opening scene is the only instance in which the prince is directly labeled as a somnambulist, the text continues to reference his somnambular tendencies, thereby making it difficult to determine which actions are performed with the prince's knowledge. The prince continuously confuses wake with sleep, uttering various forms of the question "Ist es ein Traum?" (146). This informs the standard reading of the drama being about *Schein und Sein*. Schmidt (2003) offers a discussion of the tension between dream and reality in the drama (175-179). The prince's mental state is called into question several times, as he is referred to as "krank" (648) "rasend toll!" (652), a "Tor" (649), a "Rasender!" (650, 706) and as having mental peculiarities (648). His day/night confusion manifests itself numerous times both in daydreaming, and hypersensitivity at night. Likewise, his nocturnal self varies significantly in mood and behavior than his daytime self. During the night the prince exhibits drastic mood swings and behavior that is contrary to his normal disposition. When he arrives on the evening after his sentencing at the chambers of the Kurfürstin, she is taken aback by his erratic behavior, exclaiming "Du bist ganz außer dir! Was ist geschehn?" (692) and encourages him to control himself. Her command "Fasse dich!" (692) is a central theme in the text and is echoed in various forms throughout. It is exactly this lack self control that feminizes him. Natalie calls on the prince to control himself and confront death with courage:

Geh, junger Held, in deines Kerkers Haft,
Und auf dem Rückweg, schau noch einmal ruhig
Das Grab dir an, das dir geöffnet wird!
Es ist nichts finsterer und um nichts breiter,
Als es dir tausendmal die Schlacht gezeigt! (694)⁵³

Homburg is challenged to confront the symbol of his own death, the grave that brought about his panic, but this time with calm and control. He can accomplish this, Natalie suggests, only with heroic courage and composure.⁵⁴ Such a call to heroism is an appeal to contemporary definitions of masculinity. Reminding him of the masculine role he embodied on the battle field, she responds to his impassioned outpour of emotion with a call to emotional suppression. The encounter between the Kurfürstin, the prince, and Natalie exhibits, once again, the prince displaying an inappropriate degree of passion. An ideal man, Natalie reminds him, would be able to suppress fear of impending death and accept it with courage. Expressing one's fear of death is deemed in the text as unmasculine and inappropriate. In her subsequent conversation with the Kurfürst, Natalie emphasizes this point.

Schau her, ein Weib bin ich, und schaudere
Dem Wurm zurück, der meiner Ferse naht:
Doch so zermalmt, so fassungslos, so ganz
Unheldenmüthig träfe mich der Tod,
In eines scheußlichen Leun Gestalt nicht an! (698)

⁵³ It is worth noting that the stage directions immediately after this passage describe the prince as instantly subdued and "in ihrem (Natalie's) Anschauen verloren". These stage directions seem to suggest that Natalie might still hold some of the mesmeric influence over him that she exhibited in the opening scene.

⁵⁴ Jochen Schmidt (2003) identifies in Homburg's attitude towards death traces of stoicism, a philosophy which was making a resurgence in Prussia at the time. For a complete discussion of stoicism and its influence on *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, see Schmidt pages 162-168.

Natalie characterizes the prince's behaviors as inappropriate even for a woman, of whom lesser amounts of courage and emotional control are expected. Once again, the prince's inability to control himself, his *fassungslos* behavior, is equated with feminine and cowardly behavior. *Zermalmt* and *Unheldenmüthig* the prince does not exhibit the self control expected of his gender and social status.

There is a stark contrast between the prince's erratic behavior in this scene, and his subsequent calm in the remainder of the drama. Whereas his encounter with Natalie and the Kurfürstin is characterized by unmasculine passion and emotion, subsequent scenes reveal a prince in control of himself, marked by increased rationality and measured responses. It is in the fourth act that the prince is revealed as one whose behavior is in line with masculine ideals. Upon receiving the offer of a pardon from the Kurfürst, the prince turns thoughtful and reflective. This is all the more striking considering that, a short time ago, Homburg was prepared to sacrifice everything for his life. After reading the letter from the Kurfürst, the prince reflects on the meaning behind the final sentence, "Er sagt, wenn ich der Meinung wäre - ?" (704). The sentence trails off in contemplation before he is interrupted by a panicked Natalie. Despite Natalie's desperate attempt to impress upon him the severity of his situation, Homburg remains calm and reflective. He requests to read the letter again, so as to decipher more clearly the meaning behind the words. He laughs and mocks Natalie's panic, remarking "Wahrhaftig, tut Ihr doch, als würde sie Mir, wie ein Panther übern Nachen kommen"

(704). His analogy belittles Natalie's terror as unfounded, terror that he himself voiced a short time earlier.

Natalie, on the other hand, expresses the unrestrained fear that the prince felt previously. Her frantic movements, outbursts, interruptions and impassioned speech portray her panic. Natalie describes for him the grave that waits him, a striking reversal of her emotional tone in the previous conversation. Whereas earlier she assured Homburg that the grave was "nichts finstler" than what he has encountered before, she now describes it as approaching him "mit offnem Rachen" (704). The grave hunts Homburg, and is opened up like the mouth of a predator, echoed in Homburg's panther analogy. Her previous call to "schau noch einmal ruhig" his future loses all its composure as she insists that "Der Augenblick ist dringend" (704). Natalie's outburst of extreme emotion works to amplify, by contrast, Homburg's composure. In comparison to the feminine lack of control depicted in this scene, Homburg's new found self discipline appears all the more masculine.

It is no coincidence that Homburg gains this level of self-control at the same time as he composes a written response to the Kurfürst's pardon. The exchange of writing is depicted as the appropriate form of male communication, which is strengthened by the fact that when Natalie writes the marching orders, it is as a man. Writing is presented as the masculine alternative to emotion and passion.

It is worth noting that this response is his only successful attempt at writing. Homburg's relationship to writing can be characterized as problematic prior to this

moment, and his difficulties writing are presented as a direct result of his lack of discipline. By examining the prince's communicative capacity in the text, one can trace his development from an undisciplined somnambulist to an ideal male that embodies the emotional and mental discipline required of his gender. Letter writing has successfully displaced the emotional femininity that Homburg expressed as a somnambulist.

3.0 Somnambulism and Communication

As was mentioned earlier in the chapter, we see the application of animal magnetic theory to theories of communication early in the works of Mesmer and other theorists.⁵⁵ In his dissertation on animal magnetism, Mesmer discusses the potential of animal magnetism to facilitate a utopian state of pre-verbal communication. The direct transmission of the passions through the bond formed during animal magnetism would enable both physician and patient to transmit thoughts, feelings and sensations without having to rely on language, a communicative system that he regarded as imperfect. Words, according to Mesmer, confuse us and work to distort knowledge. Only the senses are capable of “transmit[ing] to us an object's properties...” (97). Anything short of direct access to these senses constitutes imperfect communication (97). Thus, a communication based on the senses provides for a more perfect understanding of the

⁵⁵ In reading somnambulism as a form of communication I am working in the same vein as Barkhoff (Mediologie 2005) who describes animal magnetic theories as a “Modell kommunikativer Vernetzung zwischen Mensch und Natur, Leib und Seele und von Subjekt zu Subjekt ist Teil jener Dynamik der Stroeme, der Stoff / und Energiezirkulationen” (16).

world than communication based in language. The rapport between the patient and the physician offers an opportunity, according to Mesmer, for this perfect communication.

To explain this phenomenon, Mesmer compares “normal” verbal communication with the communication made possible by rapport. In verbal communication, the connection between the thoughts of the speaker and the ears of the recipient is indirect, relying on several modes of transmission. Movement, resulting from thoughts, makes its way from the brain to the organs of the voice, is transmitted across the air, or ether, and is then received by the external organs of the recipient and transmitted to their internal organs. He then compares this to the communicative situation of rapport, which does not rely on the voice. Animal magnetic fluid was believed to permeate all matter in the universe, thereby dissolving the boundaries between objects and universe reducing all matter “to a single common entity” (99). During rapport it is possible for the movements of the thoughts to immediately transport into the internal senses of the communicative partner. The mind, consisting of the “substance of the nerves” was believed to be connected to the world through animal magnetic fluid (121). The movements of the thoughts could extend outside of the body independent from external and internal organs. This made it possible for the thoughts to “extend, without the help of air or ether, to unlimited distances” so that it could “immediately relate to the internal sense of another individual” (121). This produces a state of perfect communication, in which “the will of two persons can communicate with each other through their internal sense organs” and creates a “reciprocity between the two wills” (121). Rapport, with its promise of

immediate access to the thoughts of another, seemed to offer the ideal alternative to language.

Although subsequent theorists of somnambulism and rapport did not discuss as directly the communicative potential of rapport, communicative themes – such as the influence of another’s will as well as the non-verbal transmission of information – remain at the core of animal magnetic discourse. Schubert uses the terms *Mitgefühl* and *Sympathie* to describe the bond between two people during rapport. In order to feel *Mitgefühl* for another, one must have access to their emotive state, (214) and likewise, the term *Sympathie* suggests an understanding between the two. Both these terms imply understanding between the two parties and suggest a bond that enables exchange of information from one to another. According to Schubert, rapport is nothing less than a union of the two wills, allowing the thoughts of the magnetist to become the thoughts of the patient: “es scheint zuweilen, als ob sie die tiefsten Gedanken desselben erreithen. Zugleich scheint, wie sie dieses selber bewegen, während jenes Zustandes ihr Wille mit dem des Magnetiseurs nur einer zu seyn” (214). The transmission of thoughts to the patient constitutes communication. While this is not the reciprocal communication that Mesmer identifies, Schubert does identify the ability of rapport to enable a direct transmission of ideas between communicative partners.

Contained within Schubert's *Dreizehn Vorlesungen* (1808) is a discussion of language entitled “Dritte Vorlesung: Ursprung der Sprache und des Naturcultus. Untergang des letzteren. Die Mysterien“. Parallels can be drawn between the theories of

communication presented here and his work on animal magnetism. Schubert's own lecture on the origin of language articulates a popular Romantic theory that the first language was derived from the sounds occurring in nature (38). Early peoples had an intimate connection with nature, enabling them to hear rhythms and movements in the atmosphere, abilities that had been lost as the result of human development. Schubert's understanding of this original language contains the potential for an immediate and intimate connection with the natural world through language. He describes the first language as derived from "unmittelbarer Offenbarung" of nature (36). In the phrase "unmittelbarer Offenbarung" we see the same desire for immediacy in communication, a communication without mediation, which enables direct access to nature.

Such a conception of language is similar to Mesmer's theories of pre-verbal communication, in that both posit a world in which subjects are united by a medium that allows direct access to people and forces beyond themselves. Both theories view modern language as a system divorced from this initial holistic communicative interaction. While Mesmer believes that spoken language is ultimately less desirable than pre-verbal communication, Schubert finds the development of language necessary to the evolution of humanity. Schubert's historical approach does not view natural language as superior or inferior to spoken, but rather the former is an earlier phase of human development, the destruction of which was necessary for the development of modern society as well as Christianity. Using the metaphor of a child gaining independence from its mother, Schubert explains that „eine eigentümliche Vollendung seines Wesens (humanity's) hat

ihn gegen den höheren Einfluss der Natur unempfänglicher und unabhängiger gemacht” (41). Still, Schubert acknowledges that something was lost through this development, namely an unmediated connection with Nature. In both the communicative theories of Mesmer and Schubert one sees an emphasis on unity of individual with the natural world, as well as the belief that certain information cannot be expressed by modern language alone.

The communicative potential of somnambulism must have appealed to Kleist, who grappled throughout his works with questions of communication as well as the limitations of language.⁵⁶ Magnetic relationships as a media of communication can be seen in other works of Kleist. In his reading of *Kätchen von Heilbronn*, for example, Barkhoff (1995) asserts that, within Kleist's treatment of magnetism he presents “sein utopisch-illusionäres Bild idealer, ungestörter Kommunikation“ (248). Not all of his depictions of magnetic communication are idyllic, however, and literary somnambulism also appears in his works as a way of articulating, what Esterhammer identifies as the conflict in the works of Kleist between “the immediacy of physical experience and the reflective structure of language”(242). An example of this tension between immediacy and reflection within communication is illustrated in the tension between somnambulism and writing. Somnambulism constitutes a transmission of experience that is immediate

⁵⁶ Joachim Pfeiffer examines how Kleist questions “the possibility of a utopian retreat to preverbal communication” (224), a theme that I will argue is articulated in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* through somnambulism.

and not available for reflection. Writing, on the other hand, can be viewed in the text as a process of reflection.

To further examine Kleist's views on language and its role in communication I turn to Kleist's essay "Über die allmähliche Verfertigung der Gedanken beim Reden".⁵⁷ Focusing on the relationship of cognition and language, the essay posits that there are instances in which thought occurs independently of language, an assertion that contradicts the language philosophy of Herder and Humboldt. In addition to the creative force of language in producing thought, Kleist also laments the inability of language to consistently reproduce a pre-existing thought. There is a discrepancy between the thought that one wishes to express and his or her ability to articulate it. As a result, thoughts that are well formulated are often articulated in a convoluted way. Kleist writes "Wenn daher eine Vorstellung verworren ausgedrückt wird, so folgt der Schluss noch gar nicht, dass sie auch verworren gedacht worden sei; vielmehr könnte es leicht sein, dass die verworrenst ausgedrückten Grade am deutlichsten gedacht werden" (325). Those moments in which language cannot accurately express cognition represent the limitations of language as a communicative form.

Mis-communication is a preoccupation of the *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* and thus illustrates the limitations of language. In order to more closely analyze this theme in Kleist's drama, I would like to focus on three moments of failed written communication: Kottwitz's petition to the Kurfürst; Friedrich's attempts at dictation; and Natalie's forged

⁵⁷ Stefan offers an insightful reading of this essay in his contribution to Fischer (2003).

letter to the troops. These attempts at communication break down thus drawing attention to the inherent limits of these communicative modes, and juxtaposing them with the communicative potential of somnambulism.

In order to contrast letter writing and somnambulism in terms of their communicative ability, I will draw from Bernhard Siegert's *Relays* (1999), which examines literature as an epoch of the postal system.⁵⁸ Letter writing, as it is perceived by Siegert, shares a striking parallel with theories of somnambular rapport, namely, the question of transmission.

According to Siegert, self-control is a prerequisite of writing. Siegert traces the development of the private letter and the subsequent characteristics of confidentiality, self-reflection, and control that became necessary for the existence of the private letter. Gellert's theory of letter writing is for Siegert a crucial moment in the development of the private letter. The private letter was no longer created according to a table of external references, as it was during the Baroque period, but rather through a process of fictionality – in which the author of the letter imagined the addressee (37). The private letter was written by “imagining the occasion into the letter” (37) instead of applying an external guide of possible occasions onto a letter (34). The shift from external to internal references resulted in the emergence of a private letter that was written for a particular

⁵⁸ Jill Galvan draws similar parallels between spiritual mediumship and communicative transmissions in the works of nineteenth century English literature. She uses the theoretical approach of Siegert and Kittler in her examination of discourse transmission. See Jill Galvan, *The Sympathetic Medium* (especially page 15, note 44).

individual addressee (34). The private letter after Gellert was one that was catered to fit the individual addressee and to represent the individuality of the sender.

With this new type of letter came the expectation of confidentiality. Since each letter was intended for only the addressee, written with that particular person in mind, a letter could be written that was not intended for popular consumption. This expectation of confidentiality was also made possible by a much earlier development in letter writing, namely the shift from letters written on parchment to letters written on paper (30).

Letters written on parchment, which was rolled instead of folded, and therefore made all correspondence potentially public, causing “letters and documents [to be] one in the same in both concept and fact” (30). The introduction of paper letters in the thirteenth-century brought with it the ability to fold and seal correspondence. Folded and sealed correspondence could then be distinguished from public documents (30). These older changes to letter writing, along with eighteenth-century shift from letters modeled after external references, and those written according to internal, individualized, references account for the emergence of private correspondence. Private letters became an articulation of secrets. Letters contained intimate confessions (34), which could be expressed only with the expectation of privacy, and brought with the possibility of betrayal.

To summarize, Siegert identifies three characteristics that enabled this type of communication: “confidentiality of the letter, self reflection, and the power of control” (37). The private letter's confidentiality was based in the letter's individual nature. Both

the individuality of the recipient and the highly personal content of the letter characterized the letter as a private document with the potential for confidential correspondence (37). In a private letter, there was a need for self-reflection on the part of both the writer and the addressee. The writer of the letter needed to reflect both on his/her own internal state, in order to express the message as accurately as possible, as well as reflecting – through imagination – on the individuality of the addressee. It was then up to the addressee to interpret the letter. Finally, the writer of the letter needed to exert a degree of control over the content, but then relinquished control over its disbursement to the recipient once the letter was mailed (37). These three characteristics made, according to Siegert, the writing of the private letter “synonymous with the education of civil servants” (37) for whom self-reflection, confidentiality and control were crucial to the successful completion of their jobs.

According to Siegert, letter writing took place in response to the absence of the addressee, and therefore can be read as a compensation for the space between bodies (24). Ultimately, however, it is impossible for letters to overcome this distance through letter writing. The relationship of two bodies remains “unwritten” and therefore letters continue to be written attempting to compensate for this distance (24). Letter writing, as Siegert demonstrates, amounts to an attempt to bridge a distance between bodies through symbols, the communicative success of which is inevitably illusory. Here we see a parallel between letter writing and somnambulism. Just as letter writing constitutes an attempt to “bridge the gap” between bodies, somnambulism is also concerned with

similar questions of communicative transmission. Numerous accounts of somnambulism highlight the distances that are united between individuals. In his *Theorie der Geisterkunde*, for example, Jung-Schilling records an extreme example of somnambulism to overcome geographical distance. An American, “entweder von Natur, oder durch geheime Kunst” entered a state of somnambulism in order to visit a ship captain in London (63). His soul traveled there through the “Welt der Geister, wo kein Raum trennen kann” (63). The author emphasizes that this contact could have been made regardless of the geographic distance, so that “wäre er in China oder anderswo gewesen, so hätte sie ihr magischer Wille dahin geführt“ (63). Somnambulism, with its ability to transcend the body, enables the somnambulist to overcome the distance between London and America. It dissolves geographic distance, so that in a state of somnambulism, “kein Raum” can divide the two souls. Like a letter, somnambulism attempts to overcome the space between two bodies, re-creating, at some level, the image of the letter writer for the addressee.

Although both letter writing and somnambulism attempt to bridge distances between speakers, these two modes of communication constitute other ends of a communicative spectrum in terms of the accessibility of the message being transmitted. Rapport constitutes that which Siegert refers to as “real-time processing”. Literature, and here Siegert includes letters, is “a gift of interception, which operates on the basis of feedback loops between human senses and the postal materiality of data processing known as the alphabet” (12). Literature and letters required the intermediate storage of

data on paper (or another medium) through the use of symbols (12). This data is then available for interpretation and processing (12). Rapport, however, does not require this same type of interpretation. Rapport, as it was understood by Mesmer and Schubert, bypasses the senses, making data from the somnambulist immediately assessable to the individual with whom he or she was in rapport. In this way, rapport constitutes real-time processing, as it can be defined as “the evasion of the senses” (12). It is the opposite of the availability of literature, in what rapport “is not available to the feedback loops of the human senses” (12). Both nineteenth-century theories of rapport and Siegert's theories of letter writing take on the question of meaning making through communicative transmission. Rapport offers, at least theoretically, the potential for immediate transmission that letter writing can never attain.

Written communication and somnambulism are juxtaposed in Kleist's *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*. Both modes of communication attempt to bridge the gap between speakers, but each has a different influence on the social dynamic in which they take place. Communication through letter writing is wrought with miscommunication and deception. At the same time, it is identified as the mode of communication in line with expectations of Prussian, hegemonic masculinity, namely discipline and control. With this communicative mode, however, comes a sense of loss. The passions, emotion, and immediacy that somnambulism offers is lost in written communication.

Two such instances can be seen in Kottwitz's petition to the Kurfürst as well as the fraudulent marching orders drafted by Natalie. Kottwitz drafts the petition to the

Kurfürst in the form of a letter, requesting the immediate release of Homburg. He circulates it among the men in his regiment and nearby regiments, and then presents it to Natalie to sign. A significant portion of the necessary signatures are missing, however, as there was not enough time to circulate the petitions among all of the men. Natalie expresses her doubts as to the impact the document will make. Kottwitz assures her that the petition represents the will of all the men, even those who were not able to sign. As an incomplete document, however, this petition may not achieve the intended communicative goal of presenting the collective will of the soldiers.

Whereas the petition lacks the signatures necessary to legitimate it, another instance of miscommunication is caused by exactly the opposite situation, namely a forged signature. The fraudulent marching orders issued by Natalie, is sent without the support of the Kurfürst, who is believed to be the author. Despite its claims to authenticity, indicated by the Kurfürst's forged signature, these marching orders do not reflect the will of the Kurfürst. In fact, the forged document is in direct contradiction to his desires. Through this written medium the will of the Kurfürst is misinterpreted, causing mis-communication. In addition, these forged documents add an element of political intrigue to the text. Siefert identifies the potential for political intrigue inherent in the rise of private correspondence. The private letter, folded and therefore not accessible to the letter deliverer, presented the opportunity for “secret dealings and intrigue” (30). Both of these documents, the forged marching orders and the petition, constitute a type of letter, and as such attempts to bridge distances between bodies

through communication. These two communicative attempts ultimately illustrate the shortcomings of written communication as well as the potential hazards of miscommunication.

Somnambulism and writing are presented in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* as incompatible. In order to communicate through the written word, Homburg must cease to be a somnambulist. Conversely, during his somnambulism, Homburg cannot write. While writing claims to be the expression of the soul, at the same time it is a communicative medium that requires mediation. This is contrasted to somnambulism, which offers instead the potential for pre-verbal expression of ideas. While in the somnambular state, the prince's actions are interpreted as a direct reflection of his inner state. The Hohenzollern remarks that the prince, "im Schlaf...beschäftigte sich träumend, seiner eignen Nachwelt gleich, Den prächtigen Kranz des Ruhmes einzuwenden" (648). By equating the prince's inner state, his "eigenen Nachwelt" with his actions in the garden, Hohenzollern makes clear that the mental state of the prince is expressed directly through his somnambular actions. Somnambulism is functioning as a medium for the expression of the prince's *Seele*. The transparency of his behavior is not as apparent to the Kurfürst, who wonders "was dieses jungen Toren Brust bewegt" (649). He wishes to understand what motivates the young prince, and how to interpret these behaviors. Hohenzollern offers the following response:

O-was! Die Schlacht von morgen, mein Gebieter!
Sterngucker sieht er, wett ich, schon im Geist,
Aus Sonnen einen Siegeskranz ihm winden (649).

This initial exclamation reflects Hohenzollern's surprise at the Kurfürst's ignorance. From his perspective, the meaning behind Homburg's actions are self-evident, requiring no interpretation. The Graf can see in his actions the prince's own internal visions of glory. Somnambulism provides a window into Homburg's soul. The Graf can observe the somnambulist and determine the state of the prince's "Geist". Such transparency of the soul was believed to be a result of somnambulism.

It is precisely this transparency, the immediacy of the prince's mental state that prevents the prince from communicating through writing. During the pre-battle briefing the prince is incapable of transcribing the field marshals orders into the written word. During the briefing, Natalie mentions her glove which draws his attention back to the object (which he is carrying with him). The magnetized glove reactivates Homburg's somnambulism. Hohenzollern describes the prince's state as appearing as "ein Lebender" while "die Empfindung, wie durch Zauberschläge, in ihm verlöscht" (718). He is in-between consciousness and unconscious, he is awake and yet does not have access to or control over his senses. Such a state echoes the "halb wachend, halb schlafend" state of somnambulism in the opening scene.

Homburg is called back to the discussion three times by the impatient Feldmarschall and an irritated Hohenzollern. Each time it is accompanied by stage directions referencing pen and paper. The first time the prince is called to attention he blushes and "Stellt sich mit Stift und Pergament und schreibt" (659). His writing is brief,

as he becomes entranced once more by the princess and the magnetized glove. The second time the prince is called back to attention he “nimmt wieder Stift und Tafel zur Hand”, but no referencing is made to writing (661). In fact, the prince appears thoroughly confused by the task at hand and instead tries to copy off of Golz’s paper (661). Homburg continues to write, but is once again pulled by the magnetic object and its owner, and the dictation is incomplete. Once the glove has been returned to its owner, the prince is no longer able to write. His thoughts are completely consumed by the object of his passions. He cannot write, he can only “tut, als ob er schriebe” (662). Mimicking the physical act of writing, the prince’s mind is still consumed by somnambulism and therefore cannot produce written words. In doing so, he misses the majority of his orders, and concludes his dictation with only the most superficial comments about fanfare. The prince’s inability to write is illustrated as a symptom of his somnambulism, brought about by his desire for Natalie. His impulsiveness, his passion, and his inability to control his mental state prohibit him from transcribing his orders into the written word.

Writing requires a self-reflection and control over the contents of the message, a prerequisite of which is self-restraint. The immediacy of rapport, on the other hand, prevents any degree of self-reflection or control. The somnambulist has no will, and therefore, no ability to monitor or filter the content of the transmission. It was this availability of thoughts, which would result in unmediated communication of the soul that was the concern of critics of somnambulism. In a state of complete passivity, the

somnambulist could not restrain the message, nor edit its contents, undermining the privacy of personal and family secrets.

It is in drafting a response to the Kurfürst's pardon that the prince is able to demonstrate the self-control and reflection necessary for writing. In his cell Homburg is once more called on to write as Natalie demands that he drafts a response to the Kurfürst's pardon: "Hier, nehmt, hier ist die Feder: nehmt und schreibt!" (704) Initially, the task of writing proves as difficult as before and Homburg struggles for the appropriate opening line. The root of the communicative difficulty however is different. During his attempt at dictation, lack of control causes his writing difficulties. Now, however, it is Homburg's attention to detail and self-reflection that leads him to search for just the right expression. As Siefert has indicated, writing requires control, of concealing passions in the interest of reflection. It is in this moment of writing that the prince gains composure, as various voices have urged him to do throughout the drama.

The act of writing, and not the content of the letter itself, is of primary importance in the drama. At no point is the audience privy to the content of the letter, merely its composition. Natalie approaches Homburg while he is writing and "erschrocken" she utters "Du Ungeheuerster, ich glaub, du schreibst?" (707) While she does not know the exact content of his letter, the act of writing is enough to produce an affective response. This sentiment is emphasized by the lack of direct object attached to the verb *schreiben*. What he is writing is not as important as the successful act of writing. Although frightened as to what the letter might contain, Natalie approves of the prince's actions, as

they restore his masculinity. With a kiss she expresses her pride in his decision. Her favor is once more bestowed on him as she cries “Und bohrten gleich zwölf Kugeln, Dich jetzt in Staub, nicht halten könnt ich mich, und jauchzt und weint und spräche: du gefällst mir!“ (707) The act of writing, of exerting the self control necessary to mediate his desires and give in to the will of the state, the prince has reclaimed his masculinity, indicated by the princess’ renewed favor.

Through self control, expressed through the act of writing, the prince is able to regain the favor of the Kurfürst as well. In response to Kottwitz’s impassioned plea on behalf of the prince, the Kurfürst sends for the prince himself:

Der wird dich lehren, das versichr’ ich dich,
Was Kriegszucht und Gehorsam sei! Ein Schreiben
Schichkt’ er mir mindestens zu, das anders lautet,
Als der spitzfündge Lehrbegriff der Freiheit,
Den du [Kottwitz] hier, wie ein Knabe, mir entfaltet (716).

The letter is referred to here with the gerund *Schreiben*, emphasizing the act of writing itself. The virtues of military discipline (*Kriegszucht*) and obedience (*Gehorsam*) are equated in this utterance with the act of writing. Whereas the prince’s earlier attempts at dictation during the military briefing were characterized by his lack of focus and military discipline, this subsequent act of writing re-instates the prince’s masculine virtue. The Kurfürst contrasts Homburg’s letter with Kottwitz’s earlier plea for leniency. Homburg is not the “spitzfundig Lehbgegriff der Freiheit” that Kollwitz presented the Kurfürst “wie ein Knabe”, but rather the behavior of a man of honor. The two acts of writing, the

dictation and the composition, mirror one another, and depict the transformation that the prince has undergone from passionate, impulsive and effeminate somnambulist, to controlled, disciplined, masculine soldier. In mastering the written word, indicated by his ability to draft a response to the Kurfürst, he exhibits the degree of control and discipline required of him as both an officer of the military and a model man. Such masculinity had not been possible during somnambulism.

With his masculinity re-instated, and his self discipline proven through the written word, the prince is rehabilitated and the death warrant revoked. The closing scene of the drama re-enacts the opening scene. It works to re-write the initial moment of somnambulism into one in which the Kurfürst is in control. Several parallels between the two scenes can be found. The blindfold re-creates the prince's limited sight during somnambulism (Weder 366). Despite the blindfold, the prince is still able to "see" the princess in the form of a glowing light, referencing the magnetized bond between the two in the initial scene (366). The scene climaxes in the prince fainting, a common occurrence during animal magnetism. When he awakens, the nightmarish events of the past days are behind him.

Male somnambulism in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* works to construct minority masculinity defined by the somnambulist's emotional excess and an inability to control the passions. As Mosse has illustrated, the ability to control one's passion was a fundamental characteristic of early nineteenth-century hegemonic masculinity. The hegemonic ideal called on men to suppress their desires and transform that energy into

political and military service. This sentiment is echoed throughout Kleist's drama, as the prince is called on to control himself, *sich fassen*, and to fulfill his role as a soldier in the service of the Kurfürst. The prince's attainment of this degree of control is indicated by his ability to communicate through the written word. While his previously undisciplined mind, a result of somnambulism, prevented his early attempts at written communication, the moment in which he is able to express his desires on paper indicate his attainment of self discipline. Homburg has learned to suppress his passions and redirect them through the appropriate channels – military service and written communication. Having rejected somnambulism as an inappropriate (and unmasculine) means of communication, the prince can once again take his rightful place within the family and the social structure.

Chapter 3: Homoerotic Somnambulism in ETA Hoffmann's *Der Magnetiseur*

Die Begattung ist im Grunde nichts anderes als theierischer Magnetismus: er unterscheidet sich von dem eigentlich sogenannten durch nichts anderes, als durch die Teile, aus welchem der Nervenäther aus, und in den anderen Teil überströmt. (Gmelin)⁵⁹

Insights into the nature of animal magnetism such as the above quote created strong parallels in the minds of nineteenth-century academics between animal magnetism and sexual intercourse. Fluids flowing from one body to another, as well as the intimate contact between the minds and bodies of the parties involved, resulted in allegations of sexual misconduct against animal magnetists. Literary depictions of evil magnetists using their skills to seduce young virgins emerged; some notable examples include Achim von Arnim's *Die Gräfin Dolores* (1810), E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der Magnetiseur* (1814), and later literary examples such as George du Maurier's best seller *Trilby* (1894). One can find many examples in the secondary literature in which an animal magnetic relationship between men and women is read as erotic interaction. When the practitioner and patient of literary magnetism are both male, however, there is a tendency among scholars to overlook the sexual implications presented in the text in favor of other lines of questioning that support hegemonic masculinity. By focusing on political interpretations as well as asexual examinations of the power dynamic between the characters, readings of *Der Magnetiseur* have equated the unique experience of a male somnambulist with the

⁵⁹ Quoted in Barkhoff (2005, 20).

human experience. As a result, the text's homoerotic discourse and the resulting crisis of masculinity are left under-examined.

The following chapter will address this gap in the secondary literature by examining E.T.A. Hoffmann's short story *Der Magnetiseur*, a text that contains an account of male/male animal magnetism. I will discuss the use of sexual tropes of contemporary animal magnetic theory in the context of a male/male magnetism, and the subsequent effects that this interaction has on the text's construction of masculinity. By analyzing these encounters within the contemporary animal magnetic theory and gender discourses, I am positing that the interaction between male magnetist and male somnambulist is articulated with erotic language, creating parallels to heterosexual erotic discourse found in magnetism. It is my thesis that the text employs various literary and narrative techniques to both depict and conceal the feminization of the male somnambulist and the underlying homoerotic implications, so that at the climatic moment between the baron and the magnetist, the narrative breaks down, dissolving into a dream sequence or concealed by a hyphen. I will also examine how this volatile moment results in fractures within the narrative, suggesting that the fulfillment of this homoerotic relationship would threaten the text's conception of masculinity.

1.0 Hoffmann Scholarship

Interest in the works of E.T.A. Hoffmann increased significantly in the 1960s, and underwent a drastic surge in the 1980s. Once considered a minor literary figure outside of the cannon, Hoffmann has become emblematic of the German Romantic movement by scholars not only within Germany but also among scholars abroad. This interest in Hoffmann's literary work has expanded into many fields, including the examination of

contemporary science and its resultant influence on the author's works. In his introduction to the collection *E.T.A. Hoffmann: Neue Wege der Forschung* Steinecke includes among the "wichtigsten neuen Aspekte am Bild Hoffmanns" his interest in "kulturellen Wissensbeständen seiner Zeit, vor allem an den neuesten Entwicklungen in Naturwissenschaften, Technik und Medizin" (11). This sentiment is supported by the numerous publications in the last ten years which explore the scientific elements in Hoffmann's writings.

Hoffmann was well connected with the nineteenth-century medical community.⁶⁰ Biographical evidence shows that Hoffmann traveled in magnetic circles and knew Dr. Markmus and his circle in Bamberg, including Varnhagen von Ense and David Ferdidand Koreff (Nettesheim 121). He was also part of the Berlin magnetic circles. In discussing literary somnambulism in the works of Hoffmann, I am only interested in Hoffmann's medical understanding of somnambulism insofar as it has literary and gendered significance. My goal is to examine how this literary motif emerges in Hoffmann's texts as a vehicle for discussing gender roles and sexuality. Although it is true that literary somnambulism was shaped by the interaction of medical as well as esoteric discourses, this chapter will not focus on Hoffmann's biographical encounters with these fields.

An excellent discussion of Hoffmann in the context of contemporary scientific writing is Lindner's „*Schnöde Kunststücke gefallener Geister*“ *E.T.A. Hoffmanns Werk im Kontext der zeitgenössischen Seelenkunde* (2001). What sets this study apart from others is that it examines contemporary scientific thought using the terminology and categorizations of the period under investigation. Whereas other examinations of Hoffmann have imposed modern scientific theory as well as modern categorizations of

⁶⁰ See Safranski (1984), Nettesheim (1967)

scientific fields onto Hoffmann's text, this being especially true of psychoanalytical approaches to Hoffmann, Lindner rejects such an approach as ahistorical. Instead, she defines science in the terms of *Seelenkunde*, an early nineteenth-century field that embodied not only the field we now call psychology, but included *Naturphilosophie*, mysticism, anthropology, medicine, literature and alchemy (8). By defining the discourse as *Seelenkunde*, Lindner not only widens the scope of her project to encompass all aspects of a highly integrated academic field, but also maintains historical accuracy. In addition, her text is exemplary in that it addresses questions in science without sacrificing literary and aesthetic questions. She aims to restore literary elements of Hoffmann's works to discussions of *Seelenkunde*, insisting that "Die Forschung kann und soll dieses fiktionale Moment auch nicht aus dem Wege räumen" (10). Her fusion of literary analysis with questions regarding the text's scientific elements comes closer to the Romantic ideal of a unity of art and science than an investigation that disregards literary analysis.

Regarding Hoffmann and animal magnetism specifically, Tatar (1978) sets out to examine the influence of animal magnetic theories on the literary style of Hoffmann's texts. "Because Hoffmann frequently indulges in lengthy digressions on mesmerism and takes pains to document his direct borrowings from psychological sources," she writes "it is easy to miss the way in which mesmerism also colors his imagery and style"(123). For this reason, her readings of Hoffmann spend little time drawing intertextual connections between medical and literary texts. Instead, she illustrates how motifs, metaphors and language choice are derived in the texts from "nineteenth-century psychology"(123), and

includes animal magnetism under this heading. The conclusions she draws can be summarized in four major trends, which I will summarize briefly.

Firstly, Hoffmann's emphasis on eyes and optical instruments reflects the power attributed to a magnetist's gaze. Eyes have the same penetrating qualities as, which we see in animal magnetic texts, allowing individuals to access higher levels of truth and reveal secret information (129). At the same time, eyes are often associated with snakes and basilisk's who often "exercise a pernicious, and often fatal, hypnotic influence"(131). Tatar points to *Der Magnetiseur* as an example of such deadly, hypnotic eyes. Secondly, the animal magnetic trance is "an analogue of the dream" for Hoffmann, and as such "serves as a vehicle for introducing the marvelous and the supernatural into his fictional world" (128). Thirdly, animal magnetism creates in the works of Hoffmann a master-slave relationship, in which the magnetized individual is under the complete control of the magnetist (133). Examples of this dynamic can be found in *Der Magnetiseur* as well as *Der unheimliche Gast*. Finally, magnetic trances in the works of Hoffmann are often used to mark moments of poetic inspiration. Tatar describes how Hoffmann "persistently described the transition from ordinary consciousness to sublime revelations of the unconscious mind in terms of a mesmerist operation" (151). The unconscious mind produces art in the forms of music, poems and portraits, which the poet/somnambulist brings back with him to the waking world (151). Magnetism is not only a catalyst for artistic production, but the process of magnetizing also acts as a metaphor for the audience/artist relationship. The poet exercises through his literary work the same "electrifying power" (151) that a magnetist wields over a somnambulist. Tatar's work was the first of its kind. It was the first study to examine not only the influence of

medical animal magnetic case studies on Hoffmann's oeuvre, but to examine how these motifs are poeticized. Her close readings were highly influential in subsequent studies of literary animal magnetism.

Lindner continues in this vein, emphasizing the literary nature of Hoffmann's magnetic references. Lindner asserts that Hoffmann's treatment of magnetism is “in erster Linie nicht so sehr in den Tiefen naturphilosophischer Erkenntnisse, sondern findet mehr auf der Ebene des Phänomens statt“ (146). She continues claiming that animal magnetism is used by Hoffmann as a literary medium for the “Darstellung des Phantastischen oder als Quelle der Angst”(146). Although animal magnetism does often create an atmosphere of fear within the narrative, it does so by engaging the theories underlying the phenomenon. The threat of mental invasion, the potential for abuse by physicians, the release of inappropriate passions that accompany animal magnetism in many of Hoffmann's texts not only express fear, but also address contemporary medical theories and debates of animal magnetism, such as those posed by Schubert, Eschenmayer and others. To reduce Hoffmann's use of animal magnetism to one key function, that of creating fear, seems to overgeneralize a complex motif that runs throughout his oeuvre.

In “Romantic Science and Psychology” (2009) Barkhoff reads Hoffmann's treatment of animal magnetism in the context of contemporary views towards science and technology. According to this approach, Alban's instrumentalization of magnetism can be understood as representing “den männlichen Machbarkeitswahn der modernen Wissenschaft” (201). Magnetism is used by Hoffmann in order to criticize Romantic ideal of science, namely that science should be practiced for the sake of science

(Barkhoff 202). Hoffmann offers a grim look at the effects that Romantic attitudes towards science could bring about (202). In this vein, Barkhoff views *Der Magnetiseur* as a text in which two modes of accessing and explaining nature, the “unterlegend-schwindende der Magie” and the “siegreich-aufsteigende der Technik”, come together (204). The text unites Pre-Modern notions of demonic possession and magic with the modern motif of the human-conquering-nature within its discussion of magnetism (204).

Götz Müller (1986) explores the erotic magnetic metaphors in *Der Magnetsieur*. His reading is representative of many gendered approaches of Hoffmann’s text. When discussing Alban’s magnetism of Marie he focuses on the erotic nature of the relationship, arguing that Alban “beraubt ...das Mädchen mittels finsterer magnetisch erotischer Manipulationen seiner Identität, indem er sie zu einem Teil seiner selbst macht“ (79). The magnetic treatment is viewed as an erotic encounter, one that aims to assimilate Marie and thereby remove her subjectivity. The magnetic relationship between Alban and the baron and its erotic potential are not addressed. This emphasis on the heterosexual magnetism as an erotic encounter, while overlooking or de-sexualizing the parallel male/male magnetism is typical of gendered readings.

Animal magnetism is not the only branch of *Seelenkunde* to be examined in the works of Hoffmann. In his essay on *Der Sandmann* Engelstein places the text in the context of eighteenth-and nineteenth-century debates surrounding the biological origin of life. Engelstein explains how the two predominate reproductive theories of the time, preformation and epigenesis, along with new knowledge of asexual reproduction, resulted in a debate regarding the role of the female body in reproduction. *Der Sandmann* reflects this contemporary confusion regarding the creation of life by depicting numerous

narratives of origin (178). Through its narratives of both male motherhood and a-sexual reproduction, Engelstein concludes that *Der Sandmann* amplifies contemporary reproductive concerns, “calling into question the role of the female body in generation and intensifying the ambivalence of the genitals as simultaneously a source of the uncanny and an antidote for it” (178).

Maria's somnambulism at the hands of Alban re-enforces the gender roles constructed in many theories of animal magnetism, thus lending itself to a gender studies reading. Siebenpfeiffer notes that in *Der Magnetiseur* the role of passive hypnotized somnambulist is “durchweg weiblich codiert” and therefore “die Macht des Magnetiseurs [zeigt sich] als erfolgreiche Usurpation der Träume der Frau durch den Mann“ (113). And yet, the gender codification of somnambulists is not as consistent as Siebenpfeiffer would suggest. I see two limitations to Siebenpfeiffer's reading. First, his conflation of *weiblich* and *Frau* is problematic because it assumes that the biological sex female is synonymous with the socially constructed notion of femininity. One cannot assume that just because a character is a woman that she is necessarily feminine, nor can we exclude from the discussion characters who are male but depicted as feminine. Hoffmann's texts often employ animal magnetism to challenge gender norms. In *Magnetiseur*, for example, the male-male magnetism poses a potential threat to the gender models at the core of animal magnetic theory. A man capable of being magnetized would, according to nineteenth century medical theories on the subject, necessarily display characteristics typically associated with women. A feminized man creates a rupture in the biologically grounded notion of gender typical in Romantic gender ideology and reconstructed in readings such as Siebenpfeiffer's.

Secondly, by limiting animal magnetism to the male usurpation of the female, Siebenpfeiffer cannot account for the opening instances of magnetism between the baron and the major. In this relationship the magnetist also uses his magnetic influence to gain control over the dreams of his somnambulist, with the significant difference that both parties are male. The discrepancy between biological sex and socially constructed gender within the figure of the baron-somnambulist problematizes Siebenpfeiffer's assertion that magnetism is depicted in the text as the exertion of male control over women. The relationship is neither that straightforward nor consistent, and poses multiple questions regarding the construction of masculinity.

Another line of discussion in Hoffmann scholarship, which intersects with the topic of somnambulism, is Hoffmann's subversion of gender norms. Treatments of gender in the works of Hoffmann have outlined his criticism of the Romantic ideals of femininity and romantic love. An early example of this can be found in Kohlenbach's essay "E.T.A. Hoffmann's implicit Critique of Early Romanticism" (1994). Kohlenbach examines several works including *Der Sandmann*, *Der Magnetiseur* and *Kater Murr* and concludes that Hoffman's female characters constitute a criticism of the romantic ideal of femininity. She argues that his satire of romantic poets reveals the "shortcomings in the Early Romantic discourse on femininity" by illustrating that "an idealization of the Feminine can coincide with denying to women a life of their own even when the quality of "independence " is built into the ideal" (673). Schmidt (2005) continues this line of argumentation by seeking out models of femininity beyond the romantic ideal in the works of Hoffmann. Schmidt's reading of *Der Sandmann* suggests that Hoffmann departs from the early romantic tendency to combine ideal and real woman into one figure in the

course of the narrative. Instead, Hoffmann depicts protagonists who cannot distinguish between the female ideal and the real woman, or who must choose between the two, highlighting the impossibility of the romantic ideal. Schmidt concludes that Hoffmann's "purpose of exploring the relationship between the real and ideal for an artist extended the gender boundaries of his age", albeit within the "given range of gender stereotypes", resulting in the creation of "female characters of remarkable intelligence, wit and independence of mind" (64).

In a similar vein, Barkhoff (2005) illustrates how Hoffmann's use of animal magnetism undermines contemporary gender discourse. Through his close readings of *Der Magnetiseur* and *Das öde Haus* (1817), Barkhoff identifies two primary criticisms expressed through literary magnetism. The first is a criticism of the oppressive male *Machtphantasmen* that form the foundation of animal magnetic theory (24). Masquerading as "healers", Hoffmann's magnetists seek dominance over their female patients at the expense of their health (24). Secondly, Hoffmann's texts make visible the hardship that female somnambulists undergo at the hands of their magnetists (24). Female somnambulists were depicted as embodying quintessential female qualities and therefore their downfall is often a criticism of this tenuous gender ideal. The death of the female somnambulist Marie in *Der Magnetiseur*, for example, illustrates the impossibility of the romantic ideal of femininity. In this way, Barkhoff's reading provides further evidence to support Kohlenbach's thesis.

Helfer (2005) moves away from the female role in Hoffman's texts and focuses on the male voice. Men, not women, are the underlying muses of the romantic period, according to Helfer, and the image of woman is always one that is presented through

men. She maintains that in works such as the *Goldene Topf* the muse is male and both the text as well as the male author are constructed by male discourses (306). In *Der Goldene Topf*, Helfer points to the existence of an “autopoiesis in which a male artist defines himself in terms of woman, but then questions the traditional female gendering of its own poetic ground ironically and self-critically, and presents a counter paradigm in which the process of poetic production is coded as male” (302). As a result, that which appears to be a female muse is actually male. In its assertion of an exclusively male artist/muse relationship, this article begins to explore the existence of homosocial bonds in Hoffmann’s work, which are channeled through male/female interaction. This theme will reappear in my reading of *Der Magnetiseur*.

Freud’s famous reading of *Der Sandmann* in his essay on “Das Unheimliche” began a discussion of sexuality and gender in the works of Hoffmann through a psychoanalytical lens, a trend that continues today. Although I will not be engaging in a psychoanalytical analysis of the text, a recent work in this vein – Schindler’s examination of Hoffmann in his book *Eingebildete Körper* – has particular significance for my study.

Methodologically grounded in the works of Freud and Lacan, Schindler examines how animal magnetism is used in *Der Magnetiseur* as a way of both representing connection between characters as well as distancing the character from the physical source of his or her sexual desires. By attributing socially inappropriate sexual attraction (such as erotic attraction between men) to the forces of animal magnetism, the individual can repress the source of this attraction by attributing it to the influence of an outside force. For Stephan Schnider, the magnetist in *Der Magnetiseur* does not have any power of his own, and is exerting no magnetic influence over his subjects (214). Instead there is a „Logik des

Begehrens“ which transforms the other into an „Ort der Selbstreflexion des Ichs und seiner Emotionen“ so that the “Suche nach dem Begehren des Andern“ is actually a search for the key to one’s own unconscious desires and secrets (214). Animal magnetism becomes a means of explaining repressed desires. Although I take issue with his underlying assumption that fictional characters have an unconscious and can be psychoanalyzed, I agree with his assertion that the text contains homoerotic elements. My reading of the text will examine the way in which these elements are articulated within the literary text.

In examining the gendered effects that the baron’s encounter with a magnetist has on the construction of masculinity, it will be necessary to discuss the role that power, or *Macht*, plays in the relationships depicted in the text. Traditionally, readings that address the question of power in *Der Magnetiseur* focus on the figure of the magnetist, often reducing the “victim’s” narratives to mere evidence of the magnetist’s control. Tartar speaks of a master-slave relationship in Hoffmann’s depiction of magnetism. Kolhenbach and Müller specify this relationship as a *Gewaltverhältnis* within the battle of the sexes, supported by the similarities between the contemporary articulation of gender relations and Alban’s consideration of his own power (200). In Safranski’s examination of the text the magnetist is identified as the embodiment of power itself. Power, according to Safranski, become an end in and of itself within the text (307). “Solange sie noch ein Mittel ist,“ he writes „bleibt sie auf einen außerhalb liegenden Sinn bezogen, dem sie dient. Der zentrale Aspekt der Albanschen Philosophie ist die radikale Säkularisierung der Macht: Sie ersetzt den Sinn.“ Alban is the embodiment of the very desire for power for the sake of power, and it is the existence of such power that results in

a world that is no more than “ein Labyrinth von Machtbeziehungen” (307). He then takes his interpretation a step further, exploring its political ramifications and concluding that the power that Alban exerts represents the mesmerizing power of Napoleon, who “ist für Hoffmann der politische Magnetiseur”(308). The weakness in Safranski’s reading rests on his assumption that power has no relationship to systems of gender. In this interpretation, Alban’s psychological state, as it is expressed in the narrative through his correspondence, depicts the “Psychologie und Philosophie des Willens zur Macht” per se, a psychology that would appear to be divorced from the narrative’s understanding of gender. This seems to me to be problematic. Narratives are always bound to certain social and cultural contexts, and the figures in narratives are shaped by many discourses, including that of gender. Safranski’s reading appears to rest on the erroneous assumption that Alban can be read without reference to gendered discourse. His assertion that Alban’s desire for power is a desire for “Macht als Ziel” and not “Macht als Mittel” cannot be upheld if we re-introduce into the reading the various cultural discourses that shape characters in narratives, especially gendered discourse.

2.0 E.T.A. Hoffmann’s *Der Magnetiseur*

Der Magnetiseur contains descriptions of three somnambulists and their experience at the hand of a magnetist. The text opens with a domestic scene: the baron sitting with his son Ottmar, daughter Marie, and the *Hausfreund* Bickert around the fireplace discussing the mysterious side of nature. The baron tells the story of an encounter he had in military school with a man who had strange manipulative powers. The description of this encounter contains many of the hallmark characteristics of animal

magnetism. The baron's chilling tale of somnambulism is followed by Ottmar's anecdote which serves as a positive example of the powers of magnetism. In Ottmar's narrative a young man, Theobald, uses animal magnetism on his beloved to counter-act the sexual advances of a rival. The remainder of the narrative depicts Marie's own somnambulism at the hands of Alban, a mysterious practitioner of animal magnetism who is staying with his friend Ottmar. It traces her feelings of attraction to Alban and the subsequent detrimental effect that these feelings have on her, climaxing in her death and the destruction of her family. The narrative ends several years later, shortly after the death of Bickert, when the inheritor of the estate finds the deceased's diary. The diary fragments depict the fall of the family, and places the blame on Alban and his magnetic abilities.

The following reading of *Der Magnetiseur* focuses on the baron's narrative of magnetism. I will begin by examining the narrative's military setting; exploring both its connection to historical magnetism and significance within the text. The military school in which the baron's magnetism takes place offers a space of an all male environment in which key issues of masculinity can be explored. Somnambulism is used as a motif within this space to negotiate male/male relationships, to analyze the effect of military hierarchy on the practice of magnetism and to examine marginalized masculinities that threaten the heterosexual hegemonic model. Secondly, I will examine the parallels between the erotic language used to describe Marie's magnetists that used to describe the baron's. Here I will make the claim that both narratives can be read as sexual encounters. Finally, I will analyze the different social discourses that are implemented to contain and normalize the male/female somnambulism – discourses which were not available to men.

2.1 Military and Magnetism: Historical Background

The *Ritterakademie* in B., in which the baron's magnetism takes place, embeds male somnambulism within the context of military culture. Unlike *Prince von Homburg*, in which the magnetism was presented as unintentional and naturally occurring, the predatory magnetism that is described in *Der Magnetiseur* between the major and a young man is predatory and reflects the strict military hierarchy. In this way, *Der Magnetiseur* thematizes the affinity of the military for animal magnetism and uses this metaphor to articulate the potential for abuse.

Nineteenth-century French and German military had strong ties to animal magnetism. Alan Gauld goes so far as to claim that military officers were among the most forceful proponents of animal magnetism in France (43). In France, for example, at least three of the Puysegur brothers practiced magnetism during their military careers. Maxime Puysegur actively magnetized fellow soldiers in his regiment at Bayonne around 1784 (43). It was during his time in the military that Puysegur also began magnetizing. He developed such a reputation as a magnetic healer that when his regiment went to Strasbourg it “was perceived more as the arrival of a new thaumaturgist than as the arrival of a military attaché”(Lawrence and Perry 107). The Marquis taught animal magnetism to fellow soldiers and established the Society of Universal Harmony of Strausbourg, which remained one of the most active animal magnetic organizations (110).⁶¹ During the time that Puysegur was practicing, many military posts had their own officer-magnetists (Lawrence and Perry 107). There is even an account of a military ship that was magnetized. Puysegur’s youngest brother Chastent was the commander of the supply ship the Rederic-Guillaume (111). With the help of his fellow officers, Chastent

⁶¹ See Benz, Lawrence and Perry (110), Darnton.

magnetized the entire ship so that “everything from the ropes to the masts and the sails was magnetized” and “the entire crew was under the command of magnetism” (111). The ship’s journal records many amazing cures that were said to have been made during the ship’s voyage.

Lawrence and Perry offer several convincing reasons to account for the military's enthusiasm for animal magnetism. Military officers were in an ideal position to practice animal magnetism, having both sufficient leisure time and a “ready supply of captive but willing subjects” (43). Secondly, magnetism offered a relatively painless and convenient means of healing soldier's ailments which many preferred over more orthodox medical procedures (43). There is also evidence that indicates that the involvement of many officers in Masonic groups resulted in an overlap between military and Masonic channels of communication (43). This in turn resulted in the transmission of knowledge regarding animal magnetism into the military (43). Lastly, the close quarters in the regiments meant that news of successful cures would spread from one officer’s quarters to the next, encouraging them to try their hand at animal magnetism, as well as prompting more soldiers to seek healing (43).

Animal magnetism case studies upheld reinforced the pre-existing military hierarchy; a point that has been previously made by Barkhoff (2005) and Rohrwasser(1991). Animal magnetism was always practiced by superior officers on their subordinate patients, providing the necessary power imbalance between the magnetist and somnambulist. To prove this point, Rohrwasser quotes a personal correspondence to Kunz, a contemporary of Hoffman's, regarding the practice of magnetism in the military:

Es sind immer die Großgrundbesitzer, die auf ihre Untergebenen einwirken, niemals wirkten die letzteren auf ihre Oberen, es scheint, als ob der Magnetismus

immer von oben nach unten wirkt, niemals von unten nach oben. Die Offiziere, die in ihren Garnisonen so eifrig magnetisierten, wirkten zweifellos Wunder bei armen Soldaten, die sich sehr geehrt fühlten, daß Marquis, Grafen und Barone willens waren, über ihnen ihre Gesten zu machen. (71)

Twice in this paragraph the power indifference is articulated with the phrase “oben nach unten”, emphasizing both the social and military hierarchy inherent in the practice of animal magnetism. This dynamic echoes the theories of magnetism articulated by Fischer who claimed that magnetism would only work when performed by a man on a social or intellectual inferior such as women, children, or ill men (69). The reason for this was that successful magnetism required the will of the somnambulist be replaced by that of the magnetist. The will of a healthy man was therefore too strong to be influenced by the will of a social or intellectual inferior. By asserting the ability of subordinate officers to be magnetized by their superiors, the correspondence quoted above draws parallels between the gender hierarchy and military hierarchy. The same arguments that were used to explain the natural dominance of men over women are also used to establish the dominance of high ranking officers over their inferiors. The role of submission the patients display is internalized by the low ranking officers themselves, who the text describes as feeling honored at the attention of their superiors.

Magnetism between men in the military offers a moment of social interaction which works to construct the masculinity of both parties. The magnetist, by virtue of his successful magnetism, would illustrate his strength mind, will, and body as well as his ability to dominate other men. By virtue of being magnetized, the lower ranking soldier would take on the role of passive object capable of mental penetration, thereby emasculating him and placing him in the same category as women, children and other weak and impressionable subjects. Regardless of their previous or subsequent masculine

identities, the social interaction created through magnetism would position the subject in the role of marginalized masculinity, dominated by a man embodying the hegemonic ideal of strength and will.

2.2 The Major: Evil Magnetist and Somnambulist

References to both war and the military are ever-present in *Der Magnetiseur*. Each of the text's male characters has served in the military and is a representative of the military (Forssmann 65).⁶² The military constitutes an important male realm in which adolescent males are socialized into men according to the ideals of hegemonic masculinity. Around the time in which *Der Magnetiseur* was published, military participation and its effects on masculinity were topics of extensive discussion in the public sphere. Many intellectuals hoped that this shared military experience would provide a kind of initiatory experience for young men, one that developed young men into “manly and complete” human beings.⁶³

The baron tells the story of his magnetic experience while in military academy. There the baron is magnetized by the Danish major. Although the text does not explicitly identify the major as a magnetist, it does provide evidence to suggest such a reading.⁶⁴ We see in the characterization of the major attributes, which “play to” a literary trope that had already existed by the time of the text’s publication. This trope of the evil magnetist was further developed by Hoffmann's literary contributions. The

⁶² Forssmann points out the irony of the text, namely that despite their military training and their awareness of the existence of political enemies, these military men fail to recognize the enemy within the domestic space (Forssmann 65).

⁶³ Correspondence by Arndt, as quoted in Frevert, 29.

⁶⁴ A similar conclusion drawn by Tatar (131).

characterization of the major hits on several of these attributes: foreignness, unnatural appearance as well as a capacity for violent manipulation.

Firstly, the major is depicted as a foreigner and social outcast of questionable moral fiber. The Danish major came to the school as an instructor after killing his superior officer. The official story is that the major killed his superior in a duel. The baron explains to his audience that many people believed that the major killed his superior before the latter had the opportunity to arm himself. The distinction between these two accounts has a considerable influence on the masculinity of the major. If the killing took place in the context of a duel then masculine code of conduct would be upheld, and masculine honor would have been attributed to both men, as is discussed in the previous chapter. If the general's death had been the result of a dishonorable murder, then it would characterize the major as both excessively violent and cowardly. Several other acts of brutality and dishonorable violence by the major seems to suggest the later interpretation, however the text leaves the question unresolved.

Secondly, the major's appearance is described as somewhat unnatural, full of contradictions between characteristics normally associated with frailty, and indications of strength and virility.

Seine Riesengröße wurde noch auffallender durch die Hagerkeit seines Körpers, der nur aus Muskeln und Nerven zu bestehen schien; er mochte in jüngern Jahren ein schöner Mann gewesen sein, denn noch jetzt warfen seine großen schwarzen Augen einen brennenden Blick, den man kaum ertragen konnte; ein tiefer Fünfziger, hatte er die Kraft und Gewandtheit eines Jünglings; alle Bewegungen waren rasch und entschieden (10).

Although in his late fifties, the major has the prowess of a young man. While his body is large, strong, and muscular, it is also described by the noun *Hagerkeit*, or gauntness, which is not characteristic of physical strength and virility. The narrator (the baron) can

see in the old man the beauty and confidence of youth, expressed in his quick determined movements and his eyes. Embodying characteristics of both a young and old man, the students cannot determine the age of the major, which gives him an air of mystery and suggests immortality. Further evidence to support this characterization is presented later in the novel when the baron recognizes Alban as the major from his childhood. Since the baron is himself an old man, anyone who was in their fifties when he was a child would have been long dead by the beginning of the narrative. The baron remarks that it is as if the major “würde gespenstisch durch die Türe heineinschreiten”(181). The major is seems to be mysterious and timeless, which causes the baron to attribute supernatural and ghost-like powers to him.

The major is further characterized by his violent temper. He treats his students cruelly, disciplining them with „der raffiniertesten Grausamkeit“. Despite his abusive treatment of the students, they remained loyal to him. Even a young student, whose mistreatment was investigated by school officials, came to the defense of the major, claiming that his injuries were his own fault (181). Through the motif of somnambulism, the text exposes the potential for abuse within the military hierarchy. The major’s abuse of the student can be explained as an abuse of magnetic power and the student’s loyalty as the loyalty of a somnambulist for his magnetist. At the same time however there is a criticism of a military culture that protects violent behavior against subordinates and requires complete loyalty to superiors.

Eyes are used as a key feature to identify the major as a magnetist. Eyes and optical instruments are a reoccurring motif in the works of Hoffmann.⁶⁵ Tatar describes the “penetrating gaze and basilisk-like eyes” as the “most salient characteristics of the

⁶⁵ For a closer look at the significance of eyes in Hoffmann's works, see Helga Slessarev (1971).

magnetic personalities in Hoffmann's tales" (130). In describing the magnetist's eyes, Hoffmann draws on several related discourses including animal magnetic theory, the tradition of the "evil eye", and the belief in the supernatural hypnotic powers of reptile eyes (Tatar 131).⁶⁶ In the medical literature on animal magnetism, the magnetist's gaze plays a role in bringing about the state of somnambulism in a patient. Eschenmayer writes that a *starren Blick*, along with passes of the hand and concentration of the will, are necessary to bring a patient into a state of animal magnetism (36). Illustrations that depict magnetic cures frequently emphasize eye contact between the magnetist and his patient.

Ebenezer Silby's engraving entitled *Mesmerism: The Operator Inducing a Hypnotic Trance* (1974) shows the patient locked in the magnetist's gaze.

⁶⁶ Siegfried Seligmann offers an in-depth examination of the evil eye in *Der böse Blick und Verwandtes* (1910).



Illustration 1, *Mesmerism: The Operator Inducing a Hypnotic Trance*. Printed in Sibley
A Key to Physics and the Occult Sciences (1794).

The intensity of this eye contact is further emphasized by the lines radiating from the magnetist's hands. These lines symbolize the transmission of animal magnetic fluid into the patient through her eyes, face, and chest. The magnetist's eyes became a key characteristic trait in the literary representation of animal magnetist.

The power to dominate another through the gaze is theorized in Foucault *Discipline and Punish*, in which he posits that the position of the gazer is one of power over the object of the gaze. That same construction of domination through the gaze is prevalent in the works of Hoffman. Tatar points out a correlation in Hoffman's work between eye contact and power. She argues that Hoffman emphasizes "piercing eyes"

and “burning gaze” when he wants to emphasize the hypnotic control that the magnetist exerts over his patient (131). This is especially true in *Der Magnetiseur*, in which “fiery eyes and a spellbinding gaze are directly connected with magnetic prowess” (131). When the correlation between the gaze and domination is examined in terms of the gender dynamics typically found in literary magnetism, then we find that the gaze is associated primarily with male magnetic prowess.

If we return to the baron’s description of the major, it is clear that the baron was attracted to the major’s eyes. The *brennenden Blick* acts as evidence of the major’s previous attractiveness. The baron sees something attractive and inciting in the major’s stare, which gives evidence of the major’s previous attractiveness. The relative clause provides a tension that betrays the baron’s attraction to the major. It states that he (the baron) could hardly endure the gaze of the major. Hardly is the operative word. The gaze has an intensity that is almost unbearable, but implies that he can, and does, bear it. When combined with the clause before it, the “kaum ertragbar” suggests a desire to bear the *Blick*, to be the object of the major’s gaze, and at the same time to be the observer of the major’s residual beauty. A connection is formed through this visual exchange, one in which the young baron wants to observe the major’s *Blick* because it offers a glimpse at his former beauty, but at the same time is aware of his own position as the object of that gaze, which brings with it a burden that he does bear and that he wants to bear.

Further evidence of the baron’s attraction to the major can be found in the following passage:

Bisweilen hatte er Tage, in denen er sich selbst nicht ähnlich war. Der sonst harte polternde Ton seiner tiefen Stimme hatte dann etwas unbeschreiblich sonores und von seinem Blick konnte man sich nicht losreißen. Gutmütig und weich übersah er jede kleine Ungeschicklichkeit, und wenn er, diesem oder jenem, dem etwas

besonders gelungen, die Hand drückte, so war es als habe er ihn, wie durch eine unwiderstehliche Zauberkraft zu einem Leibeigen gemacht, denn den augenblicklich schmerzvollsten Tod er gebieten Können, und sein Wort wäre erfüllt worden (182).

The passage quoted above describes the attraction that the baron felt towards the major. He is drawn in by the sonorous voice and the gaze, from which he cannot release himself. It is during these times, when the major is not his “normal self” that the baron sees him as docile and gentle. The *Zauberkraft* that emanates from the major’s hands binds the baron to the major, causing him to fall under the power of the major. He describes this bond as one of domination. The major’s *Zauberkraft* suppresses (unterdrückt) the baron, as a slave is suppressed beneath his/her master. He is willing in these moments to do whatever the major asked of him. The power and control that the major exhibits in the final clauses of the sentence are in stark contrast to the “Gutmütig” and “weich” major described at the beginning of the sentence. This suggests that the major is controlling the baron, not by use of violent corporal punishment, but some other means that gives him control through gentler means. There are several indicators that this “gentle” control is the result of magnetism: the *Blick* that cannot be avoided, the energy emitted from his hands, the bond that is formed through touch and sight, and finally the baron’s complete obedience to all that the magnetist asks of him. The fact that the baron perceives the major in this moment as “weich” and “gutmütig” echoes the devotion and admiration that many somnambulists felt for their magnetist.

Unlike the other male magnetists I have examined in previous chapters, the major displays characteristics of both magnetism and somnambulism. The major is a *Traumwandler*. Periodically he enters a trance-like state, during which he appears to battle against an unseen adversary. He re-enacts a brutal battle climaxing in the violent

destruction of the imagined corpse. After completing his virtual battle, the major exhibits several other characteristics of a sleep walker or somnambulist including extended bouts of “paroxysms” and amnesia after the event (182). Given the major’s personal history, the text implies that this may be a re-enactment of his altercation with his previous Danish General.

Barkhoff asserts that „Die Figur des Majors ist eher dämonologisch konnotiert“ with the demonic languages of possession drawing references to Mesmer's interactions with Gassner (25). For Barkhoff, these demonic motifs are reflect the development in contemporary thought from understanding sleepwalking as an indication of demonic possession to perceiving it as the result of an organic illness. The narrative intertwines the Pre-Modern discourse of possession and the “moderne selbstverkultend-übermenschliche” discourse to depict the *Selbstvergötterung* of Alban (Barkhoff 1995 204). What results is the character who bridges the historical gap between the Pre-Modern spiritual explanation for *Traumwandler* and the contemporary medical explanation - both of which attribute an exceptional character and superhuman abilities to the object of the possession/illness. The major’s association with demonic forces is described in greater depth in a following passage.

vor vielen Jahren einmal im Sturm auf der See der Böse Feind zu ihm getreten, und ihm Rettung aus der Todesnot, so wie übermenschliche Kraft allerlei Wunderbares zu wirken verheißen, welches er denn angenommen und sich dem Bösen ergeben habe; nun habe er oft harte Kämpfe mit dem Bösen zu bestehen, den man bald als schwarzer Hund, bald als ein anderes hässliches Tier im Garten umherlaufen sehe, aber über kurz oder lang, werde der major doch gewiss auf schreckliche Weise unterliegen müssen (183).

Although that is one possible reading, I feel that the references to demonic possession are also included to produce a desired affect. The pact with the devil is a common Gothic

motif, and is used here to intensify the Gothic mood and feelings of *Schauer*. The repetition of the words “Böse“ refers to the Devil, the adjective “hässlich“ is used to describe an outward appearance of an internal evil. These instances of sleep walking are narrated using Gothic language and motifs. The major’s behavior during his dream state is restless marked by fierce gestures and a “schreckliche Stimme”. He utters “grässlichsten Flüchen” after defeating the “fürchterlichen Gegener”. The “hönisch” laughter that disturbs those watching the *Traumwandler* is reminiscent of another discourse related to magnetism, that of demonic possession. The darkness that is described intensifies the mood, as does the use of the word “schrecklich”. It is also ambiguous as to whether or not the major's battles with the devil are real, or in his mind. This uncertainty adds to the Gothic mood of the text.

The major is anything but a stable depiction of masculinity. He is a somnambulist affected by astronomical events, a man under the influence of the devil, a delusional man unable to distinguish internal and external stimuli, and a powerful magnetist controlling and abusing the men around him. What is one to make of this highly ambiguous figure? He is a figure at the intersection of several diverse discourses, one who embodies social roles which, from a gendered perspective, are opposing positions.⁶⁷ We see in this uncertain, unstable Gothic figure an example of the male fragmentation that lies at the heart of Gothic literature. In *The Animal Within* (1998) Cyndy Hendershot identifies a goal of Gothic literature to expose what she calls the “veneer that conceals multiplicity and fragmentation” of traditional heterosexual masculinity (1). By exposing the “others

⁶⁷ Barkhoff (2005) reaches a similar conclusion in his reading of *Das Öde Haus*, stating that Hoffmanns novellen „unterläuft ...die rigide Opposition zwischen Mann und Frau und stellt damit das binäre Schema als Ganzes in Frage“ (40). I argue that the fusion of somnambulist and magnetist characteristics in *Der Magnetsieur* is another example of this gender subversion.

within and without” it reveals the “notion of such a category as stable masculinity” as a lie (1). The multiple subject positions that the major adopts throw into crisis the notion of a stable masculine position. It challenges the division between somnambulist/magnetist, dissolving them into one character. Such a move contributes to the Gothic mood by exposing the instability of masculinity. We see this in the drastic shifts in characterization that the major undergoes in a short period of time. The strong and aggressive major has regular periods in which he is “gutmütig und weich” associated with femininity. The shift from characteristics typically associated with hegemonic masculinity to those indicative of femininity correspond with his shift from magnetist to *Traumwandler*. At the same time, his sleep walking is accompanied by a virtual battle, an activity that is reserved for men. These personality shifts, accompanied by the shift from *Traumwandler* to magnetist and back again, undermine the myth of stable masculinity. That this occurs in a military setting is even more significant, as the military can be read as the breeding ground of hegemonic masculinity.

2.2 The Baron's Somnambulism

Despite the major’s cruel behavior and rumors of his supposed demonic connections, the baron finds himself drawn to the man “mit getreuer Anhänglichkeit”. His disposition towards him is a mix of “Schauer” as well as attraction. He feels

ein unbegreifliches Etwas, das mich unaufhörlich verfolgte und das ich mir selbst nicht erklären konnte. Es war, als würde ich von einem höhern Wesen gezwungen, treu an dem Mann zu halten, als würde der Augenblick des Aufhörens meiner Liebe auch der Augenblick des Unterganges sein (183).

Here the baron expresses an attraction to the major, one described with the adjective “*treu*” and references to *Liebe*. The baron attributes these thoughts and emotions to an outside force. The verb *verfolgte* separates the *unbegreifliches Etwas* from the narrator. The feeling of attraction he has for the major is presented as beyond the control of the baron. It is presented as a force external to him and suggests that this attraction is purely the result of animal magnetism. In such a reading the *höhen Wesen* referred to in the text is the animal magnetic fluid that is exerting an influence on the baron’s mind and emotions. The bond that forces the baron “*true an dem Mann zu halten*” resembles the bond that is formed through rapport.⁶⁸ The level of dependency and devotion illustrated in the passage reflects the dependency and devotion that characterized the somnambulist’s relationship to his/her magnetist in contemporary medical texts. Further evidence of the baron’s somnambulism is given to this interpretation by the baron’s inability to describe the source of his attraction. Medical accounts of somnambulism often noted the patient’s inability to fully describe events and experiences both during and after the magnetic treatment.⁶⁹ Any prophecies or abilities that the somnambulist exhibited while in a trance were described as “*unwillkürlich*” and were outside the patient’s cognitive abilities (Ritter 85). The baron’s inability to explain his attraction to the major, or the nature of the force affecting him, are in line with the understanding of somnambulism and further characterize this relationship as one of animal magnetism.

For Schindler, these feelings, expressed as the influence of a foreign force, represent the magnetist’s repressed homosexual desires (213). Although I find this thesis

⁶⁸ Eschenmayer describes rapport as the connection between two people marked by the somnambulist’s complete dependence on the magnetist, so that the “*Wille des auf sie einwirkenden Mannes alles für sie [the patient] geworden*” (69).

⁶⁹ Schubert identifies amnesia after the event as a trait unique to somnambulism (212).

very productive in terms of reading the baron's narrative as one depicting a homoerotic interaction, I do not share the author's assumption that fictional characters can be psychoanalyzed. Altering the approach, so that the text, and not the psychological make-up of the character, is at the center of the discussion will allow the analysis of focus on the narrative's deployment of this motif.

The major's first attempt to magnetize the baron offers an excellent example of homoerotic narration

Erfüllte mich nun mein Beisammensein mit ihm auch mit einem gewissen Wohlbehagen, so war es doch wieder eine gewisse Angst, das Gefühl eines unwiderstehlichen Zwanges, das mich auf eine unnatürliche Art spannte, ja das mich innerlich erbeben machte. War ich lange bei ihm gewesen, ja hatte er mich besonders freundlich behandelt und mir...mit starr auf mich geheftetem Blick, meine Hand in der seinigen festhaltend, allerlei Seltsames erzählt, so konnte mich jene ganz eigne wunderbare Stimmung bis zur höchsten Erschöpfung treiben. Ich fühlte mich krank und matt zum Umsinken (12).

The physical interaction in this passage is described with both desire and fear. The "besonderes freundlich" manner that the baron describes the major as he takes his hand indicates the baron's comfort with the magnetist. This phrasing does not bring to mind an evil magnetist working without the consent of the patient, but implies a degree of consent and desire on behalf of the recipient. Furthermore, the act of magnetism, is described here using sexual language. What begins with an intense gaze and embrace of the hand, leads to a "wunderbare Stimmung" that agitates him to a climactic moment, the "höchsten Erschöpfung" resulting in a complete release in which the baron feels ill, but also weak, and he collapses. Language such as this, in which a treatment leads to increased agitation, climax, and release, draws parallels between animal magnetic practice and sexual intercourse, an analogy that is applied primarily to male/female

magnetism and is overlooked in instances of male/male magnetism. Although the above passage has follows the same patterns, and to a certain extent the same language as other male/female accounts of magnetism, it is significant that the sexual undertones of the passage have not been discussed.

While Schindler reads this passage as the unconscious expression of the young man's emerging sexuality and his desire to master it (213), I feel that such an interpretation conceals the very real, physical act that is being depicted in the passage. There is a raw corporeality in this text that is overlooked when the focus is on the origin of the sexual feeling, and not the literary expression of sexuality itself. The "innerlich erbeben" that moves the somnambulist, the "Wohlbehagen" that he feels in the magnetists's presence, and the "höchsten Erschöpfung" that constitutes the somnambulist's climax should not be overlooked. Interpretations of Marie and Alban's relationship in the secondary literature offers further examples of this tendency. Schindler's reading of the Marie/Alban relationship as one that takes place not in the "niedrigen Ebene der sexuellen Eroberung der Frau" but rather at the *geistige* level (222). A similar conclusion is drawn by Forssmann, for whom the text transfigures the physical threat of rape into spiritual intercourse" (67). Such observations mask the corporal level of the text, and retroactively set a precedent for reading the baron's narrative, as it is frequently read in its relationship to Marie's experiences.

The climax of the baron's narrative is an account of a dream he had during his time at the Ritterakademie B. The dream is described as "lebhaft, als geschähe es wirklich" (184). Here the subjunctive is used to indicate uncertainty and raise the question as to whether or not the dream was in fact a dream. During his "dream" the

major enters the young boy's bedroom and attempts to magnetize him. The major approaches his bed, his "hohlen schwarzen Augen auf furchtbare Weise anstarrend" and places his right hand over the baron's eyes. The major then says to the baron

Armes Menschenkind, erkenne deinen Meister und Herrn! – Was krümmst und windest du dich in deiner Knechtschaft, die du vergebens abzuschütteln strebst? – Ich bin dein Gott, der dein Innerstes durchschaut, und alles, was du darin jemals verborgen hast oder verbergen willst, liegt hell und klar vor mir (13).

This passage is the culmination of the baron's subordination at the hands of the major.

The baron is in a position of complete exposure, his thoughts transparent before the magnetist. This transparency is accompanied by the baron's inability to exert his own will. The loss of will and transparency of thoughts are characteristics not only typical but also celebrated in nineteenth century accounts of male/female magnetism. A degree of vulnerability and passivity that was viewed by contemporary theorists as desirable in women, and a key characteristics that made them ideal somnambulists, are now attributed to the baron.

Within this relationship he exhibits the feminine quality of passivity and becomes a receptacle for the thoughts and desires of the male magnetist. The language of penetration is expressed with the verb *durchschaut*, in which the preposition *durch* implies a boundary that must be penetrated. The major is capable of mentally penetrating the baron's most intimate depths, leaving him unable to defend himself against this penetration. Such openness is similar to the open qualities emphasized in descriptions of Homburg's somnambulism.

The language of penetration continues in the concluding passage of the "dream" sequence

Damit du aber nicht wagst, an meiner Macht über dich, du Erdenwurm, zu zweifeln, will ich auf eine dir selbst sichtbarliche Weise in die geheimste Werkstatt deiner Gedanken eindringen.’ – Plötzlich sah ich ein spitzes glühendes Instrument in seiner Hand, mit dem er in mein Gehirn fuhr. Über den fürchterlichen Schrei des Entsetzens, den ich ausstieß, erwachte ich, in Angtschweiß gebadet ich war der Ohnmacht nahe (13).

The verb *eindringen* has the dual meaning of both “to pierce” and “to penetrate,” suggesting a sexual reading of the sentence. The thoughts that are being penetrated are his most secret thoughts. The major is forcing himself into a mental space that is intimate and private, leaving the victim open to his influence and incapable of defending himself. The unnamed instrument that the major is about to use on the baron, is phallic in nature with its pointy end and its capability of penetrating surfaces. The repetition of the preposition “in”, used with the accusative, indicates movement into a surface or object and emphasizes the motif of penetration. I argue that what is occurring here is an example of the “psychischen Vergewaltigung” (Barkhoff 1995, 231) often observed in the Marie/Alban relationship.

We have seen how this portion of the narrative positions the baron as the object of the major’s animal magnetic gaze. A young man who would otherwise be associated with hegemonic masculinity finds himself in a social relationship which reconstructs his subjectivity in a marginalized position. As a man, he should not be able to be magnetized. Those attributes that characterize ideal masculinity, strength of will and body, prevent male somnambulism. When he finds himself in the position of the somnambulist, therefore, it calls into question his assumed masculinity. It reveals the fragility of the masculine hegemonic ideal by depicting a male body, weakened and dominated, by another man. Such a subversion of gender ideology results in an atmosphere of fear. The baron's narrative makes use of various Gothic motifs in order to

create this affective atmosphere. Karremann theorizes the link between the depiction of male corporeality and fear in texts. The male body as a corporeal entity becomes visible in moments of weakness, in situations in which it fails to live up to the standards of the hegemonic norm. The visible body is, therefore, frequently accompanied by moments of fear and uncertainty, caused by the visible depiction of masculine frailty (14). This observation can be applied to *Der Magnetiseur*. As a male body under the influence of somnambulism, the baron's experience is one that illustrates the tentative claim that hegemonic masculinity has on any individual male body. Through its subordination to the magnetist, the masculine body of the baron is revealed as penetrable and weak. This in turn reveals the ideal that any male can encompass the hegemonic ideal to be an illusion. The affective result of this revelation is fear.

3. Marie as Somnambulist

Parallels exist between the baron's somnambular experience and the narrative's description of Marie's experience with Alban. Tatar suggests that susceptibility to magnetic influence is hereditary in the text since the baron's relationship with his magnetist is repeated in Marie's experience with Alban (132). These parallels strengthen the argument that both male and female somnambulism is depicted in the text as erotic encounters. At the same time by comparing these two narratives, differences emerge in the metaphors used to describe somnambulism, as well as the discourses available to each somnambulist through which to articulate his or her experience. This is significant since it indicates that the experiences of male somnambulists, while similar to that of female somnambulists, are different. By acknowledging and examining both the points of

intersection as well as the differences between male and female somnambulism in the text, we can begin to move away from a line of interpretation that seeks to equate his experience with that of a female somnambulist. Such an interpretation runs the risk of simplifying constructions of gender in the text, which has detrimental effects on gendered readings, regardless of the gender under examination.

Both instances of somnambulism describe the relationship in terms of mastery, comparing their experience with their respective magnetism as similar to the relationship between a master and a slave. Marie, like the baron, describes a uncontrollable loyalty that she feels towards Alban. She writes to her friend Adelgunde that Alban has “etwas Gebietendes”

so war es mir gleich, als er seine ernsten durchdringenden Blick auf mich richtete; ich müsste alles unbedingt tun, was er gebieten würde, und als ob er meine Genesung nur recht lebhaft wollen dürfe, um mich ganz herzustellen. (208)

His gaze instills in her feelings of trust for the magnetist. The baron described a similar feeling earlier when he said that he felt required “treu an dem Mann zu halten” (183). Both speakers describe this attraction as beyond their control, as something they had to feel in response to his presence. The use of the verb “müssen” in the above passage expresses the idea of necessity, thus echoing the barons description of feeling “gezwungen” (183) by some higher power to follow the magnetist faithfully. Both express feelings of obedience towards their respective magnetist. Marie feels compelled to carry out his every wish, just as the baron felt as though the “Aufhören(s) meiner Liebe auch der Augenblick meines Untergangs sein (würde)” (183). Both somnambular encounters describe the magnetist/somnambulist relationship as one of slavery. The major describes the baron's relationship with him as one of *Knechtschaft* (184) while

Marie comments that she feels like a *Sklavin* (210). These somnambular experiences are similar in that both describe the sudden, spontaneous onset of feelings of devotion for the magnetist.

“Durchdringenden Blick” is a gaze that penetrates, similar to the baron’s experiences with the major. The penetrating gaze enters her mind drawing comparisons between sexual intercourse and magnetism. This internal and intimate connection with the magnetist is echoed several times in her description of their relationship.

Ich weiß, dass Alban diese göttlichen Ideen in mir denkt, denn er ist dann selbst in meinem Sein, wie der höhere belebende Funke, und entfernt er sich, was nur geistig geschehen kann, da die körperliche Entfernung gleichgültig ist, so ist alles erstorben. Nur in diesem mit ihm und in ihm sein kann ich wahrhaftig leben... (209).

The preposition “in” along with the dative locates the action as occurring inside of Marie. He is inside of her “in meinem Sein”, and maintains a presence within her regardless of their physical proximity. She in turn is dependent on him to live, for it is only in and with him that she feels completed.

The union of Marie and Alban is narrated from a different perspective in Alban's letter to Theodor. Here he states his goals as follows

Marie ganz in mein Selbst zu ziehen, ihre ganze Existenz, ihr Sein so in dem meinigen zu verweben, daß die Trennung davon sie vernichten muß, das war der Gedanke, der mich hoch beseligend nur die Erfüllung dessen aussprach, was die Natur wollte (218).

The same integration of Marie inside of Alban is expressed here, but with a different tone. Alban wants to absorb Marie into his being, so that she can no longer exist independently of him. As we will see later, her attempts to separate herself from him, in her marriage to another man, result in her spiritual and physical death. In both descriptions of their relationship Alban and Marie emphasize the spatial unity of the

Marie's self within Alban's self. Both accept the superiority of Alban in this arrangement. As the dominate force, he is not dependent on her, but she is dependent on him in both a spiritual and physical context.

There are moments in the text in which Marie is concerned that Alban might have immoral aims and might be using his power to mistreat her. While listening to the baron and Bickert criticize magnetism, Marie remarks “alle Zweifel gegen den Meister erwachten mit doppelter Stärke in meiner Seele – wie wenn er sich geheimer höllischer Mittel bediente, mich zu seiner Sklavin zu fesseln” (210). In her letter to Adelgunde, Marie writes: “Lache mich recht aus, wenn ich Dir sage, dass ich sogar auf den Gedanken geriet: Alban wolle mich künstlich umstricken und unter dem Schein des heiligen Wunders, irdische Liebe in meinem Innern entzünden“ (210). She fears that the *heiligen Wunder* Alban claims to be pursuing is in fact a veil disguising artificial abilities which are motivated by immoral desires. The juxtaposition of healing through *heiligen Wunder* and pursuing sexual desires echoes the contemporary belief that sexual thoughts were incompatible with true healing through magnetism. If Alban is in fact using his abilities to manipulate Marie and ignite in her an erotic passion, then it is an abuse of his medical powers. As was mentioned earlier in chapter one, magnetists developed theories of magnetic influence that protect them from allegations of abuse, such as the assertion that a magnetist's mind must be “pure” in order to achieve rapport with their patients. Hoffmann's treatment of magnetism challenges this precept, portraying malevolent magnetists such as Alban, who are capable of magnetically manipulating their subjects.

Marie's concerns reach a climax in a vision she has of Alban working with mysterious tools in his room. These visions can be understood as symptoms of second

sight, the ability to see in the future or to see things happening at a great distance. Such perceptions are typical in Hoffmann's texts, as Tatar has pointed out, and illustrates the influence that somnambulism has on his work (151). The fear this vision instills in her causes her to lose consciousness, and when she awakens, she admonishes her fears as unfounded: "nicht er war's nein! Jene entsetzliche Larve, die meine Einbildung geschaffen! Wie habe ich am andern Morgen mich vor mir selbst geschämt!" (211) Her fear, which the text reveals to be accurate, are undermined by shame towards an uncontrollable fantasy. Her momentary weakness and subsequent shame is quieted by Alban's "gütigen Milde", who is aware of her thoughts and forgives her. This moment in which she realizes the truth behind Alban offers her the opportunity to save herself, an opportunity which never comes to pass. Feminine weakness in the form of fainting and visions explained by an excessive imagination squelch any hope she has of breaking free from Alban's power.

In the end the encounter draws her closer to Alban. She continues describing her relationship with Alban as one between a loving father and child. This metaphor was frequently used in this era to describe heterosexual love, as well as the relationship between a magnetist and his or her somnambulist. Marie praises the "gütigen Ernst" and „väterlichen Sorglichkeit“ with which the doctor treats her (211). Marie ultimately silences her own concerns, ultimately justifying and defending Alban's behavior and admonishing her own mistrust.

The paragraph in which she is describing his forceful entrance in her mind and complete control over her is a mixture of fear, desire, and admiration. She is afraid of him and the procedure she is about to undergo. She also suspects that the magnetist has

sexual intentions, but dismisses this idea as silly. She dismisses all of her hesitation about the magnetist. Instead, she justifies the experience through three interrelated discourses: fairytales, marriage, and the parent/child relationship. She uses these metaphors to normalize the invasive and violent actions against her.

Marie's loss of will is articulated through the language of romantic love.⁷⁰ Using fairytale references and metaphors, Marie likens Alban to a “romantische König in der märchenhaften Geisterwelt” whose purpose it is to destroy “allen bösen Zauber” that threaten her (36).⁷¹ In addition, she compares herself to a bride, and Alban to a bride groom. The bride, led into the world by the bridegroom references most directly romantic love through its connection to marriage. A trip after the marriage, similar to the male *Bildungsreise* but designed for the mental improvement of the wife, was common among newly wed couples. Alban leading Marie through the mysteries of the “*höhere Leben*” could be read as a reference to that.

An additional metaphor Marie uses to describe her relationship with Alban is that of a father/ child relationship. When she finds herself thinking about Hypolit, a subject which Alban has forbidden, she compares herself to „ein böses Kind, das des Vaters Warnung vergessend, hinauslaufe aus dem friedlichen Garten in den Wald...” (209). Following the Christian patriarchal tradition, the woman was to be subservient to the husband, obeying him as one would their earthly or heavenly father. The husband, in turn, was to care for and educate his wife as a father does for their children. The

⁷⁰ Schindler illustrates how the contemporary understanding of mesmerism was structured in the same way as the Romantic ideal of “Seelenliebe” (21).

⁷¹ Schindler reads these fairytale motifs as evidence of the contemporary sexual socialization of women through fiction. Marie’s subsequent downfall illustrates, according to Schindler, the discrepancy between the daily role that women played in society and the Liebesgenuss they were promised in fairytales (218). A similar argument is made by Barkhoff in reference to Theobald’s magnetizing of his fiancé (29).

references in Marie's description to the father/child relationship, including all of his patriarchal warning, reprimands, and moments in which he exerts authority over her, are included in the contemporary ideal of marriage and are therefore part of the romantic love discourse.

When comparing Marie and the baron's interactions with their respective magnetists, the emotion surrounding the narration of the two instances is strikingly different. While there is a socially acceptable discourse to subsume the potentially subversive desires of Maria and the threat of Alban – that of romantic love – the sexual undertones of the baron's narrative are thinly veiled by discussion of military power and fear. Ultimately, the military discourse cannot contain a subversion of hegemonic masculinity that the feminization and subsequent homo-eroticism of the baron's somnambulism instills, and the narrative breaks down before the motif can be carried out to its conclusion. When the major enters the baron's mind with his phallic instrument, the dream abruptly comes to an end, and the baron finds himself “in Angstschweiß gebadet“ and “der Ohnmacht nahe” (184). In addition, the scene is removed from the main narrative through the use of flashback and further obscured by the suggestion that it was only a dream. While the baron insists that the major's visit to his bedroom was only a dream, the text offers evidence to suggest that it really happened. The tension between these two explanations opens the possibility that the baron is either intentionally or unintentionally denying that it happened. Taken together, the abrupt end to the magnetism, and the use of dream and flashbacks as distancing techniques, the narrative both reveals the erotic discourse of male/male magnetism between the baron and major,

while at the same time abruptly undermining this discourse at the moment in which it would reach its climax.

Although typically read outside the context of sexual discourse, the magnetism between the baron and the major depicts a highly sexualized encounter, one that threatens the stability of hegemonic masculinity based in heterosexuality. Using metaphors of penetration the baron's narrative positions him in the role of the somnambulist. Both the masculinity of the baron and the major are reconstructed through this relationship. As the target of a male magnetist, the baron finds his presumed state of dominance undermined and his masculinity reconstructed in a minority position. By revealing the shortcomings of his masculinity, magnetism reconstructs thorough domination the male somnambulist. This results in an atmosphere of fear and ultimately dissolves the narrative.

Ultimately, the text eliminates the male/male relationships which are so problematic to ideals of hegemonic masculinity. The baron's narrative ends early on in the narrative and his audience turns its attention to other matters. The encounter between the baron and major is doubly removed from the main events of the narration both as a flashback into a far removed past, and as a possible dream. These distancing techniques help contain the dangerous nature of the text, shifting focus towards the male/female instances of somnambulism which uphold hegemonic masculinity. Although Alban's magnetism of Marie is condemned by the text as an immoral abuse of power, the masculine ideal of strength, activity, and reason as well as the feminine ideal of passivity, penetrability, and transparency are upheld.

In Marie's encounter the loss of will is romanticized in this initial depiction. The text is overwhelmingly critical of the magnetist's abuse of power. However, this criticism

stems from his motives for controlling the mind of the young woman, and is in no way a criticism of male control over women in general. There is one report of somnambulism that does not seem to incite the same fear and moral debate as the accounts of the baron and of Marie, and thereby offers the reader an example of “correct” magnetism. It is with this positive example that I would like to conclude my reading. Shortly after the baron has concluded his flashback, Ottmar relates the story of a friend, Theobald, who dabbled successfully in animal magnetism. Theobald used magnetism to win back his fiancée's heart, which had been recently turned towards a young foreign officer, depicted in the text as an inappropriate partner. Once again we see the image of a foreign magnetist using his powers to seduce young virtuous German girls. Theobald's motives are therefore justified by the impure motives of the foreign man.

The magnetic cure is described using much of the same language as the other two accounts. The magnetist embraces the hand of the patient, and focuses his mental energy on the mind of the young woman. He is able to influence her dreams, indicating mental penetration. The young woman shows signs of being influenced by “etwas Fremdes” that pushes into her mind (27). When she attempts to say the name of the young officer it is as if “durch irgendeine äußere Einwirkung daran verhindert würde” (27). After a time, the thoughts that Theobald had planted into his young fiancée appear to her as her own. By the time the treatment has been completed, the young woman's feelings towards the officer have been completely eliminated, and replaced with the visions and affects planted in her unconscious mind by Theobald. She confesses that her mind had been deceived by “einem Fremden...wie von einer fremden Gewalt befangen” but that Theobald's appearance in her dreams had defeated the “feindlichen Geister”. An

external influence that Theobald exerts, penetrating the mind of the patient, is described here not in terms of fear or morally questionable seduction, but with positive affective affirmation. The fear of being penetrated, of being vulnerable, and of being defenseless do not enter into this narrative. Instead, the female figure's mind appears as a type of battlefield on which competing male forces exert their power in order to claim the woman's heart and mind as their own. The narrative perspective, that of a male observer, envelopes the account in a patriarchal discourse, which praises the actions of the male magnetist in setting right the inappropriate desires of a woman, desires which were planted in the passive female receptacle by a competing male force. Mental penetration is applauded as the appropriate course of action, a conclusion that the female subject herself internalizes at the end of the treatment.

Chapter 4: “Verwirrungen anzetteln mögen die Weiber, lösen können sie nur Männer“
Somnambulism and its Threat to Male Order in
Caroline de la Motte Fouqué's *Magie der Natur*

Gewiß ist es, mir droht eine trübe Zeit, und
glauben Sie mir, eine Umgestaltung alles
bisher Bestandenen. (Caroline de la Motte
Fouqué, 1813)⁷²

Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, a conservative Prussian author and intellectual, wrote this sentiment of confusion in a letter to Rahel Varnhagen on February 10, 1813. Written at the beginning of the Wars of Liberation, Fouqué expresses in this line both the inevitability of social and political change, as well as the apprehension she feels towards that change. With the reorganization of „alles bisher Bestandenen“ comes a fear of what she believes will be a dreary and unclear time as well. In 1815 Fouqué wrote *Magie der Natur*, a historical-political novel set during the French Revolution. Through the story of an aristocratic family, *Magie der Natur* depicts those „trübe Zeiten“ that Fouqué describes in her letter, times which threatened „alles bisher Bestandenen“.

Of particular concern to Fouqué and other conservative writers, was what they perceived as the de-stability of polarized gender roles. From their perspective the French Revolution brought with it an inversion of the natural gender order. Many believed that

⁷² Letter to Varnhagen on February 10 1813. (Varnhagen 141). Also cited in Baumgartner (2009, 118).

Germany was experiencing a crisis of masculinity, which needed to be overcome if Germans were to gain freedom from Napoleon.⁷³ Re-establishing “correct” gender polarity and re-socializing weakened German men was seen as the first step in strengthening the German culture.

The following chapter will analyze the use of literary magnetism and somnambulism in *Magie der Natur* within the context of the crisis of masculinity. In doing so, I am expanding on the work of Arnold de Simine, Elisa Müller-Adams, Barkhoff and Hoffmeister who have analyzed the use of magnetism in the text articulates tension between conflicting images of femininity. These readings of *Magie der Natur* focus on the tension between post-revolutionary models of domesticated femininity, and an older mystical and highly sexual femininity, represented by the figures of Marie and Antonie respectively. In “Fouqué und die Schauerromantik”, for example, Arnold de Simine concludes that Marie, characterized by her *Häuslichkeit* and *Bürgerlichkeit*, is presented in the text as the post-revolutionary feminine ideal (407). Her königliche sister Antonie, on the other hand, embodies a sexualized femininity that cannot survive in the new world. A similar interpretation is presented by Barkhoff (2005) who identifies Antonie's transition from passive somnambulist to active magnetist as the cause of her downfall. Little is said, however, about this discourse of masculinity that runs parallel in the narrative to the constriction of ideal femininity. What conflicting masculinities are presented in the text? How do male characters respond to the gender instability caused by

⁷³ See Baumgartner *Valorous Masculinities* (2008).

the revolution? And how is somnambulism used in the text to articulate conflicting masculine desires?

It is my thesis that the construction of minority masculinities through somnambulism occurs in two ways during the text: (1) the male magnetist/somnambulist is used to criticize the Romantic ideal of masculinity through *Vollkommenheit* and (2) the male somnambulism at the hands of female magnetism is used to express the destabilization of hegemonic masculine ideals resulting in the construction of weakened minority masculinities. This chapter will illustrate the way in which these minority masculinities are constructed through somnambular interaction as well as the means by which the male figures construct new identities in line with the hegemonic ideal.

The polarized gender roles at the heart of the magnetist/somnambulist relationship make it an ideal literary motif through which to examine androgyny. By the time that *Magie der Natur* was published, the theory and practice of animal magnetism was widespread in Germany and had received considerable attention in literary works. The role of the assertive, strong-willed, masculine magnetist influencing a weak and impressionable female somnambulist was well established. By deviating from these roles, literary texts could easily present gender ambiguity and androgyny. The motif of somnambulism, therefore, can be used to support or undermine gender polarity through a discourse that would be familiar to the contemporary reader.

1. Fouqué and Masculinity: a Review of Scholarship

The works of Fouqué have gained popularity among scholars since the mid 1990s. Of particular interest to gender studies scholars are Fouqué theories of sociability and her unique contribution to female-centered history. Karin Baumgartner's *Public Voices* (2009) examines the contribution that Fouqué's theories of sociability made to contemporary discourses of the public sphere and its effect on gender relations and development of national identity. For Fouqué, the road to an independent Germany began at home. It was up to women to create an idea of the German nation and cultural identity, making them the "spiritual leaders of the new nation"(Baumgartner 132). The military was not an effective means of shaping a nation, arguing instead that a nation must be shaped through culture, not sword (132). Baumgartner reads here the influence of Fichte, specifically his view that cultural independence precedes political independence, on Fouqué's own political theories (131). The job of creating an idea of German nation and cultural identity should begin in the domestic sphere, and therefore, with women.

This in turn has important implications for men. Fouqué viewed the domestic and political spheres as inexplicably linked. The well-being of the German nation rested, according to Fouqué, on a strong private sphere, maintained by patriotic women who exerted a positive influence on men (Baumgartner 132). With the support behind them, men would be able to succeed in the public sphere. When men failed in the public sphere, such as on the battlefield, however, it could translate into instability at home (Baumgartner 132). Such was the case during the Napoleonic wars. Although Fouqué

believed that the German military defeat was due in part to the weakness of German men (Baumgartner 2008, 336). Her texts are far less critical of German masculinity than those of many contemporaries. Unlike Helvig and Westphalen, for example, Fouqué “avoided addressing the humiliating defeats and crisis of masculinity in her earlier propaganda texts” (Baumgartner 2009, 131) and focused instead on the role that women play in the creation of national spirit and the education of children. By establishing a strong private sphere, committed to strengthening the German nation through German culture, Fouqué argued that men would be strengthened and thus more effective in the public sphere, which included the battlefield (Baumgartner 132).

In Fouqué’s literary work we find a critique of masculinity, as well as the models of appropriate masculine behavior, issues which have been addressed in the secondary literature. In her reading of *Die Heldenmädchen aus der Vendée* (1816) Bertschick examines the text's use of cross dressing to re-enforce gender polarity and the division of public and private spheres. In *Vendée* the female protagonist uses cross-dressing to gain access to the public sphere and engage in behaviors that are deemed unfeminine in the text (51). The text makes clear that the protagonist’s cross-dressing is a result of the ineffectiveness of the German army. Once she has infiltrated the military, she berates the soldiers as unmasculine, insisting that she, a mere woman, has more courage than her fellow soldiers. Bertrick's analysis of cross dressing rejects the possibility that this motif is an attempt at gender subversion in the text. On the contrary, the narrative makes it impossible for the female protagonist to effect change as a woman. She must assume the

appearance and mannerisms of a man if she is to participate in the public sphere (51).

The fact that it took a cross-dressed woman to rally the troops should be read, according to Bertschik, more as a criticism of masculinity than a subversive femininity.

Baumgartner (2009) reads *Edmund's Wege und Irrwege* (1815) as a criticism of a romantic masculinity devoted to the arts. Fouqué's text presents this model of masculinity as a dishonor to German manhood (336). At the same time, Baumgartner points out, Fouqué does not counter this weak masculinity with a masculine ideal rooted in military culture. She does not follow the model of the soldier-citizen, a popular discourse of the time, but rather views the ideal man as "the man-always under the intellectual influence of patriotic women – who contributes to shaping his nation politically" (338).⁷⁴ I posit that a similar criticism of Romantic masculinity is articulated through the figure of the Marquis in *Magie der Natur*.

Elisa Müller-Adams has identified another aspect of masculinity addressed in the Fouqué's works, namely, the difficult reintegration of male soldiers into post-war society. Müller-Adams examines this motif in the context of *Fragmente aus dem Leben der heutigen Welt* (1820) and I would add as another example the Gothic short story *Cypressenkrantz* (1817). Whereas texts such as *Cypressenkrantz* begin to question the very possibility of male integration at the end of their military duties, *Magie der Natur*, the earliest of the works mentioned, has a decidedly more positive view of male military service.

⁷⁴ Baumgartner (2008) gives examples of works by Amalie von Helwig and Engel Christine Westphalen that propose a citizen-soldier model of masculinity.

2.0 Magie der Natur

Magie der Natur is the fictional account of a French aristocratic family and their experience during the French Revolution. The Marquis von Villeroi is a magnetist, whose experimentation led to the death of his wife (or so the other family members believe). Twin daughters, Antonie and Marie, are born during this fatal experiment, and are sent to be raised in a convent. The Marquis has no contact with his children until the outbreak of the French revolution threatened the convent and forced him to rescue his daughters. Once re-united, the Marquis and his daughters, along with several estranged relatives escape to Switzerland. After the family finds refuge from the war in Switzerland, the text's revolutionary aspects retreat to the background, and the narrative focuses on a love triangle between the two sisters and their cousin Adalbert. The text depicts Adalbert's choice as one between opposite manifestations of a maternal inheritance (Arnold-de Simine 2000 404). Adalbert must choose between Marie, the *engelhaft* and child-like girl, whose light hair and pleasant disposition make her a favorite of the family and Antonie, the majestic and dark haired daughter whose presence is both eerie and unsettling. The decision to wed Marie over Antonie leads to the destruction of Antonie and the apparent re-reinstatement of a stable bourgeois family.⁷⁵

Magie der Natur uses magnetism as a motif through which to depict the "seelische Krise, die durch die Revolution ausgelöst wurde" (Mueller-Adams 274).

⁷⁵ Arnold-de Simine has commented on the ambiguity of this „Happy Ending“, comparing it to other works of Gothic fiction in which the ending is left open to the possibility of further conflict (380). In *Magie der Natur* it is the continuous threat of the past, gestured towards by Marie's maternal inheritance, which may threaten the family's stability in the future (380).

There are two magnetists in the narrative, whose magnetic powers stem from very different sources. The first character is the Marquis, who has devoted his adult life to the study of animal magnetism. In contrast, Antonie's magnetic abilities seem to occur naturally as part of a maternal inheritance. The following reading of *Magie der Natur* is divided into three sections. In section one and two I will examine both magnetists and the role their magnetic abilities play in constructing their gender identity. I will then examine the affect that female magnetism has on the male characters in the text.

2.1 The Marquis

The reader's first encounter with animal magnetism and male somnambulism occurs early in the narrative through the figure of the Marquis. A student of Mesmer himself, the Marquis is a Faustian character, who wants to aggressively uncover the mysteries of nature (Hoffmeister 14). The Marquis is affiliated with the Society of Harmony (4), an actual Masonic organization founded by Nicolas Bergasse and Guillaume Kornmann and lead by Mesmer. The Society of Harmony taught animal magnetism to those who could afford the societies dues and who underwent the initiation process (Darnton 51). The Marquis' association with the Society of Harmony characterizes him not only as a magnetist, but as one whose knowledge of animal magnetism is bound to an organization marked by secrecy, hierarchy, and occult practices.

The text is critical of the Marquis' motives and the techniques he uses in his experiments. The Marquis wants not only to answer questions about the natural world,

but to do so in a manner which is destructive. He is driven by a “dämmernder Ahnung” leading him to recklessly (*rücksichtslos*) open up nature for his inspection (4). He has no understanding of the “größte Wunder der Welt, Gott in den Dingen” (4) and breaks nature apart “mit einem Schlage” (4). The violence and destructiveness with which he implements the teachings of Mesmer are also manifested in the narrative’s suggestion that his experiments caused the death of his wife.

The Marquis’ mesmeric experimentation is marked by eccentricity and social isolation. His physical appearance is exotic; he wears a “langen Schlafrock von chinesischem Stoffe” (7) a wide belt and an amulet. A reference to a magnetist’s tendency to wear such garments, the Chinese robe also signals a foreign culture and makes the Marquis appear exotic thus separate him from his society.⁷⁶ In addition to the strange clothing, the Marquis no longer pays the appropriate amount of attention to his personal hygiene, which also marks his withdrawal from society. His un-styled hair is kept in order with a brightly colored cloth, his beard is too long and he goes unshaven, and he keeps his arms uncovered. Taken together these features create an appearance that the narrator describes as uncanny.

In addition to his outward appearance, the Marquis develops strange behaviors such as talking to himself. The text describes this not only as a tendency, but more strongly as an “innere Nothwendigkeit”.

⁷⁶ The correlation between the Marquis’ position as an outsider and his involvement in animal magnetism has been noted by other scholars. Arnold-de Simine describes the Marquis as „weltfremd“ (383) and reads his experimentation as an attempt to understand the changing economic and social order during the time of the revolution (388).

Die innere Nothwendigkeit, dieses zu sein, und das Bedürfniß, durch Wort und Gebärde aus sich herauszugehen, vielleicht auch andere, nicht gekannte, Ursachen, ließen ihn so ungetheiltes Gespräch oft Stundenlang führen (8).

Previous readings of this passage have identified the Marquis' behavior as that of a magnetist. I disagree with this conclusion and read this passage instead as indicative of somnambulism. Somnambulists were known to speak in their sleep. Both Schubert and Eschenmayer identify *Schlafreden* as a characteristic of somnambulism (207, 39). It was believed that the somnambulist had no control over her speech, nor was she able to understand what she said. Mathei (1815) writes that „Ein Somnambule kann nur ins Blaue hinein sprechen, der Magnetiseur wird es schon gut deuten“ (578). The Marquis' speech seems to occur without his knowledge or control. In the passage above, phrases such as „Nothwendigkeit“ and „Bedürfniß“, as well as the possibility of other „nicht gekannte Ursachen“ emphasize that these utterances are beyond the control of the Marquis himself. He is not exhibiting the agency of a magnetist, but rather the more passive role associated with a somnambulist. He is driven by a force that necessitates these behaviors, something beyond his control. When his prior characterization as magnetist is combined with this more passive role as a medium for another power, the boundaries between magnetist and somnambulist drawn in the medical discourse are challenged within the text.

The Marquis' relationship with nature is another example of his embodiment of both magnetist and somnambulist characteristics. In the following passage the Marquis contemplates the potential of animal magnetism in unlocking the secrets of nature:

Nur so viel schien ihm gewiß: Die Natur habe in jeder ihrer Offenbarungen eine Stimme, und ob nun gleich diese der sinnlichen Wahrnehmung meist unverständlich bliebe, so müsse die entbundene Seele doch notwendig in einen Rapport mit der geheimnißvollen Innenwelt zu setzen und in Einverständniß mit ihr zu bringen sein (16).

Much of the language here suggests that the Marquis is assuming the role of the magnetist in this relationship with Nature. To put oneself in rapport with another was the first, and in some theories of animal magnetism the most important, step in the magnetizing process. Only a magnetist could place himself in rapport with another. The use of the verb phrase “in Rapport setzen” mirrors the language of magnetists, suggesting that the Marquis is an active magnetist and places nature in the role of passive somnambulism. At the same time however, the process depicted in this passage does not follow the typical logic of animal magnetism. Nature is said to have an “innerliche Stimmung” that cannot be understood by the “sinnliche[n] Wahrnehmung” (presumably) of the human subject. Rapport becomes a way for the “entbundene” soul of the human subject to reach an agreement (Einverständnis) with nature and thus understand its voice. The language of the passage suggests cooperation between nature and the human subject. “Einverständnis bringen” can imply consent and agreement. Such an understanding of rapport echo’s the works of Mesmer when he writes: “we can understand how there can exist a reciprocity, an accord, a sort of ‘covenant’ between two wills, which we can call ‘being in rapport’” (121). It does not, however, reflect more contemporary theories of rapport articulated by Eschenmayer, which emphasize the control that magnetist has over somnambulist (68). In both the Fouqué passage quoted above and this excerpt from

Mesmer, rapport suggests mutuality between parties, which stands in stark contrast to definition of rapport in the works of Ritter and many of his contemporaries.

The next few sentences in the text change drastically in tone from one of agreement and understanding to one of power and control.

Das große Phänomen des Somnambulismus und der Clairvoyance schwebte ihm hierbei vor Augen. Was dort dem Übergewicht einer animalischen Kraft über die andere möglich sei, das glaubte er, dürfe Einwirkung höherer Kräfte um so weniger entstehen. Wie diese nun zu beschwören, wie sie von den Banden der Leiblichkeit frei zu machen seien, das war die große Angelegenheit seines Lebens (16).

Here the *animalistische Kraft*, referring to the force of animal magnetism, is perceived as having the potential to be greater than all other forces, including nature. Animal magnetism has the potential to not only overtake other forces, but can prevent those higher powers from ever emerging. The language here is more aggressive than the passage quoted earlier. The preoccupation with power (Kräfte) and the use of the preposition “über” to assert a hierarchy (Übergewicht einer ... Kraft über die andere) are in sharp contrast to the language of *Einverständnis* in the passage before it.

The relationship between the *animalistische Kraft* and the afore mentioned somnambulism and clairvoyance is unclear. Does the Marquis see somnambulism and clairvoyance the source of the animalistic power, or the result of it? The latter would be the contemporary understanding, that these abilities are a by-product of animal magnetism but not greater than the powers of the magnetist. If that is the Marquis' interpretation, then it would follow that nature would be the somnambulist and

clairvoyance would be an attribute associated with it. The passage, however, seems to be suggesting something far more complex; namely that the Marquis himself would embody both the animal magnetic abilities of a magnetist and the clairvoyance of the somnambulist. The best of both worlds, this would enable the Marquis to combine both the active powers of the magnetist harnessing animal magnetism while at the same time make active the abilities of the somnambulist (clairvoyance), which were generally perceived as an accidental byproduct of the mesmeric process.

Given the correlation between the magnetist/somnambulist roles with masculine/feminine gender roles, the union of both magnetist and somnambulist attributes within the figure of the Marquis can be read in gendered terms. The Marquis has the active ability to magnetize, as well as the receptive ability necessary to reap the benefits of that magnetization, namely clairvoyance. In addition, by being aware of his own clairvoyance and capable of interpreting it, the Marquis is breaking a fundamental pre-requisite of somnambulism. Animal magnetic texts repeatedly emphasize the somnambulist's amnesia after the event, as well as her inability to interpret any prophecies she made either at that moment or afterward. This strict division of labor between the somnambulist who produces clairvoyant utterances, ignorant of both their occurrence and meaning; versus the magnetist who recognizes the utterances as clairvoyant and correctly interprets them, is dissolved in this passage.

This union of masculine and feminine in Romantic texts is often read in the context of contemporary discussions of androgyny and *Vollkommenheit*. The union of

both masculine and feminine forces was believed by many romantics to bring about a state of human perfection. A type of metaphorical androgyny was viewed by the romantics as a way of overcoming the division between male and female (Luethi 33).⁷⁷ In *Über den Geschlechtsunterschied* Wilhelm von Humboldt discusses the effects of uniting masculinity and femininity:

Denn nur die Verbindung der Eigentümlichkeiten beider Geschlechter bringt das Vollendete hervor, und wenn das Studium des männlichen den Verstand anhaltender beschäftigt, und die Betrachtung des weiblichen die Empfindung lebhafter bewegt, so befriedigt nur die Verknüpfung beider, oder vielmehr das reine Wesen, abgesondert von allem Geschlechtsunterschied, die Vernunft, als das Vermögen der Ideen (WvH 301).

As a figure that embodies both (feminine) somnambulist passivity and (masculine) magnetist activity, the figure of the Marquis offers the opportunity for human perfection. His experimentation and subsequent embodiment of both masculine and feminine characteristics does not lead to “das Vollendete” as described by Humboldt. Despite his experimentation the Marquis comes no closer to his goal of understanding nature. The potential that exists for perfection through the union of masculine and feminine forces is lost, and his experimentation in magnetism and somnambulism leave him socially isolated. Through the figure of the Marquis, the text voices a criticism of Romantic ideals of masculinity. In this regard *Magie der Natur* exhibits parallels with *Edmund's*

⁷⁷ This model has long been criticized by feminist scholars as anti-emancipatory, as it reserves the privilege of an androgynous existence to the male, and views the female as only a tool for achieving male perfection. (see Becker-Cantarino 1979). Arnold-de Simine illustrates a similar critique in Fouqué's text. It is during one of the Marquis experiments that the Marquise loses her life. The Marquise is used by the Marquis as a means of obtaining a more perfect understanding of nature, a pursuit that ends in the destruction of the Marquise herself (2000 398).

Wege und Irrwege. Just as Edmund rejects the Romantic model of masculinity, a man who “lives only for the arts” (Baumgartner 2008, 336), *Magie der Natur* criticizes another aspect of Romantic masculinity, the man embodying a union of male and female traits.

Such a model is depicted as detrimental to the stability of the family. While practicing magnetism, the Marquis is unable to fulfill his role as a father. It is not until he has received word from the convent that his daughters are in danger that he sets aside his scientific pursuits, and goes out to rescue his daughters. The male rejection of those intellectual pursuits depicted as self indulgent, in favor of physical activity and assertiveness, is a key characteristic of the hegemonic model presented in *Magie der Natur*.

The Marquis’ involvement with magnetism and his embodiment of both somnambulist and magnetist traits has a deep impact on his interactions with others. His servants pay for their impertinence with his “fürchterlichen Blick, den er aus dem glühendem Augenpaar auf sie niederschoß” (8). When interrupted from his work, the Marquis cries out with “einer Art zitternden Donner in der Stimme (...) was wollt Ihr? Niemand verlangt Euch! Ihr seid Gottlob weit von meinen Gedanken“ (8). The emphasis on glowing eyes and the reference to his terrifying gaze characterizes him as a magnetist. The Marquis’ gaze is a source of fear. The aggression of the verb *niederschließen* and the fearful eyes are followed by the Marquis enraged exclamations in a voice filled with thunder. When we read the somnambulist/magnetist relationship as a metaphor for

gender dichotomy, then the fear expressed by the Marquis' servants can be read in gendered terms. Their fear is caused by a character whose gender orientation is borderline, and therefore outside the male/female dichotomy. This follows Kristeva's definition of abjection as a response to that which challenges the boundaries with which society is ordered. That which "disturbs identity, system, order", which "does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite" is the source of abjection (Kristeva 4). The Marquis, with his strange appearance, odd behaviors, and embodiment of both male and female characteristics, transforms him into a source of abjection and explains the horror with which his staff perceives him.

Through the character of the Marquis the reader is introduced to three themes that will remain important throughout the novel. The first is a warning against any undertaking that attempts to forcibly alter nature. Although scientific inquiry is not chastised as such, the text suggests that it must be pursued with a respect for nature, and an understanding of science's inherent limitations in uncovering the secrets of nature. Any inquiry into nature that doesn't exhibit the appropriate respect will result in destruction. Secondly, the text presents an approach to animal magnetism that breaks down the active magnetist/passive somnambulist divide. Attributes that are clearly separated as either those of the magnetist or somnambulist in medical literature become conflated in the text, so that both roles become fluid. I am not suggesting that this is a misrepresentation of a "correct" medical model, but rather understand it as a creation unique to the text, and am interested in exploring the possibilities that such a conception

of animal magnetism has on gendered readings of the text. Finally, the figure of the Marquis aligns animal magnetism and all its related phenomena as outside social norms, making his study of this science grounds for social exclusion and fear. The Marquis' alienation, bizarre behavior, and strange appearance are clearly defined by the text as the result of his study of animal magnetism. These features produce a terrified reaction in those around him, voiced by his servants.

2.2 Antonie

Magie der Natur is one of the few texts in which a woman magnetizes a man, the possibility of which was repeatedly rejected in animal magnetic theory.⁷⁸ Discussions of Antonie have been the focal point of critical engagements with the text. Interpretations of the figure Antonie, especially with regards to the nature of her connection with animal magnetism, have been divided. One group confuses the medical distinction between magnetism and somnambulism thus overlooking the significance of merging those two positions in one character have on the text. An example of such a reading can be found in Hoffmeister's introduction to *Magie der Natur*. For him, Antonie is a "geborene Mesmer-Anhängerin" (32), whose hypnotic stare and power of suggestion places Adalbert in a mesmeric trance (33). At the same time, he draws parallels between Antonie's abilities and the abilities of the somnambulist patient depicted in Schubert's *Ansichten von*

⁷⁸ The other instance of women magnetizing men occurs in E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Das Öde Haus* and Tieck's *Die Wundersüchtigen* (1829). Barkhoff (2000) presents a reading of the female magnetist in *Das Öde Haus*.

der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft (45).⁷⁹ Hoffmeister goes so far as to claim that Schubert's report provided Fouqué with the "wissenschaftliche Material für ihr Antonie-Portrait" (45). Although sensitivity to metal, clairvoyance, and the other abilities cited by Hoffmeister were characteristics of somnambulists, the contemporary understanding of the magnetist/somnambulist roles ruled out the possibility of any one individual possessing these abilities and the ability to magnetize others.

The second group of readings engage more closely with medical texts in order to understand the significance that such deviations from medical case studies has on the literary text. The works of both Barkhoff and Arnold-de Simine offer a more nuanced reading of the animal magnetic/somnambulist motifs in the text. Barkhoff differentiates between Antonie's magnetist and somnambulist characteristics, and concludes that she undergoes a shift from passive somnambulist to active magnetist. He argues that this change as a subsequent effect on her feminine identity. For Barkhoff, it is Antonie's practice of animal magnetism that marks her as "unweiblich" (2005 31). The moment in which she chooses to use her powers in order to seduce her love interest marks the moment in which she oversteps the boundaries of femininity and becomes masculine.⁸⁰ He then traces the extent to which this shift affects her encounters with other characters and her experience with the world at large. He concludes that that Antonie is characterized as un-feminine by embodying the masculine traits of agency and activity,

⁷⁹ Although it is true that Schubert's work was widely circulated at this time, and could have served as a model for Antonie, scientific descriptions of somnambulism frequently contained these standardized features, making it difficult to prove that any one text influenced her directly.

⁸⁰ This argument is also made by Arnold-de Simine (2000) 405.

characteristics that define the role of magnetist (2005 31). I will take this argumentation a step further, by illustrating how Antonie exhibited magnetic abilities throughout the text, long before this crucial passage.

Arnold-de Simine argues that Antonie continuously vacillates between somnambulist and magnetist throughout the text. For Arnold de-Simine, Antonie's childhood is marked with a "Sensibilität für magnetische Kräfte" that manifests itself in „Nachtwandeln und hellseherischen Momenten“ (397). Her adult life shifts between moments in which she resembles her somnambulist mother, appearing lifeless like a statue or a „mechanische Puppe“ (396) and moments in which she actively uses animal magnetism as a magnetist would; in exerting control over Adalbert and in performing an act of magnetic „healing“ in her suicide. Arnold de-Simine goes so far as to suggest that the name Antonie is named after Franz Anton Mesmer (2000 404). Although much of her chapter is devoted to exemplifying Antonie's status as an ambivalent figure, one that dissolves gender roles by embodying both the *Heilige* and the *Hexe* (405), she does not consider how the merging of magnetist and somnambulist characteristics supports her thesis of gender ambiguity. What ramifications does this vacillation between magnetist and somnambulist have on the text's engagement with nineteenth century animal magnetic research? My examination of Antonie will demonstrate that Antonie embodies both magnetic and somnambulist characteristics throughout the text. As the magnetist/somnambulist dichotomy collapses within the figure of Antonie, so are

masculine and feminine characteristics, as defined by contemporary gender ideology, unified in one individual.

Early characterizations of Antonie in the *Magie der Natur* depict her as mysterious. She is often associated with the sublime and supernatural, causing Hoffmeister to identify her as the “Trägerin der von Schauereffekten geprägten Handlung“ (10). Antonie’s physical appearance and spatial proximity to the other characters are repeatedly used in the text to characterize her as mysterious, withdrawn, and outside the network of social relations. While her blonde haired, cheery sister Maria is always front and center, Antonie is the dark haired “hohe Gestalt von überaus großer Schönheit“ who stands “mehr hinter ihr, als zu ihrer Seite” (34). This spatial relationship is repeated throughout the text and suggests Antonie’s position outside the family.⁸¹ It also echoes back to the theoretical literature on somnambulism, which suggests that a hidden part of the human mind comes to the forefront in a somnambulist state. The terms “Verborgtheit” surface repeatedly in medical texts on animal magnetism and somnambulism, suggesting a spatial relationship in which the conscious mind is in front and the instinctual mind (what the modern reader might think of as the unconscious) dwells behind and underneath. Antonie is not positioned as the equal to Marie, but as the quiet, mysterious force that is behind Marie, ever present, fascinating as well as unnerving. In this way, Antonie seems to symbolize the mysterious part of human nature

⁸¹ Arnold-de Simine makes a similar claim, arguing that Antonie embodies the very mysteries of Nature that her father wishes to uncover and drawing parallels between Fouqué’s text and Hoffmann’s *Rat Krespel* (393). Her reading overlooks, however, the spatial metaphors in the text.

that was thought to be activated during somnambulism. Even the use of the word “dark” which is used repeatedly to describe Antonie’s eyes and hair, echo the “dark” that is present titles of many contemporary works on somnambulism.⁸²

The first extended description of Antonie comes from the Äbtissin, the caretaker of the Marquis’ two young daughters since their birth.

Antonie steht allen auch mir (Äbtissin) und der Schwester, fern. Ich habe sie nie verstanden, und wage es nicht, sie zu ahnden. Schon als Kind war ihre Nähe ängstigend. (38)

The unique inversion of the phrase *stellen mir nah* draws attention to the spatial elements of this metaphor. Antonie is located emotionally far from (*fern*) those around her.

Antonie’s fearful effect on the Äbtissin is not contained within her body, but seems to radiate around her, making her vicinity evoke feelings of fear. Already in this phrase we see the influence of animal magnetic theories. Some aspect of Antonie extends beyond the confines of her body, causing an affective response to those in her vicinity. This is similar to the theories of animal magnetism, which claim that magnetic fluids extend beyond and are channeled through the magnetist to his patient, passing through the physical space between. The magnetist was believed to be able to extend his fluids while the somnambulist was not, thus this passage suggests that Antonie has latent magnetic abilities.

⁸² For a discussion of Antonie’s dark features and their relationship to Kant’s theories of the sublime, see Arnold-de Simine, 379.

The Äbtissin relates several strange occurrences involving Antonie during her stay at the convent, which work to characterize her by drawing explicit connections to discussions of animal magnetism and somnambulism.

Am Tage träumend, ohne Lust und Theilnahme zu Ziel und Arbeit, war Nachts im Schlafe ihre Seele wie geflügelt, sie erzählte gehörte und nicht gehörte Dinge; und ging zum Entsetzen der Klosterfrauen durch die langen Gänge, zur Kapelle, wo sie vor einem Schrein, in welchem das Muttergottesbild steht, kniend, das Salve regina und Stabat Mater mit heller tönender Stimme sang (38).

The Äbtissin comments on Antonie's inversion of night and day, a theme that occurs repeatedly throughout the text.⁸³ During the day she appears as though in a daze. She is „träumend“ and „ohne Lust und Theilnahme zu Ziel und Arbeit“. It is during the night however that she becomes active, wandering the rooms of the convent, praying and singing loudly in the chapel, much to the horror of the other nuns. Antonie has inverted day and night by dreaming during the day and remaining active during the night. This inversion is a source of fear for those around her as it is unnatural. It is also the unnatural-ness of her behaviors that harms her health, „ihre Gesundheit indeß durch diese Naturunordnung litt“ (39). The Naturunordnung refers to her day night inversion and the strange behaviors she exhibits while asleep.

The above passage also contains several references to behavior typical among somnambulists. Her soul seems to leave her in the night „wie geflügelt“ and has access to things that the others cannot hear, causing her to repeat „gehörte und nicht gehörte

⁸³ Arnold-de Simine suggests that Antonie illustrates the “nachseiten” of women, as well as the *Nachtseiten* of nature through her somnambulism (394).

Dinge“ (39). It was believed that during a somnambulist state a part of the somnambulists soul could physically leave the body, travel to other realms and converse with its inhabitants.⁸⁴ The verb choice emphasizes the spatial nature of this altered state. The soul is physically leaving the body to travel to another distant location.

The Äbtissin continues

Oft fanden wir sie noch in den Frühmetten umher-schleichend, oder sie gesellte sich im Schläfe zu uns, und fand jedesmal ihren Platz an meiner Seite. Erweckten wir sie, so war ihr von allem dem keine Erinnerung geblieben, und sie schien unsern Worten sogar keinen Glauben beizumessen (38-39).

Amnesia after the event is a defining feature of somnambulism and would seem to further characterize her as a somnambulist. At the same time the phrase “sie schien” inserts a level of ambiguity, which is at the heart of Fouqué's narrative structure (Arnold-de Simine 2000 382).⁸⁵ The reader is reminded once again that this is one character's account of the situation, and it is uncertain what Antonie does or does not know. This ambiguity seems to hint at the possibility, if only momentarily, that Antonie remembers more than she suggests. It is also an example of a re-occurring theme in Fouqué's text, namely, pointing out the limitations of our knowledge of the other. With no authoritative narrator and an ever shifting perspective, *Magie der Natur* draws the reader's attention to the fact that one can never really know the intention and thoughts of the other.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ For an excellent summary of this phenomenon and contemporary theoretical texts explaining it, see Weder 44-58.

⁸⁵ Arnold-de Simine examines the use of “es scheint” to descriptions of the Idyllic in Fouqué's text, which she reads as Fouqué's attempt to emphasize the precariousness of the characters happiness (380).

⁸⁶ In *Pathologie der Liebe* Wägenbauer quotes Fouqué on this subject: „die Struktur menschlichen Verstehens, das ohne unmittelbaren Zugang zur Wahrheit nur auf ihre Erscheinungsweisen angewiesen ist, die die Interpretation erfordern. Die Möglichkeit der Täuschung muß daher immer eingeräumt werden.“

The way in which Antonie is drawn to the Äbtissin during these episodes suggests another element of somnambulism, that of rapport. It was believed that somnambulists had strong connections with their magnetists, so that while in the trance the somnambulist could only perceive stimulus through the magnetist. According to numerous case studies, the somnambulist would become deaf to all other voices except that of her magnetist, would fail to perceive any other individual, and could only interact with the world through him (D.R.B., 72). The attraction that Antonie exhibits while in this state towards the Äbtissin would suggest that the nun is in rapport with the young woman. This is not to say that the Äbtissin is knowingly magnetizing Antonie, indeed any such connection between the two appears to take place without the Äbtissin's knowledge. At the same time, some unintentionally or naturally occurring "rapport" between Äbtissin and Antonie would explain why Antonie always finds her place at the side of the Äbtissin at the end of these episodes.

The Äbtissin's comments on Antonie reach a high point when she recounts the evening in which a group of novices took their vows. During the somber event, Antonie breaks away from her chaperone and makes her way to the Äbtissin. As one of the young nuns started to take her vows the following scene unfolds:

Sie [Antonie] sah mit scharfem Blick auf die Novize [...] und sank wie todt zu meinen Füßen. Ich hob sie erschrocken auf, richtete ihre den Kopf in die Höhe, sie hatte beide Augen geschlossen und vollkommen das Ansehen einer Schlafenden. Wie ist Dir Kind? Fragte ich leise, den Andern kaum hörbar, aber

Arnold-de Simine points to this passage as a guide to Fouqué's narrative structure, which never expresses Antonie's individual perspective, but rather leaves the interpretation of her behaviors open to the reader. (382)

sie sagte, langsam und sehr deutlich, mit einer Stimme, die aus keiner Menschenbrust, nicht über Menschenlippen zu kommen schien, tief wie aus dem hohlen Innern einer Maschine: heißt ihr, das Bildniß wegwerfen, das sie an goldner Kette im Busen trägt, es drückt mir das Herz entzwei! (40-41)

Although her eyes are closed, Antonie can still “see” the locket. The ability to perceive objects with closed eyes and is commonly ascribed to somnambulists.⁸⁷ Even with closed eyes, or vision obstructed by blindfolds, somnambulists claimed to be able to perceive objects both in their vicinity as well as those at great distances. This “stomach seeing”(Eschenmayer 55), as it is referred to in contemporary case studies, could even penetrate the skin of others, making internal organs “visible” and enabling many somnambulists to diagnose the diseases of others. Antonie’s body is described as though she were sleeping, a common phrase used to describe the somnambulist state. Once again, we see the inversion of day and night that characterizes Antonie as one who inverts the normal rhythm of life. It also introduces a third state of consciousness, one that disrupts the awake/asleep binary that order the normal life of humans.

In this passage there are several elements that suggest a rapport between Antonie and the Äbtissin. Antonie is drawn physically to the Äbtissin, and communicates only with her during the somnambulist episode. The text also emphasizes the hushed tones with which the Äbtissin speaks to Antonie, barely audible to those around her. This reflects the tendency of somnambulists to be responsive to and communicate with only

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See Schubert, 29 and Eschenmayer, 55.

one person, and points to this scene as further evidence of the rapport between Antonie and the Äbtissin.

Further evidence suggesting a rapport between Äbtissin and Antonie can be found in an instance of clairvoyance that Antonie experiences when parting with the nun. The nun's parting embrace sends of shiver of "todeskalt" through Antonie and "ein leiblich Weh stieß aus meiner Brust" (63). The Äbtissin's face appears to Antonie as if contorted and a „ekler Leichendunst umgab sie“ (63). In this moment of physical contact, Antonie is filled with „Schauer und Entsetzen“ towards the nun that she previously loved. She interprets these strange images and corporal responses as a form of clairvoyance, foreseeing the nun's brutal death at the hands of the enemy. Antonie believes that nature has placed an „unglücklich weissagend Gefühl in meine Brust“ (63). The ability to see the future, especially events relating to the well-being of the individual with which the somnambulist was in rapport, was another ability frequently in the repertoire of somnambulists (Ritter 85).⁸⁸ The fact that her prophetic ability is focused here on the Äbtissin suggests an intimate relationship typical of the rapport between magnetist and somnambulist.

The final somnambulist attribute identified in this passage is the heightened sensitivity to metals. Sensitivity to metals is another attribute frequently ascribed to somnambulists, especially in the case studies at the turn of the century (Schubert 208). Antonie had always been uncomfortable around the novice, and whenever she saw the

⁸⁸ Eschenmayer claims that *Hellsehen* is nothing more than the ability to see patterns and predict their future occurrences (1816 61).

locket it produced a stabbing feeling that overtook her entire body (42). Such a strong physical reaction is in line with case studies of somnambulists. Arnold de-Simine views this scene as an example of the “explained supernatural” typical of the Gothic genre (2000 380). In this motif, a phenomenon that initially appears supernatural, here Antonie’s intuitive knowledge of the hidden locket, is later explained by logic or science – in this case Antonie’s sensitivity to metal (380). Far from being “explained”, Antonie’s encounter with metal remains mysterious even within the context of somnambulism. Although she reacts physically to the metal, she is also fixated on the contents of the locket. The encounter seems to beg the question “How would metal sensitivity alert her to the contents of the locket?”

The mystery is voiced at the narrative level by the comments of the Äbtissin, who seems uncertain as to the truth behind the episode. Whereas after previous somnambular episodes Antonie had amnesia, the Äbtissin explains how her reaction to this event was somewhat different. When asked about the strange physical movements that the gold locket produced in her, the Äbtissin says that Antonie “verschwieg (die Ursache) aus geheimer Scheu” (42). Whereas previously Antonie had reacted to the nun’s accounts of her bizarre behaviors with ignorance, disbelief, and denial, this particular encounter would appear to strike a cord with her. “Geheimer Scheu” seems to suggest that she does know the more about the mysterious reaction than she is letting on, which leads the nun to question “Von dem Bilde indeß wußte sie wachend nicht, wie es in ihre Seele kam?” (15). The question mark opens the possibility of an alternative explanation that remains

hidden, an explanation in which Antonie is not the ignorant pawn of a higher power, but at the very least understands more about her relationship to these mysterious forces that she lets on. There is an incongruity between the *Heilige* who reveals truths in an unconscious state and the Antonie whose „geheimer Scheu“ hints at a knowledge she should not have. This incongruity raises questions regarding Antonie’s relationship to her mysterious powers as well as her motives. Such questions resurface throughout the book and problematize both Antonie’s role as a somnambulist as well as her embodiment of contemporary gender norms.

The scene in the convent foreshadows the wedding of Marie and Adalbert, another instance in which Antonie exhibits characteristics of a somnambulist. When asked during the ceremony to unbind the wedding rings Antonie lapses into another somnambulic state:

Ohne Verwunderung blicken zu laßen, ja ohne Theilnahme irgend einer Art, empfang sie die Ringe. Sie trat damit zum Licht, und eine kleine Zange aus einem Portefeuille nehmend, brach sie hin und her an der Verbindung. Sie schien selbst nicht zu wissen, was sie thue, denn plötzlich brachen beide Ringe entzwei, und das Stiftchen was sie zusammenhielt, flog weit davon. Im selben Augenblick drang es wie ein helles Lachen aus Antonies Brust, sie sank nieder zur Erde und blieb bewußtlos liegen. 154

Again we have an instance in which Antonie is performing activities without appearing to know what she is doing. She moves in a trance-like state, without engaging the people or objects around her. Her dream-like behaviors are again punctuated with an eerie laugh and a lapse into complete unconsciousness. Once again this behavior corresponds to her contact with metal, in this case the rings. It is odd, however, that these rings do not cause

the excruciating pain that her last, and much more indirect, encounter with gold. While the trance-like state, the empty movements, strange laugh and ultimate collapse seem to suggest the same somnambulistic reaction that took place in the convent, the various inconsistencies, for example Antonie's immunity to metal, and the use of the phrase *schien* raise doubts as to whether Antonie was passive in this act.

Although these passages give evidence of Antonie's somnambulist abilities, several elements raise doubts as to whether she embodies the passivity and ignorance that were defining characteristics of somnambulism. The use of phrases such as "es scheint" opens a space for questioning Antonie's motives. The eerie effect of her presence on those around her suggests that she can extend an influence over the minds of others, an ability limited to the magnetist. Finally, the possibility that Antonie knows more about her condition than she indicates, that she is, in fact, hiding a "terrible secret" violates a primary tenant of animal magnetic theory.

Questions regarding Antonie's true character and her connection to animal magnetic forces continue in the narrative as her motives are called into question. Antonie exhibits a moment of explicit agency, when she decides to use every means available, even the magnetic skills she has, to attract Adalbert.⁸⁹

Sie dachte, es ist alles unbegreifliches Wunder, was uns umgiebt, warum sollen wir selbst nichts Wunderbares vollbringen dürfen! Und gäbe es einen Zauber, ihn an mich zu bannen, wie ich an ihn gebannt bin, weshalb sollte ich nicht? (180)

⁸⁹ This argument is made in Barkhoff (2005).

This passage represents the first time in which Antonie directly expresses her intention to harness the powers at her disposal. At the same time, she quickly grounds her decision in religious justification “Es giebt so viel Verborgenes im Menschen, wovon er selbst nichts weiß – Gott hat es ihm eingepflanzt.“ (180) She explains her magnetic abilities as God given talents which have been planted in her and buried beneath her understanding, but that she can now access in order to do that which she argues is God’s will. For this reason, Barkhoff and others have suggested that this moment in the narrative marks Antonie's transmission from innocent femininity to a witch-like figure.⁹⁰ Although I argue that the text has presented Antonie's motives with a certain ambivalence, raising doubts as to her passivity during moments of supposed somnambulism, I agree with Barkhoff that this passage is critical as it is the first time that Antonie directly announces her intentions to manipulate those around her using magnetism.

Antonie’s next two encounters with Adalbert depict her using magnetism to establish a rapport and create in him a state of somnambulism. Antonie places her hand on the sleeping Adalbert's heart and repeats the following incantation „Laß mein Bild in Dich eingehn, halte es fest wie es der Traum Dir zeigt, werde mein für alle Ewigkeit“ (185). In this passage sleep leaves Adalbert in a suggestible state. Although he stays asleep he indicates through physical movements that he is deeply affected by Antonie's words:

⁹⁰ See Barkhoff (2005)

Sie wiederholte die Worte mehreremale, wie lebhaft sich auch Adalbert regte und gegen den Traum anzukämpfen schien, endlich seufzte er tief, öffnete seine Arme, und breitete sie ihr entgegen (185).

The word choice in this paragraph should not be overlooked. „Regen“ indicates a response to Antonie’s suggestion, but „anzukämpfen“ makes it clear that he is resisting this suggestion. Resistance to a magnetist was not part of the medical practice, and a moment of resistance suggests a last assertion of masculine will. Ultimately, however, Antonie prevails. Adalbert eventually gives up this struggle, indicated by his deep breath, which marked the beginning of a somnambulist state in many medical accounts of somnambulism (Schubert 207). Adalbert also opens his arms, embracing Antonie. This motion indicates that he is aware of her presence despite his tightly closed eyes, another characteristic of a somnambulist.

Antonie maintains a dormant rapport with Adalbert, which she is able to activate with her gaze. When Antonie stands with „dunkelglühenden Augen“ directed at Adalbert he finds himself unable to look away. Her gaze falls on him with „unbeschreiblicher Gewalt“ and he sinks to the ground „wie (von ihrem Blick) getroffen“ (186). His head sinks on Marie’s shoulder and he recoils for the first time in fear „Zum erstenmal befiel ihn tödliche Angst bei ihren Liebkosungen“ (186). The eye contact between the two establishes the rapport necessary to bring about somnambulism. Antonie places herself in rapport with Adalbert, an event that produces a corporal reaction, falling to the ground. This rapport also explains Adalbert’s subsequent discomfort around other individuals, including Marie. Once rapport had been established, many somnambulists became very

sensitive to the presence of others, causing their physical proximity pain and fear in the somnambulist. The magnetic pull towards Antonie continues, and he finds himself standing next to her “ohne es zu wollen” (188). Everything in Antonie’s vicinity seems to take on a magnetic force that both attracts Adalbert and instills in him a violent reaction. Even Antonie’s glass, which Adalbert grasps “unversehen” causes him to throw it down “mit wilder Hast” (189). This could be read as a reference to a typical experiment performed by animal magnetists. Mesmer himself describes an experiment during which his somnambulist could pick out the cup he had magnetized among several un-magnetized cups. When the magnetized cup was placed in the hand of the somnambulist, his or her hand “made a movement and gave signs of pain” while the other un-magnetized cups elicited no reaction (Mesmer 53). Although the situation with Antonie’s glass echoes back to Mesmer’s cup experiment, it does so while allowing Adalbert greater autonomy as a somnambulist.

Having successfully magnetized Adalbert and maintained rapport with him it would appear as though Antonie fully embodies the role of magnetist. Once again, however, an ambiguous scene follows, which questions whether or not Antonie’s actions were preformed passively and without her knowledge, key elements of somnambulism. While in a feverish state, Alegris, a young boy traveling with the group, accuses Antonie of purposely destroying Marie’s wedding rings. Marie tries to calm the child, insisting that Antonie had not intended to break the rings: “Sie hat es nicht gern gethan”. But Alegris relates the following story:

Es ist aber doch wahrhaftig wahr, schluchzte er, durch Krankheit und Widerspruch gereizt, sie hat mir es ja selbst gesagt. [...] Ich! Damals, entgegnete er, wie sie so häßlich war! Damals, - Nachts, - sein Auge flammte hell auf, er sprach entsetzlich schnell, sie setzte sich bei mir aufs Bett, und da schnarrete es so in ihrer Brust wie die große Hausuhr, und da träumte mir, - und, da sagte sie – ich weiß nicht recht, - ich glaube, - Adalbert gehört mir! Er gehört mir! Ich laß ihn nun und nimmermehr, ich habe die Ringe zerbrochen, ich will alles zerbrechen, und dann kam was von Blut, von verschreiben, ich weiß nicht mehr, aber gesagt hat sie mirs gewiß (194).

The passage raises the question as to whether or not Antonie intended to break the rings during the wedding ceremony, an act that had previously been attributed to her somnambulism. The text seems to offer arguments both for and against Antonie's guilt. One could argue that Alegris' accusations should not be taken at face value, given that the fever has compromised his reliability. This is indeed Marie's first assumption. The speed at which Alegris speaks and the fractured nature of his sentences seem to suggest that these are the ramblings of a sick child. His own uncertainty as a narrator, indicated by phrases such as "ich weiß nicht recht" and "ich glaube" also question the validity of his statements. At the same time, if we consider that utterances produced in a state of illness are given legitimacy in the theories of animal magnetism, then we cannot be so quick to dismiss Alegris's accusations. Somnambulists were weak or sick individuals, and it was because of this unhealthy state that they had access to higher truths (Mesmer 112). Far from being dismissed, Alegris' physical state adds a certain legitimacy to his accusations, within the context of animal magnetic theories.

It is unclear from this passage whether Antonie was in control of herself when she broke the rings, and it is not my intention here to resolve this ambiguity. What is important to this discussion isn't whether or not she was actively involved or a passive somnambulist, but rather, the text's concern over the question of the activity or passivity of her role in this act. So long as Antonie was unaware of her actions, her passivity keeps her in the feminine role of somnambulist, and she continues to be perceived as a *Heilige*. If, however, Alegris' accusations are true, and Antonie did perform that act knowingly, then she has overstepped the boundaries of appropriate feminine, as well as appropriate somnambulist, behavior. She then loses her privileged status and is labeled a *Hexe* (195).

Ultimately, Antonie's relationship to animal magnetism cannot be reconciled with her social role. She is at home neither in her role of somnambulist, nor in her role as magnetist, as indicated by her failure to secure a husband using either of these positions. As a borderline figure, her existence threatens the stability of the nuclear family, which can only be re-instated after Antonie's death. Through her death, Antonie is transformed into a passive aesthetic object symbolizing ideal beauty. She "lag sauber, in .einem weißem Gewande mit hohem abwärtsstehenden Kragen auf einem Ruhebett" (233). Her face is described as „weiß wie Marmor, schien ruhig“ with her body perfectly straight and her hands folded on her chest (233). There is no more mention of her "wilde Blick" or strange movements which made her both enticing and frightening. Her remains appear

peaceful and still, “wie Marmor”, comparing her to a statue. Only through death can Antonie embody femininity and passivity.

2.3 Female Magnetism and Male Somnambulism

The gender ambiguity that the text presents through the magnetist/somnambulist figure of Antonie finds its masculine equivalent in the figure of the male somnambulist. The magnetic relationship that these male figures have with Antonie undermine their claim to hegemonic masculinity. Male somnambulism is used in the text to articulate a crisis of masculinity, depicted through the subordination of men to a powerful female magnetist, who, as was discussed earlier, embodies both masculine and feminine traits. When we look at the interaction of these male somnambulists with Antonie, what we see is a masculine model that is at odds with the hegemonic ideal, one that causes social disruption and internal conflict. The following section will read male somnambulism from the perspective of masculinity in crisis, delineating the masculine alternatives that emerge from this interaction, and the social relationships that ultimately restore normative gender roles.

Those men who live alongside Antonie in Bern are deeply affected by the presence of this mysterious woman. The text describes these unnamed men as drawn to the „Abentheuerliche ihrer Erscheinung“ with „größere Aufmerksamkeit“. Antonie's movements, normally slow and deliberate, occasionally erupt into abrupt gestures and countenances that the men around her describe as “elektrische Funken” which “selten irgend ein Gemüth widersteht” (147). The “elektrische Funken” that the men see are

reminiscent of the electric rays that somnambulists were said to see emanating from their magnetists. Schelling's account of the magnetization of Demoiselle M., for example, reports that the subject saw "feuerische Funken" while magnetized.⁹¹ Similarly, Eschenmayer (1816) records the tendency of somnambulists to visually perceive the power emanating from their magnetist (41). These rays were believed to be the materialization of the magnetist's magnetic influence. The rays that the men see emanating from Antonie can be interpreted in this context. The rays depict visually the magnetic influence that Antonie exerts on others and also indicate the men's position as somnambulist in their interactions with Antonie. The men's minds cannot defend themselves against the electric gestures of the young woman, and they find themselves drawn to her just as a somnambulist is drawn to his or her magnetist.

The text is careful to distinguish this attraction from "normal" attraction that men might feel for a young woman. Even those men who are not normally drawn to other women, men for whom "eine Verlobte oder bestimmt Liebende meist uninteressant wird" (147) are drawn to Antonie. Her power over them is not depicted as normal erotic attraction. It is a power that is extended over them against their will and restricts them to passive roles.

One man who appears particularly drawn to Antonie is the Chevalier. For him, Antonie is a curiosity. She belongs to "dem Wenigen, was er nicht bequem in seiner

⁹¹ Seeing "Elektrische Funken" is also listed as one symptom of somnambulism in D.R.B.'s 1822 case study. He dismisses the theory that these rays are external to the patient and concludes that what the patient "see" are the manifestations on the sensory organs of internal changes occurring.

eigenen Stellung zur Welt erfassen konnte” (147). It is the challenge that Antonie presents that attracts the Chevalier most of all, and awakens in him a desire to understand her and make her part of his world view. Much like the Marquis who wished to gain mastery over the mysterious powers of nature, so to the Chevalier wants to bring her in alignment “mit vielem andern, was er besaß” (147). The language here is one of conquest, which mirrors the scientific aspirations of the Marquis earlier in the novel. Despite the Chevalier's desire to possess Antonie and understand her seemingly supernatural abilities, his close proximity to her results in his loss of self control.

Und wirklich hatte sich der Chevalier, indem er ein Gemüth auf großen Umwegen ergründen wollte, in diesem verloren, und die Herrschaft über sich selbst auf eine Weise eingebüßt, wie es denen immer geht, welche sich an etwas wagen, was über ihre Kräfte hinaus reicht. Schon konnte er nicht von Antonien getrennt sein, ohne eine lebhafte Unruhe zu empfinden, die so merklich aus der gezwungenen Haltung seines Gesprächs, aus dem mühsamen Abwenden seiner Blicke von der Thür wo sie einzutreten pflegte... (149)

The language of romantic attraction is here also the language of somnambulism. The Chevalier experiences the loss of control over himself (“Herrschaft über sich selbst”) that is typical of somnambulists. The loss of control that Chevalier expresses is similar to the loss of will attributed to somnambulists in medical texts. When someone is a somnambulist “Wille ist hier nicht einmal möglich“ and „das Gewissen wegfällt“ (Ritter 81). The control that the somnambulist had over him/herself is replaced by the Herrschaft of the magnetist. When Demoiselle M. describes her experience of somnambulism as “eine solche Herrschaft” that the magnetist was able to win (gewinnen

können) over her (Schelling 43).⁹² The Chevalier's experience uses this same language of control that we find in medical accounts of somnambulism. Once the magnetic bond was established between magnetist and somnambulist, the latter would experience sensitivity to the magnetist's physical presence, another attribute of somnambulism that is described in the passage above. The "lebhafteste Unruhe" that the Chevalier feels when separated from Antonie is reflective of the physical pain and fear that somnambulists were said to feel around individuals other than their magnetists (Schubert 214). Lastly, the text indicates that the Chevalier is drawn to the objects that Antonie comes in contact with, similar to Homburg's reaction to Natalie's glove in *Prinz von Homburg*. Chevalier's gaze lingers on the door even after Antonie has left the room, and it is only with difficulty (*mühsam*) that he is able to draw his gaze away and return to the conversation. These three characteristics - the Chevalier's loss of self control, the pain he feels when separated from Antonie, and the attraction he feels towards objects connected with her – reference typical somnambulist behaviors in both the medical and literary discourses of somnambulism, and as a result, characterize the Chevalier as a somnambulist under the control of the female magnetist Antonie.

Chevalier's magnetic attraction to her is not a source of fear, nor is it criticized in the text as inappropriate for his gender. In fact, his attraction is supported and encouraged by the community. The Baronin observes Chevalier's interaction with Antonie with "herzliche Freude" (149). She sees in this relationship "einen Ausweg aus

⁹² The ease with which the magnetist gained this level of control indicates, according to Demoiselle M., that her magnetist was the best of all possible magnetists for her.

dieser entstehenden Verwirrung” cause by Antonie's dark and normally a-social behavior. The relationship between the two offers, in the mind of the Baronin, the opportunity to bring Antonie's extreme personality into balance with the rest of the family. The baronin praises the “Zauber geselligen Verkehrs“ which can restore the imbalance in the family caused “wenn die Einsamkeit jede Anregung mit ängstiger Gewalt anpacke, und alles so einzeln und deshalb so ungeheuer hinstelle“ (150).⁹³ The *Zauber* that is attributed to magnetism here is not the destructive force that the Marquis practiced or that Antonie intentionally exerts over Adalbert later in the narrative, but rather a type of natural *Zauber* that restores the imbalance caused by Antonie herself. This has several important implications for the gender identity of both Antonie and Adalbert. To be magnetized by a woman who naturally and unintentionally exerts this influence is not at odds with hegemonic masculinity. Instead it is embedded in the discourse of masculine conquest. The worldly Chevalier longs to understand Antonie through an intellectual domestication. He wishes to bring her unusual characteristics into line with his world view, rooted in ideals of hegemonic masculinity. Any loss of self control that the Chevalier experiences at the hands of Antonie, therefore, is not depicted as a threat to his masculinity, but rather a side effect of pursuing an object of curiosity and desire. If anything, Chevalier's feelings towards Antonie are encouraged by the baronin, a figure who in the narrative works towards domestic balance. Other members of the family and their social circle also observe the growing relationship

⁹³ The term “geselliger Verkehr“ with which the Baronin describes the relationship between Antonie and Adalbert is a phrase that is used to describe rapport.

between Antonie and Adalbert, and they “lächelte und spottete freundlich darüber“ (149). The mocking is good-natured, and the entire social atmosphere is described in terms of “Ruhe” and a “frohes” and “ein zufriedenes Ansehen” (150). The relationship between Antonie and the Chevalier marks the improvement of the domestic sphere in Bern, as indicated by the improved moods of the Baronin as well as the men in her vicinity. From her perspective the text describes the Herzog as “weniger stürmisch“ and the Marquis as having a “zufriedenes Ansehen” (150). The familial bliss is depicted as a direct result of the romantic relationship, with its promise of bringing Antonie's extreme personality into balance.

Whereas Chevalier's attraction to Antonie was viewed as a positive, restorative relationship, Adalbert's attraction to Antonie destabilizes the family and disrupts relationships between men. The disruptive potential of Antonie and Adalbert's relationship is first voiced by Adalbert's father the Herzog.

Du (Adalbert) hast ein häuslich, bescheiden Weib zur Gefährtin gewählt, ich hatte Anfangs andere Pläne, ich dachte Antonie...sie ist ein wunderbares Wesen von königlichem Stoltz und hoher Entschlossenheit, sie hat mir oft seltsame Gedanken gegeben, ich konnte nie in ihre Augen sehen, ohne so etwas von Weltherrschaft zu träumen. Lass das jetzt! Es ist so besser, ich sehe das ein.... du hast glücklicher für Dich, für uns Alle, gewählt (188).

Antonie's magnetic gaze entices the Herzog with images of power and aristocracy. She appears as a remnant of the aristocratic world order.⁹⁴ Although appealing, the Herzog recognizes that such a woman has no place in post-war France. The “stille, heitere Marie” is a better fit for the „beschränktes Dasein, daß unser aller Loos geworden ist

⁹⁴ This interpretation has been discussed at length by Barkhoff (2005); Arnold-de Simine (2000).

(188).“ Adalbert's choice is one that ensures stability for the family. His marriage is a decision that benefits the entire community, represented by „uns Alle“ as well as for himself. The Herzog approves of Adalbert's marriage choice, which is depicted as the choice between a woman of seductive power, and the bourgeois ideal of the „häuslich“ Marie.

Despite this reassurance from his father, Adalbert is still under the power of Antonie. Military culture, including songs and physical activities, are offered as a productive and masculine way with which to deal with emotional stress and turmoil. Adalbert joins the Herzog, for example, in singing military songs in order to divert his mind from memories of recent atrocities.

Adalbert musste auch singen, er stockte erst, dann aber ward er ganz zu Flammen und Gluth, die eigene Stimme schien ihm den Taumel seines Hochzeitsabends zurückzurufen, er kannte sich kaum noch. 189

His voice singing the military songs is enough to keep the unpleasant memories of his wedding day in check. The words “Flammen” and “Gluth” indicate Adalbert's returning strength. In addition to singing, Adalbert transforms his nervous energy into physical activity, he “nahm das Ruder, um nur außer sich Beschäftigung zu finden (189).” His encounters with Antonie and the mysteries of his wedding day are released through this combination of military song and physical activity.

Despite this brief release, Adalbert is still unable to break free from Antonie's magnetic attraction. This leads to tension between Adalbert and the Chevalier, who believes he has a right to Antonie. This tension reaches a climax when the Chevalier

overhears Adalbert pronounce his love to Antonie. There are indications in the text that Adalbert has made this profession of love while under the influence of magnetism. As Adalbert grasps Antonie's hand to help her out of the boat, she asks him “bist Du wirklich gerettet?” The text describes his reaction to her words and her touch “Seine (Adalberts) Hand zitterte schon in der ihren, als er bewußtlos stammelte, nein Antonie, nein, ich bin von nun an rettungslos!“ (191) The physical response he has to her words is depicted in his shaking hand. His response is unconscious stammering, suggesting that he is not aware of his response. His emotions quickly reach a fevered pitch. He cries out wildly (wild) “Du liebst mich noch” and then in a state of ecstasy (wie verzückt) “ich gehöre Dir von jetzt bis in alle Ewigkeit!“ (191) Adalbert's series of responses - his shaking, unconscious speaking, and a wild, ecstatic climax – mirrors the course of magnetic treatment.

The following day, the Chevalier, who has overheard the Adalbert and Antonie's passionate exchange, challenges the former to a duel. The duel scene, which is related to the audience second hand by an observer, is a crucial moment in the text's construction of masculinity and will therefore be discussed here at length. The role of dueling in male society has been examined at length in Frevert's *Men of Honor*. Frevert defines dueling in Germany as an “important 'behavioral paradigm' of the upper social classes in the nineteenth century” (6). According to Frevert, dueling constitutes a “habitus whose reconstruction can contribute to the identity of upper class cultural norms and forms of behavior and the changes that they underwent” (7). In examining the discourse and

practices of dueling, Frevert illustrates the effect that this habitus had on forming and reinforcing ideals of equality, honor, civility, and masculinity. Although the question of masculinity is not always addressed directly in discussions of dueling, nineteenth-century discussions of dueling viewed it as a “self-evident fact that all their debates on the subject of honor and dueling concerned the honor of men.” (Frevert 26) Frevert lists among those concepts that were at the core of the “identity and motives of duelists” the terms “‘masculinity', 'male consciousness', 'male pride', 'male worth', 'male dignity' and 'male sanctity’” (171). Since dueling was perceived by its supporters as a “test of true, unalloyed masculinity” (27) it follows that those characteristics that were believed to be demonstrated through dueling can also be seen as the defining features of the hegemonic masculine ideal among the supporters. These characteristics include “courage, boldness, willpower and resoluteness” “strength”; “uncompromising-ness” and “steadfastness and firmness” which “pointed directly to the core of male self-images” (27).

Male honor that it is defined through, what Frevert refers to as “a web of complex relationships.” Female honor, she goes on to explain, was synonymous with chastity, and therefore objectively determined. Male honor was viewed as more complicated and subjective than female. It therefore required a repeated assertion of honor. Frevert describes the purpose of the nineteenth-century duel of honor not “who was the fastest on the draw, or who dealt the most powerful blows of the saber” but rather “the fact that the two opponents braved a possibly fatal encounter, thus demonstrating that they placed greater value upon their 'honor' than upon their lives” (3). It was therefore not the victor

of the duel that received the honor at the expense of his opponent, but rather both participants gained honor by illustrating their willingness to fight and die.

Proponents of dueling viewed it as a medium of reconciliation and male bonding. This was an argument made in the nineteenth-century in defense of dueling (Frevert 23). Through a duel men were expected to purge themselves of the negative feelings they had for one another, thus transforming an enemy into a friend (24). Frevert explains that “the proximity of death subjected both duelists to a sort of ritual purgation during which all feelings of hate, deliberate abuse and enmity were cast aside” (24). Only through this mutual experience of mortality, and the expenditure of affective energy through physical action, could the division between the two men be reconciled. It is partially for this reason that dueling was viewed as an essential tool of the military. Duels among military officers bridged social gulfs found in a military culture, since any officer regardless of rank could challenge any other to a duel (26). As a result, Frevert recognizes the utility of duels as an “instrument for forging a unified corps out of a body of officers who from the standpoints of age and rank were an extremely motley group” (26). By promoting equality and offering a method of resolving disputes that ensured the honor of all participants, duels were a form of social interaction that supported hegemonic masculinity among the upper, and eventually middle, classes.

Given the importance of dueling to nineteenth century masculinity, the moment of dueling in *Magie der Natur* constitutes a crucial moment in the text's construction of masculinity. The duel in the text offers the opportunity to reassert masculine order

through a display of masculine honor. The text depicts the duel as a uniquely masculine attempt to restore order within the family by counteracting the chaos brought about by women. The Herzog voices this position when he orders Antonie not to interfere, explaining “Verwirrungen anzetteln mögen die Weiber, lösen können sie nur Männer” (197). This is re-enforced when Antonie attempts to break up the duel. After realizing the men are about to duel, Antonie runs to the door in order to follow them, and presumably, break it up. The Herzog yells to her “Nicht von der Stelle”, indicating that she is not to interfere. He points to the praying Marie as an example of appropriate feminine behavior in such a situation. “Recht mein Kind, sagte er, da suche Du Hülfe, der Weg ist dir offen geblieben“ (197). The duel is a twofold attempt to reestablish hegemonic ideals of gender. It offers male characters a method of displaying their honor and thus re-gaining their masculinity before one another and the family. Secondly, it limits the actions available to the women. Unable to participate or interfere with the duel, Antonie and Marie are confined to a room in which passive prayer is the only means available to them to influence the outcome.

During the duel Adalbert shoots the Chevalier and confines the latter to his bed. Despite his victory, he cannot escape the truth of the Chevalier's accusations. He cannot resolve his attraction with Antonie to his marriage to Marie, and as a result, flees the situation. The duel itself was unable to restore family stability. Although honor was won, as the Herzog points out, Adalbert is still stuck in the hopeless situation of being unable to resolve feelings for both women. The text describes his flight as the only

option available to him, his one chance the end “den tollen Gaukeleien” (199) that Antonie has created.

Adalbert's flight leads him to roam aimlessly in a state of “Irre”. In a letter back to his family he expresses his confusion and hopelessness as well as his plan for the future. Like the duel, this letter is Adalbert's attempt to assert a masculine identity in line with a hegemonic ideal, and for that reason I would like to examine it in depth. The opening paragraph laments his position, torn between two women. Each relationship demands of Adalbert a different type of masculinity.

Wo ist hier ein Ausweg! Was das ganze vorige Leben nicht da? Sagt, ich bitte Euch, ist Wahrheit in dem Augenblick, den ich nicht weggeben, den ich nicht erlebt haben möchte? Es ist mir wie im Traum! - ich hatte einen Traum – o Gott! Träume greifen vor und zurück, welches ist nun das rechte? (210)

Adalbert's state of confusion is caused in part by conflicting dreams. Adalbert displays dream/wake confusion typical of a somnambulist. While the first reference to dreaming likens his current state to that of a dream, the second iteration indicates that what had happened previously was a dream. The final sentence indicates that he cannot decide what is a dream, and what is reality. His confusion causes his descent into madness, a madness which is reflected in his geographic displacement.

Warum treibe ich mich in so heftiger Eil von Ort zu Ort? Wohin will ich denn? was soll ich in einer ganz fremden Welt! ...(ich) schleppe mich heute wie gestern trostlos in der Irre umher. Wozu nur das? Ich sehe dem allem kein Ende? (210)

Adalbert finds the solution to his madness, caused by his lack of direction and purpose, in the military.

Es muss anders werden! Gestern fand ich in einer Stadt französische Kriegsgefangene. Er waren Leute von meinem Regiment dabei. Sie erkannten mich gleich! Ich glaubte Musik zu hören, als das Wort Camerad, über ihre Lippen flog. Ist denn der Mann noch etwas anderes als Soldat! Sie fragten mich wo ich hinwolle? Ich stand beschämt unter ihnen. Weiss ich es selbst! Weiss es irgend eine Seele? Ich möchte nach Frankreich zurück! ... Ich will wieder Kriegsdienste nehmen! Es muss anders werden! (210)

Adalbert's encounter with the captive soldiers is both a reminder of his past and a call to future action. Their recognition of him brings with it the bonds of brotherhood, indicated by their address "Camerad". This term of military brotherhood functions as a return home. It is only after hearing the soldiers call out to him that he finds answers to the question "Wohin will ich denn", which is repeated in many forms throughout the letter. He initially feels shame in the presence of his comrades, who had been taken prisoner. His shame stems from leaving the military and his comrades. This moment of shame leads to a reinvigorated sense of masculine self. With the utterance "Ist denn der Mann noch etwas anders als Soldat!" Adalbert concludes that to be a man is to be a soldier. This military identity is the purpose he has been looking for and it offers a way out of the directionless wanderings and *Irre* that had previously constituted his life. The masculine identity that is constructed in this moment of recognition also has a patriotic dimension. For Adalbert, being a man means not only being a soldier, but being a French soldier. Masculinity is understood here as being a citizen of a country in addition to being a soldier. Masculinity, military, and national identity come together in this passage to construct a viable hegemonic ideal for the new post-war era.

Adalbert's decision to re-enter military service, thus accepting the model of masculinity associated with it, receives the approval of the Herzog. From the perspective of the Herzog, Adalbert's decision to re-enlist is the first step in his return to the family. He offers the worried Marie the following reassurance:

Es ist im Grunde gut, sagte dieser (Herzog), unruhig in ihr Auge blickend, daß sich die alte Kriegslust wieder in ihm regt; so schlägt doch etwas Bestimmtes den widerwärtigen Streit nieder, er nimmt sich zusammen, er richtet sich an grossen Beispielen auf, und die gesunde Natur heilt sich nach und nach aus (211).

This passage reveals several characteristics of the masculine ideal that the text constructs, including: personal direction, preference for the concrete over the abstract, and a relationship with nature. The *Kriegslust* that Adalbert feels is in stark contrast to the passive, direction-less wandering that Adalbert describes early in his letter. His newly invigorated passion for battle stirs within him and moves him. The text emphasizes the preference of a concrete goal, *etwas Bestimmtes*, over the unpleasant and disruptive emotional problems that plagued him at home. The verb choice here, *niederschlagen*, also calls to mind battle. The concrete goal of war will strike down the abstract and emotional turmoil that had led Adalbert to a state of confusion. Military life will also present Adalbert with appropriate role models, according to the Herzog. The “großen Beispiele” of military icons will give Adalbert a model on which to center his own perception of masculinity. Finally, physical movement in nature is described as having a healing effect. Nature here is not the mysterious nature that Antonie represents, but rather the “gesunde Natur” that promotes physical health. Taken together, Adalbert's

letter home, and the Herzog's response construct a hegemonic masculine ideal that values military service, physical exercise, assertive decision making, and national identity.

When Adalbert returns to his family at the conclusion of the novel he has changed significantly, although it remains uncertain whether the cause of the change was his time in the military, or Antonie's death. As Antonie sees Adalbert's ship returning home, she kills herself on the river bank, uttering the words "ich gebe Dich frei, Adalbert!" (229) thus releasing him of her magnetic spell through her death. Adalbert appears before the rest of his family in Uniform, a "jungen, schlanken Chasseur-Officier" (231). He is accompanied by another uniformed man, whose rough appearance and voice stands in sharp contrast with Adalbert. An unnamed soldier explains Adalbert's state

der brave Camerad hat bei Lodi was weggekriegt, er kann den Säbel leider Gottes nicht mehr führen, die rechte Hand ist ihm entzwei geschossen, er soll sich bei den Seinigen ausheilen. Ich will mich ausheilen, sagte Adalbert leise mit abgewandtem Gesicht (231).

Adalbert returned to the family a brave man. Having proved himself on the battlefield, and sacrificed his hand for the country, he is sent back to his family to be healed. This is a reversal of his earlier relationship to the domestic sphere. Earlier in the text, the domestic sphere was the location of his misery. It was a volatile atmosphere in which his masculinity was threatened by the magnetic advances of Antonie. The military represented an alternative environment, in which he could repair his masculine identity. Having proved himself in battle and reconstructed his masculine identity to one that is in line with the military ideal, Adalbert returns home to recuperate from the physical injury

sustained in battle. Once again the theme of “healing” a fractured self surfaces with reference to Adalbert. His hand was shot in two symbolizes Adalbert’s own division between Marie and Antonie. Adalbert's own statement upon returning home, “Ich will mich ausheilen” echoes the Herzog's own words as he reassured Marie “die gesunde Natur heilt sich [Adalbert] nach und nach aus”(211).

The healing that Adalbert had to undergo before he can take his place within a stable family unit is twofold. Firstly, he had to release himself from the influence of Antonie. The control that she exerted over him is depicted as threatening not only to his masculinity, but threatened the polarized gender roles on which familial relationships are based. In order to do this, he must enter the military, reconstruct his identity in alignment with a military-based masculine ideal, and prove himself on the battlefield. But this alone is not enough. The text insists that real healing can not occur until he has returned home to his wife and taken his role within the family. Once Adalbert is reunited with Marie and his son, the three of them are presented in the image of the Holy Family (Arnold de Simine 2000 412). Both parents kneel before their child

...ihre Thraenen mischten sich...Dieser Thau wusch alle fremde Bilder aus
Adalberts Seele, rein und heilig, drückte er Frau und Kind an sein Herz, das er
Marien auf immer wiedergegeben fühlte. Alle waren wir neu geboren, der
Herzog segnete erst jetzt mit freier Brust die Verbindung seines Sohnes ein (232).

The reunion is depicted here as a type of baptism. As the tears wash over Adalbert, his *Seele* is cleansed of “alle fremde Bilder”, referring to Antonie and her magnetic influence. With his desire for Antonie wiped from his mind, Adalbert is left “rein und

heilig” and can devote himself to Marie and his child. The use of the words “rein” and “auswischen” indicating cleansing, a common motif in baptism ceremonies. Likewise the phrase “wie neu geboren” emphasizes the theme of rebirth that is central to baptisms. The baptism of the small family ends with a blessing from the patriarch, the Herzog, who for the first time sanctifies their marriage.

The family unit is restored according to bourgeois gender roles. Antonie is transformed from a threatening female figure, to one aestheticized through death. Antonie also lives on “ohne Zauberei still und friedlich in Adalbert's Seele” (234). Transformed into a non-threatening memory, Adalbert can integrate this image of Antonie into his masculine identity, bringing it in line with his gendered world view, much like the Chevalier had hoped to do when meeting Antonie for the first time.

The novel ends with a glance into the future of the family with a patriarchal and military focus. In Herzog awakens a “Liebe zum Vaterlande” which he expresses through “Kriegsunternehmen” (235). Alegriz joins the men of his family, carrying on the military tradition after the Herzog has passed on. The generations of men reclaim their national identity through military service. Family, military, and country emerge as the defining aspects of post-war masculinity.

As for the Chevalier, he recovers from his infatuation with Antonie through a different means. After losing the duel, the Chevalier approaches Antonie and begs her forgiveness. He quickly recovers, and realizes that he is a fool to do so

Ich bin ein Thor! Rief er, stolz aufspringend, ein Unrecht gegen Sie durch ein größeres gegen mich selbst aufheben zu wollen. Man gewinnt nie sogleich durch die erste veränderte Stellung das verlorene Gleichgewicht wieder, aber ein französischer Ritter hat es noch immer gefunden, wenn es die Ehre gebietet. Ich denke, es zweifelt niemand an mir, sagte er, zuversichtlich umhersehend, (...) Er grüßte anständig, und verließ einigermaßen zufrieden mit sich selbst, den Schauplatz einer kurzen, ziemlich hart bestraften, Thorheit (217).

In the end, the Chevalier explains his infatuation with Antonie, as well as his jealousy towards a rival suitor as mere craziness. This short period of foolishness is ended during this encounter. He realizes that subjecting himself to the mercy of Antonie would be a greater misdeed than any dishonor he did to her. He has reclaimed his pride, and is confident that, as a French Ritter he will be able to overcome any dishonor, without Antonie's pardon.

4. Conclusion

When examined through the lens of gender studies we see that *Magie der Natur* is a narrative of a family in crisis during the French Revolution. I have argued here that this crisis stems from a lack of polarized gender roles and a prevalence of gender ambiguity, both of which are depicted through the motif of animal magnetism and somnambulism. The narrative uses animal magnetism and somnambulism to argue the necessity of gender polarity and to propose a masculine ideal compatible with post-war society. This masculine identity is modeled after the military values of strength, courage, boldness and will power but is also grounded in the patriotic domestic sphere. The hegemonic ideal

that Adalbert comes to embody combines a sense of duty and loyalty for one's country, willingness to serve in the military as well as a duty to one's home and family.

Somnambulism in *Magie der Natur* is also used as a narrative strategy to enhance the Gothic atmosphere. We see in the text how somnambulism is used to blur the boundaries between sleep and wake, dreams and reality, the irrational and the rational. Such transgression of boundaries is a fundamental feature of the Gothic mode. Using somnambulism as a Gothic motif, the text destabilizes the normal social order, enabling a critical look at changing social norms, including gender relations. The fear surrounding these social changes is articulated in the text as a fear of somnambulism. Expressing social fear through a fear of somnambulism, the narrative contains this potentially subversive affect within a condition that is eliminated at the close of the text. The destruction of somnambulism and re-installation of traditional gender roles marks an end to the social threat, and thus an end to the Gothic mood.

Chapter 5: Immermann: Deception, Love and Magnetism

„Lebe das Zeitalter der mysteriösen Charlatanerien.“
Iffland (232)

Published after the heyday of Schubert and his practice in Berlin, Karl Lebrecht Immermann's *Der Karneval und die Somnambule* (1829) responds to over three decades of medical and literary discussions of animal magnetism. *Der Karneval und die Somnambule* would appear at first glance to provide an unequivocal rejection of somnambulism and animal magnetism, presenting them as the two of the *Narrheiten* of his time. While the text does satirize those who believe in animal magnetism, at the same time it thematizes other forces that exert similar effects. Barkhoff (1995) presents this argument in his reading of *Karneval* when he writes “Doch Immermann begnügt sich nicht damit, den falschen Magnetismus zu enttarnen und den Glauben an ihn zu desavouieren; er macht die echten Antriebe hinter den Wirkungen der falschen Kraft namhaft“ (285). These “Antriebe” are those forms of interaction in which one individual exerts an influence over the other, such as romantic love and deception. The power of mental influence once subscribed to animal magnetism is demystified and attributed to intentional deception and romantic love. Both love and deception are characterized as mediums by which one individual can influence and manipulate another. This suggests that the essential principle behind animal magnetism – the ability to influence the mind of another – is still valid, even if the theories of animal magnetism itself are reduced to the work of a charlatan.

The following chapter sets out to examine Barkhoff's claim more closely. How are the "echte Antriebe" behind magnetism, specifically love and deception, conceptualized in terms of animal magnetism and somnambulism? How are these forms of human interaction framed in the language and metaphors of animal magnetism? And to what extent are the gender dynamics inherent in animal magnetism reproduced in other forms of interaction in the text? It is my thesis that the two forms of influence in the text, romantic love and deception, are both articulated in the language of animal magnetism, but result in different gender dynamics and construct different masculine positions for the male protagonist. I will examine the interactions that animal magnetism enables in the text, and the influence that such interactions have on the construction of gender.

1.0 Current Research

The works of Immermann have long inhabited a space in literary history between Romanticism and Realism, a "wichtiger Mittelpunkt vielfältiger literarische und gesellschaftlicher Beziehungen" (Hausbeck 6). This borderline position results in a productive tension in his work, one that engages elements of both Romanticism and Realism while at the same time offering insightful and often critical depictions of contemporary society. Attempts made by scholars to position Immermann in a literary movement frequently revolve around one or more of the following considerations: Immermann's engagement with and appropriation of genres (Schwering, Holst, Windfuhr, Engel), his treatment of the fantastic (Holst, Mühl, Sengel, von Weise), his intertextual references (von Weise, Windfuhr), and his biographical influences including

the role that his profession and political views played in his work (von Weise, Maierhofer, Greiner).

In *Epochenwandel im spätrömantischen Roman* (1985), Markus Schwering reads Immermann's *Epigonen* as a novel that combines the newly formed genre Zeitroman with elements of the Romantic genre Bildungsroman, which many intellectuals of the time felt was no longer capable of accounting for the complex realities of the era. Schwering sees in *Epigonen* an engagement with the romantic genre as well as an attempt at modernization, a response to the “crisis of traditional literary forms” (8). Helmut Holst also examines Immermann's engagement with Romantic literary forms, focusing instead on the fairytale genre. Holst maintains that Immermann employs the fairytale, the Romantic genre par excellence, but undermines many of its structural features, leading Immermann's conclusions to undermine Romantic world views (156). For Holst, Immermann's works represent an attempt to depict a more realistic world view than that which was offered by Romanticism (156). This is achieved, in part, through the revelation of “mystical elements” as deception, trickery, or the result of “erroneous human fancy” (155) - a tendency that can be seen also in *Karneval*. As with Schwering, Holst attributes Immerman's departure from genre expectations as indicative of a shift away from a romantic world view. The fairytale “serves Immermann as a means to disenchant an artificially conceived construct of nature” and in its place he sets “nature magic” which emanates from God (156).

Manfred Engel also addresses Immermann's use of fairytale, in addition to myth and dream, in „Frührealismus und Romantisches Erbe“ (1995). Fairytale, myth, and dream were all at the heart of the romantic understanding of *Poesie*, and therefore Engel

concludes that by examining Immermann's relationship to these genres one can examine his relationship to Romanticism (199). Although Immermann engages Romantic tradition in *Merlin*, *Epigone*, and *Münchhausen*, Engel traces a progression in these three texts away from the metaphysical treatment of myth, fairytale and dream to a more individualized use of these motifs which highlights the individual's experience. He also identifies a movement away from *Naturpoesie* of Romanticism to early Realism. Through his examination of *Merlin*, *Epigone*, and *Münchhausen* Engel makes a strong argument for Immermann's continual engagement with, as well as criticism of *Naturpoesie*, prophetic dreams, fairytales, myths, the fantastic, and other aspects of the "romantische Erbe"(208). *Karneval* shares a relationship with Romanticism similar to that depicted by Schwering, Holst and Engel. It draws on the Romantic literary motifs and discourses used to discuss somnambulism, but ultimately posits a world view separate from its Romantic predecessors. *Karneval* demystifies these romantic tropes and uses them as the basis of its satire.

Karneval contains several explicit intertextual references which work to incorporate other elements of the *romantische Erbe*. In his monograph on Immermann, Benno von Weise identifies intertextual references in *Karneval* to Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* citing not only the explicit reference to this book, but also parallel structures in the relationships between the protagonists (54).⁹⁵ Windfuhr further explores the relationship of these two texts. While the romantic relationship connecting the two couples mirrors the romantic relationship in *Wahlverwandtschaften*, the text's emphasis on depicting contemporary society mark a departure from its literary predecessors and

⁹⁵ Tilman Spreckelsen (1999) identifies intertextual connections with *Wanderjahre* as well (77).

situate the text more closely with other *Biedermeyer Zeitromanen* (99). In addition, elements of realism are introduced through the *Kriminalerzählung* which is indicated by the importance placed on fact-finding, as well as the text's inclusion of numerous testimonies and accounts (97).

Weise also marks Immerman's departure from the fantastic as a sign of Realism, “nirgends finden wir dort das Ausweichen in ferne romantische Räume oder in mythisch legendäre Zeiten” (41). Similarly, Beate Mühl's brief reading of *Karneval* locates the text in the Realism movement due to of its realistic treatment and ultimate dismissal of the wunderbaren as well as its political comments on contemporary society, “Das Thema des Wunderbaren erschöpft sich hier nicht in aussergesellschaftlicher Irrationalität. Es ist – wie die detailreiche Schilderung des Vorgangs des Magnetisierens zeigt – beschreibbar” (232). Likewise Sengel cites Immermann's rejection of “bodenlosesten Phantastereien” (823) in literature and his tendency to depict fantasy alongside rationality. His work reflects the “Detailrealismus” and the “Kult der Ding” typical of realism (823).

For Waltrud Maierhofer, it was Immermann's experiences as a lawyer that informed his realistic world view. His experiences in court informed the ambivalence he expressed regarding “Vorsehung und Schicksal, Zufall und Wunderglaube”(73), all of which were common elements in Romantic literature. Martin Greiner positions Immermann between Romanticism and Biedermeyer in terms of his political views, professional choices and personal life. He examines his disenchantment with romanticism as well as his criticism of the contemporary era as a “Zeit der geistigen Überflusse” (82).

While most readings of *Karneval* make mention of the role that animal magnetism plays in the text, only a few make it the focus of their investigation. In his chapter on

Immermann, Barkhoff (1995) contrasts the depiction of animal magnetism and romantic love in the text, concluding that the manipulative, false somnambulism is juxtaposed in the text with true love, which contains the real ability to bind two people. According to his reading, “Liebe” is the “Wirkliche Wunder, das dem falschen Zauber entgegenhalten wird” (286), a claim that will be examined here at length. Spreckelsen addresses somnambulism in his work on Androids in the literature of Immermann. Those characteristics that identify Sidonie as a somnambulist, for example the control that others exert over her and obedience to commands, can also be read as characteristics of android-ism. For him the somnambulist Sidonie is just one example of the many Androids that pervade Immermann's works.

2.0 *Karneval as an Ehegeschichte*

Der Karneval und Die Somnambule was originally intended to be two separate texts: “Der Karneval zu Köln” and “Gute Gesellschaft. Satire” (Windfuhr 95), which can account for its complex narrative structure. Karneval contains several levels of frame narratives, short descriptive digresses, and a variety of different types of texts including journal entries, legal proceedings, newspaper clippings. There is also a continuous shift in narrative voice. The reader hears multiple versions of the same event, much like one would hear at a trial, and is left to evaluate and integrate these divergent accounts.⁹⁶

Mühl aptly described Karneval as a combination of “Ehegeschichte, Individualgeschichte and Zeitgeschichte” (227). The text begins with a frame narrative in which the protagonist, Gustav, reads a notice in the newspaper, which he believes is a request from an ex-love to meet her at the Karneval in Köln. Upon announcing his plans

⁹⁶ Windfuhr (97), Maierhofer (80).

to travel to Köln, Gustav's wife Adolphine demands that he read her the section of his diary that recorded his first encounter with this former love. Gustav proceeds to relate the tale of his trip to Ems, which took place many years ago. It was there that he met a magnetist and his somnambulist Sidonie. During their first encounter, Sidonie is in a somnambular state, and asks Gustav to give her a glass of water, which she predicts will cure her. Intrigued by this pair, Gustav arranges to meet with the magnetist, who initiates him into the mysteries of animal magnetism. Gustav proceeds to have several encounters with Sidonie, with whom he appears to have an intimate bond, until she mysteriously leaves with her magnetist several days later.

At the close of the embedded narrative the plot returns to the frame narrative focusing on Gustav's trip to Köln. Gustav arrives in Köln and meets a masked woman he believes to be Sidonie at a masquerade ball. Later that evening he meets the real Sidonie, now a nun, in a church. Confused, he leaves Köln. Upon returning to his home his wife reveals that she was the masked woman, and that she had placed the announcement in the newspaper as a test of his fidelity. She then proceeds to inform Gustav that the magnetist and somnambulist he had met all those years earlier in Ems were nothing more than two con-artists, aimed at swindling him out of money. Adolphine provides records of the court case against them, which detail their tactics and include Sidonie's confession. Through a coincidence, Gustav meets the judge in Sidonie's trial while traveling, and is able to verify the accuracy of the records. The judge also shows him love letters that had been sent to the magnetist by other victims/accomplices. Among the letters was one from Adolphine. Gustav confronts his wife with the evidence, and the narrative ends with the couple's divorce.

The deceptive magnetist, using animal magnetism for his own immoral gain, is a trope well established in the works of Romanticism. Schiller's Sicilian mystic in *Der Geisterseher* (1786-1789), although not an animal magnetist specifically, uses mystical science and occult knowledge to swindle his audience. Achim von Arnim's *Grafen Dolores* (1810) also contains such a figure, who attempts to seduce a married woman with his knowledge of magnetism. Several additional examples of evil magnetists can be found in E.T.A. Hoffmann's works, including *Der Magnetiseur*, as well as *Das Gelübde* (1817) and *Der Goldene Topf* (1814). One can trace the development of this motif to other European literatures, the most famous example being Du Maurier's magnetist, Svengali, in his novel *Trilby* (1894).⁹⁷ The figure of the magnetic doctor as con artist brings together fears regarding foreign influence and sexual seduction, which were voiced already in the time of Mesmer, and reach a heightened level of popularity during German Romanticism and later in Victorian England.

Gender instability fuels conflict in the narrative and leads to the downfall of the major characters. Both Adolphine and Gustav exhibit characteristics that are not typical of their gender and which lead to instability in their marriage.⁹⁸ The text explains that Adolphine's "unfeminine characteristics" - her intense jealousy, her pride and her distrust of men – are the unfortunate result of her upbringing. She was raised by her uncle, a man of epicurean nature, who devoted his life to pleasure-travel. As a result, Adolphine was never trained in her domestic responsibility, "Eine Hauslichkeit hatte sich noch nicht

⁹⁷ Pick's text *Svengali's Web* (2000) offers an excellent examination of Maurier's Svengali in the context of Victorian England. He also traces this motif into contemporary politics, literature, film and other cultural products.

⁹⁸ I am arguing here in the same vein as Mirjam Springer (1995) who claims that Adolphine cannot embody feminine role because she cannot subvert herself to Gustav (111) while Gustav in turn does not have the authority to be a masculine figure (111).

gekannt, als sie selbst berufen ward einen zu gründen" (392). The text attributes her inability to take up domestic duties, as well as her unfeminine traits, as a result of this lack of childhood domesticity. For Mühl (1983) this upbringing is one aspect of the text's treatment of the Epochkrise, "Die Epochenkrise wird hier an der Individualentwicklung und "falschen" Erziehung Adolphines verdeutlicht. In der Überschreitung ihrer konventionellen Frauenrolle werden die Gründe für den kulturellen Verfall gesucht" (230). The inversion of gender roles, which is illustrated in the figures of Adolphine as much as in her husband, are part of Immermann's criticisms of contemporary society.

The narrator provides the reader with this background so that "man ihr (Adolphine's) Verfahren nicht gar zu unweiblich finde" (392). Adolphine exhibits numerous traits that would have been considered unfeminine in this historical context. She is worldly for a woman, having traveled her entire childhood throughout Europe. She stands in stark contrast to Gustav, who has not traveled outside of Germany. As a result, it is she who instructs her husband on the culture and art of Italy, France and other countries. In her interactions with Gustav she appears aggressive and abrasive. She demands, for example, that her husband read aloud from his journal, despite his protests. She orchestrates an entire trap to test his fidelity. In addition, she is critical and bitingly sarcastic throughout the text, laughing and sneering at him. Even when Gustav asks her to marry him, she responds by laughing at him and his emotional excess.

Adolphine's main weakness is identified in the text as her fear of her own emotions.

Auch schämte sie sich gewissermaßen ihrer Empfindung, die sie eine Schwäche nannte, sie fürchtete eine volle Hingebung, die sie einmal so schwer hatte büßen müssen; abwechselnd kokett und kalt, traf sie nie das rechte Wort, welches ein

unschuldiges Wesen aus der Fülle der überströmenden Liebe dem Manne zu sagen vermag (393).

Aldophine is uncomfortable with the very emotionality that was identified at the time as a key characteristic of femininity. For her, emotions are a weakness (Schwäche), and she has difficulty expressing her love towards her husband. The text suggests two reasons behind her fear of emotions. For one, she was raised outside of the domestic sphere, and therefore did not receive the domestic upbringing necessary to socialize young girls. She also did not have a positive male role model. Her male guardian was not fatherly towards her. As a result, she lacked the security of a father figure and domestic sphere, which resulted in her discomfort with emotions and her unfeminine behavior.

The text also alludes to an unfortunate romance that occurred before meeting Gustav. Later in the text the reader learns that the emotional “Hingebung” mentioned in the quote above was her relationship with the unnamed magnetist many years ago. It was this experience in love that soured her on future relationships. Taken together, her decidedly unfeminine upbringing along with her destructive previous relationship leaves her incapable of expressing her emotions. Instead of love, she vacillates between “Stolz, Wehmut und Lachen” (393) as well as fits of jealousy and insecurity. Her fear of her own emotionality is presented in the text as the root of her destructive behavior.

Gustav, in turn, exhibits many characteristics that go against the masculine norm. His marriage to Adolphine is an inversion of traditional gender roles. It is described in the text as “eine von den Ehen, die nicht unter dem Segen des Spruchs: Und er soll dein Herr sein! geschlossen sind” (392). Gustav is not the head of his household because he cannot command the respect of his wife. Instead he gives into his wife's every demand. The text attributes this to two main factors: (1) that Gustav is unworldly, having gained

his knowledge through books but not practical experience and (2) that he is overly sentimental, a characteristic that is often taken advantage of by his wife.⁹⁹ Unlike his wife, Gustav has not traveled beyond Germany. His one attempt at international travel was thwarted by romance. Before meeting his wife, Gustav set out on his Italian trip, an important phase of a young man's development. He does not make it out of Germany, however, because he meets Adolphine and falls in love. Instead of traveling “in fremde Länder” Gustav travels “in den Ehestand” (323). As a result, “alles was ich von Frankreich und Italien weiß, habe ich aus Reisebeschreibungen und durch den mündlichen Unterricht meiner Frau“ (323). This is an inversion of traditional gender roles of the time. It was customary for the man to go on an extended trip through other European countries in order to complete his education. It was the man, in turn, who was to educate his wife. Traditionally, the woman's knowledge of foreign countries came through her husband, through *Reiseberichte*, and through her own limited travel at the side of her husband. Here, however, it is the worldly-wife who educates her husband.

Gustav's lack of travel experience is mentioned repeatedly throughout the text. His shortcomings as a man are reflected in his limited travel experience and enables Adolphine to exert power over her husband. For example, when describing a missed opportunity he had to become a diplomat, Gustav concludes with the sentence “Das geschah, ehe meine Frau mir Unterricht über Italien und Frankreich gab” (326). Later in the narrative, as Gustav wishes to travel to Köln for Karneval, Adolphine degrades the German Karneval tradition, describing it as “pedantisches Vergnügen” and arguing that it

⁹⁹ Claudia Liver (1987) draws a similar conclusion when she writes Gustav's romantic tendencies are deemed the reason why he is the victim of the hoax. His „mangelnder Sinn für das Reale verantwortlich, und beide stehen im Zeichen des Romantischen“ (91).

cannot compare to what she has seen in Italy (328). When he tries to defend the German Karneval tradition, she merely laughs at him.

It is not until the end of *Karneval* that the narrator makes explicit the causal relationship between the couple's disparate travel experience and their marital unhappiness.

Indessen blieb das Glück diesem Bunde fern. Der nacherworbene Geliebte hätte ihr imponieren müssen, das war nicht der Fall. Scheinbar beschränkt, erfahrungslos, stand er der Vielgereisten, die alles gesehen und gehört hat, gegenüber. (393)

The marriage is never a happy one because of a power imbalance that is at odds with normative gender roles. Travel here plays a key role. Gustav cannot impress his wife with his experiences, and is limited in his world-view. As a result he cannot earn her respect as her husband.

Gustav also displays a type of sentimental masculinity that makes him ineffectual in his marriage to Adolphine. His wife sees him as a “weichen gutmütigen Mann“ (393), equating his sentimentality with weakness. Gustav seems to agree with his wife's assessment, viewing his sentimentality as a source of weakness. For example, Gustav initially refuses to read aloud from his diary at Sidonie's request, but ultimately gives into her commenting “Ich war so verlegen, wie es ein Mann von Geist und Gefühl nur sein kann” (329). Only a sentimental man of Geist und Gefühl would fall prey to the demands of his wife. He continues, “Ach, hätte ich weniger Geist, und etwas mehr gesunden Menschenverstand gehabt, ich glaube, ich wäre nicht so vernagelt gewesen” (329). It is his Geist, which he links to sentimentality in the previous sentence, that prevents him from avoiding the unpleasant task of bearing his soul to his wife. In the end he reads the

journal entry to her, but can only do so once she is turned away from him, so that he cannot look her in the face.

Through these examples the text concludes that Gustav and Adolphine are incorrectly matched. Gustav's sentimentality and limited world view are presented as weaknesses. Adolphine's aggression, her manipulative tendencies, and her discomfort with her own emotions characterize her as unfeminine and an unsuitable partner for Gustav. The text traces the dissolution of their marriage as Gustav's passion of a previous love is accidentally sparked by Adolphine's test of his fidelity. There are parallels between this frame narrative and Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften*, parallels which the text strengthens through explicit intertextual references. Just as Eduard and Charlotte's marriage is destabilized through the introduction of the Captain and Ottilie, so too is Gustav and Adolphine's marriage destabilized with the re-introduction of Sidonie and the magnetist. The theories of animal magnetism replace the chemical theory of elective affinities as the scientific lens through which human interactions are observed.

4.0 Somnambulism in *Karneval*

Sidonie is the *Somnambüle* referred to in the title, and it is her relationship with the magnetist that acts as the catalyst for much of the plot. By the end of the text it is revealed that the majority of her behaviors as a somnambulist were part of an elaborate hoax. The accusations of fraud made against Sidonie are reminiscent of other scandals involving a deceptive somnambulist. Critics of animal magnetism cautioned against “deliberate deception or fraud” which was believed to be “most often perpetrated by the somnambulist” describing the phenomena as “cheap tricks” (Crabtree 180). There were

several scandals that erupted around accusations of fraud, which seemed to make credible such criticisms. Critics believed that somnambulists (especially female somnambulists) would attempt to deceive their magnetist in order to continue receiving special treatment. One documented case of such deception was that of Maria Rübel, a somnambulist treated by Adolph Köttgen in Langenberg around 1818. Early in her treatment the woman exhibited somnambular abilities including the ability to perceive objects and read words with closed and bound eyes (Moser 137). Once her ailment improved she seemed to have lost many of her abilities. Maria resorted to “stupid and clumsy deceptions” (Moser 137) to keep up the appearance of somnambulism. Liselotte Moser summarizes several attempts of fraud, for which Maria eventually confessed, including opening and re-sealing letters she was supposed to read while blindfolded (145) and injuring herself intentionally so that she could later diagnose the nature of her ailment (145). The discovery of fraud created a large scandal.

In order to fool the unsuspecting Gustav, both Sidonie and her magnetist go through great lengths to mimic the commonly cited characteristics of somnambulism and the rapport that binds the patient to the physician.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, Sidonie’s case, had it appeared in the medical journals, may have appeared extreme, as she embodies a large spectrum of the somnambular ailments and abilities that were thought possible. Tilman Spreckelsen suggests that Immermann was influenced by *Die Seherin von Prevorst*, which appeared in publication at the same time that *Karneval* was written. While this does seem a possibility, I am hesitant to name Kerner’s text the soul model for Immermann’s somnambulist, as many of the abilities that Sidonie possess were well

¹⁰⁰ The text emphasizes repeatedly that Sidonie was unaware of the extent of the fraud, believing that her role in the deception was harmless.

documented before the publication of *Die Seherin von Prevorst*. She is capable of diagnosing her own illness as well as prescribing a cure. The cure that she prescribes takes the form of water, which draws parallels to the magnetized water often used in animal magnetic experiments to bring about crisis as well as a cure. Her ability to prescribe a cure goes hand in hand with her clairvoyant talents. The magnetist remarks that Sidonie had announced to him the exact day and time of Gustav's arrival, as well as a detailed description of his appearance. In addition to these abilities, Gustav learns of Sidonie's other behaviors including speaking in her sleep, her ability to read letters with her eyes closed, and an ability to see things from a great distance. Finally Sidonie is said to have a great sensitivity to metal, a detail which enables the magnetist to gain access to Gustav's room key and other valuable possessions.

The magnetist also embodies his role in the hoax in a stereotypical way, exaggerating the mystical elements of the practice so that even Gustav detects some element of “Rosenkreuzerei, Geisterbannen oder Scharlatanerie” (334). When the magnetist enters Gustav’s room, he is covered by a “weiten rotausgefütterten Carbonaro” (333) and carries with him a black tablecloth, candles, two daggers and a *Totenkopf*, which he sets in a specific order on the table. Although unusual clothing was worn by Mesmer and those in his practice in order to facilitate the animal magnetic process, my research indicates that such measures were not generally used by German practitioners of animal magnetism during the nineteenth-century. Furthermore, none of the objects mentioned have a specific association with the medical practice of animal magnetism. It is possible that magnetist’s own ignorance of animal magnetism is being depicted through his eclectic use of objects associated with an array of occult practices. It is also

possible that the text is satirizing the branch of mystical magnetism that was gaining popularity in Germany at the time.¹⁰¹ Either way, the magnetist's use of these objects is an attempt to mystify animal magnetism, an attempt that falls short of its goal and appears to both Gustav and the reader as excessive and ridiculous. We see here a satire too of Gothic Literature. Elements of the Gothic mode, such as symbols of death, physical seclusion and mysterious societies are common elements in Gothic literature. They are used to increase the sense of mystery and illicit fear from both the characters in the text and the reader. This scene, however, fails to elicit fear in Gustav who sees it instead as a ridiculous exaggeration. Gustav disarms any potential fear the reader might feel, thereby undermining the goals of Gothic literature.

Other, less sensational, attributes characterize the magnetist as a practitioner of animal magnetism. Descriptions of the magnetist's eyes echo back to previous literary depictions of animal magnetism. Twice in the same encounter Gustav describes the magnetist's gaze as “durchbohrender” (339):

...der Arzt warf einen Blick, den man wirklich durchbohrend nennen konnte, auf die Leidende, dann strich er sich; mit der Hand über die Stirn, und erschien nun als ein verwandelter Mensch (339).

and later

Sein (Arzt) durchbohrender Blick, seine nachherige Freundlichkeit – diese Kontraste hatten etwas Furchterliches (339).

The preposition contained within the term *durchbohrend* emphasizes the spatial relationship contained in the phrase. As we have seen in the Hoffmann texts, a metaphor for penetration is used to describe the gaze of the magnetist and its effects on the

¹⁰¹ In 1839 Fischer, writing a history of magnetism, would criticize the practice of mystical magnetism “Er verschmähte es nicht, die Wirksamkeit des Magnetismus durch mysteriöse Apparate und Ceremonien zu erhöhen und ihn bloß auf Wunderkuren zu verwenden” (29).

somnambulist. Whereas in the first excerpt the magnetist's gaze enters Sidione, Gustav has been substituted in the second excerpt for the female somnambulist. The magnetist's gaze is now penetrating Gustav, placing him in the position of the somnambulist, and giving the first indication that it is Gustav, and not Sidonie, who is the target of the magnetist's influential power.

Gustav himself comments on the accuracy of the animal magnetic session, stating that it follows every account he has read exactly. Here it would appear that it is precisely Gustav's knowledge of the subject, which is completely academic, that causes him to fall prey to the magnetist (Barkhoff 1995, 283). Although he had read "mit Interesse die Schriften über den Magnetismus" he had never experienced magnetism or somnambulism first hand, was never "selbst in den Kreis jener Erscheinungen gedrungen" (330). Ironically, Gustav is in the position of being less equipped to see through this charade precisely because of the reading he has done on the topic. In addition to his lack of practical experience with animal magnetism, Gustav's gullibility and general interest in all things mysterious make him the perfect target.

The "*Urrapport*" (340) the Gustav supposedly has with Antonie prompts the Magnetist to initiate him into the secrets of animal magnetism. Such initiation is reminiscent of the Society of Harmony and Masonic groups. These organizations were composed of exclusively upper-class men and were based in secrecy. Members had to pay a fee to enter the society with the expectation that, once inducted, they would have access to secret mysterious information (Darnton 73). Rituals or initiation such as these play a vital role in constructing masculinity and institutionalizing masculine domination. Bourdieu describes the role of such rituals in the following terms

[...] rites of institution occupy a place apart, by virtue of their solemn and extraordinary character: they aim to set up, in the name of the whole assembled community, a sacred separation not only, as it is suggested by the notion of the rite of passage, between those who have already received the distinctive mark and those who have not yet received it, (...) but also and more importantly between those who are socially worthy to receive it and those who are forever excluded from it, in other words the woman... (24).

Gustav's initiation into magnetism contains many of these features. The extraordinary character of Gustav's initiation constructs exactly what Boudieu describes as a „space apart“ from the everyday world of with the “Geklapper der Teller” and “Schwätze einer Wirtstafel” (332). The magnetist tells Gustav that a secluded place is required in order to speak of “den zartesten Wundern der Welt” (332). This separation is re-enforced spatially by their retreat from the bustle of the common room to the seclusion of Gustav's private room. The magnetist bring several symbolic objects into Gustav's room—candles, a skull, daggers, and a black cloth – hoping to draw further divisions between this space and that of the everyday world. The magnetist's clothing, the “weiten rotausgefuetterten Carbonaro”, sets him apart from Gustav, who is described as wearing “einen blauen Frack und Pantalons von graugestreiftem Gingham” (330). In his clinic in France, Mesmer also wore exotic and foreign clothing during his healing. Like the Japanese robes used by Mesmer, the Carbonaro has the added function of characterizing the magnetist, and therefore magnetism, as foreign and exotic. Taken together, the mysterious objects, exotic clothing and physical separation from “everyday life” work to construct the space apart that Bourdieu identifies as necessary for an initiation ceremony. Once the room has been prepared the magnetist delivers an initiatory speech

Schwören Sie, mein Herr, keinem Unberufenen etwas von dem zu entdecken, was Sie sogleich hören werden; schören Sie auf dieses Symbol des Todes, und schwerter, schaft wie die, welche Sie vor sich sehen, mögen den Busen des Eidbrüchigen durchschneiden! (333)

The magnetist's address is intended to create a solemn atmosphere, and impress upon Gustav the gravity of the ceremony. Within the language of the oath, the magnetist draws boundaries between an absent community that is privy to the mystery, and the those elements of society which are not. The "Unberufenen" represent those who do not have access to the secret, who have not been chosen to share in the mystery. By referencing those who have not been chosen, the magnetist attempts to establish the boundaries between those who are worthy to receive the secret knowledge and those who are not, a key aspect of rituals of institutionalization, as Bourdieu explains. The existence of a society of magnetists is also indicated at the beginning of the magnetist's speech, in which he makes the following assertion:

Ich pflege jedem, den ich für würdig halte, einen Blick in das Heiligtum des Lebens tun zu lassen, zuvor den Eid der Verschwiegenheit abzunehmen. Auch Sie, mein Herr, muß ich ersuchen, sich dieser Regel zu unterwerfen (333).

The word "jedem" references the other people that have been initiated, and in doing so helps establish the ritualistic nature of this encounter. Each person has been initiated in exactly this way with this same oath. Likewise, the inclusion of "auch Sie" reinforces that Gustav will undergo the same process as those who have gone before him, confirming the existence of a larger community of followers, as well as presenting the initiation ritual as time honored tradition. The oath of silence solidifies the boundary between insider and outsider and insures the continued power of the institution by guaranteeing that no one will enter the secret without the permission of the institution. Among those who have been excluded from entrance into this organization are women, as Bourdieu illustrates. Indeed, although Sidonie plays a key role in animal magnetism,

she is not included in the ritual. Her presence in the neighboring room is indicated only by “ein leises aber heftiges Weinen” that can be heard during the magnetist’s speech (333). Her auditory presence draws attention to her exclusion. By excluding, and physically separating Sidonie from the ritual, the initiation plays a role in the construction of hegemonic masculinity and institutionalizing male domination. Once privy to the secret of magnetism, Gustav will have access to Sidonie as well as the power to dominate her, power that she will never have over herself or others.

In addition to drawing distinctions between those in the circle and those not, the magnetist’s speech endows him with the power of judging worthiness. Only those, who “ich für würdig halte” can enter into the group. This phrase both constructs and re-affirms his power within the organization. The magnetist makes clear that it is not by virtue of his gender alone that Gustav is deemed worthy of the secret, rather, he must prove himself worthy of this distinction. The magnetist engages him in conversation, observes him, and asks him about his opinion of animal magnetism. Gustav is aware that the interrogation will determine his entrance into the group and “stellt [sich] noch gläubiger, als ich im Grunde war, um ihn nur recht zutraulich zu machen” (333). It is only after the magnetist judged him worthy of entrance into the secret that the men retreated to the other space.

What is missing from this ritual scene, according to the definition of Bourdieu, is an assembled community. Although the existence of other magnetists is indicated through linguistic references, the ritual undoubtedly loses some of its effectiveness in light of this absence. It is perhaps this lack of an assembly, re-enforcing the symbolic potency of the ritual, that leads Gustav to detect elements of “Rosenkreuzerei,

Geisterbannen oder Scharlatanerie” but ultimately decide that “Klingeln gehört zum Handwerk” (334).

The ritual has an effect on Gustav as a masculine subject. After Gustav has been initiated into the mystery of magnetism his position within the dynamic is made clear to him. The magnetist attributes to Gustav a natural, or “Urrapport” (340), which is not reliant on magnetic manipulation, over Sidonie. *Urrapport* suggests that Gustav possesses a magnetic virility that allows him to exert control over this woman without having had any training to this effect. It also marks Gustav as someone spectacular, with unique abilities that will usher in “eine neue Epoche in der Geschichte des Magnetismus” (340). Given that the ability to magnetize was an exclusively male attribute, it would seem to suggest that one who could magnetize without any effort must be especially masculine. The magnetic relations Gustav believes exists between the himself and the somnambulist constructs traditional gender roles. Male dominance is asserted over a female subject and a subsequent bond is formed between the two men. Gustav's participation as a magnetist in this social dynamic marks him, in his mind, as a masculine subject capable of domination the “weaker sex” and forging bonds with other men.

Gustav's magnetic virility and entrance into the magnetic society has also altered his relationship with the magnetist. The magnetist describes rapport, as it is normally found in cases of magnetism, as an exclusive relationship between the magnetist and the somnambulist. In the instance of Sidonie, however, this dynamic has been altered:

Ein Dritter, ein Fremder tritt in den Zauberkreis, der innigste Rapport scheint ihn an diesen Kreis, an die Person, welche in dem Mittelpunkte des Kreises sich befindet, zu knüpfen (336).

If one follows the metaphor, in which rapport constitutes a circle which encompasses the somnambulist and places her in the middle, then Gustav's entrance into the circle would seem to place him in the same space as the magnetist himself. Sidonie is still in the middle, but now there are two men who are influencing her in different, but supposedly equal, ways.

This new position of power, as well as acceptance into the society of magnetism, gives Gustav new freedoms with regards to his interactions with Sidonie. He is allowed greater access to Sidonie which includes a private meeting with her in her room the following morning. Having disturbed her in her morning clothes, Gustav justifies his otherwise inappropriate boldness with rapport.

Eine Kühnheit kann hier nur durch die andre gerechtfertigt werden... Lassen Sie mich Ihnen sagen, Gräfin, daß ich alles weiß. Steht mein Wesen zu dem Ihrigen in dem wunderbaren Verhältnisse, von dem mir Ihr Arzt erzählt hat, so wird Sie meine Offenheit nicht beleidigen (337).

His apparent transgression, entering Sidonie's bedroom while she is in inappropriate dress, is justifiable because of the rapport that he has with Sidonie. Capable of penetrating her mind, he seems to find nothing wrong with also entering her space.

It is ironic that the moment in which Gustav believes to be empowered through magnetism is in fact the moment in which he becomes the victim of the hoax. Far from achieving mastery over Sidonie or equality with the magnetist, Gustav is in fact the victim of their manipulation (Barkhoff 283). The effect of this three-pronged animal magnetic relationship, and the position of masculinity that is constructed as a result, is undermined at the conclusion of the text when the animal magnetism is revealed to be an elaborate hoax. The conclusion forces both the reader as well as Gustav to rethink the

roles in this bizarre social dynamic. Positions of power shift as it is revealed that it was Gustav, not Sidonie, on whom powers of mental influence were being directed.

The influential powers attributed to animal magnetism are replaced by the magnetist's ability to manipulate his victims through deceit and cunning. The magnetist manipulates through deceit as one would manipulate a somnambulist, and this manipulation is expressed in language that echoes theories of somnambulism. In her biting criticism of Gustav, Adolphine reveals the truth behind the hoax using terminology of animal magnetism:

Auch das Unglaubliche zu glauben, und eine handgreifliche Komödie für Wahrheit zu halten, das – lieber Gustav- hast du mir ja selbst vorgelesen. Jenes Glas Wasser auf der Bäderlei bezauberte dich, du warst blind für alles, was sich dir aufdrängen mußte. Ich unglückliche Frau! daß ich es weiß, was noch außerdem dir die Binde fester um die Augen zog! (380)

Adolphine uses the language of animal magnetism to mock her husband. The almost magical powers of water are referred to in this passage. The glass of water that he gave to Sidonie had an almost supernatural effect on Gustav, not Sidonie. The “verborgene Kräfte des Wassers“ (336) that were said to have healed Sidonie are now revealed to be fake. The only power that the water had was the manipulative powers that the magnetist and Sidonie exerted over Gustav. This water, a symbol for Gustav's initial encounter with the two, put Gustav in a state that is ironically described here as one of somnambulism. It was he that was “bezaubert”. He was made blind by the encounter, and thus susceptible to manipulation. The motif of blindness and references to blindfolds are reminiscent of numerous experiments on somnambulists, in which their sight was impaired in order to prove their somnambulist abilities. Like the somnambulist who is responsive only to the magnetist, Gustav also is under the power of those deceiving him.

What is described here as a type of deceptive rapport leaves Gustav vulnerable to manipulation.

Aldophine continues her mockery of Gustav's gullibility:

Als du nun da saßest hinter deinem Schirme, vertieft in ihren Anblick, ging ja der Edle hinaus, um zu sehen, ob du allein für dich ohne seine Gegenwart mit ihr in Rapport stehst. Es galt aber noch ein andres Experiment. Er hatte die Schlüssel sacht mitgenommen, der Man der Wunder setzte sich mit deiner Schatulle in Rapport, d.h. er stahl sie, kam dann wieder, legte die Schlüssel sacht an ihren Ort, und du wurdest fortgeschickt, weil der Zweck der Session erreicht war. (381)

The scientific nature of the magnetic experiment is undermined by equating it with the “experiment” of deception. The legitimacy of Gustav's rapport with Sidonie, the bond that justified their love and Gustav's masculinity, is destroyed. The mystical relationship that Gustav believed existed between the two of them is placed at the same level as thievery. In using the language of somnambulism to sarcastically depict the hoax, Aldophine destroys any mystery associated with this magnetic encounter. She lays bare the truth behind the experience, and in doing so, reveals both the power of the magnetist's deception as well as Gustav's own weakness.

Despite its mocking tone and biting sarcasm, Aldophine's account of the magnetic experiment does depict the actual power of the magnetist, namely the power to deceive, and presents it as the legitimate counterpart of animal magnetism. It was not his manipulation of invisible fluids that enabled the magnetist to exert influence over Gustav, but rather, his abilities of deception that enabled him to exert a magnetic like influence over those around him. Her retelling of the events also suggests the role that romantic attraction played in this deception. Gustav was „vertieft in ihren Anblick“ and

bezaubert by her presence, suggesting that erotic attraction can also be discussed in terms of somnambulism.

The form his deception took was carefully selected to prey on the victim's weakness. The magnetist's hoax appealed to Gustav's interest in mysterious phenomena, his emotional disposition, and his longing to identify with another model of masculinity. The magnetist convinced Gustav of his masculine prowess by offering him the opportunity to control Sidonie through somnambulism. He promised to reveal the secrets of animal magnetism to Gustav, thus including him in an exclusive male society defined by its exclusion of women and unworthy men. Gustav is a man who identifies himself in the narrative as emotional and weak and it was precisely these attributes which the magnetist's hoax appealed.

4.0 Romantic Love

Romantic love plays a pivotal role in Immermann's text. Like deception, romantic love is presented in the text as a medium which binds individuals and is articulated in the text through the language of somnambulism. Love emerges as the positive embodiment of the manipulative force and is contrasted with the destructive manipulative powers of deception, the “Wirkliche Wunder, das dem falschen Zauber entgegenhalten wird” (Barkhoff 1995, 286). Whereas the accounts of (supposed) rapport between Sidonie and the magnetist were described in terms of domination, the language used to describe Gustav's somnambulism and rapport with Sidonie are indicative of romantic love, culminating in a ring ceremony.

While Sidonie plays the role of somnambulist, she also exerts a kind of magnetic influence over Gustav, one that is sexually charged. The characterization of Sidonie in the text bares striking resemblance to that of Antonie in *Magie der Natur*. Gustav offers the following description of Sidonie, written after their first encounter:

Ich sah eine volle, hohe Gestalt, ich sah in zwei dunkle, brennende Augen. Sie zog einen Kurbecher aus ihrem Korb, und sprach mit einer Stimme, die zwischen Furcht und Kühnheit schwankte... 331

Tall and mysterious with dark *brennende Augen*, Sidonie shares a similar physical description to Antonie. The dark eyes are associated with the mysteries of animal magnetism, and her gaze is marked as something that leaves a physical impression, namely burning. Sidonie's presence brings about an altered state in Gustav. When she approaches him for the first time, he finds himself drawn to her "unwillkürlich" (330), an adverb that has been used time and time again to describe the unconscious pull of the somnambulist towards a magnetized object. When Sidonie announces that only Gustav can fetch the water she requires, he "empfang mechanisch das Gefäß aus ihrer Hand" (331) and follows the instructions she has given him. Such mechanical movement and adherence to orders is symptomatic of one in a somnambular state, and suggests that Sidonie may have such an influence over him. Other encounters with Sidonie produce equally passive and suggestible behavior, creating a somnambular state in Gustav in which wake and sleep are blurred. As Sidonie returns Gustav's belongings to him, Gustav is overcome with strong emotions, which send him into a state in which he is no longer in control of himself. He describes his mental state the following: "Mir vergingen die Sinne, ich wusste nicht, was ich tat" (347). The lack of agency, as well as an absence of rational thought are indications of a state akin to somnambulism. He makes

exclamations of love, but does so besides himself “...rief ich ausser mir”, suggesting a passive position. The altered state is directly named in the text the moment that Sidonine gives Gustav her ring. The text states: “Sie (Sidonie) streifte einen kostbaren Brillantring vom Finger, ich empfang ihn wie ein Träumender” (348). In placing himself in the position of a Träumender, and reaching dream-like for the ring, Gustav is drawing a direct connection between his current state and one of somnambulism.

Often times the magnetic influence that Sidonie exerts over Gustav is accompanied with eroticism. Animal magnetism was believed by both practitioners and critics alike to have the potential to foster sexual desire. The bond of rapport was thought to be so strong as to induce in the somnambulist an intense affection for her magnetist. It was believed that even the most upstanding of magnetists could be affected by the devotion and admiration of the young woman and begin to reciprocate feelings of love and/or eroticism. Aside from the strong emotional bond that could develop between the two, the potential of somnambulism to manifest itself in physical erotic stimulation was cause for concern. Some accounts of somnambulism drew parallels, either directly or indirectly, between the state of crisis and orgasm. Heavy breathing, bodily contortions, and a climax followed by a sense of calm and well being – all these symptoms lead some to suggest that somnambulism had an erotic effect on the patient.

Gustav recognizes early on the erotic potential of animal magnetism and comments on it directly. After an encounter with Sidonie and the magnetist, Gustav returns to his room in anxious contemplation:

In meinem Zimmer war es mir zu eng, zu ängstlich. Ich schämte mich, ich weiß nicht weshalb? ich wünschte, ich weiß nicht was? Ich war verstimmt, ich weiß nicht worüber? Unwillkürlich schweiften meine Gedanken nach dem Schlafzimmer der Somnambule, ich sah den Arzt sich mit ihr beschäftigen, sie

berühren. Der geistige Zwang, den in diesem Zustande ein Wesen über das andre sich anmaßt, die schrankenlose Hingebung eines Weibes in den Willen des Mannes kam mir unnatürlich, widerlich vor und doch wäre ich gerne an der Stelle des Magnetiseurs gewesen (342).

This passage traces Gustav's reaction to the relationship between the magnetist and Sidonie as a mixture of shame, disapproval, desire and what the protagonist later identifies as jealousy. The opening questions, which are left unfinished, represent feelings of shame, desire and approval indicated by the verbs *schämen*, *wünschen*, and *verstimmen* respectively. His thoughts travel to Sidonie's bedroom, where in a moment of voyeurism, he fantasies about the doctor's interactions with the patient. In emphasizing the accidental nature of this imaginative journey into Sidonie's intimate sphere Gustav suggests that his thoughts were anything but accidental. In his mind's eye he watches the magnetist touch her, attend to her, and despite his several clauses denouncing this action as *unnatürlich* he ultimately admits to himself his own desire for Sidonie. He too wishes he could not only have the physical contact that he fantasizes about, but also the mental influence that would result in her complete and limitless submission to him. There is a tension in this passage between the erotic and emotional control over Sidonie that Gustav desires, and a sense of moral decency that deems such a relationship as inappropriate, and produces in him feelings of shame. This conflict will later be resolved in the text through romantic love.

Gustav's encounters with Sidonie reflect the attraction he admits feeling for her and articulates this attraction through the language of somnambulism. As Sidonie speaks to him, Gustav finds himself drawn in by her words and appearance, in a manner that combines elements of somnambulism and characteristics of erotic attraction. Listening to her he remarks "Sidonie war so schön! - Meine Lippen bebten, mir wurde sehr warm"

(338). Gustav's quivering mouth is depicted as moving without his control and is reminiscent of the uncontrolled movements that somnambulists would undergo during magnetic sleep. Likewise, the transmission of energy from magnetist to somnambulist, indicated here by feelings of warmth, suggests magnetic rapport. At the same time, the warming of the body is also an indication of sexual excitement. The exclamation of Sidonie's beauty that precedes this somnambulist characteristic suggests that the somnambular reaction is at least in part brought on by erotic attraction. In this way eroticism and rapport are equated.

The conflict between an inappropriate sexualized magnetic rapport and the erotic feelings Gustav feels for Sidonie are resolved through romantic love – which is manifested in a marriage proposal. Upon finding the couple together, the magnetist admonishes Gustav for betraying the practice through his eroticizing of rapport. Gustav has, according to the magnetist, “Leidenschaft und Verworenheit in den heiligsten Kreis getragen” and imposes upon him the importance of maintaining pure thoughts during magnetism “Wissen Sie nicht, daß der magnetische Rapport nur von der Unschuld, von dem ruhigen Frieden des Gemüts beschützt wird?” (348) Gustav watches the magnetist leave with Sidonie and feels torn between feelings of guilt and entitlement.

Ich wollte nach; hatte sie sich nicht mir zu eigen gegeben? Trug ich nicht ihren Ring? Ich mußte mich zurückhalten; hatte der Arzt nicht recht? (348)

Erotic rapport, for which the doctor admonishes Gustav, is justified with romantic love – symbolized by the engagement ring. Gustav seems to suggest in the first two sentences that Sidonie offered herself to him in love, not somnambulism, and therefore he is entitled to her. At the same time, he articulates feelings of residual guilt – wondering if, perhaps, the romantic love that ensued was sparked by his misuse of animal magnetism.

Gustav is robbed while pondering these questions, and never reaches a conclusion.

Broke and beaten down, Gustav leaves town the next day.

5.0 Conclusion

Der Karneval und die Somnambüle is a satirical look at many elements of somnambulism that were an integral part of Romantic literature including mysticism, the suppression of erotic desires, and the morally upright motives of the magnetist. Instead, the narrative reveals the ceremony, props and oaths behind animal magnetism as ridiculous, thus deconstructing any potential mysticism. The magnetist's motives are not the welfare of the somnambulist, but rather sexual and monetary gain. Even the power of men to control women through somnambulism is exposed as an illusion. Gustav's desire to possess Sidonie completely results in his submission to her. Furthermore the text undermines the type of man who would be interested in animal magnetism, presenting him as overly sensitive, unworldly, and gullible. Gustav falls victim to the magnetist's hoax precisely because he longs to embody those masculine traits of strength, discipline, and knowledge that are associated with magnetism. The *Männerbund* that he believes he has established with the magnetist is merely part of the hoax.

At the same time, however, the text aims to uncover the true forces of manipulation that enable individuals to exert their influence over others, namely deception and romantic love. Animal Magnetism is replaced in the text with these other models of social interaction, a connection that is made explicit through the borrowing of metaphors and language from animal magnetic theory. The boundaries between these two forces, however, are anything but clear. Love turns into deception, as we see in the

marriage between Adolphine and Gustav. What started as love develops into deception and manipulation by a jealous wife. At the same time, there is also the possibility of deception turning into love, as was the case with Sidonie. The two forces flow in and out of one another, so that it is uncertain where one begins and the other ends.

Love does not have the power to overcome deception in the narrative. The text does not leave the reader with a happy ending, nor the hope of reconciliation between either Adolphine and Gustav, or Sidonie and Gustav. In this way Immermann moves away from the romantic endings of *Magie der Natur* and *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* in which mystical forces unite lovers against all odds. Love is not the “Wirkliche Wunder“ with the power to overcome “falschen Zauber entgegenhalten wird,” as Barkhoff would have us believe.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Instances of male somnambulism in Romantic German literature exhibit diverse challenges to, and support of, hegemonic masculinity. The four texts under consideration here illustrate the numerous ways in which somnambulism influences those social interactions that shape masculinities including homosocial bonding, *Männerbund* and initiation rituals, partner choice, communication among men and homoeroticism. Male somnambulism in these texts occurs in both the military and the domestic spheres, under a variety of conditions. Due to this diversity, it would be unproductive to try and identify one role that male somnambulism plays in constructing masculinity. Nor would such an endeavor be desirable as it would negate the plurality of masculinities that are constructed in the texts. Having said that, it is possible to identify several distinctly male forms of interaction that are frequently negotiated through the motif of male somnambulism.

Relationships between men in the context of military hierarchy are mediated through somnambulism. This motif is present in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* and *Der Magnetiseur*. In Kleist's text somnambulism is presented as a liability within military culture. The close rapport between Homburg and his sovereign that is mediated through somnambulism is the result of Homburg's undisciplined mind. The very attributes that make him susceptible to somnambulism, namely his impressionability, suggestibility and

open-ness, are the attributes that separate him from the hegemonic masculine ideal, an ideal that is vocalized through the Kurfürst and Natalie. Only through suppressing and re-directing these characteristics can Homburg form himself in the image of the masculine ideal and assume a position of authority in a household, as evidence by his engagement at the conclusion of the narrative. This act of suppressing is achieved through writing in the text. Writing indicates the attainment of those hegemonic masculine characteristics that somnambulism threatens: namely self control, reflection and discipline. Through writing Homburg controls his somnambulism and reconstructs himself in the image of the hegemonic ideal that is vocalized by the men and women around him.

Male somnambulism in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* represents a type of minority masculinity against which the hegemonic values can be articulated. Through their encounter with the male somnambulist, Natalie, the Kurfürst and others identify the hegemonic ideal by voicing their criticisms against the male somnambulist and all the ways in which he fails to be a true man. We see in the relationship between the somnambulist Homburg, Natalie and the Kurfürst the paradox defined by Connell. Although somnambulism threatens the male ideal and by extension the gender order, this threat is necessary to ultimately establish the lend credence to the hegemonic ideal.

This same tension between the necessity of male somnambulism to define and empower the hegemonic ideal constructed in the military sphere, while at the same time threatening it, is at the core of the Hoffman's *Der Magnetiseur* as well. In *Der Magnetiseur* male somnambulism is used as a motif to articulate the homoerotic

attraction that is fundamental to, and at the same time destructive to, military culture. Somnambulism explains the sadomasochistic attraction that the young men have towards their abusive superior, thereby depicting in an extreme form the hierarchy in military culture. This vision of military obedience is de-naturalized through the use of somnambulism. The young men's obedience towards and attraction to their superior does not stem from a belief in the major's virtue or a commitment to their inferior place within a hierarchy, as we see in *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, but rather is achieved by means of magnetism. What emerges is a critical depiction of military society in which magnetism is an abuse of power that structures the military hierarchy.

In Fouqué's *Magie der Natur*, the military environment is seen as an alternative to the destructive forces of female magnetism and male somnambulism. The military is constructed in the text as a male sphere in which Adalbert can find refuge from the gender ambiguity brought on by his somnambulism. With its focus on action, physical discipline and bravery, the military provides an escape from the destructive mental influence of Antonie, and the mental and physical weakness that Adalbert feels in her presence.

Adalbert's somnambulism threatens his masculinity by bringing forth in him those characteristics that contradict the hegemonic ideal, namely impressionability, weakness and a lack of discipline. This challenge to his masculinity prompts him to engage in several behaviors including military service and dueling, in an attempt to reconstruct his masculine identity. By positioning Adalbert in a type of social interaction with Antonie that reconstructs his identity in a minority masculinity, male somnambulism in the text

offers the opportunity to re-integrate himself in the masculine ideal. Texts such as *Magie der Natur* provide a space in which hegemonic masculinity can be temporarily threatened, and then reconstructed through diverse forms of male social interaction.

A second form of social interaction mediated by male somnambulism is the relationship between men and the object of inappropriate erotic desires. Here we see a parallel between the literary functions of male and female somnambulism. Female somnambulism has long been viewed as literary device used in part to provide female protagonists subject positions through which to voice their erotic desires, without fear of persecution. The same can be argued of male somnambulism. In *Der Magnetiseur* it is the Baron's desire towards his mentor, a homoerotic desire, that is at odds with the mandatory heterosexuality of hegemonic masculinity. In *Magie der Natur* the inappropriate partner choice is Antonie, whose gender ambiguity threatens polarized gender norms.

Both *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* and *Der Karneval und die Somnambüle* offer different perspectives on desire and its relationship to somnambulism. In *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, it is somnambulism which sparks Homburg's attraction to Natalie. Through somnambulism Homburg is able to connect with those emotions although he cannot be with her until he has overcome his somnambulism, proving that he can control his passion and discipline his mind. It is not his attraction to Natalie itself which is inappropriate, but rather the way in which he expresses that attraction. In *Karneval* Gustav's love for Sidonie is described as a type of somnambulism. Through deception the magnetist and Sidonie lead Gustav to believe that he has magnetic power over the

young woman, when in actuality it is the two of them that have power over him. The magnetist controls Gustav through deception and Sidonie is drawn to him through love. Gustav's interest in Sidonie is inappropriate because it is the result of a hoax. Even if the emotion he feels is real, the conditions under which it was formed are fake. The manipulative power that the magnetist has over Gustav, articulated in the language of somnambulism, prevents him from realizing that the object of his affection is not an appropriate choice.

Male somnambulism problematizes the relationship between men and their bodies. Male somnambulists often lose control of their bodies and fall victim to uncontrollable movements, burning sensations, weakness, fainting, and other physical ailments. Each of the male somnambulists in the texts under discussion described one or more of these conditions. Through such physical conditions, somnambulism draws attention to male corporeality by depicting male bodies that are undergoing physical hardship. Such moments make the male body visible to both the reader and to other figures within the text. The exposure of male corporal weakness challenges the male strength that characterizes hegemonic masculinity at the time.

Men in these texts overcome this physical hardship of somnambulism in a variety of ways. For Homburg and Adalbert the key to overcoming physical weakness lies in exerting discipline over the body, a discipline which is taught in the context of military culture. In the case of the Baron, physical weakness ends with the destruction of his magnetist. Since he was not able to overcome the negative effects of somnambulism on his own, he continues to be physically susceptible to the memory of his magnetist. He

falls victim to the manipulative powers of another magnetist, Alban, later in his life. Likewise, Gustav is unable to gain control over the manipulative powers of either Sidonie, the magnetist, or his wife Adolphine, nor the physical effects their powers have. He never exerts the control over his own body or mind necessary to break free from their influence, and continues to fall victim to the modern forms of magnetism: deception and love.

Despite the fear and criticism of male somnambulism, each of these texts suggests that something is lost at the end of the male characters' somnambulism. In *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, the loss is that of direct expression of emotion and passions. In *Magie der Natur*, there is a loss of a type of heterosexual relationship, an alternative to the domestic love that characterizes Adalbert's marriage to Marie. In *Der Magnetiseur* the Baron loses a mentor, who is also the object of his romantic desire. And finally in *Der Karneval* when the somnambulism and magnetism is revealed as a hoax, Gustav loses the illusion of his own control, the illusion of his own masculine prowess illustrated by his magnetic powers. In the case of *Der Karneval*, there is also a loss that is experienced at the de-mystification of magnetism, when the seemingly mystical phenomena of animal magnetism and somnambulism are revealed as mundane deception.

Through instances of male somnambulism *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, *Der Magnetiseur*, *Magie der Natur* and *Der Karneval und die Somnambule* address the tension between what a masculinity should be, based on the hegemonic standards of early nineteenth-century German culture, and those attributes that are part of the lived experience of men but at odds with the gender norm. Male somnambulism provides

moments in which men become visible *as men*, in which their experiences can be understood in gendered terms. Although these subversive figures are “healed” at the end of their respective tests, and thus brought back in line with normative masculinity, the experiences as somnambulists open spaces, if only temporarily, to examine the construction of masculinity and the fear surrounding the subversion of the masculine norm.

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