

The Fantastic Problem of Individuation
as Depicted in Gustav Meyrink's *Der Golem* and *Walpurgisnacht*

by

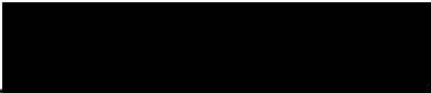
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ABSTRACT

This thesis focusses on two novels by Gustav Meyrink, *Der Golem* and *Walpurgisnacht* which employ fantastic motifs to depict the two main themes that characterize Meyrink's work, the individual's search for the "self" and the possession of an individual by other-worldly forces. The aim of this thesis is an analysis of what constitutes fantastic literature and themes in relation to these two novels. An emphasis is placed on Jung's theory of the archetypes of the collective unconscious and the process of individuation, because both he and Meyrink consider arcane symbols as depictions of the psyche. After a detailed analysis of *Der Golem* it is concluded that the text constitutes what Tzvetan Todorov defines as a fantastic-marvellous text. *Walpurgisnacht*, however, depicts supernatural events as metaphors for "reality," which detract from the fantastic nature of that novel.

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Dedication

To my parents Peter and Erna Zimmermann for their moral and financial support.

I would not have been able to spend the last two years engrossed in a subject I enjoy without their help.

I also would like to dedicate this work to Maggie and Max for providing desperately needed moments of distraction while I was working away in the deep, dark recesses of our cellar.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on two of Gustav Meyrink's novels. His first novel *Der Golem* was chosen for study because it was the most successful of his novels and because it has been the subject of the most commentary in secondary literature. Meyrink's second novel, *Das Grüne Gesicht*, has been disregarded, for it primarily retells the same story of an individual's search for the "self," in this case with the aid of Chidher Grün, the Wandering Jew instead of the golem. *Walpurgisnacht*, his third novel, treats the concept of the process of individuation, but also another common theme found in Meyrink's work, that of the possession of the individual by historical forces. This novel is, however, less a treatise of mystical beliefs than his two last novels, *Der weiße Dominikaner* and *Der Engel vom westlichen Fenster*, are criticized as being.

The search for the self that the two characters of Pernath in *Der Golem* and Flugbeil in *Walpurgisnacht* undergo is depicted by an array of "fantastic" motifs such as the double, life after death, reincarnation, the golem, the destruction of perceptions of time and space, possession, the devil, objects coming to life, and vampirism among others. The purpose of this thesis is threefold. First of all, it must be determined what constitutes fantastic literature. This is accomplished by examining a range of writings from early ideas on the subject to psychoanalytic theories of the role of the fantastic. Secondly, these theories are employed in interpreting the two novels, with the main emphasis being on the writings of C.G. Jung. Lastly, it is determined whether the works constitute examples of fantastic texts.

The study begins with a look at the life and writings of Gustav Meyrink. The two are not mutually exclusive because his works involve supernatural events and Meyrink dedicated much of his life to the study of parapsychological phenomena. This introduction is followed by a theoretical study of what constitutes fantastic literature. From the early

writings of Louis Vax and Roger Caillois, the evolution of the term is followed to Tzvetan Todorov's structuralist approach which determined three rules defining what comprises a fantastic text. Since his work neglects the importance of a psychoanalytical method of interpretation, Rosemary Jackson's study *Fantasy: the Literature of Subversion* fills this vacuum by integrating theories by Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. A psychoanalytical interpretation is necessary because themes in the modern fantastic such as "alienation, metamorphosis, doubling [and] transformation of the subject [are] expressions of unconscious desire, and [are] not 'accounted for' as reflections or manifestations of supernatural or magical invention" (Jackson 62). The theme of the search for the "self" that is central to the two texts lends itself best, however, to a Jungian analysis since Jung and Meyrink both consider the symbols of occult beliefs to embody archetypes depicting changes in the psyche of the individual. Therefore Carl Gustav Jung's writings on the process of individuation and the archetypes of the collective unconscious are studied to determine how they may aid in interpreting *Der Golem* and *Walpurgisnacht*. The present state of research on *Der Golem* is examined to see what approaches other scholars have taken in interpreting the novel and determining whether they believe it belongs to the canon of "fantastic" works. Unfortunately, this cannot be accomplished with *Walpurgisnacht*, since there are no detailed studies of the novel as such.

By employing Jung's theories certain characters may be interpreted as archetypal figures such as the double, the shadow, the wise old man, the mirror and the female anima. All these aspects of the unconscious must be integrated by the conscious mind so that a person may reach the ultimate goal of complete self-knowledge. This theme is universal and emerges in the belief systems of the Jewish secret teachings of the Cabbala, Egyptian mythology, alchemy and tarot, all of which appear in *Der Golem*.

Walpurgisnacht does not contain the rich imagery of occult beliefs that permeate the first novel. Yet its emphasis lies in another direction, in addition to the concept of the

search for the “self.” The text consists of an intertwining of two plots, that of a person who evolves into a humane individual and the story of the dangers that await the person who does not listen to his or her unconscious. Once the Jungian analysis of the text is completed, it is determined whether the texts fulfil Todorov’s three requirements to describe them as fantastic literature. The political and social background of the texts are studied as well, in order to depict the contemporary problems the novels addressed.

1. MEYRINK: In the Context of Fantastic Literature

1.1 A Biographical Sketch of Gustav Meyrink's Life and Literary Achievements

Gustav Meyrink was born in Vienna on January 19th, 1868 as the illegitimate son of Maria Meyer, an actress at the court theatre, and the Freiherr Varnbühler von und zu Hemmingen, a Minister of the State of Württemberg (Bleiler, "Introduction" iv). He spent most of his youth in Munich and Hamburg and eventually attended a business college in Prague. When his schooling was complete, he opened a bank with the nephew of the poet Christian Morgenstern. Meyrink became famous for his physical prowess. He won the Austro-Hungarian rowing championships and was also well-known as a highly-skilled fencer. Meyrink was a dandy and could often be seen riding in carriages festooned with balloons together with crowds of chorus-girls. Even his manner of decorating his apartment was considered unseemly for a banker, as his friend Paul Leppin described (VIII). He chose to live in a tower-room filled with curiosities such as a confessional booth, a terrarium inhabited by exotic African mice, a large photo of the famous medium Madame Blavatsky, and a sculpture of a ghost disappearing into a wall.

Meyrink claimed to have been interested in the occult since his youth. However, one key episode demonstrates why it became the focal point of his life's work, as he explains in the short story "Der Lotse." At a low-point in his early twenties, Meyrink was seriously considering suicide. He was on the verge of shooting himself in the head when a pamphlet was shoved under his door. He picked it up out of curiosity and was overwhelmed by the title: "Über das Leben nach dem Tode." The pamphlet came from an esoteric bookshop and concerned spiritualism, magic and all sorts of occult subjects. As a result of this odd coincidence which saved his life, Meyrink dedicated himself to the study of the occult by being involved with seances and becoming a member of various occult groups such as the "Loge zum blauen Stern," the Prague theosophical society, and the

Freemasons (Fischer, "Phantastik" 97). He also occupied himself with learning more about "exotic" religions such as Buddhism, Cabbala, Rosecrucianism and the Islamic esoteric teachings of the dervishes (Bleiler, "Introduction" iv).

Meyrink's life, however, did not proceed smoothly (Strelka 8). His first marriage to Hedwig Certl in 1893 ended in divorce and four years later he chose to live with Philomena Bernt, whom he married after a long, drawn-out divorce case. During this difficult period Philomena was slandered by an army officer. When Meyrink's request for an apology was refused, he challenged the officer to a duel, but was refused on the grounds that he was not *satisfaktionsfähig*, due to his illegitimate birth. In addition, there were irregularities at the bank of Meyer & Morgenstern. Meyrink was accused of embezzlement and the misuse of funds, and was even purported to have attempted to swindle money from clients through spiritualist tricks. In reality, Meyrink was only a scapegoat for his partner and was hounded because of personal grudges. As a result of these accusations, Meyrink was arrested and placed in prison for several months while authorities investigated him. After being released he was a ruined man, professionally and physically. Despite of being cleared of any wrongdoing, Meyrink's reputation was destroyed and a health problem was aggravated by his prison stay. He was diagnosed with tuberculosis of the spine, which was to trouble him throughout the rest of his life. In his search for an alternative means of dealing with his pain he began to study yoga.

The writer Oskar Schmitz was the catalyst in Meyrink's decision to begin writing at the age of thirty-two (Schmitz 264-66). The two met at a sanatorium shortly before Meyrink's imprisonment. Schmitz was so enthralled by the anecdotes Meyrink recounted that he suggested Meyrink write some of them down. When Meyrink asked how he was to accomplish this, Schmitz replied that Meyrink should simply write it up in the same style as Meyrink spoke. Meyrink sent his first story "Der heiße Soldat" to Germany's leading journal of the time, *Simplizissimus*. The story was saved from the wastepaper basket by

the editor, Ludwig Thoma, who found it interesting. When he asked why it had been thrown out, the reader claimed it was “das Abgesandte eines Wahnsinnigen,” to which Thoma replied: “Wahnsinnig vielleicht. Aber ein Genie. . . . Merken Sie sich nebenbei den Namen Meyrink. Und schreiben Sie dem Mann, ob er nicht noch mehr von solchen Sachen hat. Wir drucken’s umgehend” (Schmitz 264-65).

Meyrink’s writing can be separated into three distinct periods. His first phase of work (1901-1913) encompassed the production of a great number of short stories combining satirical and occult elements (Strelka 19). They were published in a number of anthologies starting with *Der heiße Soldat und andere Geschichten* (1903), *Orchideen* (1904), and *Das Wachsfigurenkabinett* (1907). In 1913 all three books were combined with some additional stories to form *Des deutschen Spießers Wunderhorn*. The title is a parody of one of the most revered classics of German national literature, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano (1805-08). Another anthology entitled *Fledermäuse* appeared in 1916. The objects of satire in most of the stories are the military and the medical professions, and in “Der Saturnring” even the wives of clergymen become the object of ridicule. Meyrink was also very vocal in his dislike of the then popular *Heimatliteratur*, which he satirized in “Das Wildschwein Veronika.” He was bothered by naturalistic literature which found its inspiration in daily life. He explained his dissatisfaction with its limitations in his introduction to the *Gespensterbuch* (1913): “Wirklich immer wieder müssen Gastwirte, Felder, Oberlehrer, Kühe und Kommerzialratstöchter geschildert werden--als ob’s noch nicht genug Gastwirte, Felder, Oberlehrer, Kühe und Kommerzialratstöchter gäbe” (vi).

The second period of Meyrink’s work is that of the novels (Strelka 22). From 1913 to 1921 Meyrink completed *Der Golem* (1915), *Das grüne Gesicht* (1917), *Walpurgisnacht* (1917), and *Der weiße Dominikaner* (1921). These four novels still contain satirical elements such as the description of the Polizeirat Otschin in *Der Golem*,

who is based on the real-life Polizeirat Olic whom Meyrink dealt with during his imprisonment. However, mystical elements no longer form the backdrop for satire, but provide the entire context of the stories. The novels became very popular and *Der Golem* even became a bestseller which inspired two golem films.

The third period of Meyrink's writing encompassed approximately the last decade of his life from 1921 to 1931 (Strelka 27). During this time Meyrink only wrote one other novel, *Der Engel vom westlichen Fenster* (1927). His main writings were essays concerning his interest in the occult such as "An der Grenze des Jenseits" (1923), and some even demonstrated a disillusionment with the subject such as, "Hochstapler der Mystik" (1927). In the former Meyrink very carefully points out the difference between occultism and mysticism:

Okkultismus und Mystik werden häufig verwechselt, und daher kommt es, daß Menschen, die sich über diese Gebiete unterhalten, oft aneinander vorbeireden. . . . Zu glauben, der Okkultismus bedeute das Ende einer materialistischen Weltanschauung, ist ein Irrtum. Okkultismus ist nur insofern "Meta"physik, als seine Erscheinungen die Grenzen des bisherigen Wissens von der Wirkungsweise der Naturgesetze durchbrechen. Seine "Geister" und "Gespenster" sind ebenso stoffliche wie die Leiber der Menschen, gehören ins Reich des Materiellen wie etwa der Röntgenstrahlen; mit der Quelle des Reingeistigen, der "Ewigen Ursache," haben sie nichts zu tun. (372-73)

Meyrink sees himself more as a mystic than a follower of the occult. He never remained for a long time with any of the groups he joined, but seemed to be on a search for a means of attaining a higher level of being. As will be later demonstrated in my interpretation of *Der Golem*, the occult is more of a backdrop against which the main figure's search for his "ultimate" self comes to fruition. It is perhaps Meyrink's own search. For as Karl Pinthus, who wrote the afterword to the first publication of Meyrink's collected works, believed, "Die Abenteuer seiner Bücher sind die Abenteuer seines Geistes, die er nicht erfand, sondern erleben mußte" (380). Meyrink died on December 4th, 1932 after suffering from a deep depression over his son's suicide the year before.

The literary image of the mysterious city of Prague many Germans share, and which most attribute to Franz Kafka, actually stems from the pen of Gustav Meyrink (Fritsch 220). The city appears in three of his five novels and seems to have exerted a large influence on his life as he himself attests in an autobiographical writing, *Die Stadt mit dem heimlichen Herzschlag*:

Schon damals, als ich über die uralte steinerne Brücke schritt . . . da befahl mich ein tiefes Grauen, für das ich keine Erklärung wußte. Jene Bangigkeit hat mich seit diesem Tage nicht einen Augenblick verlassen, solange ich--ein Menschenalter hindurch--in Prag lebte, der Stadt mit dem heimlichen Herzschlag. Sie ist nie mehr ganz von mir gewichen; sie senkt sich heute noch auf mich herab, wenn ich an Prag zurückdenke oder nachts von ihm träume. (157)

Prague was a centre for occult studies during the late sixteenth century, due in most part to Emperor Rudolf II, who became a patron of alchemists from all over Europe (Veselà 131). He had the small houses of the *Alchemistenstraße* built as laboratories to be used in experiments such as the transmutation of lead to gold. Sixteenth century Prague was also the home of the famous Rabbi Löw, who was known as a great scholar of the Cabbala and according to legend brought the first golem to life.

Meyrink's novels, despite their initial popularity in a wave of interest in the occult, fell from public favour in the years after his death. During the Nazi era they were banned and burned. It has only been in the last twenty-five years or so that interest has been reawakened in them in light of a scholarly debate over fantastic literature and a reborn interest in the authors of the neo-romantic literary movement in German-speaking countries during the early decades of the twentieth century.

1.2 A Historical Overview of Fantastic Literature before Gustav Meyrink

The term "fiction" implies writing that is not concerned with reproducing the truth, but with creating a different world. Nevertheless, most fiction takes place in a realistic frame of reference to which the reader is accustomed. Fantastic literature, however,

represents a category of fiction where the “literary lie” is expanded and the concept of truth, as inherent in the reality presented by a text, is itself put into question. It is comprised of a kind of general principle in opposition to the concept of *mimesis* (Sandor 340). Eric Rabkin describes the fantastic as: “a quality of astonishment that we feel when the ground rules of a narrative world are suddenly made to turn about 180 degrees” (41).

The roots of fantastic literature, according to Rosemary Jackson (14), lie in the traditional literary genre of Menippean satire, which was embodied in texts such as Petronius’s *Satyricon* of the first century AD. It was a genre marked by unrealistic occurrences, where dreams, hallucinations, madness, discrepancies in the unities of time and space, and strange transformations were presented as realistic events. Elements of the *menippea* can be traced throughout literary history from ancient Christian times to the present day. Mikhail Bakhtin’s work *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* notes many modern writers who belong to this tradition, including E.T.A. Hoffmann and Edgar Allan Poe.¹

Roger Caillois, however, insists that fantastic literature was a by-product of the Enlightenment, when people began to discover how the universe functioned, believing that one day all natural phenomena could be explained by clearly defined rules. Logic delineated the manner of thinking, and sentiment was denigrated as a baser means of organizing one’s existence and the universe, and therefore repressed.² As long as people believed in witchcraft, magic and superstition there was no need for fantastic literature.³ The first work considered a fantastic text, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) by Horace Walpole, scared enlightened readers with the ghosts of the past (Rottensteiner 13). Since it fed the irrational

¹ These are considered to be the two writers who had the most influence on Gustav Meyrink (Müllberger 275).

² Pierre-Georges Castex, the author of *Le Conte fantastique en France de Nodier à Maupassant*, calls the advent of fantastic literature circa 1770 a “renaissance de l’irrationnel” (in Steinmetz 11).

³ Caillois is supported in his opinion by Louis Vax, who in *L’art et la littérature fantastiques* wrote, “Vienne le temps où . . . on a encore peur des esprits sans y croire, alors une littérature fantastique est possible” (73).

yearnings and fears of people, fantastic literature became a popular forum for Romantic writers everywhere, such as Washington Irving, Charles Robert Maturin, Merimée, Sheridan le Fanu, Gogol and Achim von Arnim (Caillois 59).

Fantastic literature was reborn in German-speaking countries around the turn of the century out of the decadent atmosphere of the *Fin-de-siècle*. This trend was referred to as Neo-Romanticism, because the writers's choice of subject matter and literary style was similar to that of the Romantics. According to Jens Malte Fischer, that period was dominated by a general feeling of insecurity as a result of the Industrial Revolution ("Phantastik" 95). The economy was in a constant state of flux while the countries of Europe underwent a period of transition from being agrarian states to becoming industrial powers. People also were politically apathetic, feeling helpless against the development of imperial power, forces of nationalism and official religions. Mysticism, the occult, spiritualism and intense self-introspection became popular means by which to escape the barbarities of turn of the century everyday life (Fischer, "Phantastik" 95). Richard Rieß, who wrote reviews for the journal *Orchideengarten*, described contemporary literature as having, "[eine] deutliche Neigung nach dem Absonderlichen, Phantastischen [als eine] Reaktion auf die Misere des Alltags und die Unerfreulichkeit seiner Erscheinungen" (16). Eventually, even satanism and black masses became socially accepted forms of entertainment (Fischer, "Phantastik" 98). Fantastic literature as a form of escape in German-speaking countries reached its zenith during World War I. Anthologies such as *Der Gespensterkrieg* (1915), featuring Gustav Meyrink's "Die vier Mondbrüder, eine Urkunde" and short stories by K.H. Strobl, among others, were most popular with soldiers who wanted a distraction from the horrors of battle.

But what actually constitutes fantastic literature? How can it be described? No one dared to define it ⁴ in a systematic frame as a genre until in 1970 Tzvetan Todorov wrote his

⁴ As Louis Vax states: "Sogar die Zusammensteller der 'Checklist of fantastic literature' haben sich an diese Aufgabe nicht herangetraut" ("Phantastik" 11).

study *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. Before Todorov examined the subject in a systematic manner most theorists, such as Louis Vax and Roger Caillois, described the fantastic more in terms of how it differed from other genres and the themes inherent to it.

1.3 Early Writings on the Fantastic

Louis Vax points out that neither reality, nor the imaginary world, as presented in fairy tales, are to be feared because both are one-dimensional (“Phantastik” 12). Fantastic literature, however, scares the reader: “Die phantastische Kunst läßt . . . imaginäre Schrecken inmitten einer realen Welt entstehen” (“Phantastik” 12). Other forms of literature or topics are categorised as being related to fantastic literature, but do not incorporate the definitions of the genre for various reasons. Superstitions, poetry, tales of horror and the macabre, detective stories, tragedy, humour, utopian writings, allegories, the occult, even psychoanalysis and parapsychology may all be related to fantastic literature, but do not constitute it. Horror, Vax cites as an example, has a place in our daily lives and therefore does not qualify as a fantastic event (“Phantastik” 18). In addition, horror is a fear of the unknown which we ourselves produce, not an outside supernatural force. Fantastic events in detective stories are ultimately proved to be the product of human machinations. Stories of the occult may seem fantastic, because the reader is kept in a cloak of secrecy about strange events; however, this forbidding aspect is really only a backdrop against which fantastic stories unfold.

In his essay “Die Phantastik,” Vax identifies various themes that appear in fantastic literature. The list includes transformations from human to animal states (31), vampires (32), appendages which function separately from the body (34), identity disorders (35), the play of the visible and the invisible (37), changes in causality, space and time (38), and

regression (40). Unfortunately, although Vax attempts to explain the nature of these themes, he neglects to mention how they are related to fantastic literature as a whole.

Roger Caillois, on the other hand, in his essay “Das Bild des Phantastischen vom Märchen bis zur Science Fiction” expands the idea of the fantastic as, “ein Ärgernis, einen Riß, einen befremdenden, fast unerträglichen Einbruch in die wirkliche Welt” (45). Authentic fantasy only takes place in the contemporary world, for if set in the distant past it loses its power, because the supernatural was considered natural by “unenlightened” people.

Caillois notes that authors employ tricks to avoid presenting true fantastic tales. As in Vax’s detective story example, some fantastic events only appear to be unrealistic. Other stories reveal themselves at the end to be the result of hallucinations or dreams. Many authors use tales of monstrous creatures whose origins can be traced to natural disasters or the experiments of a mad scientist. Strange events are also often caused by machinery that can steal souls, or chemical concoctions that transform humans into monsters. Other stories use parapsychological occurrences such as telepathy and spiritualism, since connections with the beyond are deemed to be fantastic in nature (53-54).

Caillois differentiates fantastic literature from fairy tales and science fiction. Magic is an everyday occurrence in the world of the fairy tale.⁵ It allows humans to control nature. The supernatural here, as Vax also claims, is not to be feared. Fantasy literature is just a means by which naive wishes come true. They can never be realized. In contrast, science fiction is a more sophisticated frame for presenting the marvellous. It allows us to reflect logically on the power of science and problems which may hypothetically result from its development. Caillois describes the wonders presented by science fiction as “die Auszüge,

⁵ According to Franz Rottensteiner, the fairy tale can be subordinated into the category of fantasy literature. He notes that both story types illustrate the same textual features. They present a world separate from our own reality; they contain supernatural elements, but present no conflict in their world order. The only difference seems to be their length. Fairy tales are generally short, but authors of fantasy literature tend to write tales of epic proportions. The original fantasy epic is J.R.R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* (14-15).

die Negative, die hohlen Formen all dessen, was jede Stufe der Kultur zu wünschen übrig läßt" (61).

Science has set the boundaries of what may be achieved; nevertheless, it does not dismiss the threat of powers from the beyond:

Die übernatürlichen Schauergeschichten entstanden aus der Angst, die so sorgfältig festgestellte und durch die methodische Untersuchung und die experimentielle Wissenschaft bewiesene Ordnung der Welt dem Angriff der unversöhnlichen, nächtlichen und dämonischen Mächte ausgesetzt zu sehen. (Caillois 80)

According to Caillois, fear is therefore the factor that defines whether a text is fantastic or not.⁶ Some of the powers we fear are depicted in fantastic themes such as: the pact with the devil; the agonized soul who needs help to achieve peace; the ghost damned to wander for eternity; the figure of death appearing among the living; the "thing" that oppresses; vampires; the statue of a doll that comes to life; the magician's curse; the seductive phantom lady who leads men to their death; the reversal of dream and reality; the room that disappears from space; and the standstill or repetition of time (63-66).

Both Vax and Caillois argue that the fear we feel when confronted with supernatural situations define their use as themes for fantastic literature. The supernatural implies events that do not comply with the rules of our real world.

⁶ Caillois contradicts himself here, for he argues previously that horror does not belong to the category of the fantastic. Nevertheless he claims it results from fear, which he now contends is the defining element of fantastic literature.

1.4 Tzvetan Todorov's Theory of the Fantastic

In his work entitled *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, Tzvetan Todorov maintains that he is not attempting to interpret fantastic themes, only to establish their existence. The aim of his structural approach is solely to determine what does or does not belong to the genre of fantastic literature.⁷ In his opinion:

Genre represents, precisely a structure, a configuration of literary properties, an inventory of options. But a work's inclusion within a genre . . . merely permits us to establish the existence of a certain rule by which the work in question--and many others as well--are governed. (141)

Todorov argues that the fantastic has a function in the development of the narrative. Fantastic texts begin by presenting the reader with a stable situation. The fantastic enters in order to destabilize the situation. Characters overcome obstacles presented by the fantastic in order to recreate stability; however, the situation that emerges is not the same as that presented at the beginning of the text. The fantastic therefore mobilizes the narrative (Todorov 90). In this sense a fantastic tale is reminiscent of the detective story.

Todorov bases his definition of the fantastic not on the subjective fear a reader experiences when reading a strange tale, as Caillois and Vax claim. Rather, "The fantastic is that hesitation experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature, confronting an apparently supernatural event" (25).⁸ The reader must consider the world represented in a text as a realistic one and must remain uncertain whether unusual events are natural or supernatural in nature. This is the first of three requirements which, according to Todorov, must be fulfilled in order that a text may be considered fantastic. Todorov argues that this is

⁷ Stanislaw Lem's main critique of Todorov's structuralist theory is that it is based on linguistic principles that are in his view too simplistic for the definition of literary principles. As Lem writes "Die literaturtheoretischen 'Strukturen' entstammen der modernen Linguistik, die auch 'mathematische Linguistik' genannt wird. Diese Disziplin hat sich als erste der Willkürlichkeit entzogen, die alle bisherigen humanistischen Verallgemeinerungsversuche als theoretische *Unreife* abgestempelt hat" (93) (emphasis in original). Nevertheless, Todorov's theory is the only systematic study of fantastic literature to date, and therefore serves as a foundation for debate and research on this topic.

⁸ Stanislaw Lem believes Todorov's critique of Caillois's contention that the fantastic is based on the reader's fear is unfounded. Todorov's concept of "hesitation," Lem notes, is just as subjective (114).

only possible on a first reading of a text, for the reader cannot come under the spell of the fantastic during a second reading. It becomes a meta-reading, where the reader notes the methods used to create the fantastic.⁹ Secondly, the hesitation may be experienced by a character with whom the reader may or may not identify. Thirdly, a reader must reject either a poetic or allegorical reading of the text. For as Todorov explains, “If what we read describes a supernatural event, yet we take the words not in their literal meaning but in another sense which refers to nothing supernatural, there is no longer any space for the fantastic to exist” (63).

The fantastic exists only while there is a feeling of uncertainty: “Once we choose one answer or the other, we leave the fantastic for a neighbouring genre, the uncanny or the marvellous” (25). These two terms veer in opposite directions away from the central notion of the fantastic. The pure uncanny results when the reader decides the laws of reality stay in force throughout a text. Strange events may be explained by coincidence, dreams, drug-induced hallucinatory states, tricks or madness. One example of a pure uncanny text is the horror story. The marvellous, on the other hand, presents events which cannot be explained by our frame of reference. The purely marvellous depicts supernatural events, but in a world where they are accepted as normal occurrences by the characters. The best example of a purely marvellous text is the fairy tale. Two subgenres, the fantastic-uncanny and the fantastic-marvellous result when a text sustains the reader’s hesitation until the end, where either a natural or a supernatural explanation is deemed correct. The pure fantastic text is very rare, for it must extend the reader’s hesitation beyond the span of the text. One of the few examples of a purely fantastic text, according to Todorov, is Henry James’s *The Turn of the Screw*.

Fantastic literature is also marked by a specific use of language. Events are generally recounted by a single first-person narrator, with whom the reader can readily

⁹ Robert Wörtche claims this is an unacceptable conclusion. Structures do not simply disappear during a second reading of a text because they are metatextual constructs and not material actualities (49).

identify (the narrator's use of the pronoun "I" aids in the identification). However, the narrator's account of the story is not always within the realms of truth as is presented in the context of the narrative. "Though the sentences of a literary text generally have an assertive form, they are not true assertions, for they do not satisfy one essential condition: the test of truth" (Todorov 82). The ambiguous nature of his narration is exploited by the author of fantastic texts. The language is constantly subject to doubt. The validity of figurative expressions is diminished by remarks such as, "as if", or "it seemed." Similes and metaphors are the most common form of description the author employs and in a sense become a kind of meta-language for fantastic literature in general.

Todorov finds little merit in the listing of fantastic themes as was accepted by previous scholars. He argues one must study the event that proceeds from the supernatural in the world presented by a fantastic text. The descriptions and explanations of these events, however, may be categorized into separate themes.¹⁰ Todorov divides all themes into two separate groupings: themes of the self and of the other. Themes of the self can be categorized, in "that they essentially concern the structure of the relation between man and his world" (120). Works that employ themes of the self nearly always emphasize the concept of perception or vision. The events themselves constitute a form of metamorphosis which puts mind and matter into question. Metamorphosis is presented by a myriad of themes such as special causality; pan-determinism;¹¹ multiplication of the personality; collapse of the limit between subject and object; and finally the transformation of time and space (120).

¹⁰ Although Todorov claims his is not a literary historical approach to the subject and his theory has evolved to encompass all eventualities, he does base his conclusions on historical examples (Wörtche 56).

¹¹ Pan-determinism is linked with the concept of pan-signification. The latter is the belief that everything is important and has a meaning. Todorov states it thus: "Since relations exist on all levels, among all elements of the world, this world becomes highly significant. . . . the hour at which one is born, the name of the room, everything is charged with meaning. Even more: beyond the primary, obvious meaning, one can always discover a deeper meaning" (112).

Themes of the other are characterized by the relation to desire. Desire is presented in fantastic literature in its perverse as well as usual forms. Love is also connected to the ideas of death, life after death, corpses and vampirism. Desire is also the force which determines human relations. Therefore themes do not question vision, but discourse. Language is defined as, “the structuring agent of man’s relation to other men” (139).

Like Caillois, Todorov claims fantastic literature reached its highpoint between the late eighteenth and the late nineteenth centuries. It succeeded because it centred on themes that were taboo to contemporary discourse. Its importance declined due to the advent of psychoanalysis that became the discourse which spoke about these taboos. Fantastic literature of the twentieth century, as exemplified by texts such as Franz Kafka’s *Die Verwandlung*, began to integrate the supernatural into the text as a natural occurrence, so that the reader no longer had to hesitate in choosing an explanation for a strange event.¹²

1.5 Rosemary Jackson’s Psychoanalytic Approach

Rosemary Jackson’s study, *Fantasy, the Literature of Subversion*, emphasizes the idea that fantasy plays upon the difficulties in interpreting events and thus destabilizes the reader’s concept of reality (20). Jackson accepts many of Todorov’s basic requirements for determining whether a text is fantastic or not, as axioms for her definition of the term. However, Jackson sees the fantastic more as a literary mode than a genre (32). Texts such as Kafka’s *Die Verwandlung* do not signal the death of fantastic literature, as Todorov claims. Jackson argues they belong to the category of surrealism, which employs similar

¹² Stanislaw Lem points out that Todorov’s equation of fantastic texts and psychoanalysis assumes that the characters in the text are real people who require psychoanalytic therapy and is therefore an intentional fallacy (106).

themes as fantastic literature, but whose characters accept all supernatural events as normal occurrences (36).¹³

The problems of perception and truth inherent in fantastic literature result, in Jackson's opinion, in a lack of meaningful signification. The gap between signifier and signified leads to two opposing motifs of fantastic literature (38). One motif is that of "nameless things" (38),¹⁴ the other comprises "thingless names" (41)¹⁵ or words or signs which are undetermined. The gap in fantastic literature is therefore left wide open for the imagination and interpretation. Todorov's assertion that poetry or allegory cannot be fantastic is correct, since the fantastic takes metaphors literally, "one object does not *stand for* another, but literally becomes the other, slides into it, metamorphosing from one shape to another in a permanent flux and instability" (42).¹⁶ Fantastic worlds are constantly dissolving and for that reason differ from the worlds of the marvellous, which construct their own realities.

Jackson perceives the greatest weakness in Todorov's argument to be his decision to reject psychoanalytic theory as a means of interpreting our experiences of the real world, especially in view of his categorization of motifs into themes of the self and of the other. Jackson insists however:

It is only by turning to psychoanalysis, considering some of the theoretical accounts of the structure of unconscious desire, that those narrative effects and forms can be seen as manifestations of deeper cultural issues, to do with the placing of the subject in a social context, in language. (62)

¹³ For a more detailed study of the difference between fantastic and surrealist, or magical realist literature see Amaryll Beatrice Chanady's *Magical Realism and the Fantastic: Resolved Versus Unresolved Antimony*.

¹⁴ H.P. Lovecraft uses this technique often for it permits readers to create their own monsters, which are more frightening. He argues in his essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature": "The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown" (12).

¹⁵ Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwock" from *Alice in Wonderland* is one example.

¹⁶ Emphasis in original.

Freud's essay "Das Unheimliche" provides Jackson with the basis for her interpretation, and she observes that the concept of the uncanny coincides with the emergence of fantastic literature since the Enlightenment (64). Freud's study begins by investigating the definition of the term. "Das Heimliche" denotes that which is familiar and comfortable, therefore its negation "das Unheimliche" implies the opposite: the strange and unsettling. Nevertheless, on a different level, "das Heimliche" also refers to that which one wants to hide. Its opposite meaning therefore denotes that which has been kept hidden and what one wants to "dis-cover." The duality of meanings of the uncanny endow the term with its significance. "It uncovers what is hidden and, by doing so, effects a disturbing transformation of the familiar into the unfamiliar" (Jackson 65). Freud's theory presents the uncanny as a result of projecting unconscious fears and desires onto other people and one's surroundings.¹⁷

Freud sees a parallel between the development of the child and the evolution of cultural history (71), in that both are governed by the pleasure and reality principles. The first stage of a child's life is narcissism, or self-love, which corresponds in developmental terms to an acceptance of a magical or animistic world view, where the subject is omnipotent. The child later becomes attached to love objects, rather than itself. At the same stage of development, our culture adopted a religious perspective whereby we believed the gods held the majority of power and we could only attempt to influence their actions. The final stage of a child's formation is the acceptance of reality. Mankind has achieved maturity by accepting its own impotence and mortality. Freud argues that scientific principles presently govern our world view and leave no room for human omnipotence. The laws of necessity now dictate our concept of reality (70).

The tendency of fantastic literature to evade distinct forms and structures reaches its zenith in the concept of complete undifferentiation (72). This characteristic is akin to

¹⁷ In the same vein, Joachim Metzner defines the fantastic as "die Wiederkehr des Verdrängten" (108).

Freud's concept of the "death wish," which he described in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). The "death wish" is not necessarily the desire to end one's existence, but a yearning for life in a paradisaical setting, where all worries disappear. This condition exemplifies the ultimate form of the pleasure principle, which Freud refers to as a state of entropy, a kind of zero point. Jackson states that this entropic state is what fantastic literature aspires to, "the arrival at a point of absolute unity of self and other, subject and object" (77). The entropic state therefore establishes a stability which allows diffuse elements to unite (80).

According to Jackson the most frightening theme in fantastic literature is that of the disintegrated self, whether it is physical, psychological or both (82). Its terror lies in its blatant violation of the unity of character, a state we all desire to attain. Characters in fantastic narratives are not the life-like characters which are depicted in the typical nineteenth century realistic novel. Fantastic characters remain mysterious, their true identity remains unknown. Similes made in realistic narratives employing "like," "as" or "as if" do not remain pure analogies in fantastic literature, (except when an event is marvellous or happens in a dream-like state), rather the analogy becomes reality. Gregor Samsa in Kafka's "Die Verwandlung" does not resemble an "Ungeziefer," he becomes one (85). There is no need to explain why a transformation occurs. The new state of being is only another aspect of the self.

The most extreme fragmentation of the self is presented by the notion of the *Doppelgänger*. He or she may be regarded as an incarnation of one's evil side or the representation of a resistance to structure and cultural order (86).¹⁸ The metaphor of the mirror best exemplifies the formation of other selves, because "It employs distance and difference to suggest the instability of the 'real' on this side of the looking glass, and it

¹⁸ Some examples of the personality split between good and evil is the Jekyll/Hyde character in Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" and the Viscount Medardo of Terralba, whose two halves independently survive bisection by a cannonball in Italo Calvino's "The Cloven Viscount."

offers unpredictable (apparently impossible) metamorphoses of self into other” (87-88).¹⁹ The mirror also denotes a specific stage of identity and language development in Jacques Lacan’s psychoanalytic theories. *Le stade du miroir* designates the transition between Freud’s periods of narcissism and love for others (88). In Freud’s first stage the child loves himself and lives in a completely undifferentiated state. The child eventually begins to distinguish between himself and others, therefore perceiving himself as an object. What he sees in the mirror is how others view him. The mirror thus becomes the means of self-identification, and the self in turn may be classified as a cultural construction. Lacan argues that the child then no longer conceives himself as a body in fragments, but as a whole, unified entity or *Je-idéal*. This ego which conforms to Freud’s concept of the super-ego represses instincts and desire. Many fantastic narratives with a dualism theme exploit the conflict which exists between the original, narcissistic state and the ideal ego who morally judges the other’s demands. As Irène Bessièrre states, “Fantastic narrative constitutes a decentred discourse of the subject” (103).

1.6 Carl Gustav Jung’s Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious

Carl Gustav Jung does not interpret doubles as negative symbols of the individual’s disintegration of the self. Rather, he regards the double as a symbolic means by which the individual confronts him- or herself in an objective light. Some doubles do not resemble the individual, but are archetypal representations of various aspects of the individual’s psyche. They must be integrated into a person’s concept of the “self” for the process of individuation to be completed. This process represents the most universal of human experiences because it is a natural development that everyone must undergo.

¹⁹ Emphasis in original.

Jung looks at literary works as a source of material for psychological interpretation. The works which he finds most fascinating to study are not psychological novels, for they are the least open to interpretation, as they present their own analyses of their characters' behaviour ("Dichtung" 101). Jung prefers to deal with texts that present visionary experiences.²⁰ Their readers are baffled and crave explanations. The events presented are foreign to their everyday experiences, but have more in common with their nightmarish fears ("Dichtung" 105).

Unlike Freud, who treats works of literature as experiences of the author or the main character, Jung is less interested in the author's personal unconscious as depicted in a work. He chooses instead to look at the text to delve into the *Urerlebnis* which is introduced. Its interpretation requires great belief, since the visionary experience is unlike anything one has ever encountered. As Jung explains, "Es erinnert so fatal an obskure Metaphysik, daß wohlmeinende Vernunft einzugreifen sich bemüßigt fühlt" ("Dichtung" 107). The *Urerlebnis* is very difficult to interpret, because it is "wort- und bildlos, denn es ist eine Vision 'in dunkelm Spiegel'" ("Dichtung" 111). Jung calls that which appears in the vision a picture of the *collective unconscious* which he defines as a "Sphäre unbewußter Mythologie, deren urtümliche Bilder Gemeingut der Menschheit sind" ("Kunstwerk" 92).²¹ Unlike the personal unconscious which is a somewhat superficial layer located directly beneath the threshold of consciousness, the collective unconscious cannot under normal circumstances be called to consciousness ("Kunstwerk" 93). It also may not be recalled using analytical techniques, because it was never repressed or forgotten. The collective unconscious embodies the possibility of thinking using mnemonic shapes or forms, a mechanism which is innate to the brain structure we have inherited from primeval

²⁰ Meyrink's *Das grüne Gesicht* is one such text Jung mentions ("Dichtung" 104).

²¹ T.E. Apter disagrees with Jung's mode of analyzing literary texts in his study *Fantasy Literature - an Approach to Reality*, claiming it is too vague: "Even the given work is only an approximation to unconscious meaning, and any other story, bearing any similarity to it, may be cited as relevant" (142). Jung's approach, however, points out the intertextual nature of literature, which supports his contention of the existence of the collective unconscious.

times. These shapes cannot be explained by events in our individual lives, but are part of our thought processes. Jung refers to these forms as *archetypes*. They are representations of a motif and may vary greatly in detail, nevertheless their basic form always remains the same. Archetypes are instinctive trends, but should not be confused with instincts, which are physiological urges (“Unconscious” 69). These urges may, however, be represented in fantasies or dreams as symbolic images which are archetypes. Jung defines the archetype as “die formulierte[n] Resultate unzähliger typischer Erfahrungen der Ahnenreihe,” and “die physischen Residuen unzähliger Erlebnisse desselben Typus” (“Kunstwerk” 93).

Jung describes the power the archetype exerts on us when we recognize it thus, “Der Moment, wo die mythologische Situation eintritt, ist immer gekennzeichnet durch eine besondere emotionale Intensität; es ist, wie wenn Saiten in uns berührt würden, die sonst nie klangen, oder Gewalten entfesselt würden, von deren Dasein wir nichts ahnten” (“Kunstwerk” 94). The most effective ideals are all more or less variations of an archetype. One can recognize them easily, because they lend themselves readily to allegorization.

It would be a great mistake, according to Jung, to interpret great literature on a personal level (“Dichtung” 112). Whenever the collective unconscious forces its way to the forefront and unites with the ways of thinking of an age in a work of art, an act of creation has occurred which affects an entire epoch, for the archetype these artists have chosen to revive is the most appropriate one to compensate for the inadequacy and one-sidedness of their *Zeitgeist*. It is only the greatest of artists or authors who are capable of resurrecting the archetype and presenting it in the context of the *Zeitgeist* (“Kunstwerk” 95). Artists, whose works convey the greatest message to their contemporaries, become the educators of their era in that their works define the artistic movements which characterize a specific period.

But what other purpose does literature serve, than as a form of education, in Jungian analysis? The author’s fantasy reveals elements of his subconscious, just as dreams do. In his study of dreams Jung discovered that they appear to follow a particular

pattern. This pattern is referred to as “the process of individuation” (Franz 160). This psychic growth happens involuntarily, but may be observed through years of studying the everchanging contents of one’s dreams. Jung believes it is the “self,” a sort of “internal regulator” in our psychic system, which is the source of our dream images, and also aids in the maturation of the personality. This can only be accomplished, however, with the recognition of the ego.²² The ego does not exist to pursue its own impulses, but to aid in uniting the entire psyche. It allows ideas from the self to become conscious and thereby realized (“Individuation” 161). Jung maintains that this process is inherent in human nature, but people cannot undergo the process of individuation unless they consciously realize they are going through this development and adjust themselves to it. In the words of Jung’s colleague, Marie-Louise von Franz, “in order to bring the individuation process into reality, one must surrender consciously to the power of the unconscious (“Individuation” 163). This process allows the individual to discover his or her “true self.” As this thesis will demonstrate, the search for individuation is one of the major themes of Meyrink’s novels.

1.7 The Present State of Research on Meyrink and Fantastic Literature

There have been a great number of studies of Meyrink’s *Der Golem*. Many reviews, but also a few studies were written about the novel at the time of publication. During the First World War Meyrink was highly criticized for extolling non-German values in his novels (Gupte 94). *Der Golem* was perceived as a Jewish ghetto book, that had nothing to do with the “German soul,” except for being written in German.²³ Meyrink’s

²² Marie-Louise von Franz compares the psyche to a sphere. The self forms its nucleus, but simultaneously the entire sphere as well. Consciousness is represented by a small field on the surface, while the ego is depicted as a small circle centred in the consciousness (161).

²³ Adolph Bartels disagreed vehemently with the positive reviews the novel received from the press in 1916 (Gupte 95).

satirical side was railed against by the critic, Albert Zimmermann, who in the April 1917 edition of *Deutsches Volkstum* called Meyrink one of, “der geschicktesten und gefährlichsten Gegner des deutschen, des völkischen Gedankens . . . [dessen Hauptabsicht sei] die Monarchie, die Offiziere, Vertreter des deutschen Volkes im Auslande, kurz irgend etwas Deutsches lächerlich zu machen” (179). Zimmermann’s attack went even further, claiming in a footnote that Meyrink was the illegitimate son of a Jewish actress. Meyrink’s success was also claimed to be a result of a Jewish conspiracy. That Meyrink denied being Jewish was not considered of any importance, because he was perceived to represent a Jewish attitude of mind. In his three-volume work *Deutsche Dichtung der Gegenwart*, Adolf Bartels wrote: “Meyrink hat geleugnet, Jude zu sein, der literarischen Physiognomie und auch der Tendenz nach ist er es aber zweifellos” (101-02). Meyrink did not stand alone facing such criticism, but was supported by other writers such as Heinrich Mann and Franz Wedekind (Gupte 296), with whom he became acquainted during his visits to the coffee-houses of Vienna and Munich.

Since Meyrink’s works were banned during the Second World war, they remained unknown until the 1950’s when scholars began to re-evaluate neo-romantic literature which had since its heyday been relegated to the status of *Trivialliteratur*. Approximately thirty monographs and dissertations have been published about Meyrink and his works. The first four appeared in 1917-18, a few years after the publication of *Der Golem*. Three more were published before 1935. Nothing else appeared in print until 1949. Six more works were produced between 1952 and 1966. The real interest in Meyrink seems to have started in 1972. Since then one book or dissertation is published generally on an annual basis. In addition, his works have been translated into fifteen languages, including Japanese. As one can see, there still is growing interest in Meyrink and his works.

Of the many scholars who based their readings on Todorov’s theories of the fantastic, Peter Cersowsky was the first to apply Todorov’s concept of “hesitation” to one

of Meyrink's novels in his study *Phantastische Literatur im ersten Viertel des 20. Jahrhunderts* (1983). The argument begins with Cersowsky pointing out elements of naturalism in the interior plot of Pernath's life. The depiction of the ghetto milieu is realistic (34). Meyrink also alludes to real places in the city, such as the Hahnpaßgasse, and also to real events, one example being the renovation of the ghetto. Characters such as Wassertrum speak in dialect which gives the text the illusion of reality. Elements of the plot such as Charousek's vengeance, the unscrupulous business practices of Dr. Wassory and the murder of Karl Zottmann furnish the text with the characteristics of a *Kriminalroman* (38). The golem embodies the supernatural element of the novel, for his on-going cyclic appearances imply he is a sort of ghost, although he occupies a material body (38). In this manner "[fungiert] mit der Golem-Sage . . . ein Mythos als Träger des Übernatürlichen" (40). The status of myth as a depiction of the supernatural is emphasized by the legend of the house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*. Pernath's appearance after his death can also only be explained as a supernatural occurrence. The supernatural elements of the interior plot can, however, be explained as dreams or the hallucinations of a mentally ill individual, which is indicated by Pernath's institutionalization in an insane asylum.

Ambiguity lies though with the relationship between the frame narrator and Pernath (57). The manner in which the frame narrator falls asleep and begins to dream is described in a naturalistic manner (59). And Pernath's life and the frame narrator's subsequent adventure can all be explained as a dream, especially since it is revealed that Pernath is the frame narrator's double. Nevertheless, the dream-like nature of the interior plot is put into question and Pernath's experiences are declared as realistic (62). This, in addition to the frame narrator's discovery that Pernath's hat is a real object, lends credibility to Pernath's experiences. Cersowsky asserts that the reader's hesitation to accept a natural or a supernatural explanation for the events depicted, does not cease at the end of the text when the frame narrator meets Pernath at the house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*. For this

reason, Cersowsky argues that *Der Golem* is one of the few examples of a “pure” fantastic text (63) and counters Todorov’s thesis that “pure” fantastic literature cannot exist in the twentieth century.

Florian F. Marzin’s book *Okkultismus und Phantastik in den Romanen Gustav Meyrinks* (1986) attempts to interpret the concepts of fantastic literature and the occult to determine whether the occult can be deemed fantastic (136). Since Meyrink employs occult lore in the plots of his novels, Marzin believes his conclusion will determine whether Meyrink’s novels are fantastic. Marzin states that the fantastic is literature that embodies two plot cycles (131). One presents the empirically experienced world which is interchangeable with that of the reader. The second plot embodies phenomena that contradict a scientific, rational world view. The fantastic develops from the interdependence of these two plot cycles. The rules put forward by one plot must be destroyed or destabilized by the other, so that events may occur which would not have been possible in the framework of the one plot level.

Occultism denotes a special world view which an author presents, and is not comparable to the fantastic as a literary category (133). In most cases the author and reader share the world view presented in an occult text. But how does the reader react who does not share this belief? To which genre does this kind of literature then belong? Marzin argues that one should then return to the definition of fantastic literature in order to determine whether an occult text belongs in that category (136). The nature of the character of the golem in *Der Golem* and Zrcadlo in *Walpurgisnacht* are contrary to the initial plot and herefore bring an irrational level of events into play (137). In this respect, “wäre die okkulte Literatur als Subgattung der phantastischen Literatur zu konstituieren” (140).

Hypostasierung - Die Logik mythischen Denkens im Werk Gustav Meyrink nach 1907. Eine Studie zur erkenntnistheoretischen Problematik eines phantastischen Oeuvres (1987) by Jan Christoph Meister uses Todorov’s interpretation of the reality or irreality of

events to determine whether *Der Golem* constitutes a work of fantastic literature or not (40). Meister examines the appearance of the golem (90), the *Zimmer ohne Zugang* (94) and the Tarot cards (101) as symbols that are not only interpreted by the reader, but also by the narrator. In addition, he conducts a close (textual) reading of the text to study their development in the plot as well as their function. Meister sees a pattern emerge where these symbols are not only organizing principles that structure the plot of the novel. They also demonstrate, at climactic points, the ability to transform into concrete objects. Meister refers to this characteristic as *Hypostasierung* (83). This distinguishing feature of the plot and narrative structure points significantly to the mythical belief systems inherent in the novel (82-83).

Meister argues that just as the unscientific nature of an object or event rests in its symbolism, when it becomes concrete, its supernatural nature is lost:

Wenn die symbolische Referenz eines Zeichens gerade definiert ist als Bezug auf einen außerempirischen, nicht-pragmatischen Bedeutungsgehalt, dann ist die Re-Transformation des Bedeutungsgehaltes ins Gegenständliche das genaue Gegenteil, nämlich Bedeutungsreduktion eines symbolischen zum pragmatischen Zeichen.(89)

He studies this inversion by examining the symbols in detail throughout the course of the plot and by looking at the nature of the frame and interior narratives. There is no break between the two “levels” of story, according to Meister, since the concretization of symbols continues on into the frame narrator’s “reality” at the end of the novel (107). Pernath does fall from the house in the Altschulgasse, as depicted on the Tarot card of the tower, but does not die. The frame-narrator observes Pernath finally united together with Mirjam at the *Haus zur letzten Latern*, behind a gate decorated with the figure of a hermaphrodite. This scene concretizes all the elements of Mirjam’s dream. The only discrepancy between the two narratives is the fire at the house from which Pernath falls. The external narrator learns that this never occurred. Nevertheless, Meister views the juxtaposition of Pernath and the narrator as doubles of each other, as a sign that, “die Binnenhandlung [sich] nicht mehr

symbolisch auf die Realität des Rahmenerzählers [bezieht], sondern . . . in ihr fort [wirkt]” (107-08). Since a congruence exists between the reality of the interior and frame narratives, Meister contends that Todorov’s condition of two competing realities is unfulfilled. Therefore *Der Golem* cannot be considered a fantastic text (3).

Robert Wörtche also employs a hermeneutic approach and Todorov’s concept of hesitation (186 f), but his results, published under the title *Phantastik und Unschlüssigkeit: Zum strukturellen Kriterium eines Genres, untersucht an Texten von Hermann Hesse, Ewers und Gustav Meyrink* (1987) are the opposite of Meister’s. Wörtche perceives the major question in the interpretation of *Der Golem* as the macrostructure of the two narratives, that of the frame narrator and that of Pernath (187). He rejects the notion that the entire novel can be considered a dream. Ambiguity permeates the text in the enigma of whether the interior narrative begins in the chapter entitled *Schlaf*, or later on in chapter two, *Tag*. The same confusion arises with the last two chapters and centres on the idea of the stone and the piece of fat. It appears in all of the aforementioned chapters and therefore puts into query the concept that the frame narrator’s “reality” is completely separate from the internal narration. As Wörtche puts it, “[Die] Binnenhandlung . . . destabilisiert den Rahmen, der Rahmen destabilisiert die Binnenhandlung” (189). That, along with the reader’s uncertainty as to what is a dream, in addition to the supernatural events of the interior narration, guarantee the fantastic nature of the text (189). Wörtche also finds inconsistencies in the depiction of the supernatural symbols in the text, such as the golem (201), the book *Ibbur* (213) and the Tarot cards (211). He believes the novel puts into question not only the reality status of the “supernatural” plot system, but its irreality status as well. As Wörtche states it, “Die Insinuation von Kohärenz dieses Systems wird immer wieder zurückgenommen und dementiert” (216). Nevertheless, this does not detract from the novel’s function as a fantastic text, which, according to Wörtche, is to attack our understanding of the world (238).

Finally, Stefan Berg's study *Schlimme Zeiten, böse Räume. Zeit- und Raumstrukturen in der phantastischen Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts* (1991) rejects a structuralistic, psychoanalytic or thematic study of fantastic literature (34). Berg believes "die phantastische Literatur [repräsentiert] in ihrer Zuspitzung ein allgemeines Krisengefühl" (34). In order to understand the roots of these crises it is essential to study their cultural historical contexts. Like Marzin, Berg argues that the main characteristic of a fantastic text is the confrontation of two levels of reality (2). The motifs which best lend themselves to presenting various "realities" are time and space, precisely because they are the building blocks of our own concept of the world (35). Berg studies the utilization of architectural space in *Der Golem* and how it becomes a plot device by determining the interior reality that affects the protagonist and the external reality of the real reader. Berg reads *Der Golem* as a novel where space becomes a crucial point in the search for the self. In fact the anthropomorphic architecture of the novel has such a depersonalizing effect on the main character; "[er] erlebt sich nicht mehr als Gegenüber zu den bedrohlich gewordene Raum, sondern wird von ihm geschluckt, indem [er] sich selbst in eine architektonisch chiffrierte Figuration verwandelt" (206). Berg further argues that the "I" degenerates in the evil architecture of the text, but that Meyrink provides a second, fantastic superstructure of a mythic-occult nature which conquers the decline of the self through a spiritual resuscitation of the protagonist (231). This is exemplified architecturally by Pernath moving into the non-existent house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*.

Many of the aforementioned interpretations employ Todorov's condition of two different realities which are juxtaposed in the narrative. However, as Lee B. Jennings points out, none of these in-depth studies takes into consideration that C.G. Jung, like Meyrink, "treats occult and arcane doctrines as a general repository of archetypal symbols of psychic change" (56). These symbols aid the protagonist in his search for the "self." It is the goal of this thesis to argue that these two theories of interpretation, the structural and the

psychoanalytic, are reconcilable in interpreting these two novels, especially since the protagonist's dreams present a "hyper-real" order of events (Jennings 56).

Der Golem was the most popular of Meyrink's novels and has been considered his masterpiece. It is therefore understandable that it has become the main focus of those scholars who wish to study Meyrink's works. *Walpurgisnacht*, however, has never been studied at great length. One usually finds a very short chapter on the text in those studies looking at all of Meyrink's novels. Most of the comments are positivistic in nature, viewing the work as a mouthpiece for Meyrink's political opinions, again in the framework of a mystical belief system, or result from a hermeneutic reading of the text.²⁴ This thesis will attempt to look at the novel in greater detail employing the same Jungian approach in the Todorovian frame of the fantastic, as used for *Der Golem*.

²⁴ See Mohammed Qasim's *Gustav Meyrink: eine monographische Untersuchung*, 143-50; Florian F. Marzin's *Okkultismus und Phantastik in den Romanen Gustav Meyrinks*, 59-68; and Jan Christoph Meister's *Hypostasierung: Die Logik mythischen Denkens im Werk Gustav Meyrink nach 1907. Eine Studie zur erkenntnistheoretischen Problematik eines phantastischen Oeuvres*, 200-08.

2. DER GOLEM: The Search for the “Self” followed by the Journey into the Beyond

2.1 The Golem in History

Before commencing the interpretation of Meyrink’s *Der Golem*, it is necessary to supply some information about the history of the novel’s title character. The concept of a figure being made from earth goes back to ancient Greek mythology. It was believed that Prometheus created humans out of clay and earth, into which the goddess Athena breathed the spirit of life (Krauss 6). The mythic figure of the golem has survived for thousands of years. The word “golem” made its first appearance in Psalm 139:14-16 of the Old Testament where it states: “Thou knowest me right well; / my frame was not hidden from thee, / when I was being made in secret, / intricately wrought in the depths of the earth. / Thy eyes beheld my unformed substance.” Gabriela Veselà interprets the term “golem” in this passage to mean “[ein] *Keim* des Menschen, eine unfertige, formlose Stoffmenge, in die noch kein Gedanke Ordnung gebracht hatte” (132).²⁵ The Cabbala, a complex system of Jewish lore that reads the Scriptures to penetrate their mysteries and foretell the future (Slade 154), developed a new meaning for “golem” as “ein aus Lehm geformter, durch Sprechmagie lebendig gewordener, stummer Mensch, den fromme Meister herstellten” (Brolsma-Stancu 190).

The popularity of the golem grew greatly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when the Jewish people of eastern Europe were the victims of repeated *pogroms*. The creation of this supernatural figure was a means by which the Jews gained hope at a time of great suffering. The belief grew to be so strong that some people thought the golem was a real being. According to Gerschom Scholem, toward the middle of the eighteenth century the golem legend began to be associated with the famous scholar of the Cabbala, Rabbi Löw, who lived in Prague in the sixteenth century (202). It was reputed that Rabbi Löw

²⁵ Emphasis in original.

buried the clay remains of the golem in the attic of the Altneu synagogue, where they supposedly remain to this day.²⁶

Jacob Grimm popularized the mythical figure in the April 23rd, 1808 edition of the *Zeitung für Einsiedler*. His version incorporates a golem legend about a Polish rabbi from the city of Chelm. Here the myth begins to take on a Faustian element, whereby the creature became dangerous because of the misuse of divine knowledge by its creator.

Die polnischen Juden machen nach gewissen gesprochenen Gebeten und gehaltenen Festtügen die Gestalt eines Menschen aus Thon oder Leimen, und wenn sie das wunderkräftige Schemhamphoras darüber sprechen, so muß er lebendig werden. Reden kann er zwar nicht, versteht aber ziemlich was man spricht und befiehlt. Sie heißen ihn Golem, und brauchen ihn zu einem Aufwärter allerlei Hausarbeit zu verrichten, allein er darf nimmer aus dem Hause gehen. An seiner Stirn steht geschrieben *aemaeth* (Wahrheit, Gott) er nimmt aber täglich zu, und wird leicht größer und stärker denn alle Hausgenossen, so klein er anfangs gewesen ist. Daher sie aus Furcht vor ihm den ersten Buchstaben auslöschen, so daß nichts bleibt als *maeth* (er ist todt) worauf er zusammenfällt und wiederum in Ton ausgelöst wird.

Einem ist sein Golem aber einmal so hoch geworden und hat ihn aus Sorglosigkeit immer wachsen lassen, daß er ihm nicht mehr an die Stirn reichen können. Da hat er aus der großen Angst dem Knecht geheißten, ihm die Stiefel auszuziehen, in der Meinung, daß er ihm beim Bücken an die Stirne reichen könne. Dies ist auch geschehen, und der erste Buchstab glücklich ausgethan worden, allein die ganze Leimlast fiel auf den Juden und erdrückte ihn. (8)

Four years later, Achim von Arnim wrote about a golem in his short story *Isabella von Ägypten*. In Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* written in 1816, the creature has also become a monster similar to the one depicted in Grimm's tale.²⁷

The golem was resurrected again at the turn of the century because hatred against the Jews was growing again, particularly in the city of Prague. Meyrink describes the phenomenon surrounding the rebirth of the figure in this manner:

Immer einmal in der Zeit eines Menschenalters geht blitzschnell eine geistige Epidemie durch die Judenstadt, befällt die Seelen der Lebenden zu irgendeinem Zweck, der uns verhüllt bleibt, und läßt wie die Luftspiegelung die Umriss eines

²⁶ It is even said that Goethe visited the synagogue and was inspired by the golem legend to write the ballad "Der Zauberlehrling" (Scholem 203). In 1897 the ballad was put to music by the French composer Paul Dukas. The music and plot of "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" was animated by Walt Disney and became a popular scene in his classic 1940 film *Fantasia*.

²⁷ Eric Rabkin interprets the monster as "the narrative symbol of Victor Frankenstein's knowledge gone beyond control" (186).

charakterischen Wesens erstehen, das vielleicht vor Jahrhunderten hier gelebt hat und nach Form und Gestaltung dürstet. (*Der Golem* 51)

Under these circumstances the golem takes on the role of a Messiah, like that of Jesus to the Christians (Petrus 64). This is one level on which the description of the golem in Meyrink's novel as "the collective soul of the ghetto" (Scholem, 159), can be interpreted, especially since his return every thirty-three years coincides with the period of Christ's life. As a messianic figure, he reinforces the themes of the novel of "resurrection and redemption, the transcendence of the ideal over the real" (Goldsmith 98). His recurring appearances also suggest a connection with the character of the Wandering Jew, who never has a chance to rest and can never die.

In 1908 the dramatist Arthur Holitscher brought the figure to life on stage in his play entitled *Der Golem* (Brennicke 64).²⁸ Meyrink's novel was published in 1915,²⁹ a year later than the première of Paul Wegener's film *Der Golem* (1914) which depicted the destructive nature of the creature.³⁰ Wegener was so intrigued with the subject matter that in 1920 he wrote, directed and starred in another film, *Der Golem, wie er in die Welt kam* which focussed on the golem's origins (Brennecke 63-64). Six years later a golem-opera was composed by Eugen d'Albert based on a libretto by F. Lion (Wörtche 201). The golem still walks the earth today, for Marge Piercy's 1991 novel *He, She, and It* (200 ff.) is interspersed with the golem legend. In the same year an anthology entitled *Der Golem* appeared that included golem stories by Meyrink, Egon Erwin Kisch and Chajim Bloch.³¹

²⁸ This play has since then been forgotten by the literary world (Brennicke 65).

²⁹ The chapter *Prag* was published in an earlier form under the title "Der Stein der Tiefe" in the journal *Pan* in 1911 (Lube 522).

³⁰ Unfortunately, all copies of the film are now lost.

³¹ In addition, the golem remains a figure in popular culture, most recently it surfaced in a book about a famous cartoon character, *Bart Simpson's Guide to Life* (Groening 157-59).

2.2 The Disorientation of Perception

As *Der Golem* begins, the reader is confronted with a man who finds himself in a “twilight” state of being neither awake nor asleep and confusing “Erlebtes mit Gelesenem und Gehörtem”³² (9). In his “Halbtraum” the dreamer mistakes the moonlight falling on the foot of his bed for a stone. He associates the stone with a passage he read about the Buddha Gotama just before going to sleep.³³ The passage recounts the story of a crow that flew to a stone which resembled a piece of fat. The bird thought that it would taste good, but since it discovered that the the object of its desire was not tasty, the bird flew away. The phrase, “[der] Stein, der aussah wie ein Stück Fett” (9), which appears at the start of the Buddha’s story runs continuously through the mind of the narrator. This stone becomes the central image of a number of the narrator’s dreams.

The confusion of the stone with the piece of fat can be read as a metaphor for fantastic literature in general. The stone, in this context, represents reality, or sensual perception. The fat is a slippery medium, something we cannot grasp. It refers to the secondary realm of strange phenomena which we deem to be fantastic. Like the crow that is originally confused by what it saw, the reader, too, is in a state of “hesitation” in the Todorovian sense, as he too undergoes the experiences of Pernath, the protagonist of the novel, and cannot distinguish between reality and dream.

Pernath’s guide on his search for the “self” is his neighbour Hillel, who is a rabbi well versed in the Cabbala. Hillel describes Pernath’s original mental condition as that of a sleeper. Hillel has awakened him, and, “Wer aufgeweckt worden ist, kann nicht mehr sterben. Schlaf und Tod sind dasselbe” (80). Hillel’s description of sleep as death can be compared to Jung’s belief that dreams originate from the unconscious which is the major

³² All page references in this chapter refer to the 1994 edition of *Der Golem*.

³³ This story first appeared in *Das Leben des Buddha* by Julius Dutoit which was published in 1906.

force in the development of the individual. If one does not dream one cannot evolve and is therefore in a death-like state. The state of dreaming that Pernath constantly undergoes aids him in reintegrating all aspects of his “self,” not to mention his sessions with Hillel where his dreams are in a sense analyzed.³⁴

The image of the stone appears often in the course of the novel and is also related to the theme of the search for the “self.” Pernath is in certain way a “stone,” and in his role as a gem-cutter it is his job to cut away all that is unnecessary to free his creation. His work is “ein Symbol für die Arbeit an seiner Persönlichkeit (Claes 32). Hillel’s remarks, “Wohl dem Menschen, . . . der von sich sagen kann: Ich bin geschliffen” (78), indicates the goal of the individual who works to divest himself of all that is unnecessary to find his true “self.” The “self”, the nuclear centre of a person, is often represented in dreams by a stone (Franz 209). In *Der Golem*, as Walter Claes states, “Der Stein symbolisiert das (höhere) Selbst, der Speck das sinnliche und instinktive Leben”(32). The goal of the Buddhist religion, as is symbolized by the story of the crow, is to reject all earthly desires and aspirations in order to attain a higher state of being, a goal which Pernath also strives to reach, by ultimately leaving his physical body behind at death.

Furthermore, the stone is the foundation for the figure of the golem. As the narrator explains, “das Bild von dem Stein . . . wächst ins Ungeheuerliche in meinem Hirn” (9). The golem is brought to life from earth which may be equated with stone. The narrator does think of stones in an organic sense, when he depicts them as, “steingewordene Versuche eines Kindes, plumpe, gesprenkelte Molche nachzubilden” (9), and as “große schieferfarbene Taschenkrebse” (10). The narrator’s need to think of stones as living creatures comes from an “eigensinnige Stimme in [seinem] Innern” (10) that he cannot escape. It is the voice of his unconscious which finally takes him into the dream world of

³⁴ This occurs numerous times, for example when Hillel explains the reasons behind Pernath’s meeting with the golem in the chapter *Wach* (77-85); and later after Pernath’s journey into the *Zimmer ohne Zugang* (116-23).

Pernath's life. Since the stone represents the "self" and the golem consists of earth, a substance which once consisted of stone, then the golem symbolizes the "self."

The confusion over what events constitute the narrator's actual dream continues, as he sees his body asleep in bed and then suddenly is transported into a dark courtyard where he finds himself living the life of another man. He does not know the identity of this person until someone in the dream refers to him as "Meister Pernath." The utterance of the name interrupts the dream when the man supposedly wakes up at the end of the chapter *Tag* and recognizes the foot of his bed in the moonshine. He insists though that he is still asleep, but recalls having accidentally taken the hat of a man named Athanasius Pernath. What surprised the dreamer at the time was that the hat fit him, although his head had a very unusual shape. The hat is therefore the medium which connects the dreamer, who provides the narration to the outer frame of the novel, to its protagonist Pernath. Jung interprets the use of the hat in this manner:

Der Hut als das den Kopf . . . Einnehmende wie man bei der Submersion 'alle Begriffe unter einen Hut bringt,' so überdeckt der Hut wie eine Obervorstellung die ganze Persönlichkeit und teilt dieser ihre Bedeutung mit. . . . Die Krönung . . . ein[es] fremde[n] Hutes [erteilt] eine fremde Natur. (*Psychologie* 67)

Shortly after the realization of Pernath's identity, the frame narrator returns to his dream of Pernath's life, which is no longer interrupted until the death of its protagonist.

One indication of which experiences lie in the realm of the frame narrator and which lie in Pernath's, is Meyrink's use of tense. Chapter one *Schlaf* is generally written in the present tense and indicates what is happening to the frame narrator. The next chapter *Tag*, where he discovers himself in Pernath's world, begins immediately with the imperfect and pluperfect tenses. The present is used in the break with the dream when the frame narrator clarifies his connection to Pernath. It also extends into Pernath's description of being pursued by someone (22). The imperfect/pluperfect takes over when Pernath actually meets the golem. Pernath's use of the present can be explained by the immediacy of his feelings

of paranoia, but also because this section of the text constitutes the birth of the golem itself, who is the first of Pernath's doubles to appear.

In addition to the question of which events are dreamed by the frame narrator and which are experienced by Pernath, the perceptions of time each of them perceives are continuously warped. These changes are reflections of the inner conflict of Pernath's psyche. In the frame narrator's dream, which takes up only one hour of "real" time, the narrator experiences over seven months in the life of Athanasius Pernath (Fernandez-Bravo 135), which happened approximately thirty-three years before, as the collapse of the bridge over the Moldau River and the tearing down of the ghetto indicates.³⁵ One sign of the disorder of perception is the explosion of chronological time. According to Rosemary Jackson, "time past, present and future [lose] their historical sequences and [tend] towards a suspension, an eternal present" (47). This present is depicted by the antique store of Aaron Wassertrum where, "an den Mauerrändern seines Gewölbes hängen unverändert, Tag für Tag, jahraus, jahrein dieselben toten, wertlosen Dinge" (14). Even the inhabitants of the ghetto seem to belong to the same cycle of reincarnation as the golem (Mayer 201). One example is Rosina, a young prostitute who lives in the ghetto, and who seems to be destined to relive her mother's life. Pernath describes her resemblance to her ancestor in this manner, "Dieses erstarrte, grinsende Lächeln kenne ich nun schon ein ganzes Menschenleben. Erst die Großmutter, dann die Mutter!--und stets das gleiche Gesicht, kein Zug anders! Derselbe Name Rosina--es ist immer eine die Auferstehung der anderen" (56).

³⁵ This points to an incongruity in the text. Pernath's age is given as between forty and forty-five in the main plot. Nevertheless, in the last chapter he is reported to be around ninety. The thirty-three year cycle of the golem's return, however, puts his age between seventy-three and seventy-eight (Mayer 200).

2.3 The Many Doubles of Pernath

To further confuse the reader's perception of events in the novel, the identity of the protagonist is put into question. Pernath looks like, "ein altfranzösischer Edelmann mit seiner schlanken Gestalt und dem Spitzbart" (57), but eventually begins to associate himself with the golem to the extent that he assumes the golem's Asian appearance. To Pernath the golem is, "wie ein Negativ, eine unsichtbare Hohlform, . . . deren Linien ich nicht erfassen kann--in die ich selber hineinschlüpfen muß, wenn ich mir ihrer Gestalt und ihres Ausdrucks im eigenen Ich bewußt werden will" (28). The golem's role as a double is supported by the testimony of Hillel's wife:

Sie sagte, sie sei felsenfest überzeugt gewesen, daß es damals nur ihre eigene Seele habe sein können, die--aus dem Körper getreten--ihr einen Augenblick gegenübergestanden und mit den Zügen eines fremden Geschöpfes ins Gesicht gestarrt hätte. Trotz eines furchtbaren Grauens, das sich ihrer damals bemächtigt, habe sie doch keine Sekunde die Gewißheit verlassen, daß jener andere nur ein Stück ihres eignen Innern sein konnte. (53-54)

On another level the golem represents all of the inhabitants of the ghetto as individuals. They are often described as automatons,³⁶ as is evident in Pernath's description of his neighbours, "die seltsamen Wesen, die . . . wohnen wie Schemen, wie Wesen--nicht von Müttern geboren--, die in ihrem Denken und Tun wie aus Stücken wahllos zusammengehängt scheinen" (32). In other words they remind Pernath of the golem:

Und wie jener Golem zu einem LehmBild in derselben Sekunde erstarrte, in der die geheime Silbe des Lebens aus seinem Munde genommen ward, so müßten auch, dünkt mich, alle diese *Menschen* entseelt in einem Augenblick zusammenfallen, löschte man irgendeinen winzigen Begriff, . . . --in ihrem Hirn aus. (33)³⁷

In their resemblance to the golem the ghetto inhabitants can also be equated with Pernath. Like him they too are perhaps being prodded by their unconscious and are in the process of

³⁶ Pernath too is like an automaton, in his original "sleeping" state.

³⁷ Emphasis in original.

searching for their own “self.” As Simone Stancu-Brolsma remarks, “Pernath, mit seinem Identitätsverlust, ist aber auch nur ein Spiegelbild aller im Roman auftretenden Figuren, ob Juden, Deutsche oder Tschechen” (193). Zwakh explains the golem’s appearance as:

eine seelische Explosion, die unser Traumbewußtsein ans Tageslicht peitscht, um . . . hier ein Gespenst zu schaffen, das in Mienen, Gang und Gehaben, in allem und jedem das Symbol der Massenseele unfehlbar offenbaren müßte, wenn man die geheime Sprache der Formen nur richtig zu deuten verstünde. (51-52)

The golem is therefore the same symbol for each member of the community as it is for Hillel’s wife, who saw her own soul as being represented by the apparition (53).

The term Meyrink employs to describe the golem, “das Symbol der Massenseele,” has two conflicting meanings. *Massenseele* can mean the soul or “self” inherent in each individual member of the crowd, but the word can also refer to the one soul of the masses joined together. As such the “collective soul” stands as the “Universal Being” or Adam, who in Jewish tradition contains all of humanity since the beginning of time, a conglomeration of everyone’s soul. He is the symbol of “a total oneness of all human existence, beyond all individual units” (Franz 200) and therefore stands for all the characters in the novel, who are all undergoing the same process of individuation, as is represented on an individual level by Pernath. His story is consequently the story of every human being.³⁸ The golem is therefore everyone’s double as it is for Pernath and Hillel’s wife.

The concept of the double, or split personality, has become one of the major themes of modern literature. It is the subject of such Romantic works as Adelbert von Chamisso’s

³⁸ The “Universal Being” appears worldwide in many myths and religions (Franz 200). The Cabbalist concept of it is represented by Adam Kadmon, the mystical original manifestation of God who can simultaneously be interpreted as God’s imperfect double, as man is, in his fragility (Oehm 179). Christ is another example of the figure in Western culture. In the East he is depicted as Krishna and Buddha (Franz 202). Yet there it is recognized that the “Universal Being” is not necessarily a concrete reality, as he is depicted by Adam of the golem, for that matter, but rather as an innate aspect of ourselves which achieves immortality (Franz (202). It is the act of divesting oneself of any interest in the external, materialistic world. This is demonstrated in *Der Golem* by the ultimate rendering of the here and now, in the death of the protagonist, Pernath. His death is a “Paradigma der Sublimation, das heißt die Befreiung der Seele (Jung, *Alchemie* 421).

Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte (1814) and E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Die Elixiere des Teufels* (1816). According to Freud: "[Verdankt] der psychologische Roman . . . im ganzen wohl seine Besonderheit der Neigung des modernen Dichters, sein Ich durch Selbstbeobachtung in Partial-Ichs zu zerspalten und demzufolge die Konfliktströmungen seines Seelenlebens in mehreren Helden zu personifizieren" ("Dichter" 15). He considers the concept of the double as one of the most terrifying of fantastic themes and calls it a "Schreckbild" which has haunted humanity since primitive times ("Unheimliche" 64). Todorov includes it in his category of themes of the self (116) and Jackson looks at it from a psychoanalytic perspective where, "The double signifies a desire to be re-united with a lost centre of personality" (108).

At the beginning of *Der Golem*, Athanasius Pernath is an individual who has lost touch with his true "self." He has spent some time in an insane asylum and has overcome the problems which led to his institutionalization by undergoing a treatment of hypnosis to close off those memories which disturbed him. In the process, however, all memories of his youth were blocked off as well. Pernath is at this point only the shell of a man, when the golem, another "shell-like" creature, approaches him to use his stone-cutting skills to repair the "I" on the page of a book called *Ibbur*.³⁹ The book whose title signifies *Seelenschwängerung* speaks to Pernath, precisely because he has no soul.⁴⁰ The book and the golem are aspects of Pernath's unconscious which are to aid him in seeking, or repairing, his "self". This is made clear when Pernath describes reading the book as leafing through his brain (26).

³⁹ It is unclear whether this meeting occurred at all, for Pernath is at the time in a hazy, or dreamlike state of consciousness.

⁴⁰ The roots of the term *Ibbur* lie in the Cabbala; however the book as such is non-existent. The word *Ibbur* comes from the Zohar and is related to the concept of reincarnation. According to Heidemarie Oehm it refers to: "Die Schwängerung einer hilfsbedürftigen, noch dem irdischen Dasein verhafteten Seele in besonders kritischen Momente ihrer Existenz mit der Zusatzseele eines bereits verstorbenen Gerechten" (182). In the context of the novel the *Gerechte* can be tied to the golem-figure, again in its positive aspect as an aid in the process of individuation. The word otherwise refers to "transition" or "transmigration" (Mayer 206). Later it was employed to describe the relation between an adept and his master (Oehm 182).

Subsequent episodes confirm Pernath's association with the golem figure. Pernath is dreaming when he imagines himself to be the marionette head his friend Zwakh, a puppeteer, is cutting from a wood block, which is later identified as the head of the golem (60). The golem also takes control of Pernath's body when he becomes overwhelmed with the decadent, erotic events going on at Loitschek's, a local café. Eventually, Pernath discovers a *Zimmer ohne Zugang* that represents his unconscious. It is located at the house of the golem and Pernath finds the remnants of the golem's clothes there, which he puts on to keep warm. Pernath leaves the room, and not realizing his state of dress, horrifies the inhabitants of the ghetto who only recognize the golem (112). Pernath's physical appearance as the "monster" coincides with the retrieval of his memory of school (114). After leaving prison Pernath ends up residing in the house of the golem (265), where his quest to find his mentor Hillel and Hillel's daughter Mirjam leads to his physical demise. A fire breaks out in the house and when Pernath attempts to climb down a rope to safety, it breaks and he falls to his death. The golem is last observed as a servant of Pernath at the strange house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern* (278), which demonstrates his role throughout the novel, as a means of aiding Pernath to reach his full spiritual potential.

Pernath's friend Hillel embodies the archetype of the wise old man (Russack 159), a superior being. He teaches the uninitiated Pernath about the abstract side of the Cabbala, a process which can only be accomplished with the help of a teacher (138-39). He interprets the golem's appearance as a positive sign for Pernath: "Nimm an, der Mann, der zu dir kam und den du den Golem nennst, bedeute die Erweckung des Toten durch das innerste Geistesleben. Jedes Ding auf Erden ist nichts als ein ewiges Symbol, in Staub gekleidet!" (80).

The symbols inherent in Tarot cards also represent Pernath at different stages of the development of his "self."⁴¹ The first figure symbolized in the Tarot with whom Pernath comes into contact is the Fool. Pernath meets him just after he is given the *Buch Ibbur* by the golem. This is followed by a hallucination in which many images appear, one of which is a Pierrot. He sits across from Pernath and gazes into his face, as if it were a mirror. The Pierrot begins to grimace and move his arms about and Pernath seems driven to copy his strange actions (25). The Fool and Pernath are connected because both behave in the same manner. In turn Pernath, at this point in the novel, shares the same characteristics as the Fool (Oehm 182).

⁴¹ Jung studied the meanings of the Tarot, for "divination by means of the Tarot may be defined as a practical way in which a bridge is built between the world where physical events take place in time on the one hand, and the timeless world of the archetypes of the collective unconscious on the other" (Hoeller, in Goldsmith 104-05). The Tarot forms the basis for Hermeticism, a philosophy founded on the ancient figure of Hermes Trismegistus, who was skilled in alchemy and the occult sciences (Sadhu 11). The origins of the tarot are unknown, however, many famous occult scholars such as Eliphas Lévi, Paracelsus and Papus (Dr. Encausse) believe it came from Ancient Egypt (Sadhu 11). The Tarot is also described as the book of Cabbala since the cabbalists linked the twenty-two cards of the major arcana with the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, as Hillel explains to Zwakh and Pernath (121). In turn, the cards of the Major Arcana are also connected to the twenty-two paths of power that link the ten sephiroth in the "Tree of Life." The sephiroth concurrently portray the highest spiritual values that earthly man can realize in attempting to become like God (Oehm 179). The trunk and branches of the tree depict the greater reality of the Occult Realm which is reflected by the lesser reality of our universe as illustrated by the tree's roots. Occultists say "Quod superius, sicut inferius," which translates into "As above so below," which are almost the exact words of Hillel. According to Jung the tree is, "der Prototyp des Selbst, ein Symbol des Ursprungs und des Zieles des Individuationsprozesses" (*Studien* 214). The slow involuntary growth pattern of the tree parallels that of the self (Franz 161). Its roots are in the subconscious, which is covered, while that which we strive for, spiritual awareness, is illustrated by the growth of the branches towards heaven.

The Tarot is considered a tool in unlocking the secrets of the past, present and future. It's purpose is to teach a seeker who wishes to examine various spiritual paths for him or herself, a method of developing and using one's mind to attain the highest goals of human fulfilment (Sadhu 22). Everyone's path to spirituality is different, as Zwakh recognizes from Hillel's observations: "Jawohl: Fragen, die jedesmal anders lauten, und Antworten, die jeder anders versteht!" (121). Even the Hebrew alphabet must be interpreted by each reader for himself, since it lacks vowels (121). Hillel points out the same rule for the Tarot, for which the cards are dealt differently for each person (122).

The highest goal an individual can reach is that of a saint, a highly developed individual who no longer follows any egotistical aims. The saint, having eventually learned all there is to know becomes a sage, and may be referred to as master or a perfect being. By the end of the novel Pernath fulfils this role, which in a sense was his fate, as his name indicates. "Athanasius" signifies, "ein Unsterblicher, ein Zeitloser, als welcher ein allgemeingültiger, immer existierender Mensch, der sich vom einmaligen, sozusagen zufälligen Individuum unterscheidet" (Jung, *Alchemie* 67). "Pernath" can be connected to "Nath". The nine "Naths" were the models for the "Masters of Wisdom" or "Mahatmās" who lead the present Theosophical Society. Athanasius Pernath means in its totality, "the immortal, spiritual guide" (Claes 32).

The Tarot card of the Fool depicts a happy-looking fellow, who is about to step into an abyss, where a crocodile awaits him (Oehm 182), signifying that the happiness of the physical life is only an illusion (Sadhu 458). In one sense the card symbolizes the sensuous life and its gratification. The recognition of his carnal nature is the first step in the development of the “self” Pernath takes, after having been awakened from his automaton-like existence.

The Fool card, however, is a wild card with no direct value, as its number zero indicates (Wirth 77). It depicts infinity, the unknown, the mystery of mysteries, emptiness, nothing, in other words the abyss from which everything emerges and to which it all returns in the end (Wirth 77). It symbolizes the story of terrestrial Adam, created in the image of the celestial Adam, who is destined to rise from his fall into the slavery of materialism. This also is Pernath’s fate. He must learn to realize that, “Das ganze Leben ist *nichts* anderes als formgewordene Fragen, die den Keim der Antwort in sich tragen--und Antworten, die schwanger gehen mit Fragen” (121),⁴² otherwise he will remain a fool and see life only as a means towards physical fulfilment. Pernath’s eventual disgust with Rosina’s dance in nothing but stockings and a jacket at Loitschek’s café indicates his evolution to a higher level of spiritual being. Nevertheless, this cannot be accomplished without the reintegration of the primordial man (Sadhu 458).

The different facets of the “self,” that are depicted by different characters and symbols in *Der Golem*, are all aspects of the unconscious. For the process of individuation to take place Jung believes “Das Unbewußte steht schon wie ein Schatten mit seinen Figuren hinter [dem Träumer] und drängt in die Bewußtheit” (*Alchemie* 67). The “realization of the shadow” is the stage Jung refers to when, examining our own personality we find aspects we do not wish to delve into too deeply (Franz 168). This dark

⁴² Emphasis in original.

side of the ego-personality is often personified,⁴³ but is not necessarily evil, rather it has “an evil effect because it is an unrecognised bearer of self-realization” (Russack 158), and therefore poses a danger to the conscious ego. As Rosemary Jackson puts it, “Any . . . structure tends to exclude as ‘evil’ anything . . . which threatens it with destruction” (52). The golem is the archetypal shadow which represents the negative aspects of Pernath’s consciousness. The shadow may have negative connotations because it sometimes represents an instinctual drive that an individual wishes to conquer (Franz 216).⁴⁴

In the first stage of Pernath’s quest for self-awareness the golem leads him to the path of life from a robot-like, mechanical existence. Pernath’s further development into the spiritual realm is hindered by his earthly nature. The roots of this belief are inherent in our culture, as Jung states: “Nach unseren Märchen ist das natürlich Böse in die ‘Wurzeln,’ das heißt, in die Erde, respektiv in den *Körper* verbannt” (“Studien” 216-17).⁴⁵ Mirjam echoes this disdain for the worldly aspect of life when she tells Pernath of her father’s teachings, “Die Welt ist dazu da, um von uns kaputt gemacht zu werden, . . . dann erst fängt das Leben an” (146). The golem, in his tellurian aspect, illustrates the separation of body and spirit as represented by the pagan as opposed to the spiritual being in the tradition of Hillel’s cabbalistic beliefs (Russack 158). The spirit is not integrated with the body, but remains separate.

The “evil” aspect of the golem connects it to Prague, the setting of the novel. The city’s sinister origins are related in a legend concerning the founding of Prague in

⁴³ The personification of the evil personality is a popular one in contemporary horror film, for example *The Dark Half* and *Raising Cain*.

⁴⁴ Jung saw the golem as a personification of the horrible troubles that befall the hero in his visions. As such he is to be construed as an entirely negative figure, the complete shadow of the immortal one (*Notes*, 93-94).

⁴⁵ Emphasis in original.

Meyrink's essay entitled "Die geheimnisvolle Stadt."⁴⁶ It is reputed that seven monks from central Asia arrived at the banks of the Moldau River and planted a grain of rice on the side which today is known as the *Hradschin*. The seed grew into a dwarf elder tree with fantastically deformed limbs. It is said that the tree's strange presence attracted many wars and disasters (Caroutch 183). The unusual Asian appearance of the golem suggests that he is a ghostly reminder of the city's founders. The "evil" nature of the tree they planted coincides with the murders which accompany the return of the golem.

The Czech word for the city "Praha," means the "threshold (Pollet, "Ville" 118).

Meyrink also describes the city as a kind of threshold in "Die geheimnisvolle Stadt":

Ich kenne keine Stadt, die wie Prag, wenn man in ihr wohnt und mit ihr geistig verwittert ist, einen so oft und in so merkwürdig zauberhafter Art lockt, die Orte ihrer Vergangenheit aufzusuchen. Es ist, als riefen die Toten uns Lebende bis an die Stellen, wo sie einst ihr Dasein verbracht, um uns zuzuraunen, daß Prag nicht umsonst den Namen "die Schwelle" führt--daß es in Wirklichkeit eine Schwelle zwischen Diesseits und Jenseits ist, eine Schwelle, viel schmaler als an anderen Orten. (162)

The threshold of the city is marked by a large gate, which indicates for Pernath the end of "die breite Heerstraße der Geschehnisse" (83), which he must transcend in order to regain his memory. The other side of this threshold is described as, "[eine] Leere," "der Abgrund" and "die andere, ferne Heimat, die Jenseits allen Denkens liegt" (84).⁴⁷ Jean-Jacques Pollet describes Meyrink's Prague as "l'image archétypale de la cité comme *Axis Mundi*, point de rencontre entre Ciel, Terre et Enfer" ("Ville" 131).

⁴⁶ Although the legends in the novel are to some extent adaptations of legends surrounding the city of Prague, they are not accounts of real events (Marzin 135). Legends are enigmatic stories, but are not the same as a myth. Andras Sandor notes that, "They are associated usually . . . with some geographic location and they are asserted to have happened to people to whom the things recounted happened or who believe that they happened in their own lifetime or one or two generations before" (384). What makes the legend enigmatic is the intrusion of a supernatural agent. In that both are bidimensional the legend and the fantastic narrative are similar. Nevertheless, the legend is an oral form, rather than a written one, and as Amaryll Chanady states: "The supernatural is treated as unfamiliar, but not logically incompatible with other beliefs, since there is no rational distinction between it and the natural. It is held in awe, because it is marvelled at" (8). Meyrink's use of legends therefore allows the characters as well as the readers to accept some of the fantastic events presented in the text without question.

⁴⁷ The passage through a gateway is a common metaphor used in fantastic literature to represent the journey into a dream-realm or to the "other side" (Schödel 120).

The confusion over what one perceives as dream and reality is intensified by Meyrink's use of real landmarks, such as the Moldau bridge and the palaces of the *Hradschin*, and also real events like the tearing down of the ghetto, that lend the novel a note of realism. This hint of authenticity, his *mimetic* style of writing (Gupte 99), as well as the contemporary setting, made *Der Golem* all the more terrifying for the original readers because they were acquainted with Meyrink's world (Heller 44). On the other hand, as Gabriela Veselà points out, Meyrink's description of Prague, "bleibt vage genug, um wesentliche Teile der Stadt als symbolisch erhöhte Architektur des geistigen Weges der Hauptfigur zu deuten" (134).

One example of the "evil" nature of the novel's setting is presented by Pernath's impressions of houses as live, threatening entities. Some are described in zoomorphic terms, such as "die mißfarbigen Häuser, die da vor meinen Augen wie verdrossene alte Tiere im Regen nebeneinanderhockten" (32). Others are described using anthropomorphisms:

Dort ein halbes, schiefwinkliges Haus mit zurückspringender Stirn, -- ein andres daneben: vorstehend wie ein Eckzahn. . . . Oft träumte mir ich hätte die Häuser belauscht in ihrem spukhaften Treiben und mit angstvollem Staunen erfahren, daß sie die heimlichen Herren der Gasse seien, sich ihres Lebens und Fühlens entäußern und es wieder an sich ziehen können--es tagsüber den Bewohnern, die hier hausen, borgen, um es in kommender Nacht mit Wucherzinsen wieder zurückfordern. (32)

The ghetto as a whole is a fantastic place, "un lieu intermédiaire entre l'imaginaire et le réel" (Grivel 27). It fulfils the same function as the golem in that both symbolize the evil side of the individual (Karst 76). The houses especially have a demonic presence:

Unter dem trüben Himmel sahen sie aus, als lägen sie im Schlaf, und man spürte nichts von dem tückischen, feindseligen Leben, das zuweilen von ihnen ausstrahlt, wenn der Nebel der Herbstabende in den Gassen liegt und ihr leises, kaum merkliches Mienenspiel verbergen hilft. (32)

The use of similes in the description of the houses diminishes their fantastic nature. They have not become monstrous beings, but are objects of terror only to Pernath.⁴⁸

The passage to the room with no entrance, however, actually becomes the passage to Pernath's unconscious, where all his memories are locked away. Jung notes that the human body is often represented as a house ("Unconscious" 78). The journey Pernath takes through the passage to find this room is similar to the odyssey of Osiris (*Psychologie* 384). As M-L.von Franz remarks, "The maze of strange passages [and] chambers . . . recalls the old Egyptian representation of the underworld which is a well-known symbol of the unconscious" ("Individuation" 170).

Pernath's entry into the room through the passage is marked by symbols of the religions that appear in the novel. The first is a horizontal cross that Pernath must climb over in order to reach the next level in the room. Heidemarie Oehm interprets it to be an "Auferstehungssymbol, als Sinnbild für den Aufstieg des Geistigen durch das Materielle zum Ewigen" (187). The next obstacle is a spiral staircase with eight steps, that stand for a "Wanderung der Seele" (Claes 33). The eight steps mark the eight stages of the life of Buddha. The last symbol is the Solomon's Seal which depicts the entire macrocosm. According to Oehm, "Seine beiden ineinander verschlungenen, sich gegenseitig reflektierenden Dreiecke mit der nach oben bzw. nach unten gerichteten Spitze stellen die Trinitäten des Geistes und der Materie dar" (187). Together, these signs indicate that Pernath is searching for his "self" by following the path of Christianity, then the older religion of Buddhism and lastly the ancient Jewish belief. This journey of transcendence explains why Pernath, after travelling through all the subterranean passageways beneath the ghetto, ultimately finds himself in a room on the second story overlooking the other rooftops in the neighbourhood.

⁴⁸ For this reason I cannot agree with Stefan Berg's argument that, "Die von [ihm] als Zentrum des Textes behaupteten Raumverzerrungen haben . . . nicht nur die Tendenz, die individuelle Souveränität der handelnden Protagonisten nachhaltig zu demontieren, sie beginnen . . . sogar dem erlebenden Ich ihre eigene verzerrte Tektonik als Struktur einzuprägen" (206).

When he first enters the *Zimmer ohne Zugang*, Pernath first sees a deck of Tarot cards (107). The first card that attracts his attention is the Magician which depicts the Hebrew letter *Aleph*, “in Form eines Mannes altfränkisch gekleidet, den grauen Spitzbart kurz geschnitten” (109).⁴⁹ The figure is not the usual Magician one sees on cards, but bears a resemblance to Pernath (109). Eventually, the Magician emerges from the card, grows larger and sits in a corner staring at Pernath, each a mirror image of the other, in the same way Pernath resembled the fool earlier (110). Pernath wrestles with the Magician for his life, which Pernath realizes no longer belongs to him. The figure then dwindles down in size and re-emerges into the card, which Pernath puts into his pocket as a trophy (110).

In relation to humanity the card symbolizes individual initiative, the unconscious called upon to create the “self,” because it is the individual’s mission to create himself (Wirth 116). As Kéther, the crown sephiroth of the Cabbalistic Tree of Life, the Magician represents the beginning of all things. It is the card numbered one in the higher arcana and therefore represents the principle of unity (Wirth 119). The Magician depicts the ability to solve one of the Great Mysteries, that of neutralizing the basic binary oppositions of spirit and matter, good and evil, life and death, and consciousness and the power of realization (Sadhu 35). In time Pernath realizes these goals through the unification of his “self” and subsequent journey to the Astral Plane.

Pernath’s journey to the *Zimmer ohne Zugang* brings back some of his childhood memories and represents a step towards finding his “self.” As this evolutionary process continues Pernath is faced, in the context of a strange dream, with another choice, that of a life beyond the earthly realm which is presented to him.⁵⁰ The strange headless man who

⁴⁹ Like the Hebrew letter *Aleph*, the man shown on the card points with one arm above and with the other below, indicating the main rule of alchemy, “So wie es oben ist, ist es auch unten.” In addition, it illustrates the Cabbalistic doctrine of correspondence, that the microcosm is a mirror-image of the macrocosm. It implies that a unity exists between individual and universal being, as man is an imperfect copy of the original universal Adam Kadmon (Oehm 187).

⁵⁰ In this dream a strange man appears and offers Pernath some seeds. Instead of a head the man has a nebulous cloud floating over his shoulders. He holds a white spiral-formed staff. Pernath attempts mentally to set different heads into the void, but only the head of an ibis remains longest in his sight.

presides over the offering of the seeds can be read as a personification of the golem-as-shadow, and as such stands in place of the golem (Russack 160). Pernath discovers that the head of the ibis, an Egyptian bird, matches the body, and forms the full figure of the Egyptian god Thoth. He is an underworld figure who decides which souls are allowed to transcend into a higher realm (Henderson 155-56).⁵¹

According to Laponder, the *Lustmörder* Pernath meets in prison, the seeds which are offered to Pernath represent magical power. That they rolled on the floor signifies: “Sie sind hiergeblieben und werden von Ihren Vorfahren so lange gehütet, bis die Zeit des Keimens da ist. Dann werden die Kräfte, die in Ihnen jetzt noch schlummern, lebendig werden” (247). Furthermore, the violet people who surround him comprise, “die Kette der ererbten ‘Iche’” (247). When the soul becomes united, the individual attains a state of immortality (247).⁵²

Had Pernath chosen one of the options available to him he would have followed either the path of life or death, as was presented to him earlier by Hillel, in the context of Pernath realizes his decision either to accept or reject the seeds will have a great effect on his life. He elicits help in making his decision and thereby envisions a chain of his ancestors, the last of whom is represented by the golem. The “grey shadow” appears again surrounded by two circles of strange beings. One circle is dressed in violet, the other in red-black robes; both have their faces hidden. Pernath perceives that his choice of dealing with the seeds affects each group differently. Ultimately, he hits the phantom’s arm and sends the seeds scattering on the floor. The phantom disappears as does the red-black circle. The violet figures, now with a strange golden inscription on their chests remain to pick up the seeds. In the background Pernath hears a storm raging. The violet figures inform Pernath he should remain calm, for it is “die Nacht der Beschützung” (156). As the bad weather subsides, one of the circle tells Pernath that the man he is searching for is not there. Another mentions the name “Henoeh.” One member asks Pernath if he can read the inscription on the member’s chest. When Pernath denies he is able to do so, the letters are transferred to him, which he is then able to read as CHABRAT ZENEH ALUM BOCHER, whereupon the symbols transform themselves into an undecipherable alphabet. Pernath then falls into a deep, dreamless sleep (153-57). CHABRAT ZEREH AUR BOCHER is the name of an occult group Meyrink belonged to at the beginning of the century. The phrase means “Brotherhood of the Descendants of the first Light” (Oehm 198).

⁵¹ Thoth was a lunar deity, who was endowed with complete knowledge and wisdom. He was the first and the greatest of magicians, as the nebulous figure’s staff indicates (Oehm 189), and like Hillel (118), was a keeper of the divine archives (“Thoth” 27-28).

⁵² Jung likens the episode to the dream of one of his patients, where the seeds are represented by gold coins. The coins are interpreted as representations of gross materialism, so it is therefore comprehensible that they are considered unseemly and discarded. In addition, the profuse nature of both the coins and the seeds is similar to lapis, the philosopher’s stone, which is difficult to discover, precisely because it is found in abundance everywhere (Jung, *Alchemie* 102-03).

being awake or asleep. However, Pernath chose a third option, that of knocking the seeds away, which is symbolic of simultaneously accepting and declining the offer. Pernath accepts neither life nor death, but immortality. He therefore associates himself with everything, thereby unifying his “self” which combines natural and spiritual realms into a regenerated and redeemed individual.

That Pernath has not yet reached this ultimate state of “self” is underlined by the remark that the man he seeks is not there. That man is Pernath himself. One of the circle members refers to this man as “Henoeh.” Hillel calls Pernath by that name later when they use Laponder as a medium for contact (243). Henoeh is a reference to the seventh of the ten biblical patriarchs, who without suffering death and therefore surrendering his body, was given immortality because of his spiritual nature as is stated in Heb. 11, 5: “By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had taken him.” In the esoteric sense Henoeh personifies every individual (Oehm 189).⁵³

Pernath’s decision to choose neither the path of life nor death has symbolic repercussions on other events in the novel. The very night of his meeting with Thoth, the bridge across the Moldau collapses (158). This bridge connects the two separate worlds of the ghetto and the *Hradschin*, but also of the here and the beyond. Its ruin is a concrete example of the destruction of the link between the two worlds. The knowledge that the boundary between life and death must be erased illustrates another of the steps Pernath must take in order to integrate his disparate “selves.” This is symbolized by the discovery that the “I” of the book *Ibbur* that represents Pernath is finally united with itself (158).

⁵³ Henoeh is the hero of Franz Spunda’s *Ägyptisches Totenbuch*, 1924.

2.4 Representations of the Female Element

The process of individuation is at this point still incomplete. The next problem Pernath must tackle is to unite himself with his “female” nature which is represented in the text by three different women who alternately attract and/or repulse Pernath. Their personalities are illustrated in one of Pernath’s daydreams, where he ponders which of the three he is falling in love with:

Die ganze Nacht über hatte es mich gequält. Einmal war es Angelina gewesen, die sich an mich geschmiegt, dann wieder sprach ich scheinbar ganz harmlos mit Mirjam, und kaum hatte ich das Bild zerrissen, kam abermals Angelina und küßte mich; ich roch den Duft ihres Haares, und ihr weicher Zobelpelz kitzelte mich am Hals, rutschte von ihren entblößten Schultern--und sie wurde zu Rosina, die mit trunkenen, halbgeschlossenen Augen tanzte--im Frack--nackt. (169-70)

Meyrink’s depictions of all three female characters are to a large extent stereotypical. Rosina is the first to appear in the text. She is a sort of siren, who attracts men with her physical attributes, only to lead them to their downfall (Janßen 35). As Sigrid Mayer writes, “[Rosina] scheint [Pernath] doch durch ihre blosse Existenz zu bedrohen” (204). Pernath constantly wrestles with Rosina’s allure, but disgust at her worldly nature and erotic endeavours finally give him the strength to spurn her advances. The complete opposite to Rosina is Mirjam, Hillel’s daughter. She is the virtuous girl who represents the ideals of a spiritual life to Pernath.⁵⁴ Florian F. Marzin calls Meyrink’s description of Mirjam “klischeehaft” (52).⁵⁵ As opposed to Rosina, who in her sexuality exudes a certain power over the male sex, the naive Mirjam eventually falls victim to the *Lustmörder*

⁵⁴When Meyrink was expanding his original published short story “Der Stein der Tiefe” into *Der Golem*, he made the following note in his little black book, “Nötig ist: Gegensatz zu Rosina = eine edle Jüdin”, obviously referring to the character of Mirjam (Lube, “Entstehungsgeschichte” 534).

⁵⁵Pernath’s carving of a cameo portraying Mirjam demonstrates that the three women represent images of femininity created by the masculine mind of Pernath, “Und ich dachte nach, welchen Edelstein ich wählen müßte, um es [Mirjams Gesicht] als Gemme festzuhalten und dabei den künstlerischen Ausdruck richtig zu wahren. . . --Wie erst die unirdische Schmalheit des Gesichtes sinn- und visionsgemäß in eine Kamee bannen, ohne sich in die stumpfsinnige Ähnlichkeitsmacherei der kanonischen ‘Kunst’ richtig festzurennen! Nur durch ein Mosaik ließ es sich lösen, erkannte ich klar, aber was für Material wählen? Ein Menschenleben gehörte dazu, das passende zusammenzufinden” (115).

Laponder. Nevertheless, he only provides the means by which Mirjam and Pernath may be united in another realm. Between the two extremes of virgin/whore lies the character of Angelina. She is the child Pernath remembers from his youth, who pledged her “pure” love to him, yet when he meets her as an adult she is conducting an affair with Dr. Savioli, although she is a married woman and has a child. In this position she becomes susceptible to Wassertrum’s blackmail from which Pernath has to protect her and ultimately pays the price for her freedom when he is framed by Wassertrum for the murder of a man named Karl Zottmann.

The superficial nature of the descriptions of Rosina, Angelina and Mirjam emphasizes that they represent elemental forces to which Pernath either succumbs or eventually is able to fight off. All three, as well as the figure of the woman who is “splitternackt und riesenhaft wie ein Erzkoloß,” and whose pulse “schlug wie ein Erdbeben”(24-25), are aspects of Pernath’s “anima.” Jung describes it as a female personification of the unconscious (*Alchemie* 137). Its function is similar to the shadow, except that in a man it represents all his feminine tendencies.⁵⁶ These aid him in finding ideas in the subconscious that elude logical thought, but are more easily discovered through feelings (*Alchemie* 140). Mirjam’s willingness to believe in a miracle and not in the logical study of morals and ethics as a means of transcendence is one example of the dichotomy of “masculine” and “feminine” tendencies (145). In this respect the “anima” acts as a guide to the “self” (Franz 181-3).

The “anima,” as a part of the “self,” may also undergo a development, and like the shadow it may exhibit an evil as well as a benevolent nature. In the case of the “anima” there are four distinct stages of evolution (Franz 183-85). The first is symbolized by Eve or the siren, who stands for instinct and sexual nature. The figure of Rosina most resembles these representations of the *femme fatale*, for she, like them, leads the men she is involved

⁵⁶Females, in turn, have an “animus” or male figure, who possesses masculine characteristics.

with to their downfall (Cersowsky, *Phantastische Literatur* 37). Rosina does not succeed with Pernath, but plays the brothers Loisa and Jaromir against each other out of lust for her (17-18). The second stage of development is represented by Helen of Troy, who is a more sentimental and aesthetic personification of woman, yet is still sexual in nature. She is best exemplified by Angelina, whom Pernath takes on a romantic carriage ride around the *Hradschin*. Mirjam, while she is still alive represents the third level of development that is characterized by the Virgin Mary, a figure who raises love (eros) to the heights of spiritual devotion. After her death Mirjam personifies the highest level of the “anima,” that of wisdom, which surpasses the qualities of holiness and purity. It is represented by such figures as Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom or the Mona Lisa (Franz 186). Even the names of the three women represent their place in the context of the novel. Rosina implies the colour red, which is the most sensuous of colours. Angelina is not exactly an angel in the sense of purity, however she plays the role of messenger in that she brings back aspects of Pernath’s youth in the memories of their earlier relationship (Mayer 203). Mirjam is another form of the name Maria and implies the Virgin. The colossal female figure stands for the concept of “das Ewig-Weibliche” that attracts the male element and which the male needs in order to form a complete entity, as symbolized by the hermaphrodite.

The figure of the hermaphrodite, who sits on a throne of mother-of-pearl and is wearing a crown (25), is closely connected to the appearance of the female characters in the novel and the visions of the colossal woman. Its presence is explained by Mirjam who dreams of the ancient Egyptian cult of Osiris, which is symbolized by a hermaphrodite. She explains it as “Die magische Vereinigung von Männlich und Weiblich im Menschengeschlecht zu einem Halbgott. . . . Nein, nicht als Endziel, als Beginn eines neuen Weges, der ewig ist--kein Ende hat” (179).⁵⁷ The figure appears in many religions as a symbol of eternal unity. One source can be found in Greek mythology:

⁵⁷ Emphasis in original.

According to legend, the beautiful nymph Salmacis seized the comely Hermaphroditus while he was bathing in her spring. When the young man did not return her caresses, the gods answered her plea to be united forever with the youth by creating a single being combining the physical characteristics of both sexes. (Goldsmith 109)

The ideal of the hermaphrodite as a spiritual, androgynous entity is also found in other religions such as the Cabbala's Adam Kadmon, the Templar figure of Baphomet, the Buddhist concept of Yin and Yang (Béalu 93), and in certain forms of Hinduism (Hutin 145). The origin of Mirjam's concept of the hermaphrodite lies in the myth of Osiris.⁵⁸ His symbol, the rabbit, is found on the coat-of-arms of a house that, according to legend, sporadically appears at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*.

After Pernath reports having seen the house while taking a walk in the fog his friend Zwakh tells him of the legend of the ghostly edifice:

Es geht nämlich eine alte Sage, daß dort oben in der Alchimistenstraße ein Haus steht, das nur bei Nebel sichtbar wird, und auch da bloß 'Sonntagskindern.' Man nennt es 'die Mauer zur letzten Latern.' Wer bei Tag hinaufgeht, sieht dort nur einen großen, grauen Stein--dahinter stürzt es jäh ab in die Tiefe in den Hirschgraben, und Sie können von Glück sagen, Pernath, daß Sie keinen Schritt weiter gemacht haben: Sie wären unfehlbar hinuntergefallen und hätten sämtliche Knochen gebrochen. Unter dem Stein, heißt es, ruht ein riesiger Schatz, und er soll von dem Orden der 'Asiatischen Brüder,' die angeblich Prag gegründet haben, als Grundstein für ein Haus gelegt worden sein, das dereinst am Ende der Tage ein Mensch bewohnen wird--besser gesagt ein Hermaphrodit. . . . Und der wird das Bild eines Hasen im Wappen tragen. (191-92)

The stone which provides the foundation for the house is the philosopher's stone (Claes 32).⁵⁹ The treasure it hides is in a sense the unconscious, which provides the information

⁵⁸ Osiris was considered a kind and just ruler by his people, however, his brother Set was jealous of his popularity. Set and his conspirators killed and dismembered Osiris and scattered his remains all over Egypt. Osiris's sister and wife Isis, with the aid of Thoth, employed her magical powers and collected all his body parts, pieced them together and restored her husband back to life. Osiris became the god of resurrection and eternal life. Eventually, he retired from his earthly life and reigned in the "Elysian Fields" where he welcomed the souls of the dead ("Osiris" 16-17). The Christian concept of the god-man has its roots in the Osiris myth. The conquest of life over death that Osiris acquires is similar to the resurrection of Christ (Jung, *Alchemie* 354).

⁵⁹ The most important aspect of the stone in the novel is its symbolic value as the philosopher's stone, for which alchemists, many of whom lived in Prague, had searched for many years. According to Walter Karbach alchemy was one of the main themes of occult and fantastic literature in German-speaking countries around the turn of the century (287). Meyrink translated an essay by St. Thomas of Aquinas called "Abhandlung über den Stein des Weisen" and wrote an introduction to it, in which he gave alchemical formulas and described experiments he performed himself. For that reason he was well acquainted with the

required for the conscious to complete the individuation process. Jung interprets the search for the philosopher's stone as a psychic process as well as an alchemical one:

Die Beziehungen beider Formen des aus dem Unbewußten ins Bewußtsein übergreifenden Prozesses zur alchemistischen Anschauungswelt sind so nahe, daß man wohl zur Annahme berechtigt ist, es handle sich beim alchemistischen Verfahren um gleiche oder zum mindesten sehr ähnliche Vorgänge, wie in denen der aktiven Imagination und der Träume, das heißt also in letzter Linie um den Individuationsprozeß. (*Alchemie* 396-7)

What the philosophers were really searching for in the guise of "the philosopher's stone," was a means by which they could extract an element from the stone, a kind of spirit that could permeate all bodies, and could also change all base elements into precious ones.⁶⁰ This "spirit-matter" resembled quicksilver, which must undergo a smelting process in order to eliminate the dross. Once one obtains the penetrating mercury one can "project" it on other bodies and transform them from their imperfect state to a perfect one. The imperfect state can be likened to sleep, or death, "welche durch die göttliche, aus dem *geistesschwangeren* Wunderstein gewonnene Tinktur wie vom Tode zu neuem, schöneren Leben auferweckt werden" (Jung, *Alchemie* 342-43).⁶¹ The attainment of this goal is symbolized by the hermaphrodite, who it is claimed will someday live in the house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*.⁶² The status of the house itself is questionable in that it may only be seen by very few people and only on special occasions. It also exists in a strange void

"science" of alchemy and he employed alchemical "elements" in the novel.

⁶⁰ This spirit is not only to be found in the philosopher's stone, but in all living things (Jung, *Alchemie* 41).

⁶¹ Emphasis is added to indicate a similarity in the alchemical language Jung employs with the title of the Buch Ibbur which means *Seelenschwängerung*.

⁶² The main figure in alchemic lore is Hermes also known as Mercury by the Romans. He represents quicksilver and the "Universal Soul" (Jung, *Studien* 139). Mercury has an unstable nature and is sometimes deceptive (136). He is two-sided, in that he is equally susceptible to good and evil, but also represents masculine and feminine powers (237). The most important alchemical process was the division of the *prima materia* into an active element, the soul, and a passive element, the body. The reunification of the two disparate elements was represented as "die chymische Hochzeit" (139). This reunification springs forth from the *filius sapientiae* or *philosophorum*, the changed Mercury, who as a sign of his perfection, is represented as a hermaphrodite (139).

between spirit and matter, heaven and earth (Berg 230), in other words, the Astral Plane.⁶³ Under these circumstances it is not surprising that it eventually becomes the home of Pernath and Mirjam. As a symbol it combines the concepts of alchemy, the search for the “self,” the cult of Osiris and even the legend of the founding of Prague by Asian monks, who represent Buddha’s path to Enlightenment.

Jung interprets the concept of the philosopher’s stone as a means to salvation (*Alchemie* 271), for it is often referred to as *Deus terrestris* or *salvator* and therefore sees a parallel between it and Christ. The principle difference between the two is:

daß das christliche ‘opus’ ein ‘operari’ des Erlösungsbedürftigen zu Ehren des erlösenden Gottes, das alchemische ‘opus’ aber die Bemühungen des erlösenden Menschen um die im Stoffe schlafende und der Erlösung harrende göttliche Weltseele ist. Der Christ verdient sich *ex opere operato* die Gnadenfrüchte; der Alchemist hingegen erschafft sich *ex opere operantis* (im wörtlichen Sinne) ein ‘Heilmittel des Lebens,’ welches ihm entweder als Ersatz für die Gnadenmittel der Kirche oder als Ergänzung und Parallele des göttlichen und im Menschen fortgesetzten Erlösungswerkes erscheint. (*Alchemie* 543)⁶⁴

2.5 The Integration of Pernath’s Earthly and Spiritual Natures

Following his visit to the house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern* Pernath is unjustly imprisoned for the murder of Karl Zottmann. While incarcerated, Pernath’s fate is linked with that of two other men. Charousek, his friend, and Laponder, his cellmate, are Pernath’s doubles, but they each represent different aspects of his “self.” Both individuals are given the same choice of the way of life or death, as Pernath was given in the strange dream, yet each one represents the choice of one of the paths and its consequences.

⁶³ The figure of Mercury symbolizes transcendence, for he travels from the highest reaches to the lowest depths, which is emphasized by his role as the Greek messenger of the gods. As *Hermes Psychopomp*, he leads souls to and from the Underworld (Franz 156).

⁶⁴ The individual can therefore manufacture the essence of the divine gift of God’s sacrifice of his own son (*Alchemie* 137). The older religion of hermetism in this sense anticipates the symbolism that lies at the foundation of Christianity, in that it identifies the philosopher’s stone with man himself (*Studien* 524). The symbols of Christ and the philosopher’s stone ultimately have their roots in the collective unconscious and are archetypes depicting the process of individuation.

Pernath's relationship to the two men comes to light when the frame narrator goes in search of Pernath towards the end of the novel. He meets a man in a café who claims to have known Pernath. Ferri Athenstädt says of Pernath: "Wenn ich nicht irre, galt er seinerzeit für verrückt.--Einmal behauptete er, er hieße--Warten Sie mal--ja: Laponder! Und dann wieder gab er sich für einen gewissen Charousek aus" (275). Both characters share Pernath's interest in the Other World (Goldsmith 113), and both must die before Pernath can become his idealized "self."

Charousek represents the individual who has chosen the way of life. His choice is represented by his study of medicine. He is the first of the two characters to appear and describes his hatred for Aaron Wassertrum in terms of an animal's primitiveness, "Ich wittere wie ein wildes Tier, wenn auch nur ein Tropfen von seinem Blut in den Adern eines Menschen fließt" (132). Charousek's connection to a baser nature is underscored by his discovery that Wassertrum is his father. Wassertrum, the junk dealer, depicts dead materialism, for he is surrounded by society's castoffs of iron junk, broken tools, rusted stirrups and ice skates (12). He also resorts to criminal activity by blackmailing Angelina and her lover Dr. Savioli, and he sells Charousek's mother to a brothel, all in order to feed his greed for riches. He is also described as being the exact opposite of Hillel, who would starve by giving his food away to beggars (138). For these reasons, as well as his status as Wassertrum's heir, Charousek appears to represent Pernath's earthy nature and therefore is another of Pernath's doubles. Charousek's consumption and need to spit blood are his body's attempt to rid himself of his father's blood (135), but is also a means of purging himself of his physical character. Charousek later reiterates this point in his letter to Pernath in prison when he writes, "Wir Menschen sind unrein" (234). He ultimately ties himself to the earth when he cuts his wrists and lets the blood seep down into his father's grave.

Charousek's decision to end his life on earth is a positive step for Pernath, because it indicates the reintegration of his character into Pernath's "self." Charousek redeems

himself on another level by restoring money back to Pernath that Wassertrum had swindled from his family. At this point his first name is revealed to be “Innozenz” and Pernath remembers him as a man with a high, noble forehead (236). Pernath equates Charousek with his spiritual guides: “Er war ein Mensch wie Hillel, wie Mirjam, wie ich selbst, ein Mensch über den die eigene Seele Gewalt gewonnen hatte” (236). In his letter Charousek also claims that he and Pernath will be reunited in another realm, for he is also an initiate into the secrets of the Cabbala and even saw the strange lettering on Pernath’s chest.

In opposition to Charousek, who represents the path of life, Laponder, the *Lustmörder*, stands for the individual who chooses the purely spiritual path of death. As Laponder states, it was his spiritual side that allowed him to become a murderer (250) which alleviates him from any moral responsibility because he is “only” killing the body, or outer shell, of another person. This act is therefore pleasurable for him. Like Pernath, Laponder experienced a meeting with the headless shadow, Thoth. Laponder, however, accepted the seeds offered and therefore chose the path of death (249).⁶⁵ Both men also seem to have led two separate lives in succession. Pernath’s present existence is cut off from his youth, while Laponder’s changed overnight, when at the age of twenty his dream life and reality switched places. Laponder claims the loss of youth is a “holy stigmata” for those who were bitten by the “Schlange des geistigen Reiches” (250).⁶⁶

Laponder also acts as Pernath’s medium so he can contact Mirjam, Hillel and Charousek who have already reached a higher plane of existence. They are neither dead, nor alive, as Mirjam says, “Ich lebe.--Ich schlafe” (242). When Laponder wanders in his sleep, he enters into another reality, which is that of Pernath’s dreams. There he sees Hillel and Mirjam, who inhabit the other-worldly plane. Laponder then follows the passage,

⁶⁵ As a result of his choice, Laponder is punished by society for his crimes, which demonstrates one consequence an individual endures who does not develop an integrated “self.”

⁶⁶ According to Jung the snake is not necessarily an evil figure whose bite sends victims to their death. For the alchemists the snake was often represented by *ouroboros*, “[Der] Drachen, der sich selbst frißt, begattet, schwängert, tötet und wiederauferstehen macht” (*Alchemie* 425). As such the is a symbol of transcendence. To the Ophites the snake represented Christ (Jung, *Alchemie* 172).

which Pernath took to the *Zimmer ohne Zugang* where the golem lives. Laponder sees the strange figure there as it peers at the book *Ibbur*. The book, open to the page Pernath repaired, however, begins with an "A" instead of an "I" (246). This change can be interpreted with the aid of Hillel, who at an earlier point informs Pernath, "der Mensch [ist] die erste Figur in seinem eigenen Bilderbuch, sein eigener Doppelgänger:--der hebräische Buchstabe Aleph" (122). *Aleph*, the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet, is akin to our letter "A," and represents the first important step in life, which is the difficult unification of the "self" for the individual. Our lives are represented by a book, in Pernath's case, the book *Ibbur*.

In his explanation of his dreams, Laponder educates Pernath about the process which they must undergo to achieve the ideal state, a process which is identical to Jung's concept of the unification of the "self" through the ego's acceptance of unconscious ideas in the form of dreams:

der Schlüssel liegt einzig und allein darin, daß man sich seiner 'Ichgestalt' sozusagen seine Haut, im Schlaf bewußt wird--die schmale Ritze findet, durch die sich das Bewußtsein zwängt zwischen Wachsein und Tiefschlaf. Darum sagte ich vorher 'ich wandere,' und nicht 'ich träume.' (250)

In addition, the individual's dreams represent different aspects of the "self," which can be negative as well as positive, as demonstrated by the concept of the shadow. Each person must interpret these characteristics in a manner suitable to him- or herself in order to reach the goal of an equalized or unified state. Laponder explains this evolution as: "Das Ringen nach der Unsterblichkeit ist ein Kampf um das Zepter gegen die uns innewohnenden Klänge und Gespenster; und das Warten auf das Königwerden des eigenen 'Ichs' ist das Warten auf den Messias" (250). Laponder later describes the process in greater detail:

Der Mensch ist wie ein Glasrohr, durch das bunte Kugeln laufen: bei fast allen im Leben nur die eine. Ist die Kugel rot, heißt der Mensch: 'schlecht'. Ist sie gelb, dann ist der Mensch: 'gut'. Laufen zwei hintereinander--eine rote und eine gelbe, dann hat 'man' einen 'unfestigen' Charakter. Wir 'von der Schlange Gebissenen' machen in einem Leben durch, was sonst an der ganzen Rasse in einem Weltenalter

geschieht: die farbigen Kugeln rasen hintereinander her durch das Glasrohr, und wenn sie zu Ende sind-- --dann sind wir Propheten--sind die Spiegel Gottes geworden. (251)

Those individuals who do not examine their dreams never reach a state of perfection, for they never undergo the internal war of opposing elements suffered by the chosen ones like Pernath, who attempt to reconcile their positive and negative attributes. It is also necessary to reconcile one's masculine and feminine natures in order to complete the process of individuation. Laponder lacks this "key" information until Pernath tells him of Mirjam's beliefs in the Osiris cult. Thereafter Laponder is happy to go to his death which he then refers to as a "marriage." For in death he will be unified with his "female" element which he symbolically murdered by his act of *Lustmord* (252).⁶⁷ This "marriage," the ultimate state of unity, or entropy as Freud referred to it, is represented in Pernath's dreams as a crowned figure of a man, whom Laponder is able to identify for Pernath, "Der schemenhafte Habal Garmin, den Sie gesehen haben, der 'Hauch der Knochen' der Kabbala, das war der König" (251). Habal Garmin is, according to Hillel, one's true *Doppelgänger*, of whom it is said, "Wie er in die Grube fuhr, unverweslich im Gebein, so wird er auferstehen am Tage des letzten Gerichts" (122). It is therefore an immortal and indestructible spiritual body that stands as a Christ figure representing salvation.⁶⁸ Laponder, like Pernath, is an initiate into the mysteries of the occult beliefs inherent in the novel, and by the time he dies he has gained the insight required to become a Master or Messiah.

⁶⁷ This is a reference to the alchemical concept of the "chemical marriage" which signifies the unification of Mercury's masculine and feminine natures.

⁶⁸ Meyrink's interpretation of Habal Garmin most likely has its roots in a lecture given by Graf Leinigen at the Psychological Society in Munich in 1887, which was later taken up by Papus in his book about the Cabbala, *Le Tarot des Bohémiens*. Leinigen identifies Habal Garmin with the concept of an astral body that is taken from the Zohar. It is described as, "ein feinstofflicher, der sinnlichen Wahrnehmung nicht zugänglicher pneumatischer Leib, in dem sich die individuelle geistige Wesensgestalt des Menschen ausdrückt. Er hat eine Mittlerfunktion zwischen dem grobstofflichen Körper und der Seele inne und kann nur in einem Akt mystischer Selbstentrückung und Selbstvergessenheit als Doppelgängerphänomen erfahren werden, in dem der Mensch sich selbst begegnet. Da der Astralleib den Umriß des materiellen Körpers in vagen Zügen beibehält, wurde er vom modernen Okkultismus auch als Schatten, Gespenst oder Doppelgänger des Menschen gedeutet" (Oehm 188).

2.6 Pernath's Journey into Another Realm

A few months after Laponder's execution, Pernath is found to be innocent of the murder he is charged with. Once he is released he discovers that the ghetto is being renovated. The demolition of the monstrous buildings Pernath once feared is an indication that his search for his "self" is coming to an end. Pernath is now able to see his experiences only as "Symbole ohne Blut und Leben [und streicht] sie aus dem Buch [seiner] Erinnerungen" (265). Yet his memories of his youth are restored to him as he discovers in an antique store the heart of stone that Angelina gave to him when they were young (266). Pernath's progress in his mystical search for the "self" is nearly complete, for he has now gained all the information he needs, for as Hillel states earlier, "*Wissen und Erinnerung sind dasselbe*" (81).⁶⁹

To complete the process of individuation in its entirety, Pernath must find Hillel and Mirjam, but discovers that they have disappeared. While Pernath awaits their return he rents a room at the house of the golem. On Christmas Eve, the anniversary of the birth of Christ, the Christian symbol of salvation, Pernath finally comes face to face with his *Doppelgänger*. Suddenly fire breaks out in his room.⁷⁰ When Pernath accidentally loses his grip on the rope he is using to escape the fire in his building he ends up hanging upside down, his legs crossed, suspended between heaven and earth (268). This is the same position as that of the Hanged Man in the Tarot deck.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Emphasis in original.

⁷⁰ Meyrink switches now to the present tense perhaps to indicate in a subtle manner the reassertion of the frame narrator's conscious out of fear of death, that foreshadows the narrator's awakening from his dream.

⁷¹ For the alchemists the upside down position was a means of purification, of surpassing the bounds of worldly thought. They believed that by hanging with the head down sperm would travel into the head and would cause an expansion of the powers of the mind (Marzin 50).

The card, the twelfth in the major arcana, represents the next stage in Pernath's development.⁷² It depicts the Hebrew letter *Lamed* that represents a mystical initiation (Wirth 182), whereby the individual has recognized the vanity of his worldly ambitions and is willing to forget himself completely in his need to sacrifice himself (Wirth 183), in order to enter a purely spiritual world (Oehm 191). The hanged man is in a sense crucified on the material world (Oehm 191). The card therefore represents the prophet or the enlightened being (Wirth 186), but in total is the archetype of the Messiah (Sadhu 278). For the Jungians the card stands for the turning point in our psychic life, when we come to grips with our unconscious mind (Slade 254). This is represented in the text when Pernath looks into the window of the golem's room and is able to see Hillel and Mirjam (268).

When the rope Pernath is hanging from breaks, he attempts to grab a stone window ledge to prevent his fall. The ledge, however is "Glatt wie ein Stück Fett" and Pernath's grasp on it slips (268). This phrase connects Pernath to the frame narrator who dreams about a stone that resembled a piece of fat at the beginning of the text. It indicates the narrator, who is dreaming about Pernath is returning to the realm of consciousness and as he awakes the frame narrator loses touch with Pernath (Mayer 210). Pernath's fall from the building is depicted by the Tarot card of the Tower. It shows a burning tower from which two men are falling. One is crowned the other is not. The bare-headed man is the frame narrator who has now separated himself from Pernath. The crowned man represents Pernath, who has become the crowned Habal Garmin as he falls to his physical death. The crowning of Habal Garmin occurs as Laponder described it would, as the breaking of a rope, "mit dem Sie durch die äußeren Sinne und dem Schornstein des Verstandes an die Welt gebunden sind" (251).

⁷² According to Alfred Douglas, "In Arabic numbers, it is a combination of the numbers one and two, signifying the interaction of unity with duality that gives birth to a third dimension" (in Goldsmith 105), which is the Astral Plane, the location of the house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*.

Laponder's remarks bear resemblance to the interpretation of the sixteenth arcana, the Tower, that illustrates physical destruction (Sadhu 373). The card represents the Hebrew letter *Ajin* which is the symbol for material (Oehm 191). Oswald Wirth interprets the card as symbolizing the sin of Adam which is that of earthly man, therefore Pernath's fall to his death symbolizes the final victory of spirit over matter:

Le Péché d'Adam est très relatif et n'existe que par rapport aux humains aveuglés, qui geignent de se voir condamnés au travail, sans comprendre qu'ils se divinisent en s'associant de leur plein gré à l'œuvre éternelle de la création. Mais leur aveuglement transitoire est conforme au programme divin. Dans l'intérêt du travail transmutatoire qui nous incombe, il nous l'ordonne quand nous nous incarnons; il ne veut pas que nous soyons distraits de notre tâche initiale par la nostalgie du Ciel. L'enfant n'est au début qu'un animal. Il construit son organisme en ne se préoccupant que de lui-même, avec l'égoïsme inconscient le plus absolu. Son édifice corporel s'érige dans l'esprit qui animait les constructeurs de la Tour Babel, bâtisse dont l'arcane XVI présente une image symboliquement correcte. (211)

Once he awakens from his dream the frame narrator is confused as to whether he has only dreamed about Pernath, but he quickly realizes "So träumt man nicht" (269). He then spots the hat he mistakenly took from a man called Athanasius Pernath and decides to find this man to return the hat to him. He eventually learns that Pernath lives at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*, "wo kein lebender Mensch wohnen kann" (276). To visit Pernath in his home in the Astral Plane the frame narrator must cross the Moldau which serves as a gateway to the beyond. To traverse the river he must enlist the aid of a ferryman, who plays the role of Charon. His duty was to transport the souls sent to him by Mercury *psychopompus* to the Underworld. Pernath, however, lives in an indefinable world of neither here nor there, a kind of entropic or unified state. The narrator himself recognizes he is entering into this unusual condition when he crosses the water: "Ein unbeschreiblich feierliches Gefühl ergreift Besitz von mir. . . als lebte ich zuweilen an mehreren Orten zugleich" (277). The actual crossing of the threshold is similar to passing over to the

reverse world of a mirror (Pollet, "L'enjeu," 116),⁷³ or from the world of the visible to the invisible (Pollet, "Ville," 131) which comprises the Astral Plane.

By the end of the novel the hermaphrodite emerges as a concrete symbol when it is used as a decorative motif on the wall and gate that mark the borders of Mirjam and Pernath's home at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*. It includes a depiction of a rabbit, the symbol of Osiris (192):

Die Gartenmauer ist ganz mit Mosaik bedeckt. Türkisblau mit goldenen, eigenartig gemuschelten Fresken, die den Kult des ägyptischen Gottes Osiris darstellen. Das Flügeltor ist der Gott selbst: ein Hermaphrodit aus zwei Hälften, die die Türe bilden: die rechte weiblich, die linke männlich.--Er sitzt auf einem kostbaren, flachen Thron aus Perlmutter--im Halbreliëf--, und sein goldener Kopf ist der eines Hasen. (278)

This representation of the hermaphrodite depicting unity of the "self" and the transcendence of mortality unites the myth of Isis and Osiris, the theory of the alchemical philosopher's stone and the Cabbalistic concept of Adam Kadmon (Oehm 192).

When the frame narrator finally sees Pernath face-to-face, he realizes that Pernath is his own double (280). The frame narrator's "dream" of Pernath is therefore the frame narrator's own means of searching for his own "self." The cyclic return of the golem implies that this event occurs every thirty-three years. But the frame narrator's means of undergoing this process of individuation have been modernized to adapt to the Prague of the early twentieth century, where the ghetto no longer existed. The events of the frame narrator's dream are perhaps those of the previous initiate into this mystical realm of the "self." The nature of this search changes with time in order that it may correspond to the *Zeitgeist*, so that it is as meaningful for subsequent generations as it is to earlier ones. That it is presented to the readers of the 1910's in the context of a dream coincides with the birth of psychoanalysis, for which dreams are the unveiling of the unconscious in the theories of its two major proponents at the time, Freud and Jung.

⁷³ This concept is demonstrated in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*.

At the end of the novel the hat connects the figures of the golem, Pernath and the frame narrator. The frame narrator returns Pernath's hat and is given his own back by the golem, who informs him that Pernath did not wear his hat because he immediately knew it did not belong to him. Pernath also hoped the narrator did not try on Pernath's hat, because it would give the narrator a headache. This is obviously Meyrink's last laugh on the reader, who has been thoroughly confused by the odyssey of Pernath's life and death.

Whether *Der Golem* constitutes a fantastic text or not must be considered on a multitude of levels. There exists a confusion in the narrative because the novel consists of an interior and exterior plot based on the experiences of two different narrators, Pernath and another character, which are intertwined at the beginning and the end of the text. Looking at the interior plot, that of Pernath's search for the "self," the question constantly arises as to whether the events occurring are dream or reality. The reader becomes as confused as Pernath. This fulfils the first two of Todorov's three requirements of the fantastic, that the reader and the main character must hesitate in choosing whether the events are natural or supernatural.⁷⁴ The third and final requirement for the text to be deemed fantastic is that it cannot be interpreted in poetic or allegorical terms. As it stands alone the interior text fulfils this requirement. However, the relationship between the interior and exterior plot, whereby the reader is given the impression that the frame narrator is dreaming about the life of Pernath, places the interior plot into the category of a dream, which detracts the fantastic from the nature of the interior plot. The dream is therefore subject to a psychoanalytic interpretation and all the persons and events depicted in it have a symbolic nature. The interior text, in this manner, becomes an allegory for the process of individuation, another reason why it cannot be considered fantastic.

The exterior text is subject, however, to a different interpretation. From the beginning, the external narrator who falls asleep while reading a book, is confused, like

⁷⁴ According to Todorov the second of these requirements is optional.

Pernath, as to whether he is sleeping or dreaming. This confusion as to what is being experienced continues into Pernath's narrative. However, at the end of Pernath's story the frame narrator wakes up during Pernath's fall from the house of the golem and his dream ends. His experiences, nevertheless, lend credibility to Pernath's existence, for he visits certain buildings that appeared in the dream and meets people who knew Pernath. The supernatural comes into play with the exchange of hats. The narrator's dreams are the result of wearing a stranger's hat, which allows him to experience the life of another, in this case Pernath's search for his "self." The hat also leads the external narrator to the realm of the fantastic when he crosses the threshold of reality, as depicted by his boat trip across the Moldau. He finally meets Pernath, Mirjam and the golem at the mythical house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*, where he exchanges Pernath's hat for his own. This acceptance of supernatural events as reality place the entire novel into Todorov's category of the fantastic-marvellous.

3. WALPURGISNACHT:

The Search for the Self in Conflict with a Pre-determined Destiny

3.1 Walpurgisnacht: the Night of Crisis

Like *Der Golem*, Meyrink's novel *Walpurgisnacht* also contains supernatural motifs such as the double, somnambulism, possession by outside forces, reincarnation, the devil and vampirism (Wörtche 231). Its characters also suffer from strange visions (Marzin 67), as did Pernath. The text itself consists of two separate plots (Meister 200), both of which originate with the problem of individuation. They are therefore open to the same Jungian interpretation as *Der Golem*. The first plot centres on the search for the "self" which is also the theme of *Der Golem*. The second plot concerns those individuals who do not find their "selves." They are possessed by or are reincarnations of other-worldly forces, another common theme in Meyrink's novels (Evola 139). Jean-Jacques Pollet describes this kind of individual as a " 'marionnette' dans la main de la destinée" ("Ville" 129). These "incomplete" souls become tools of other powers whose duty is to balance forces in the outside world. If the masochistic side of humanity of false humility and piety becomes too strong, then the sadistic aspect will be aroused that will create "einen Wirbelsturm von Dämonen, die sich der Gehirne der Menschen bedienen, um Kriege zu entfesseln, Mord und Totschlag" (104).⁷⁵ The historical event that is re-enacted, or "mirrored," by the majority of the characters in *Walpurgisnacht* is the Hussite rebellion of 1419 that was led by the Czech national hero, Jan Zizka (Qasim 62).⁷⁶

The search for the "self" is led by the character of the imperial physician Thaddäus Flugbeil, who throughout the course of the novel eventually reintegrates different aspects of his split "self" to complete the process of individuation. In order to accomplish this he

⁷⁵ All page references in this chapter refer to the 1968 edition of *Walpurgisnacht*.

⁷⁶ This uprising had its roots in the church reform movement of the preacher Zelivsky (Qasim 63) that grew eventually into a Czech nationalist revolution and led to a series of wars from 1419 to 1422 (Meister 206).

must also integrate his “female” side or “anima” which is represented by his former mistress, the Böhmisches Liesel. Flugbeil’s guide on his journey to self-realization is an old Manchu, who appears through the aid of a medium, an actor called Zrcadlo with somnambulistic tendencies. Zrcadlo “mirrors” the unconscious desires of those people who ask his help. Since these desires are often sexual in nature, and therefore considered base, their fulfilment is connected to the character of the devil who represents the “shadow” or “negative” side of the psyche. For Flugbeil, Zrcadlo acts as the catalyst for his search for the “self,” just as the golem plays this role for Pernath in *Der Golem*.⁷⁷

The second plot centres on the character of a young noblewoman, Polyxena. As an individual who does not undergo a process of individuation she begins to “mirror” the attitudes of an “evil” ancestor whom she physically resembles. In a lust for blood propelled by the spirit of this dead woman and by a childhood trauma, Polyxena envisions the events of the Hussite rebellion in Prague. Using supernatural talents, she rouses a mob to a frenzy to recreate the events of five hundred years before in order to fulfil Ottokar, her lover’s dreams of attaining the throne of the Emperor. Their plans are thwarted by the imperial troops who are sent to quell the rebellion.

The two plots of the search for the “self” and the fulfilment of a pre-determined destiny, depicted by history as a cycle that constantly repeats itself, are linked by the uprising in the novel. In order to remain true to their true “selves,” Flugbeil and Liesel become casualties of the revolution. Yet their deaths, like those of Pernath and Mirjam, ultimately allow them to complete their journeys, for the materialistic life is presented as nothing but an illusion, as illustrated by the collapse of Polyxena’s and Ottokar’s dreams of glory.

The novel is permeated by a threatening atmosphere where strange events are accepted because they are the result of Walpurgis Night (which occurs once a year on April

⁷⁷ Neither Zrcadlo, nor the golem have developed their own “selves.”

30th). According to legend, it is the night when the spirit world is allowed free rein (104). The all-knowing Manchu contends that cosmic Walpurgis Nights also exist. He describes them as periods when “sich das Oberste nach unterst und das Unterste zu oberst [kehrt]” (104). This statement has two possible interpretations. Firstly, on a psychological level, it means that those negative elements of their “selves” or secret desires that people hide away are let loose. This is supported by the Manchu’s statement that “Die Zeit ist wieder da, wo die Hunde des wilden Jägers ihre Ketten zerreißen dürfen” (104). For Flugbeil this means that he can finally find his “self,” but for Polyxena it means that her bloodlust must be satisfied. Secondly, taken in the context of the revolution, the lower classes will rise up against the upper classes and temporarily trade places with them by oppressing their former oppressors. That a revolt actually occurs on the evening of April 30th links the cosmic Walpurgisnacht to the annual one on the calendar. The Manchu additionally points out people’s inability to recognize the cosmic Walpurgis nights as “un Éternel Retour” (Pollot, “L’enjeu,” 111), because they are so far apart in time that people cannot remember them. They therefore believe that the strange events happening have never occurred before (104), despite the fact that the rebellion that occurs almost “mirrors” another one which happened almost five hundred years before.

3.2 Flugbeil’s Process of Individuation

Flugbeil’s search for his “self” begins with the help of Zrcadlo. Zrcadlo personifies that which his name signifies in the Czech language. He is a mirror (17), “un canal entre l’invisible et le visible” (Abellio 155), that reflects the desires of different characters in the novel. For the imperial physician Flugbeil, Zrcadlo becomes a kind of double, as the mirror is a “metaphor for the production of other selves” (Jackson 87). To the Jungian the unconscious symbolically employs the mirror as an instrument to show the individual an

objective view of him or herself (Franz 205), a process that can also be accomplished by deep inward reflection (Franz 217). In *Walpurgisnacht*, Zrcadlo “mirrors” Flugbeil not as an adult, but presents the doctor with a view of himself as a child (96), thereby depicting an early stage in the doctor’s development.⁷⁸ The voice of the child is the voice of Flugbeil’s unconscious, which until this point in the novel Flugbeil has been unable to hear, thereby preventing him from completing the process of individuation, as is demonstrated by the child asking the question “Wer bin ich?” (96).

The voice that asks “Who am I?” is echoed by another voice, that of the old Manchu, who simultaneously speaks to Flugbeil through the medium of Zrcadlo. His is the voice of the mentor, the archetype of the wise old man, who like Hillel in *Der Golem*, advises the initiate or undeveloped person how he or she can reach the final goal of individuation. This is a universal process as the Manchu indicates, “Hat es je, seit die Erde steht, einen Menschen gegeben, der auf diese Frage [Wer bin ich?] die richtige Antwort wüßte?” (97). He is also the voice of Flugbeil’s unconscious, that until this “meeting” Flugbeil has ignored. For this reason the voice says, “Nichts im ganzen Weltenraum war dir stets so nahe und eigen wie ich, und jetzt fragst du mich, wer ich bin?” (97). This statement indicates Flugbeil’s inability to integrate aspects of his unconscious into his conscious mind. For this reason the Manchu calls Flugbeil a “Missetäter,” because he has not listened to his soul (97).

The Manchu equates the self with joy. It is the state of mind that can only be achieved through learning and great longing and must not be confused with the happiness that results from the acts of others or from sensuous pleasures. Once an individual has reached this stage of enlightenment he has consolidated all the many aspects of his “self” and thereby attains immortality (98-99). The “self” is also not to be confused with the body

⁷⁸ Flugbeil’s lack of development is similar to Pernath being in a state of “sleep” at the beginning of *Der Golem*.

or its functions, but can only be identified by its power to affect individuals and events everywhere (101).

The Manchu inhabits what he calls “das Reich der wirklichen Mitte” (102), which is not a geographic location, but resembles the house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern* where Pernath and Mirjam reside. The Manchu has therefore reached a state of complete self-knowledge. He informs Flugbeil that the material world is nothing but an illusion when he says, “Für jeden, der das wahre ‘Ich’ sein eigen nennt, ist der eigene Leib, so wie auch der der andern: ein Narrenkleid, nichts weiter” (103).

On the day of Walpurgisnacht Flugbeil has an encounter with the devil, an archetypal shadow figure who has both positive and negative aspects. His ambivalent personification in the text is therefore at odds with his depiction in the Christian tradition as being the incarnation of evil. This devil is the only one of the gods who can fulfil desires because as he claims:

Ich bin der einzig Gegürtete unter den Göttern, die andern sind geschlechtslos. Nur ich kann Wünsche verstehen, wer in Wahrheit geschlechtlos ist, der hat für immer vergessen, was Wünsche sind. Die unerkennbare, tiefste Wurzel jedes Wunsches ruht stets im Geschlecht, wenn auch die Blüte--der wache Wunsch--scheinbar nichts mit Geschlechtlichkeit zu tun hat. (158)

The wishes the devil fulfils therefore have libidinous origins. His role is not to judge what is worthy, but only to realize what each individual wants deep down in the recesses of the unconscious, not what one believes one desires (Wünsch 174).

For that reason Lucifer grants two wishes that Flugbeil yearns to have fulfilled. He will give Flugbeil’s soul immortality, which the doctor will attain as soon as he integrates all aspects of his personality as the Manchu foretold, and at the same time Lucifer will bring back the past and Flugbeil’s youth. As Lucifer argues, “Ewige Jugend ist ewige Zukunft, und in dem Reich der Ewigkeit wacht auch die Vergangenheit wieder auf als Gegenwart” (159). One way in which the devil accomplishes this is by bringing Flugbeil together with his former mistress Liesel, whom he found physically desirable when they were young.

Lucifer brings Flugbeil and Liesel together through his connection with Zrcadlo. The old woman often spoke to the spirit of the young Flugbeil through the medium, but one day the actor does not transform himself into Flugbeil but into the devil. He tells Liesel her image of Flugbeil is false. She should rely on her memories of him because they will always remain true. He also tells her of a land of eternal youth, foreshadowing her and Flugbeil's journey to a higher realm (190). Since Liesel can no longer conjure up the doctor's image in Zrcadlo, an image that could never reciprocate her love for Flugbeil, she goes to the doctor in the hope that her wish for him to love her will come true. Lucifer therefore fulfils Liesel's changing needs as she goes through a process of development until she realizes the inadequacy of loving the "ideal" of the young Flugbeil, rather than his real "self." In that respect their advanced age is of no importance, since the "self," rather than that which is idealized, is timeless.

Böhmische Liesel aids Flugbeil in the search for his "self." She represents his female nature, his "anima," that he has ignored for most of his life. The integration of this part of his personality is Flugbeil's key to completing the process of individuation by which he will secure himself immortality. That Liesel inhabits a section of Prague which is referred to as the "Neie Welt" (35), indicates her role as the key to fulfilling Flugbeil's goal. Flugbeil's carriage-driver's manner of pointing out where Liesel lives also foreshadows Flugbeil's and Liesel's journey into another realm, "Dabei deutete er mit dem Daumen zum Firmament empor und beschrieb dann behende mit dem Arm eine Schlinge in der Luft, als wohne die alte Dame in beinahe unzugänglichen Gefilden -- sozusagen im Astralreich zwischen Himmel und Erde" (35). They are therefore destined to share the same fate as Pernath and Mirjam who ultimately inhabit the house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*.

The major obstacle Flugbeil has to overcome in order to accept Liesel as a fellow human being is his disgust at her sentimentality and old age. At their first meeting after forty years, he is repulsed by her affection for him. When she wants to kiss him he is

revolted, "Von Grauen geschüttet, prallte der Herr kaiserliche Leibarzt zurück und starrte sie entsetzt an" (38). Although Liesel is a symbol of his lost youth, Flugbeil is eventually able to overcome his revulsion and begins to accept Liesel because of her feelings for him. Her concern for his well-being goes so far that she comes to inform him of the unruly mob in the streets and warns Flugbeil to leave the Hradschin. At the same time she is careful that no one will see them together so that his reputation will not be tarnished (181). Flugbeil wrestles with his feelings of sympathy for Liesel and his fear of losing his social status when suddenly "ein freier, selbstbewußter Stolz, den er fast wie etwas Fremdes empfand [sich] in ihm empor [reckte]" (181). And he asks himself, "weshalb soll ich eine Ausgestoßene, die jetzt, noch mitten in ihrem Schmutz und Elend, mein Bild in Ehren hält und küßt, nicht freundlich aufnehmen?" (181). Flugbeil even comes to suggest that he and Liesel move to a small town called Pisek and look after each other (186). After Liesel leaves him, Flugbeil decides to provide for her in his will (196). As the doctor leaves the city, he discovers how powerful his former mistress's love for him was. Liesel is slain by the mob while singlehandedly protecting the southern gate to the Hradschin where Flugbeil lives (200).

Ultimately Flugbeil does attain compassion for his fellow beings (Pollot, "Ville" 130), as demonstrated by the transformation of his feelings for Liesel. As Jan Christoph Meister notes, it is only in death that Flugbeil can be united with his "female" side, something he was unable to do in life (200). At the end of the novel Flugbeil is a changed man from the callous imperial servant who ignored the plight of a poor woman he spotted in his telescope because the sight of such misery would ruin his appetite (33). The doctor is able to save his identity and his humanity in the face of historical events that he cannot escape (Qasim 150), as his annihilation by the train attests. Ironically, the train is transporting soldiers who are to protect the social class to which he belongs.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ The train as a symbol of industrialization and progress, also stands for the power of history which in the context of the novel "crushes" the individual.

The metaphor of the bird is used in the novel to symbolize Flugbeil's progress in his process of individuation. He has been given the name Penguin by the students of the Hradschin (8), who even perform a bird dance in his honour, "wobei sie mit gekrümmten Armen unbeholfene Flugbewegungen nachahmten und wie mit spitzen Schnäbeln nacheinander hackten" (34). The name "Penguin" is therefore a caricature of Flugbeil's physical appearance, but it also must be understood as a mystical interpretation of his inner nature (Qasim 148). The description of the doctor as the wingless bird implies he is unable to fly and transcend the earthly realm. Symbolically, he therefore does not possess the ability to allow the elements of his unconscious to enter his conscious mind, by which he would be able to realize the full potential of his "self" (Henderson 149-50).

This Jungian interpretation of the flying bird as an archetype of transcendence is supported by the Manchu who says to Flugbeil, "ich bin hier, weil in Ihrem Leben der richtige Zeitpunkt gekommen ist" (102), referring to Flugbeil's failure to listen to his unconscious until then. The Manchu also employs the metaphor of the bird when speaking of Flugbeil's further development, "Bisher haben Exzellenz . . . Dero Flug nicht hoch genug genommen. . . .Flügelansätze haben ja Exzellenz. . . . Flügel zwar noch nicht, . . . aber Flügelansätze, etwa so wie ein . . . Pinguin" (105-6). Flugbeil himself uses the metaphor when he comes to the realization that he is at fault for not having company on Christmas Eve. In his loneliness he admits, "Ich bin ein Pinguin und kann nicht fliegen-- -- Hab' doch nie fliegen können!" (179). Flugbeil ultimately connects the railroad with the metamorphosis of his "self," to being able to fly. He likens the sound of the oncoming train with the sound of flapping wings, "Ein Brausen wie von unsichtbaren Riesenflügeln ging durch die Luft" (201). Within a minute Flugbeil is crushed by the locomotive, which brings eternity to him, something he associated with the optical illusion of the point where the railroad tracks seem to come together (201).⁸⁰ Flugbeil associates the point of eternity he

⁸⁰ This episode presents the concept of the "real" railroad tracks in contrast with the "fantastic" free flight of the bird Flugbeil is to become.

wants to reach with the real city of Pisek, where he had hoped to meet Liesel, so they could spend the rest of their lives together. After her death, however, Flugbeil begins to connect the real city with a mythical place, like Pernath and Mirjam's house at the *Mauer zur letzten Latern*.

3.3 Polyxena as a Tool of Demonic Forces

As the Walpurgisnacht is the catalyst for Flugbeil's ultimate discovery of his "self" and his unification with Liesel on a higher plane, it is also a impetus for strange events emanating from those people who do not follow the path of self-realization and enlightenment. These individuals who do not evolve are sinners in the eyes of the Manchu (98). They do not fulfil their potential and consequently can not experience the joy associated with this accomplishment. The Manchu describes this joy almost in terms of a charm against evil:

Vor dem Glanz der Freude, die in der Brust strahlt wie eine Sonne am inneren Himmel, weichen die Gespenster der Dunkelheit, die den Menschen als die Schemen begangener und vergessener Verbrechen früherer Leben begleiten und die Fäden seines Schicksals verstricken. (98)

Those people who do not awaken from the sleep of ignorance about their "selves" are possessed by ghosts that play the role of the "self." These individuals are then doomed to repeat the histories of the beings that control them (100).

Polyxena, the second protagonist of the novel, is an example of the individual who becomes an instrument of the demonic historical forces. She is convinced that her body is inhabited by the spirit of her great-great-grandmother the Countess Lambua, whose first name was also Polyxena (74). The amazing resemblance between Polyxena and the figure depicted in the portrait of her ancestor affects the young woman to the extent that she begins to model herself on the person depicted, even in her character:

Das Bild, das dort an der Wand hing, war gewissermaßen sie selber--so, wie ein Samenkorn das Konterfei der Pflanze, die es dereinst werden soll, in sich trägt, verborgen den äußeren Sinnen und dennoch in allen organischen Einzelheiten klar umrissen, so hatte jenes Bild in ihr seit Kindheit an gehangen, war die vorbestimmte Matrizze, in die ihre Seele hineinwachsen mußte mit jeder Faser und Zelle, bis auch die kleinste Vertiefung der Form von ihr ausgefüllt sein würde. (113)

Since the figure in the portrait is a double of Polyxena, the portrait acts a a kind of mirror. As such it is "ein Fenster ins Jenseits und in die Geschichte, [der Spiegel] erzeugt Wiederholung und Doppelgänger. So induziert er den revenanthaften Einbruch des Vergangenen in die Gegenwart und wird zum Anlaß einer Identitätskrise der Protagonisten" (Ruthner 155). Eventually Polyxena succumbs completely to the power of her ancestor and "Die tote Polyxena im Bilderzimmer war lebendig geworden und die lebendige tot umgefallen--sie lösten einander ab" (114-15). Polyxena's great-great-grandmother is an archetypal *femme fatale*. She was guilty of poisoning her husband and was punished by being locked in the Daliborka tower where after thirty years she went insane and bit open the artery on her wrist. Before she died she used her blood to paint a picture of her dead spouse on the wall of her cell (72).

Polyxena has also developed another problem that affects her role in the revolution. She suffers from *haematomania*, an obsession with human blood. This illness began in her youth when, at the age of four, she awoke in bed frightened either by a nightmare or suffering from a fever and began to scream. No one came to comfort her and she then realized that her aunt was in the room with her and sleeping so heavily she could not be woken up. To the young girl, her relative had "im Gesicht ein versteinertes Ausdruck unversöhnlichster Grausamkeit" (110). After that experience Polyxena began to be repulsed by anything that appeared to be dead, including the faces of sleeping people. Her feelings grew in time to become a hatred against "alles Tote, Blutleere" (110). While receiving her education at a cloister Polyxena began to spend much of her time in view of a crucifix of a bleeding Christ. She started to associate the ideas of "Blut, Märtyrertum, Geißelung,

Kreuzigung, Blut, Blut.--Dann die Liebe zu einem Gnadenbild, in dessen Herzen sieben Schwerter staken. Blutrote Ampeln. Blut. Blut" (111). Blood as the symbol of life takes control of Polyxena's soul. Her fascination with blood can be explained in Jungian terms as a weakness in her psyche that causes her to react more quickly to an extreme stimulus or disturbance (Jung, "Unconscious" 28), which in Polyxena's case is constituted by her uncanny resemblance to her ancestor. Her obsession is described in the text as a form of vampirism.⁸¹ Böhmisches Liesel refers to her as a bloodsucker (51). And Ottokar, her lover, connects her ancestor with a vampire. To him the woman in the portrait had "winzige, kleine, blutdürstige Zähne" (74). While Ottokar and Polyxena are making love she also behaves in a vampire-like manner to the extent that she bites his neck, however no blood is shed through her action (77).

In addition to Polyxena's childhood experiences the entire history of Prague also affects her illness.⁸² She goes from one historic location where blood was shed to another. The sites begin to speak to her of violent past events, "jeder graue, verwitterte Stein, an dem sie früher achtlos vorübergegangen war, erzählte ihr von Blutvergießen und Folterqual, aus jedem Fußbreit Erde hauchte der rötliche Dampf" (115). Her obsession with violent historical events also carries over to her lover.

Polyxena's fate is linked to that of the young musician Ottokar who lives with his parents, the caretakers of the Daliborka, a medieval prison tower. At the beginning of the novel Böhmisches Liesel prophesies that Ottokar will want to become Emperor of the world. She also warns him of the dangers inherent in a future relationship he will have with a woman of the Boriwoj clan, a reference to Polyxena (51). Like Polyxena, Ottokar too is

⁸¹ In this respect Polyxena resemble Hanns Heinz Ewers's title figure in his novel *Vampir*. According to Ruthner, "Ewers' Vampir ist, seiner konventionellen Attribute entledigt, kein übernatürliches Wesen mehr, sondern ein hämatophil-devianter Mensch. Auch damit vollzieht der Autor den Übergang vom natürlichen zum psychologischen Vampirismus, den Schritt zur Reduktion des Übernatürlichen in der Phantastik nach dem 1. Weltkrieg" (39).

⁸² In his essay "Die Stadt mit dem heimlichen Herzschlag" Meyrink writes that the city has an effect on all its inhabitants, "Prag gestaltet und bewegt wie ein Marionettenspieler seine Bewohner von ihrem ersten bis zum letzten Atemzug" (158).

attracted by the portrait of Polyxena's ancestor. Two years before he met Polyxena he fell in love with the Countess Lambua from her portrait and became obsessed with the dead woman:

Allmählich hatte es [das Bildnis] sich seiner sehnsüchtigen jungen Seele bemächtigt und sein ganzes Sinnen und Trachten derart gefangengenommen, daß es für ihn Leben gewann und er es oft wie ein Geschöpf von Fleisch und Blut an seine Brust geschmiegt fühlte. (74)

Ottokar transfers his love for the painted figure to its living image, Polyxena, who in turn is transformed by Ottokar's love into "das *seelische* Ehrenbild ihrer Stammesmutter" (76).

The portrait therefore takes control of both of their lives.

As soon as Ottokar meets Polyxena he too becomes sensitive to the bloody history of Prague. While he is waiting for their rendez-vous to take place he sees his home, the Daliborka, otherwise known as *der Hungerturm*, for the first time in an evil light. To him it becomes a living entity (Berg 214), a Moloch that has just woken up from a hundred-year long sleep:

Es war ein granitenes Ungeheuer mit schauerlichen Eingeweiden, die Fleisch und Blut verdauen konnten gleich denen eines reißenden nächtlichen Tieres. Drei Stockwerke darin, durch waagrechte Schichten voneinander getrennt, und ein rundes Loch mitten hindurch wie eine Speiseröhre, vom Schlund bis hinab in den Magen.--Im obersten hatte in alter Zeit Kerkerjahr um Kerkerjahr in lichtloser schrecklicher Finsternis die Verurteilten langsam zerkaut, bis sie an Stricken hinuntergelassen wurden in den mittelsten Raum zum letzten Krug Wasser und Brot, um dort zu verschmachten, wenn sie nicht vorher wahnsinnig wurden von dem aus der Tiefe hauchenden Fäulnisgeruch und sich selbst hinabstürzten zu den verwesenden Leichen ihrer Vorgänger. (69)

The history of Prague begins to affect Ottokar to a greater extent when during his and Polyxena's love-making he is able to read her mind and discovers what Polyxena is imagining to increase "die Raserei ihrer Brunst" (78). These images have their roots in an old chronicle that describes the background of a painting called "Das Bild des Gespießten." They depict the horrific death by impalement of a knight who attempted to seize the crown of Bohemia. This man, Boriwoj Chlavec, was one of Ottokar's ancestors. After Polyxena leaves Ottokar he vows to himself that he would rather suffer the pain of impalement a

thousand times than to die before giving Polyxena the highest honour he could hope to attain (80). This honour is to make her an empress (209). Consequently, Ottokar is doomed to repeat the destiny of his ancestor, just as Polyxena's fate is controlled by the spirit of the dead countess. In this respect Ottokar and Polyxena become negative archetypes like their ancestors and the pattern of destructive events is repeated; the only difference is that their images are easily recognizable for contemporary readers. Not having developed their "selves" they are fated to repeat the sins of their fore-fathers.

While under the influence of her ancestor Polyxena employs her newly discovered powers of *Aweysha* in order to make blood flow again through the streets of Prague. According to a Tatar Polyxena meets at a dinner party, *Aweysha* is the ability to leave one's body and take possession of the body of another. But it is also possible that while a person is asleep that dead spirits may take over his or her body. The Tatar also states that it is the spirits of some evil dead who manipulate bloodbaths and wars, or crimes against humanity (121), but this may only be accomplished with people who are asleep, in the sense that they have not found their "self," as the Tatar states, "Wer nur an sich selbst glaubt und nachdenkt, ehe er handelt, mit dem kann keiner Aweysha machen" (122).

The Russian carriage-driver uses his powers of *Aweysha* to speak through Zrcadlo, whose words the masses believe to be those of God, in order to instigate a revolution. Meyrink's warnings of such behaviour, in the case of the novel the re-creation of the Hussite rebellion, are to be interpreted in the framework of historical events at the time of the novel's appearance. Meyrink wrote the work during the First World War. At this time the problem of Czech nationality, that was also at the root of the Hussite revolt of 1419 and led to uprisings in Prague during the 1890's, was cause for great political concern (Meister 206). Meyrink's presentation of the situation in the novel indicates a disgust for the motives of the leaders of such revolutions as depicted by the views of the

Russian who attempts to rouse the mob to rebellion by playing upon its greed.⁸³ He suggests that by overthrowing the nobles the proletariat will be able to line its pockets with great riches (140).⁸⁴ As for the Russian, “worauf es ihm einzig und allein ankam, war: sich selbst an die Spitze einer Bewegung zu setzten, gleichgültig, welchen Namen sie tragen würde” (139). He is the true demagogue who will say and believe what the majority of people want in order to gain their support and increase his own power and social standing. Flugbeil, as a representative of the individual who is on the path of discovering his “self” is not partisan to the political events happening around him. His order to his carriage-driver, at the end of the novel, to drive straight ahead (200), demonstrates his unwillingness to take sides in the issues at stake (Qasim 149). His only means to transcend the cyclic repetition of history is to remain true to his “self,” even if he is destroyed by the events of its constantly rotating wheel.

There are instances, however, when Polyxena seems to break away from the influence of the countess. When Polyxena realizes the welfare of her own kind is at stake, she blocks the Russian’s control of the medium. The actor is then possessed by another soul who is never named, but who expresses ideas similar to that of the Manchu. This being attempts one last time to convince the crowd that the only way they may escape the slavery of destiny is by believing in the power of humanity and the individual, not in the omnipotence of a god. As he claims:

Ja, ihr könnt Herr über das Schicksal werden, aber nur wenn ihr wißt, daß ihr Gott seid; denn nur Gott kann Herr über das Schicksal sein. Wenn ihr glaubet, daß ihr nur Menschen seid und von Gott getrennt und von Gott geschieden und ein anderes als Gott, so bleibt ihr unverwandelt, und das Schicksal steht über euch. (146)

⁸³ Meyrink’s mention of the Russian revolutionary Kropotkin and the citation of his writings lend another note of reality to the plot (Qasim 140). However, the manner in which Meyrink handles the revolutionary ideas demonstrates that he disdains the results of the Russian revolution.

⁸⁴ Peter Cersowsky says about *Walpurgisnacht*; “Den Unterschichten wird Sympathie entgegengebracht, aber das Proletariat, so heißt es, sei noch nicht reif für die Revolution” (“Politische Aspekte” 40).

The crowd is unable to take this advice seriously, because by the time Zrcadlo finishes his speech, the ghosts of Walpurgis Night have been let loose (149). Polyxena is able to observe the spirits of Boriwoj Chlavec and Jan Zizka as they slip into the bodies of Ottokar and Zrcadlo respectively.

Und das Ebenbild Ottokars verschmolz mit dem Lebendigen, der Mann mit dem Helm [Jan Zizka] trat hinter den Schauspieler und verschwand;--statt seiner schwarzen Binde fiel plötzlich ein Schlagschatten über Zrcadlos Gesicht, und der rostige Helm war in wirres Haupthaar verwandelt. (150)

Polyxena also sees the ghost of her ancestor as it attempts to strangle the Russian, indicating that the events to come are not a rebellion with modern political goals, but a recreation of past slaughters. Polyxena is able to visualize the battle that took place almost five hundred years before in the streets of Prague. She sees the fate of Jan Zizka who was blinded by an arrow in his only seeing eye and his death from the plague. The young woman also envisions his resurrection, for he ordered his skin to be fashioned into a drum so that after his death he could continue to lead his troops into battle. Polyxena is at this point her true self and is therefore able to realize that “Die Bilder [ihrer] Seele sind zu Gespenster geworden und tun dort unten ihr Werk” (153). Ottokar’s goal to crown her Empress also becomes apparent to her, as is the fact that his love for her is much stronger than the love she feels for him (153).

After Polyxena flees the Daliborka she begins to feel separated from her memories. It’s as if her past were experienced by someone or something other, her ancestor. She nevertheless takes responsibility for transmitting thoughts of the legend of Jan Zizka to Zrcadlo, from whom it escalates into eerie reality. However, Polyxena’s powers of *Aweysha* are not under her control. She believes it to be influenced by her ancestor Polyxena Lambua behind whom, “verbirgt sich vampirgleich der unsterbliche Keim der alten blutdürstigen Brandstifterrassen, der sich auf sie vererbt hat seit Geschlechtern und sie nur vorschleibt als Werkzeug, um teilzuhaben am Leben und der Furchbarkeit der herrannahenden Geschehnisse” (205). Yet immediately after thinking this, Polyxena

questions her belief and wonders whether she is being manipulated by a voice that wants Ottokar's dream of becoming emperor to come true. She then foresees the inevitable outcome of the realization of her thoughts; Jan Zizka will lead his insane followers to their death.

The first organized act of the revolutionary forces is to crown Ottokar Emperor in the cathedral. Since no crown can be found the crowd runs off in search of one at the palace of the Countess Zahradka, Polyxena's aunt, so the ceremony may be officially completed. On the way to the palace the mob passes the stuffed remains of General Wallenstein's horse and Ottokar is hoisted on its back. As the crowd continues on its quest Polyxena spots a strange figure intermingling with the people and playing on an imaginary drum. He is the devil who visited Flugbeil and Liesel. To Polyxena he is the incarnation of the evil force that even guided Jan Zizka five centuries earlier, "Er ist nackt; seine eigene Haut ist auf die Trommel gespannt. Er ist die Schlange, die in den Menschen wohnt und sich häutet, wenn sie sterben" (214). Polyxena, despite her intermittent ability to recognize what is happening to her is, nevertheless, a representative of the group of people the Manchu described as not being able to find their "self." She blames the devil for the evil in the world and cannot understand that he only represents humanity's baser desires. He is ultimately the one who fulfills her bloodlust, by manipulating events so that the revolution can take place.⁸⁵

Once the mob reaches the countess's palace they demand she give them the crown. Instead, the old woman fires a bullet into Ottokar's forehead. The resulting drop of blood on his forehead resembles a ruby, as one would see on a crown, resulting in a confusion of "illusion ou réalité?" (Danes 68). Ironically, Ottokar has been crowned, but his is a hollow and cheap victory. His mount is no more than a large toy, and Ottokar's dreams are strangely only fulfilled for one brief moment until he dies. Polyxena sees their pursuit of

⁸⁵ Marianne Wunsch notes, "In ihrer literarischen Darstellung gehören . . . zu allen Formen der sozialen Unordnung oft auch orgiastische Exzesse in der Sexualität und/oder im Bluttausch" (209).

power as a childhood game, “Jaja, wir haben doch ‘König und Königin’ gespielt!” (217). Ottokar’s death marks the beginning of the end of the attempted revolution. Immediately afterwards armed troops arrive to quell the mob.⁸⁶ Once the ghosts of the past have satisfied their lust for blood, they leave the people they have been manipulating to return to their normal lives. Polyxena is freed from the power of the Countess Lambua, and she declares the death of the old Polyxena, “Da liegt das Bild der--Polyxena.--Jetzt ist es tot und hat Ruhe” (217).

Nevertheless, the magic of the Walpurgis Night has not been completely dispelled. The eighteenth century Polyxena may be put to rest, but the twentieth century one has taken her place. She carries Ottokar’s child, so “Der Keim der Rasse Boriwoj, die nicht sterben kann, die nur schläft, um immer wieder aufzuwachen, ist [ihr] anvertraut.--[Sie] ist gefeiert” (216). Polyxena is relieved of the specter that haunted her, but will continue in the tradition of the bloodthirsty Boriwoj clan. Even her portrait will be hung for the edification of her descendants. She will require its presence to employ her power of *Aweysha* on another Cosmic Walpurgisnacht in order to complete the historical cycle of violence that only a few individuals like Flugbeil and Liesel can escape by sacrificing their earthly shells in order to remain true to their spiritual ideals. As Jan Christoph Meister states, “die Weltgeschichte [erscheint] hier nunmehr als eine redundante, zyklische ‘Wiederkehr des Gleichen,’ die es zu transzendieren gilt als Subjekt, das sich nur im Bezug auf sich selbst definiert” (208).

By examining the lives of Flugbeil and Pernath it has been demonstrated that archetypes affect humanity on the level of the individual. But, as Jung believes, the energy of the archetypes can also be focused to manipulate people to take collective action (“Unconscious” 79). In this manner archetypal myths can influence epochs of history (“Unconscious” 79). *Walpurgisnacht* constitutes one such example. The revolution of 1419

⁸⁶ Florian F. Marzin points out that the historical uprising was the signal of an authentic folk movement, whereas Meyrink’s rebellion is easily and brutally put down (64). In this sense the re-creation of the revolt has not taken place.

was a real event, its leader, Jan Zizka, however, became a legendary figure for Czech nationalist forces. His self-sacrifice in dying for his cause and choice to fight the established powers make him an archetypal hero. Ziska's status is indirectly exploited by Polyxena to manipulate the masses and provide her with the bloodshed her illness compels her to see.

Although the novel *Walpurgisnacht* has the same theme as *Der Golem*, the search for the "self" has been placed in a realistic setting rather than a dream. Consequently, the archetypes which appear in *Walpurgisnacht* depict "real" people whom Flugbeil knows, with the exception of the Manchu and the devil whom he encounters either while suffering from a delusion or hypnosis. Unlike Pernath who eventually is confronted with his double in the form of Habal Garmin at the end of the interior plot, Flugbeil encounters his symbol, the bird, only metaphorically when he dies.

What is supposed to constitute the supernatural in the novel is the existence of the power of *Aweysha*, which denotes one person's ability to leave his or her body and to enter and take control of the body of another. The concept of *Aweysha*, however, does not incite feelings of hesitation in the reader because the characters accept it readily as a parapsychological phenomenon. In Polyxena's case the fight over her will is a psychological one. She is the example of the individual who is still "asleep," meaning that she has not completed the search for her "self." For this reason she is more susceptible to outside forces to determine her "self" and her behavior. Polyxena is convinced by her physical resemblance to her ancestor, in addition to her bloodlust, that she is the reincarnation of the Countess Lambua. Her delusion hinders her from listening to her unconscious and prevents her from evolving into her own person. Polyxena's compulsion to see blood also has psychological roots in a childhood trauma. Meyrink's use of vampire imagery is only employed to make her seem more frightening. Other strange events such as the appearance of the devil and the ghosts of the Hussite revolution can be explained as

visions experienced by various characters in the novel. The repetition of the historical revolution is not to be interpreted as fantastic,⁸⁷ for as Polyxena says, “Es ist nichts Wunderbares dabei--ich hab’ doch immer gewußt, daß es so kommen muß!” (216).⁸⁸ That there is no hesitation in accepting the supernatural event of *Aweysha* as a real occurrence detracts the element of the “pure” fantastic from the text.⁸⁹ The text is rather an example of “real” events being exaggerated and described in a “fantastic” manner.

Another reason why *Walpurgisnacht* cannot be considered to belong to the category of fantastic literature is because the concept of *Aweysha* can be interpreted as a metaphor explaining the behaviour of individuals and groups who are overwhelmed by enthusiasm in striving for certain idealistic goals. This *Begeisterung* is a means by which one loses control of one’s own spirit or self. According to the Tatar, “[können] manche Menschen *Aweysha* machen, bloß indem sie eine Rede halten” (121). This type of *Aweysha* is the natural explanation for a kind of mass hypnosis. The enthusiasm the crowd feels in the novel is exaggerated so that it becomes a form of possession by historical forces. Only the individual who thinks of him- or herself and thinks before he or she acts does not fall victim to this strange power that takes control of the mind (122). Jan Christoph Meister thus interprets the author’s concept of *Aweysha* as a means of arousing “nationalistische Masseneuphorie” (206).

Heidemarie Oehm argues that political and social factors are also at the roots of the problem of the disintegration of the “self” (192). The motif of the *Doppelgänger* was a popular one in the early twentieth century because it addressed the anxieties of the

⁸⁷ It appears as if the arcane imagery of *Der Golem*, which had its roots in the allusions to Egyptian mythology, the Cabbala, Tarot, and Alchemy, have been replaced in *Walpurgisnacht* by the historical images of Prague’s violent history. Consequently, the imagery of the this novel is not as rich, but also has natural origins as opposed to the occult nature of the archetypal images in *Der Golem*.

⁸⁸ Even at the time of the writing of this thesis one can see the repetition of history in the former country of Yugoslavia. Different ethnic groups who lived in harmony for decades have begun to murder each other because their ancestors did so under the same guise of nationalism.

⁸⁹ The supernatural nature of this power is also subject to interpretation as there are people who believe such powers exist, but have not been scientifically proven.

bourgeoisie during the Bismarck and Wilhelminian eras, which was confused about its own identity. The members of this group internalised the trauma of having to renounce their political ideals in order to continue their businesses. In this manner they began to identify “genau mit der herrschenden Klasse, . . . gegen die sie opponierten” (193). Their external duplicity was internalized as a duality of the personality, a “Doppel-Ich” (193). Meyrink’s use of the problem of identity, in connection with the escape into the occult realm, touched a nerve in the public conscious. For this reason, Oehm argues, *Der Golem* became a bestseller (193). *Walpurgisnacht*, which employs the theme of identity to a lesser extent and ignores the occult background, was less popular.

4. CONCLUSION

Both *Der Golem* and *Walpurgisnacht* have been examined in detail as to how these texts deal with Carl Gustav Jung's theory of the process of individuation. The two novels present figures who depict archetypes of the collective unconscious. Many archetypes are aspects of the psyches of two characters in the novels, Pernath in *Der Golem* and Flugbeil in *Walpurgisnacht*. The only difference is that in *Der Golem* these characters are presented as dream figures who appear as Pernath is awakening from an automaton-like existence. In *Walpurgisnacht*, these archetypes are depicted by characters in a realistic setting and mark the evolution of humanity in the figure of Flugbeil. *Walpurgisnacht* additionally shows the dangers that result from a person's inability to discover his or her "self." Polyxena becomes a victim of stronger forces that manipulate her life until disaster in the form of the re-creation of a fifteenth century revolution affects the lives of all the characters in the novel. The condition of the individual who has not unified all the disparate aspects of his or her psyche is a frightening one. It is depicted in both novels by such supernatural motifs as the double, anthropomorphic architecture, and the questioning of the individual's perceptions of time and reality. To determine whether the texts belong to the category of literature referred to as "the fantastic" one must return to Todorov's initial argument.

The interior plot of the novel depicting Pernath's life presents many supernatural occurrences. Some examples are the appearances of the mythological figure of the golem, Pernath's journey to a room with no entrance, and Pernath's ability to see a legendary house where none exists. The addition of an exterior plot with a frame narrator who dreams of a stone, a symbol that reappears in Pernath's story, detracts from the supernatural nature of the events because they can be explained as this character's dream of Pernath, though the incidents that happen may seem life-like. The dream itself is subject to interpretation on a

symbolic level, in this case by examining the archetypal figures that appear in the text and represent the protagonist's evolution through the process of individuation.

What cannot be explained is the means by which the frame narrator is able to dream about the life of another character, only by having tried on the other character's hat, a concrete proof of Pernath's existence. The connection between the two narrators is destroyed when Pernath falls to his death, which indicates the end of the frame narrator's dream. The reader is given the impression that all the events that follow are in a "realistic" sphere, for the frame narrator visits the people and places which appear in his dream of Pernath. When he finally crosses the Moldau and visits the "dead" Pernath at a non-existent house near the *Mauer zur letzten Latern* to exchange hats, the frame narrator has stepped over into the realm of the marvellous. The reader's hesitation as to whether the explanation for the events is natural or supernatural therefore does not extend beyond the text. *Der Golem* is therefore an example of Todorov's concept of the fantastic-marvellous text.

Walpurgisnacht includes many allusions to supernatural motifs, yet all these otherworldly elements can be interpreted as descriptions of or metaphors for "real" events, which detracts from their "supernatural" nature. Flugbeil sees his double in Zrcadlo, but the actor's function is only as a medium by which Flugbeil is able to recognize and deal with his unconscious. Zrcadlo, as a somnambulist, depicts in an exaggerated fashion the "sleeping" state of those individuals who do not journey to discover their "selves." Polyxena, also as a representative of those who do not successfully undergo a process of individuation, is psychologically weak and suffers from the delusion that she is possessed by her ancestor, whom she believes to be the cause of the uprising in Prague that coincidentally takes place at that time. One can interpret her "vampirism" as a psychological illness. The power of *Aweysha* exerted on the crowd by both Polyxena and the Russian can be explained as the powers of demagoguery and as a kind of mass hypnosis. Whether certain supernatural events occurred remains questionable because their witnesses are

suffering from visions. Other events take on a supernatural aspect because they are described by unusual similes. As a result, the “real” events depicted in the novel have been fantastically transformed (Schödel 87) by the character’s perceptions of what occurred and by the language employed by the author to describe them.

As Meyrink’s novels *Der Golem* and *Walpurgisnacht* demonstrate, fantastic literature has value for society, other than as a mere means of escape. The combination of the supernatural and the natural prevents the reader from differentiating what is real and unreal in the fantastic world. By its themes and confusing nature, fantastic literature embodies the disintegration of the world and the fragmentation of human experiences. It presents the factors that have led to the real crises one wishes to leave behind, and even criticizes them. Fantastic literature therefore rises above the level of a trivial literary phenomenon. Insofar as it does not embody reality it promotes, “the search after the truth, its provocation and, most importantly, its *testing*”(Bakhtin 94).⁹⁰

Louis Vax perceives the actual reading of a fantastic text as an aesthetic experience, that seduces the reader’s critical faculties and charms the soul. In order to enjoy a fantastic text the reader must still be afraid of spirits, but without believing in them (*Littérature* 73). They both attract and repulse us, nevertheless we are attracted by the repulsion and simultaneously repulsed by our attraction (“Peur” 917). This sentiment is expressed by the character of Zwakh in *Der Golem* who says “Ich kann mir nicht helfen: das *Übersinnliche* ist doch das Reizvollste!” (192). His sentiments perhaps reflect those of the author who devoted much of his life to the search for the supernatural.

⁹⁰ Emphasis by Rosemary Jackson (15).

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