

The Normative Relations between Fiction, Imagination and Appreciation

1. Summary

It is a commonplace that fictional texts — notably in the shape of novels and other works of literature — invite and move us to imagine certain things concerning the characters and events described by the text. Reading *The Sound and the Fury*, say, prompts us to imagine various incidents in the history of the Compson family. It is equally undeniable that considerations about what fictional texts ask us to imagine, and how, are central to our aesthetic appreciation of them. We value Faulkner's novel in part because it allows us to imagine these incidents from the very complex, diverse and subjective points of view of the three Compson brothers.

What these two truisms about the relationship between fiction, imagination and appreciation have in common is that they describe *normative* relations. Imagining is the appropriate basic response to fictional texts. We cannot understand fictional texts without becoming imaginatively involved with the world that they describe. If we fail to imagine in accordance with the text's prescriptions to imagine, we fail to properly engage with it. Similarly, appreciation is the appropriate response to the power of fictional texts to captivate our imagination in rich and rewarding ways. Much of the aesthetic worth of fictional texts resides in the fact that they make specific fictional worlds accessible to our imagination. Hence, the aesthetic evaluation of fictional texts requires us to take into account what they ask us to imagine, and how they do this.

The general aim of this interdisciplinary research project is to investigate the nature of these two normative relations, which may be characterized in the following general way:

(NR1) Fictional texts direct us to imagine certain things.

(NR2) That fictional texts direct us to imagine certain things bears on whether we should aesthetically (dis)value them.

With respect to each fictional text, there are specific instances of (NR1) and (NR2), which tell us what to imagine when reading the text, and also how to aesthetically assess it in light of what it asks us to imagine. Although certain important aspects of (NR1) and (NR2) have already been discussed in considerable detail in the literature (e.g. how it is generally determined what is fictional relative to a given text), many others have not (e.g. what the value of fiction-based imagining is, or what literary scholars actually think about these normative issues). Thus there has so far been no systematic investigation of the normative role of imagining and its normative connections to fiction and appreciation — something that this research projects aims to remedy.

The neglected issues that we intend to address can be divided into factual, normative and foundational questions (not unlike the division into applied ethics, normative ethics and metaethics). In line with this division, our research project consists of three subprojects. *Subproject 1* — to be led by Tom Kindt (Literary Studies/Fribourg) — inquires into which specific instances of (NR1) and (NR2) are *de facto* accepted by literary scholars in their interpretative practice (with a focus on E.T.A. Hoffmann's 'Der Sandmann'). *Subproject 2* — to be directed by Tilmann Köppe (Literary Theory/Göttingen) — investigates which particular instances of (NR1) and (NR2) *should* (or *should not*) guide our interpretation of fictional texts. And *Subproject 3* — to be run by Fabian Dorsch (Philosophy/Fribourg) — intends to answer why these instances do possess normative authority over our imaginative and appreciative engagement with fictional texts.

Together, the three subprojects aim at providing a comprehensive account of the normative relations between fiction, imagination and appreciation accross disciplines. So far, research in literary studies and philosophy displays a picture of complementary strengths and weaknesses. While philosophical aesthetics has contributed to our theoretical understanding of fiction, imagination and appreciation, it has all too often neglected actual interpretative practice. The interpretations conducted in literary studies, in turn, host a wealth of insights concerning our engagement with the arts. The insights, however, need to be made explicit and clarified for the purpose of theory building. While this may amount to a truism that has often led to a call for joint efforts of the disciplines, such endeavors are but seldomly undertaken. The interdisciplinary approach of the proposed research promises to combine the strengths of both philosophy and literary studies, while mend their blind spots.

2. Research Plan

2.1. State of Research

The three subprojects approach the normative relations (NR1) and (NR2) from three complementary angles. Whereas the first subproject studies the factual issue of which specific norms are *de facto* in play in interpretative practice, the second asks the normative question of which specific norms *should* be followed, while the third addresses the foundational issue of where these norms derive their authority from. Paying careful attention to the relations between the factual, normative and foundational issues will be part and parcel of the three subprojects (especially of the foundational and philosophical Subproject 3), thus facilitating their close integration.

Subproject 1 explores the interrelation between imagination and appreciation in the practice of literary studies. By examining argumentative structures and evaluative components in a comprehensive sample of ‘expert interpretations’ of a certain literary work (i.e. E.T.A. Hoffmann’s ‘Der Sandmann’), the subproject aims to gain empirical evidence for answering the following general question concerning the normative dimension of ‘doing interpretation’ in literary criticism:

- (Q1) Which specific instances of (NR1) and (NR2) are *de facto* accepted by literary scholars as governing our imaginative and appreciative engagement with fictional texts?

Subproject 1 puts a particular emphasis on the specific instances of (NR1) and (NR2) that are examined by Subproject 2.

Subproject 2 takes the philosophical debate over what particular works of fiction prescribe us to imagine as a starting point and analyzes arguments to the effect that matters of appreciation should influence these prescriptions. In addition, the project explores the extent to which these prescriptions can be said to guide not only the content of our imaginings but also the way of imagining. Evidence for the importance of these content-transcending aspects of imagining for literary appreciation is taken from the narratological literature on typical narrative features of literary fictions:

- (Q2) Which specific instances of (NR1) and (NR2) *should* (or *should not*) govern our imaginative and appreciative engagement with fictional texts?

The results of Subproject 2 will be cross-validated by drawing on the actual interpretative practice as uncovered by Subproject 1. Moreover, Subproject 2 will suggest reconsiderations of the very notion of prescriptions to imagine that need to be assessed in close cooperation with Subproject 3.

Subproject 3 aims to investigate why the normative relations between fiction, imagination and appreciation hold and what makes them possible. That is, it tries to identify the source of their normative authority. Concerning (NR2), there are already well-developed views on the normativity of aesthetic appreciation and thus also on how fiction-related prescriptions to imagine can constitute aesthetic qualities that are normatively relevant for appreciation (see below). For this reason, the subproject focuses primarily on the much more neglected normativity of imagining and, especially, on (NR1):

- (Q3) What is the source of the normative authority of the specific instances of (NR1), in virtue of which fictional texts direct our imagination?

Tackling this question will, *inter alia*, help us to find solutions to problems raised by the Subprojects 1 and 2 — for instance, to the puzzle of (apparently) conflicting prescriptions to imagine with respect to a particular work. — While Subproject 1 is intended for a PhD student, Subprojects 2 and 3 are designed for postdocs. All three positions will be advertised internationally.

Subproject 1: Factual Issues (Kindt/Literary Studies/Fribourg/PhD)

The Emergence of ‘Practice Analysis’. Inspired by the so-called ‘practice turn’ in science studies and the history of science, literary criticism has — in the course of the last two decades — developed a steadily growing interest in illuminating its own practices (cf. e.g. Schönert 2000; Martus/Spoerhase 2009; Albrecht et al. 2015).

On the one hand, this trend has resulted in sociologically oriented investigations of different spheres of activity in literary studies. On the other hand, it has revived the very endeavor that the subproject attempts to carry forward, namely the endeavor of an empirical analysis of the practice of interpretation guided by philosophical and linguistic theories of speech acts and argumentation.

This manner of ‘practice analysis’ originated in the 1970s with a series of studies on ‘expert interpretations’ of literature that, for two reasons, are still an important point of reference for meta-critical investigations like the projected one. First, these studies have developed convincing basic accounts of the language and the speech acts used in literary criticism and, by doing so, of the different operations involved in the activity of scholarly interpretation (cf. Weitz 1964; Beardsley 1970; Fricke 1977). Second, the research in question has provided us with systematic models for analysis and with empirical insights into the argumentative structures of interpretations in literary studies (cf. Grewendorf 1975; Beetz/Meggel 1976; Kindt/Schmidt 1976; von Savigny 1978).

Relevant Recent Developments. In the line of the meta-critical studies of the 1970s, the last years have seen several approaches in literary studies to attain a refined analytical and empirical picture of the discipline’s interpretive practices. Three strands of these approaches are of particular relevance for this subproject.

First, based on Toulmin’s understanding of argumentation (Toulmin 1958), Winko has conceived of and compellingly exemplified a model for examining argumentative structures and procedures in scholarly interpretations that allows for the specifics of these structures and procedures in the field of literary studies (cf. Winko 2002, 2015a, 2015b).

Second, stimulated by speech-act- and action-theory, increased attempts have been made recently to advance the project of a pragmatics of interpretation that characterizes the practice of interpretation in literary criticism as an interplay of various basic critical operations related to specific aims, types of claims and conditions of success (cf. Zabka 2005; Dennerlein/Köppe/Werner 2008; Kindt 2015a).

Third, one of the basic operations involved in scholarly interpretation, the act of evaluation, has found particular attention in newer approaches to illuminating elements and compositions of critical discourse: From the perspective of linguistic discourse analysis, Thompson and Hunston have analyzed evaluation as a ‘stance taking’ that is at hand once someone verbally expresses any kind of attitude towards an object (cf. Thompson/Hunston 2000). Following speech act-theoretical conceptions, Winko and von Heydebrand have proposed a more restrictive notion of evaluation; they have systematically explicated the operation as the usage of ‘value-terms’ to ascribe or disavow value to objects, and they have exemplarily illuminated acts of evaluation in ‘expert interpretations’ of different critical schools (cf. von Heydebrand/Winko 1996).

Subproject 2: Normative Issues (Köppe/Literary Theory/Göttingen/PostDoc)

Theories of Truth in Fiction. Current theories of fiction maintain that what is the case in the story world of a literary work of fiction is centrally determined by what recipients are prescribed to imagine by the work (Evans 1982; Walton 1990; Everett 2013; Walton 2013). Fictional facts are, in short, facts to be imagined. An indispensable part of most, if not all, interpretations as conducted in literary studies consists in determining what is the case in the story world of particular works of fiction. The philosophical debate on the determination of fictional content has identified several general difficulties for this interpretive endeavor. In particular, it is clear that the fact that a work contains ‘*p*’ is not necessary for *p* being the case in the story world. In the fiction, Sherlock Holmes has two lungs, although the novels do not say so explicitly. Readers draw all kinds of inferences from what is said in a story, and they assume that certain (but certainly not all) facts from the real world hold in the story world, whether the text says so or not (Currie 1990, 60; Bareis 2009). Yet there is a broad consensus that there are norms constraining content ascriptions. In particular, it seems that there are certain ‘import rules’ that govern what must or must not be imported from the real world to a given fictional world. However, there are different candidates for such import rules, and with respect to particular cases, they lead to more or less intuitively plausible, and sometimes conflicting, results (cf. Köppe 2014d for a recent summary). This has led some to maintain that there is no general ‘principle of generation’ for fictional facts

(Walton 1990, ch. 4; Lamarque/Olsen 1994, 94; Zipfel 2001, 90), while others maintain that one may keep searching for a meta principle that allows us to choose among the existing principles (Petterson 1993, 91), or that such a principle would at least explain the sometimes considerable agreement amongst interpreters (cf. Livingston 2005, 192). Still others maintain that the search for overarching principles is misguided from the start, and that the principles invoked in the philosophical discussion are not what guides the interpretations that are actually being conducted by literary scholars (Lamarque 1990; 1996, ch. 4).

Theory of Fiction and Narratology. Philosophical and narratological research so far is just beginning to acknowledge the importance of the theory of fiction for both our appreciation of particular narrative features of works of fiction and our understanding of the accordant narratological concepts (cf. Martínez/Scheffel 2003; Walsh 2007; Bareis 2008; Köppe/Kindt 2014). This is surprising given that many narratological concepts are defined in terms of what is the case in a fiction, and given that the notion of truth in fiction is elucidated in the theory of fiction in turn. An example for this that is gaining more and more attention in the literature is the notion of a fictional narrator (Kania 2005; Diehl 2009; Köppe/Stühling 2011; 2015). But, arguably, a similar case can be made for narratological notions such as *unreliable narration* (Köppe/Kindt 2011). Moreover, notions such as the distinction between *telling* and *showing* as modes of narrative presentation (cf. Klauk/Köppe 2015) seem to designate response-dependent phenomena such that their elucidation involves the evocation of particular attitudes on the part of the reader. Thus, the *showing* mode of presentation is often said to consist in the propensity of a text to give readers the impression to be imaginarily ‘present on the scene’ (cf. Martínez/Scheffel 1999, 47f.). Since large branches of the theory of fiction involve reference to the ‘fictive stance’, i.e. a particular reception mode on the part of the reader (cf. Wolterstorff 1980; Walton 1990; Lamarque/Olsen 1994), it seems natural to inquire into the relationships between these aspects of the theory of fiction and of narratology.

Subproject 3: Foundational Issues (Dorsch/Philosophy/Fribourg/PostDoc)

(NR1). Much recent work in the philosophy of fiction is devoted to characterizing what is supposed to guide and constrain our imaginative responses to fictional works — that is, the accounts focus on the principles that determine the *content* of a work of fiction (see e.g. Lewis 1978; Currie 1990, ch. 2; Walton 1990, ch. 4) and the kind of *utterances* by which that content is expressed (Searle 1975a; Currie 1990, ch. 1; Lamarque/Olsen 1994, ch. 2; Davies 2007, ch. 3). But the underlying question of how utterances of that kind — with the sort of content they are presumed to have — could be apt to provide any normative guidance for imagination, and how various forms of imaginative thought (and possibly also experience) could be subject to normative directions and constraints in the first place, has received much less attention. Our research aims to address these foundational issues by elucidating the structural features that are presupposed by the idea that fictional utterances can serve as normative guides for imaginative thought.

The (Dis)Analogy with Reports and Beliefs. A natural way of approaching the issues is suggested by how fictional utterances and the corresponding imaginative responses are usually characterized. What someone who tells a fictional story does is often described as resembling, or even being parasitic on, what is done in a factual report: the person telling the fictional story is taken, not to report, but merely to pretend or make as if to report (Searle 1975a; Lewis 1978; Kripke 2011), to imitate reporting (Ohmann 1971), or to do what very much looks like reporting but is done with a different, distinctly fictive intent (Currie 1990, ch. 1; Lamarque/Olsen 1994, ch. 2; Davies 2007, ch. 3). Similarly, what the reader or hearer of a fictional story does when she adopts the ‘fictive stance’ and forms the relevant imaginative responses is often characterized as something that is closely connected to belief: she is taken not to believe, but instead to make-believe that what she is being told is the case (Currie 1990; Walton 1990), or that it is being told with the standard communicative commitments in force (Lamarque/Olsen 1994, ch. 2). Accordingly, the way how our imaginative responses are guided and constrained by the fictional utterances in a story is usually accounted for in the same terms as the way our doxastic responses are guided and constrained by the assertive utterances in a report, namely in terms of speakers’ communicative intentions and commitments (Currie 1990; Carroll 1997; Davies 2007), discourse-specific conversational rules and practices (Walton 1990), or combinations thereof (Searle 1975a; Lamarque/Olsen 1994). It is generally

accepted that the intentions, commitments or rules that govern the non-fictional case are missing or somehow suspended in the fictional case. What is striking, though, is that the accounts remain remarkably unspecific when it comes to positively explaining how intentions, commitments or rules can endow fictional utterances with the normative authority over imaginative thoughts that they are supposed to have.

Communicative Commitments, Rules, and Intentions. More precisely, that fictional utterances lack the commitment to truth that is characteristic of assertive utterances (Ohmann 1971; Searle 1975a), and that imaginative thoughts lack the sensitivity to truth that is exhibited by beliefs (Velleman 2000b; Searle 2002, ch. 2; Burge 2010, ch. 8), does not imply that fictional utterances can serve as guides to imagination in the sense assertions are apt to guide beliefs. We have a rough idea of the sense in which genuine assertions are said to guide or constrain what we believe: beliefs are cognitive states whose function it is to be true and which are sensitive to evidence in favor of (or against) their truth (Velleman 2000a; 2000b; Shah 2003; Burge 2010, ch. 8), while assertions are utterances that involve a commitment to truth and thus seem to provide evidence for the truth of, and hence for believing, what is asserted (cf. Burge 2013a; 2013b). In the fictional case, by contrast, the appeal to truth only serves to indicate which fundamental features fictional utterances and imaginative thoughts do *not* possess, and it is difficult to see how the absence of these features could account for the normative relation that is supposed to hold between utterance and response. That fictional utterances lack a commitment to truth only suggests that they lack the normative force that genuine assertions possess, not that they have any normative force of their own; and the observation that imaginative thoughts are insensitive to truth suggests only that they are insensitive to the evidential considerations that guide beliefs, not that they are sensitive to any other kind of normative considerations at all.

In order to offer a more positive characterization, some accounts appeal to the notion of a fictional practice, as regulated by specific communicative rules, according to which we are required to respond to fictional utterances by forming corresponding imaginative thoughts (Searle 1975a; Walton 1990, ch.4; Lamarque/Olsen 1994, ch. 2). But this idea is hardly any progress. For saying that there are rules that require us to imagine certain things in response to fictional utterances does not amount to more than saying that fictional utterances have normative authority with regard to our imaginative thoughts. What we are trying to understand is why, or in virtue of what, these rules apply and what makes them normatively binding in the first place.

The most popular idea in this context is the assumption that fictional utterances are made with a specific communicative intent, namely the intention to get the reader or hearer to form certain imaginative thoughts, rather than to adopt certain beliefs as in the case of assertion (Currie 1990, ch. 1; Lamarque/Olsen 1994, ch. 2; Davies 2007, ch. 3; Stock 2011; Mikkonen 2013, ch. 2). Yet it is unclear how an intention like that could have any normative impact on its own. Intentions in themselves do not constitute normative reasons, and so there is nothing wrong or incorrect about not carrying them out (cf. Raz 2011, ch. 8; Kolodny 2014; or Scanlon 2004).

(NR2). In contrast to the normativity of fiction-based imagining, the normativity of appreciative responses to fictional texts is relatively unproblematic. The main reason for this is that we already have a fairly good grasp of how aesthetic appreciation works and, in particular, of the fact that aesthetic judgements are structurally similar to perceptual or descriptive judgements in that both are experience- or evidence-based (Walton 1993; Budd 1995; Goldman 1995; Levinson 1996; Dorsch 2000). Whenever the fact that a given fictional text invites a certain imaginative response gives us a *prima facie* reason to ascribe a certain aesthetic value to the text, this happens because — and to the extent to which — the fact contributes to the text’s aesthetic value and thus ensures that our matching aesthetic evaluation is appropriate.

2.2. State of Own Research & Institutional Setting

Subproject 1. Tom Kindt’s past and present research is closely linked to the proposed research, especially regarding the historical appraisal of literary studies’ development since the 19th century and the systematic clarification of interpretation as one of the discipline’s fundamental activities. Concerning the first of these two issues, several of Kindt’s publications examine instructive episodes of the history of the humanities, and literary

criticism in particular, in order to illuminate the structural architecture of approaches to literature and their linkage to general cultural developments (cf. e.g. Kindt/Müller 2005, 2008). The second topic is reflected in the theoretical foci of Kindt's publications. On the one hand, in a series of studies, he has elucidated central aspects and traditions of scholarly interpretation. The publications in question explicate their object as a normative practice composed of different lower level operations (like description, classification, explanation, evaluation) and develop proposals for distinguishing between theories, methods and heuristics of interpretation (Kindt/Köppe 2008; Kindt/Müller 2003; Kindt 2007; Köppe/Kindt 2014; Kindt 2015a). A recent contribution of this type relates these distinctions to the interpretive debate about E.T.A. Hoffmann's 'Der Sandmann' and outlines a text-based explanation of why the novella has induced such a controversy (Kindt 2016). On the other hand, Kindt's emphasis on meta-theoretical issues becomes manifest in a couple of publications that analyze the interpretive usage of highly disputed critical concepts like 'implied author' (Kindt/Müller 2006, 2011), 'unreliable narration' (Kindt 2008; Köppe/Kindt 2014), 'fantasy' (Kindt 2011), or 'literary epoch' (Kindt 2015b).

The Institute for German and Literary Studies at the University of Fribourg provides an excellent research surrounding for the subproject. Due to the proven collaboration between its literary studies- and linguistics-division and to the research foci of its members over the last years, the institute is known for stimulating theoretical and meta-critical contributions to literary criticism and for advanced attempts to combine hermeneutic and empirical approaches to text and discourse analysis.

Subproject 2. Tilmann Köppe's work in literary theory has focused on several topics at the intersection of philosophical aesthetics and literary studies. In particular, he has worked on fiction as a source of knowledge (Köppe 2007; 2008b; 2009; 2011), the methodological foundations of literary interpretation (Dennerlein/Köppe/Werner 2008; Köppe/Winko 2011; Köppe 2012a), and problems in the theory of fiction (Köppe 2005; Gertken/Köppe 2009; Köppe 2009a; 2014a; 2014b; 2014c; 2014d; Klauk/Köppe 2014b; Klauk/Köppe/Rami 2014). In his current research, Köppe focuses on the textual foundations of 'higher-order' narrative features such as *narrative closure*, *narrative unreliability* (Köppe/Kindt 2011) or the concept of a *narrator* (Köppe/Stühling 2011; 2015), and *narrative distance/telling* vs. *showing* (Klauk/Köppe 2014a; 2014c; 2015).

Göttingen is an ideal place for this subproject due to the longstanding close cooperation between philosophy and literary studies established at the Courant Research Centre 'Textstrukturen' where Tilmann Köppe is head of the research group 'Analytic Literary Theory'. Also, the German Department hosts the 'Arbeitsstelle für Theorie der Literatur' (ATL), of which Tom Kindt and Tilmann Köppe are members. The ATL features a strong focus on analytic literary theory (cf. Köppe 2008a; Köppe/Winko 2010) which makes it a natural cooperation partner for the planned project.

Subproject 3. Fabian Dorsch has worked and published on three major topics of the proposed research: imagination, normativity, and aesthetic appreciation. He is one of the few contemporary philosophers to have published a monograph on the philosophy of the *imagination* (Dorsch 2012a) and is preparing another one for Routledge (Dorsch 2016e). While the first defends an account of the nature and unity of the various forms of imagining that takes them to be intentional mental actions, the second deals with the difference between imaginative experiences and thoughts and their distinctive roles in knowledge acquisition and aesthetic appreciation. In addition, he has written articles on visualising (Dorsch 2010), imaginative and emotional responses to fiction (Dorsch 2011), Hume's views on the imagination (Dorsch 2012, 2016c), extended imaginative projects (Dorsch 2016a), and imagination-based accounts of pictorial experience (Dorsch 2015b, 2016b). Dorsch's research on *aesthetic appreciation* is focused on its nature (Dorsch 2000), its justification (Dorsch 2007, 2013) and its relation to empirical studies (Dorsch 2012b, 2014); while his work on *normativity* deals with reasons for belief and action (Dorsch 2009, 2016d), perceptual justification (Dorsch 2010, 2016d) and visualization-based knowledge (Dorsch 2015a).

Fribourg is a perfect location for this subproject, given that the philosophy department there hosts not only the EXRE Centre for Research on Mind and Normativity (led by Dorsch, Gianfranco Soldati and Martine Nida-Rümelin), but also Dorsch's current research group 'The Normative Mind', which investigates the normativity of beliefs, intentions, actions and evaluations. The group is also a founding member of the European Normativity

Network (other members include Barcelona, Paris, Southampton, Stockholm and Oslo).

2.3. Detailed Research Plan

Subproject 1: Factual Issues (Kindt/Literary Studies/Fribourg/PhD)

The first subproject intends to answer (Q1) by concentrating on the particular case of the interpretative practice concerning E.T.A. Hoffmann's 'Der Sandmann'. The smaller first part of the subproject addresses the task of shaping an analytic guideline for the intended empirical exploration of interpretation practices in literary criticism. The larger second part applies this guideline in a detailed meta-critical study of about 60 contributions to the interpretive controversy about 'Der Sandmann'.

To inform the meta-critical analysis of the 'Sandmann'-debate, the **first part** of the subproject will outline an 'analytic manual' for the illumination of argumentative and evaluative structures in 'expert interpretations'. With regard to *argumentation analysis*, the study will follow Winko's proposal of adapting the Toulminean model of argumentation for examining procedures of justification and generating plausibility in literary critics' approaches to texts (Winko 2002, 2015a, 2015b). It is our contention that Toulmin's core distinction between 'grounds' (i.e. reasons), 'warrants' (i.e. inferential patterns or forms of reasoning), and 'backings' (i.e. background justifications for these 'warrants') for claims or conclusions (Toulmin 1958) facilitates a precise description of the complex and rarely elaborated argumentative dimension of scholarly interpretations and helps keeping in mind that explicit reasons and implicit regularities in argumentative practices do not necessarily refer to rules and principles governing the practices in question (von Savigny 1976). The *evaluation analysis* of the corpus-texts will, in line with von Heydebrand and Winko, build on the speech act-account of interpretive practices in literary studies (Zabka 2005) and conceive of evaluation as a specific illocutionary act characterized by the attributive usage of 'value-terms' (von Heydebrand/Winko 1996). Such a conception of evaluation draws a generally adequate picture of the ascription of aesthetic values in scholarly interpretations and has recently been the point of reference for a comprehensive catalogue of procedures tailor-made to analyze evaluative practices in critical discourse (Worthmann 2013).

Guided by the scheme of categories that have been clarified in the first part of the subproject, its **second and main part** is devoted to a meta-critical appraisal of the interpretive debate on E.T.A. Hoffmann's novella 'Der Sandmann'. The corpus of the study will consist of about 60 contributions to the controversy that, by now, comprises approximately 100 elaborated scholarly interpretations. All elements of the sample to be analyzed have been published in the course of the last hundred years, that is, after the formation of literary studies in its present disciplinary setup.

By examining the argumentative structures in the corpus-texts related to the issues of both 'world construction' and 'work evaluation', the subproject intends to exemplarily elucidate central aspects of the normative practice of interpretation in literary criticism. More specifically, the second part of the subproject aims at formulating empirically underpinned answers to the following two, more specific questions:

(Q1.1) What are the principles and rules that, in the scholarly interpretations of 'Der Sandmann', form the *actual* basis for the imaginative construal of the fictional world of that work?

(Q1.2) How is the imaginative construal of this fictive world *de facto* related to the appreciation of 'Der Sandmann' in the scholarly practice?

The controversy over Hoffmann's 'Sandmann' is ideally suited as a test case for the projected empirical study for at least three reasons.

First, the debate has already been the object of several survey articles (e.g. Kremer 2010) and some meta-critical appraisals (Tepe/Rauter/Semlow 2009; Detel 2014). Since these publications convincingly identify basic camps and lines of argument in the controversy but give no noteworthy attention to the key questions of our intended study, they can serve as an advanced starting point for the realization of Subproject 1.

Second, the debate about Hoffmann's text centrally addresses the problem of determining the outlines of the fictive world. At the heart of the controversy, as the available surveys unanimously claim (Kindt 2016),

is the question of whether the novella tells the story of a mental derangement due to psychic processes, or whether it alternatively describes a fatal life crisis brought about by demonic powers, or whether it instead supplies insufficient evidence for determining what finally causes the death of the narrative's protagonist. In short, the interpretative debate about the text is essentially a dispute about the 'elucidation' (Beardsley 1970) of the fictional world related to the text and, therefore, constitutes a highly instructive test case for the three subprojects.

Third, meta-critical publications on the 'Sandmann'-controversy and random samples of the likely corpus of the study indicate that many contributions to the debate – explicitly or implicitly – intermingle the task of determining the fictional world of 'Der Sandmann' with the task of aesthetically evaluating (aspects of) the fictional work. Thus, the debate provides a rich collection of examples of how 'world construction' and 'work evaluation' are related in scholarly interpretations.

As discussed by the Subprojects 2 and 3, the orthodox view in fiction theory is that what is fictional relative to a given text consists in what is to be imagined in response to that text; and that imagination is a rule-governed practice which can be performed in an accurate or inaccurate way. Using the 'Sandmann'-controversy as an example, the main part of Subproject 1 attempts to explore how this general picture is actually cashed out in interpretative practice. In particular, the argumentative analysis will shed light on the epistemic question of how claims concerning what is fictional in the story world of the work are answered.

However, since the contributions to the debate do not use the terminology of fiction and imagination theory, since surface and deep structures in literary criticism may diverge, and since meta-critical approaches to the field have repeatedly challenged the view that the activity of scholarly interpretation is governed by principles and rules (e.g. Göttner 1973; Schmidt 1979), the subproject will adopt a precautionary measure, before commencing with the thorough analysis. More specifically, in order to establish comparability between the various contributions to the debate and to assess their specific relevance for the subproject, the study will start with a detailed paraphrase of selected passages of the corpus-texts. Based on this paraphrase, the appraisal of the critical debate on Hoffmann's 'Der Sandmann' can then proceed with a meta-critical analysis that successively addresses a catalogue of questions with regard to each interpretation in the corpus.

First of all, there are questions in relation to (Q1.1) and the imaginative construal of the fictional world of 'Der Sandmann', which are concerned with *fictional facts*:

- What does the interpretation — or INT, for short — claim regarding the fictional world's fundamental laws and structures?
- How does INT determine the connection between the basic events of the plot?
- How does INT construe the relation between, and the ontological status of, the characters Coppepius, Coppola and Sandmann?

Then, there are also questions pertaining to (Q1.2) and the imagination-based appraisal of Hoffmann's novella, which are about *aesthetic assessments*:

- Does INT contain explicit or implicit aesthetic evaluations of (aspects of) the fictional work?
- If so, which elements of the fictional work does INT assess aesthetically, and in which specific way?
- Are INT's aesthetic evaluations of the fictional work related to its claims about the fictional world?
- Does INT assign to certain aspects of 'world-construction' an argumentative role in the process of 'work-appreciation'; or vice versa?
- If so, which specific kind of argumentative role is assumed?

Finally, there are questions about the way in which the claims about what is fictional in, and the aesthetic evaluations of, the text are *argumentatively justified*:

- Does INT provide justification for its answers to these questions?

- If so, what are the ‘grounds’ (in Toulmin’s sense) that INT offers for its claims regarding the fictional world?
- Does INT refer additionally to ‘warrants’ or ‘backings’ (again in Toulmin’s sense) to support its defense of its claims?
- Does INT contain evidence that indicates its implicit acceptance and application of specific principles and rules for the construal of fictional worlds?

In addition to a systematically refined survey of the ‘Sandmann’-controversy, the analysis of the corpus-texts guided by this catalogue of analytic perspectives will undoubtedly render sufficient empirical evidence for developing a sound answer to the subproject’s leading questions (Q1.1), (Q1.2) and, ultimately, (Q1) — an answer that illuminates the normative dimension of the practice of interpretation.

Subproject 2: Normative Issues (Köppe/Literary Theory/Göttingen/PostDoc)

This subproject intends to approach (Q2) by examining the influence of *literary appreciation* on what a work of fiction prescribes us to imagine. In particular, we want to contribute to answering the following, more specific question:

(Q2’) Does appreciation influence what literary works of fiction prescribe us to imagine, and if so, how?

The subproject has three interrelated parts. The first part asks for the influence of literary appreciation on the determination of fictional *content*, i.e. on *what* to imagine. This part is mainly analytic in that it tries to uncover the structure and force of arguments in favor of the thesis that appreciation does play a role in the determination of content. The second part is constructive, arguing that the appreciation of certain *narrative-structural* features of literary fictions presupposes an imaginative involvement of a certain *kind*; in this part, we therefore aim at spelling out the influence of literary appreciation on *how* to imagine a particular content. The third part is mainly speculative in focusing on implications of both ventures for the very notion of prescribed imaginings.

In asking for the influence of literary appreciation on what to imagine, the **first part** of the subproject starts with a very general notion of aesthetic appreciation. According to a widely held view, aesthetic appreciation aims at the appraisal of aesthetic merit, and works of art have aesthetic merit in so far as they offer for intrinsically valuable experiences (Budd 1995; Goldman 2006). This conception of aesthetic appreciation can easily be applied to literary fictions. Take the notorious debate about whether there are ghosts in H. James’ *The Turn of the Screw* (cf. Currie 1991). The claim that there are ghosts that are in contact with the children supposedly makes for a (more) scary reading than the claim that there are no ghosts in the story world, but rather a deluded governess. Other things being equal, the fact that the story is scary amounts to a merit-constituting property of a ghost story. Hence, it seems that the claim that ‘in the fiction_W, *p*’, makes for a more scary reading of work *W* counts in favor of the claim ‘in the fiction_W, *p*’. Generalizing over this particular case, we get something like the following hypothesis:

(H) A content-ascribing interpretation I_1 is (other things being equal) better than its alternative I_2 , if imagining in accordance with it leads to an intrinsically more valuable experience. (Cf. Goldman 1995, 102)

However, both the details and the validity of (H) are far from clear and need to be carefully scrutinized. For instance, the example discussed suggests that whether the dispositional quality of ‘allowing for a scary reading’ counts as a merit-constituting property of a work depends on the genre (cf. Walton 1970). Suppose that we read *The Turn of the Screw* as a psychological novella instead. Doesn’t, in the context of this reading, the claim that in the fiction, there is a deluded governess (*g*), rather than ghosts, constitute the more rewarding reading experience, and hence counts in favor of the claim ‘in the fiction_W, *g*’? Also, (H) seems to imply that aesthetic experiences can be compared (cf. Budd 1995, 42f., on the incommensurability of aesthetic value). And, given that the *appropriateness* of experiences of aesthetic value depends on the quality of the interpretations the

experiences are based on, (H) moreover seems to imply that the appropriateness of experiences of aesthetic value depends on the degree of value ascribed by the interpretation. Both implications of (H) are clearly problematic. Our first subquestion then becomes:

(Q2.1) Does the realization of aesthetic merit help to determine which of two (otherwise equally well supported) content-ascribing interpretations I_1 and I_2 is to be preferred, and if so, how?

(H) is concerned with the rather simple case of two alternative interpretations which are *ex hypothesi* equally well supported in all other relevant respects. However, interpretations can be more or less convincing according to several different criteria (Strube 1992). For instance, content-ascribing interpretations may be judged according to the purely formal criterion of how many (important) textual features they explain (Føllesdal et al. 2008). Now, suppose that we have two (otherwise equally well supported) incompatible interpretations, I_1 and I_2 , such that I_1 ascribes a merit-constituting property as explained above (say, ‘in the fiction_W, p ’), while I_2 ascribes another property (say, ‘in the fiction_W, q ’), thereby having greater explanatory scope with respect to other (important) properties of the work than I_1 . Which one should be preferred? Our second subquestion therefore is:

(Q2.2) Do merit-constituting properties trump other criteria for content ascriptions, and if so, how?

In the next step, we turn to another notion of appreciation, namely literary appreciation more narrowly construed, and its putative influence on content-ascriptions/prescriptions to imagine. Interpreters are not always guided by the goal of enabling readers to undergo experiences which are intrinsically valuable (Shusterman 1978). For instance, they may also aim at ‘historical interpretation’ (cf. Olsen 2004, 142; on different goals of interpretation in literary studies, cf. Kindt/Müller 2003, 212; Köppe/Winko 2013). Proponents of historical interpretation take seriously the idea that works of literary fiction are historical artifacts and try to uncover the ways the work was intended to be read by its historical audiences (or the ways it was actually read by these audiences). As we shall argue, appreciating a work of fiction as a historical artifact certainly amounts to appreciating the work *as* a work of fiction. Historical interpretation is not meant to merely *use* the work, say, in order to gain historical knowledge about the world (cf. Eco 1999, 35ff.), but rather the work itself and its properties are at the focus of interest. Thus it seems fair to say that historical interpretation amounts to a form of literary appreciation, and is in the business of uncovering *literary merit* (cf. Lamarque 2009, 171). Our third subquestion thus becomes:

(Q2.3) How are we to decide between two (incompatible) interpretations, I_1 and I_2 , of work W, such that I_1 involves the claim that ‘in the fiction_W, p ’, thereby giving rise to literary merit M_1 , and I_2 involves the claim that ‘in the fiction_W, q ’, thereby giving rise to literary merit M_2 ?

In working on part one of the subproject, we need to keep two methodological points in mind. Firstly, one may be tempted to claim that (Q2.1), (Q2.2) and (Q2.3) need to be answered on a case to case basis. Literary interpretation is often regarded as holistic insofar as one has to trade the total package of pros and cons of I_1 off against the total package of pros and cons of $I_2 \dots I_n$ (Köppe 2008b, 86f.). The results of Subproject 1 will hopefully contribute to our understanding of the matter. But even if holism gives us the correct picture with respect to content-ascriptions (both *de iure* and *de facto*), we certainly want to know what types of reasons guide, and ought to guide, our decisions in typical cases. Secondly, maybe there is no best interpretation to be had, but rather only optimal ones (in the sense of Currie 2003, 293). We turn to some implications this may have for the notion of prescribed imaginings below, as part three of this subproject.

Part two of the current subproject asks for the influence of literary appreciation on *how* to imagine. It does so by identifying three narrative-structural features the appreciation of which make special claims on the imagination. Thus a case will be made that certain narrative structural features not only normatively constrain the content of our imaginings but also *how* to imagine it. We focus on three such features, namely *unreliable narration*, the distinction between *telling vs. showing*, and *internal focalization*.

Unreliable narration comes in many forms (cf. Kindt 2008; Köppe/Kindt 2014, ch. 4.4). One form involves the reader’s misinformation about the contours of the story world. Readers of Bierce’s *An Occurrence at Owl*

Creek Bridge are told that the protagonist escapes from a life threatening situation, only to learn later on in the story that the escape was nothing but the hallucinations of the dying man (Stühling 2011). This narrative strategy, then, centrally involves a distinction between what is the case in the fiction and what is but *seemingly* the case in the fiction. However, we surely cannot say that only the former is what is important to appreciating the work. For, arguably, appreciating the short story involves that you first faithfully follow the protagonist's hallucinations (without knowing that they are but hallucinations, that is), that you gain hope and be awaked, and probably disappointed, in the end. So, what do we have here in terms of prescriptions to imagine? In previous work, we have proposed to distinguish between prescriptions to imagine and *prima facie* prescriptions to imagine (Köppe/Kindt 2011). Readers are, in other words, misled by the story concerning what it is that they are prescribed to imagine. This solution leaves untouched the idea that prescriptions to imagine establish fictional facts. But it does not seem to capture the idea that, in order to appreciate the story in accordance with its narrative strategy, one actually *needs* to be misled concerning what is the case in the fiction. The work, as it were, prescribes us to imagine what it does not prescribe us to imagine. However, the details are far from clear; in particular, it is not clear how the account relates to what has been identified as a major functional effect of the story, i.e. its propensity of eliciting a particular emotionally qualified imaginative response (cf. Köppe 2012). Our research question thus becomes:

(Q2.4) How can we accommodate that in certain cases of unreliable narration literary fictions seem to prescribe emotionally qualified imaginings that, moreover, do not establish fictional facts?

The second narrative feature under consideration is *internal focalization*, i.e. the telling of a narrative from the perspective of one of its characters (Genette 1980, 185ff.; Klauk/Köppe/Onea 2012). Take the sentences 'Peter looked out of the window. The cars were green.' Presumably, readers are supposed to imagine that the focal character, Peter, sees the green cars, or that the cars looked green to Peter. It is a common assumption, however, that the appreciation of internally focalized passages of text not only involves grasping what is the case in the story world. These passages rather invite you to imaginatively perceive the situation *from the character's perspective* (Lindemann 1987, 6; Habermas 2006, 505; Stanzel 2008, 16). The passages, in other words, invite you to put yourself, imaginatively, in the character's shoes. Thus for the Peter-case, you are invited to imagine seeing the green cars. But again, we need to spell out the details. Recently, the related claim that point of view shots in cinematic fiction prompt readers to imagine seeing things from the character's point of view has been put to criticism (Choi 2005), and a similar case can be made for the effects of internal focalization, it seems. Hence, our research question is:

(Q2.5) Do passages of internal focalization prescribe us to imagine the content of what is said from the point of view of the focal character, and if so, how?

A similar case will be made for the notorious distinction between *telling vs. showing* modes of presentation in a narrative (Klauk/Köppe 2014a; Klauk/Köppe 2014c; Klauk/Köppe 2015). The gist of passages of *showing* seems to be that readers are invited to *vividly* imagine what the text is about. But this is not more than the beginning of an account of the narrative mode of *showing*. Obviously, any passage of narrative fiction could be said to invite a rich and multifaceted, hence vivid, imaginative engagement. So what is special about *showing*? Hence, our research question is:

(Q2.6) Are passages of *showing* special with regard to the way of the imaginings they prescribe?

The first two parts of the subproject identify a number of problems and research questions which have implications for the very notion of prescribed imaginings. Spelling out these implications, and arguing for their relevance to a general theory of prescriptions to imagine in the context of fiction constitutes **part three** of the subproject, which will be conducted in close cooperation with the Subproject 3 on foundational matters.

If the picture of literary interpretation sketched above is correct, then it might turn out that prescriptions to imagine do not issue from works of fiction *tout court* but need to be construed as being somehow sensitive to types of interpretation. (We can think of an interpretation that seeks to promote intrinsically valuable

experiences and ‘historical interpretation’ as two types of interpretation here). This gives rise to the following research question:

(Q2.7) Are prescriptions to imagine sensitive to types of interpretation, and if so, how?

There are at least three *prima facie* options to answer this question (cf. Lamarque 1996, 64): Firstly, what a work *W* prescribes to imagine could be said to have no unconditional validity, but may be represented as ‘hypothetical imperatives’: ‘When you engage in an interpretation of type *T* of *W*, then you are prescribed to imagine ... by *W*’. It is, however, unclear whether all prescriptions to imagine have this hypothetical form or only some. In other words, do we have different kinds of prescriptions to imagine in the appreciation of literary fictions, some with unconditional force and others conditional upon types of interpretation? Secondly, we might opt for the de-emphasis of prescribed imaginings that are not ‘apt’ to a particular type of interpretation *T*, in the context of engaging in a *T*-type interpretation. Walton recommends to de-emphasize fictional facts that do not fit into certain games of make-believe, meaning that there is a prescription to imagine in these cases, but we somehow do not take it seriously (Walton 1990, 182). This strategy does not touch the unconditional force of prescriptions to imagine. However, it rearranges the relation of interpretation and prescriptions to imagine considerably, for interpretations here do not only aim at determining prescriptions to imagine, but also at their evaluation. As a third strategy, we might opt for a ‘disjunction’, claiming that work *W* may have different story worlds *SW*₁, *SW*₂, ..., where each *SW* depends on the type of interpretation *T* adopted. In this picture, prescriptions to imagine have unconditional validity but are relativized to types of interpretation. The pros and cons of these alternatives need to be evaluated, and they need to be supplemented by further options.

In our exposition of part two of the current subproject, we have considered three examples of narrative-structural features that seem to have an influence on the way of imagining that is prescribed by works of fiction. The notion of ‘way’ here refers to a mixed bag of phenomena: *à propos* unreliable narration, we have considered the notion of imagining in an emotionally qualified way (such that we, say, are invited to *confidently* imagine that the protagonist escapes) as well as the distinction between *prima facie* and all-things-considered prescriptions. /‘*A propos* the narrative modes of internal focalization and *showing* (vs. *telling*), we have considered the ways of imagining something from a character’s perspective, or imagining something in a vivid manner. Our final research question, then, generalizes over the particularities of these cases:

(Q2.8) How do prescriptions to imagine extend beyond the content of what is to be imagined to the *way* of imagining?

Subproject 3: Foundational Issues (Dorsch/Philosophy/Fribourg/PostDoc)

The general goal of this subproject is to answer (Q3) by developing an account of the normativity involved in (NR1). A preliminary task is to show why it is misguided to think that the normative relation between fictional stories and imagination could be construed in parallel to that between factual reports and beliefs. A fictional story is not simply a report that is stripped of its commitment to truth; nor is an imaginative thought simply a belief that is insensitive to matters of fact. The link to truth is not just a marginal aspect but a constitutive feature of reports and beliefs. Once that link is removed, we get something fundamentally different. It is therefore not entirely clear what we are supposed to do when asked to consider the normative relation between reports and beliefs *in abstraction from* their connection to truth.

To get a different perspective on the issue, we suggest to leave the standard comparison with reports and beliefs aside (until the end of the third part) and to try to understand the normative relation (NR1) between fiction and imagination in terms of the nature of imagining (first part). After that, we can ask what makes imagining susceptible to normative guidance in general (second part), before addressing the more specific question of how it could be guided by fictional utterances in particular (third part).

The **first part** of the subproject is concerned with identifying the nature of imaginative thoughts. In general, thoughts are mental episodes in the stream of consciousness that constitute propositional attitudes. As such, they possess a propositional content which determines certain conditions that can be met or not, and which is

true if and only if these conditions are actually met. But not all thoughts are imaginative. Our first research question is thus:

(Q3.1) How do imaginative thoughts differ from other thoughts?

In order to answer this question, we need to consider three important distinctions. First of all, the propositional contents of thoughts may be entertained in either of two ways (Velleman 2000a; Stock 2011). On the one hand, if a content is entertained in a *presentational* way (as in the case of guesses or empirical judgments), it seems to the subject as if the conditions determined by the content are already met (somewhere, sometime). On the other hand, if a content is entertained in a *projectional* way (as in the case of wishes or occurrent desires), it seems to the subject as if the conditions determined by the content are still in need to be met. Our hypothesis is that our imaginative responses to fictional texts involve primarily presentational thoughts. For not only is it open to debate whether there are any projectional forms of imagining (Velleman 2000b; Currie/Ravenscroft 2002b; Kind 2011). But even if, our main imaginative responses to fiction portray the respective fictional world as being a certain way, and not as to be made a certain way (Velleman 2000b; Martin 2002).

Then, only some propositional attitudes are such that their success constitutively depends on the truth of their contents. Cognitive attitudes like beliefs or judgments, for instance, have the function to be true — they are successful when they fit the world. Conative attitudes like desires or intentions, on the other hand, have the function to be made true — they are successful when the world is made to fit them. By contrast, imaginative thoughts seem to have neither a cognitive nor a conative direction of fit (Searle 2002). Although they have propositional contents, their success does not constitutively depend on whether their contents are (made) true or not; or so we would like to argue.

Finally, we want to defend the view that imaginative thoughts differ from other propositional attitudes in that we have direct voluntary control over them (McGinn 2004; Dorsch 2009, 2012a, 2016e). We cannot believe or desire something just because we want to do so (Pink 1996; Shah 2003, 2008; Dorsch 2009). But we are able to imagine something simply by deciding to imagine it. Of course, there are certain conceptual and psychological limits to what we can imagine (Gendler 2000; Dorsch 2012: ch. 13.3, 2016c). But, within these limits, we do have voluntarily control over those imaginative thoughts that we (can) actually form. Moreover, this control is direct in the sense that, once we have decided to imagine something, we do not have to do anything else to execute the decision: we can simply imagine what we want to imagine (Dorsch 2009, 2012: ch. 13). Accordingly, our first working hypothesis is:

(H3.1) What is distinctive of imaginative thoughts is that they are presentational, without a direction of fit, and subject to direct voluntary control.

We would like to conclude the first part by arguing that, assuming that (H3.1) is indeed true, its truth is best explained by the following hypothesis:

(H3.2) Imaginative thoughts are intentional mental actions.

To start with, only actions seem to allow for direct voluntary control (Pink 1996). In addition, intentional actions arguably do not possess any direction of fit. For they are just the kind of entities that render conative attitudes successful by making the world fit them. Finally, the idea that imaginative thoughts are mental actions is compatible with the observation that we sometimes imagine something ‘against our will’ (e.g. when we cannot banish a certain thought), given that there is room for akratic, obsessive and similarly irrational actions (Dorsch 2012: ch. 13.3). What is special about the class of actions to which imaginative thoughts belong is, however, that they have propositional contents entertained in a presentational way.

The **second part** of the subproject uses the results from the first in order to answer the question about how it is possible that imaginative thoughts are open to normative guidance:

(Q3.2) How can imaginative thoughts, understood as intentional actions, be normatively guided?

That imaginative thoughts are intentional mental actions suggests that they are sensitive to considerations related to the value that they might serve to realize or promote. For what generally guides us in deciding what

to do are considerations that show the action worth doing (Raz 2011, ch. 4; Shah 2008; Hieronymi 2014). It is commonly assumed that a given action can serve to realize more than one value at once (Raz 2003). In this sense, a particular (string of) imaginative thought(s) may have features that render it both entertaining and instructive, say. But it may also be part of some broader activity which is worthwhile to pursue because it furthers a third value. So the first thing that seems relevant to ask is:

(Q3.3) Is there a value that attaches to imagining as such, and which is common to all (and only) imaginative thoughts (as well as other forms of imagining)?

Our working hypothesis regarding this question is that there is indeed a value which any occurrence of imagining realizes or promotes:

(H3.3) Imaginative thoughts (and experiences, etc.) realize the value of (what may be called) *presentational liberty*.

This value is realized whenever one successfully exercises one's capacity to decide which presentational thoughts to entertain, unburdened by external evidential or perceptual restrictions. (H4) is controversial in a lot of respects and calls for many qualifications. In particular, if presentational liberty does indeed constitute a value for imagining, the following issue needs to be clarified:

(Q3.4) Is presentational liberty an intrinsic or merely an instrumental value?

If it is intrinsic, then we should have a *default* reason to imagine something whenever we are in a position to do so – that is, a reason that holds unless there is more reason to do something else instead. But it is not obvious at all that this is indeed the case. On the other hand, although the claim that the value of presentational liberty is merely instrumental seems less controversial, it remains to be shown which external values the exercise of presentational liberty qua exercise of presentational liberty may help to realize.

We have to appeal to external values in any case in order to answer another question, which concerns the value of specific imaginings rather than that of imagining in general. That our imagination can be subject to normative guidance does not only mean that we can have reason to *imagine* something rather than *doing something else*. It also implies that we can have reason to imagine *this* rather than *that*. So the question is:

(Q3.5) Which value(s) underpin the considerations that normatively guide our decision to imagine *this* rather than *that*?

Presentational liberty cannot be the answer to this question, given that it attaches to all imaginative thoughts, irrespective of their particular content, and thus cannot adjudicate between imagining *p* and imagining *q*. If value-based considerations are to guide us not only in whether to imagine anything at all but also in *what* we imagine, they must somehow relate to the contents of our imaginings. The most simple way of construing the connection, we contend, is in terms of the goals that particular imaginings serve to achieve:

(H3.4) What normatively guides us in deciding *what* to imagine are considerations related to the value of the specific goals that are instrumentally promoted by what we imagine.

According to this proposal, what we have reason to imagine in a given situation depends on (a) how worthwhile it is to pursue the goal that this particular imagination serves to attain, and (b) how well the imagination is suited to attain that goal. Given the great variety of external values that imaginative thoughts can help us to attain, and given the variety of alternative ways in which each of these values might be attained, it seems unlikely that a full systematic account of the reasons for particular imaginings can be provided. But the considerations adduced so far at least specify what shape such an account would have to take.

The **third part** of the subproject then turns to the following, more concrete question:

(Q3.6) Given the preceding general considerations, how can our imagination be normatively guided *specifically by fictional utterances*?

The key to understanding how this is possible is the assumption that fictional utterances, too, have a presentational (rather than projectional) make-up. This assumption, in combination with a few further observations about the presentational-cum-practical nature of imaginative thoughts that were made in the first two parts of the subproject, provides the explanation that we are looking for. Since both fictional utterances and imaginative thoughts are presentational in character, there is a perfectly good sense in which what we imagine can be the same as what fictional utterances present. Moreover, since imaginative thoughts are intentional actions, they can be formed for any suitable, deliberately chosen purpose. In particular, they can be formed with the specific purpose of imagining what is presented by some utterance(s). This suggests the following simple account:

(H3.5) We read/listen to fictional utterances with the goal to imagine what those utterances present, and the imaginative thoughts we form in pursuing that goal can be said to be normatively guided by the utterances insofar as and because we take the goal to be worthwhile pursuing.

On such a view, it is not the fictional utterances that constitute or provide us with reasons in favor of forming the corresponding imaginative thoughts, but rather the considerations that show the underlying goal worthwhile pursuing. Still, the guidance that the utterances provide us with can be said to be normative in the (minimal) sense that it is supported by normative considerations – if we could not see any good in adapting our imaginative thoughts to what the utterances present, the utterances could not be said to serve as a guide to our imagination in the first place.

Moreover, the sense in which it can be correct or incorrect to form certain imaginative thoughts in response to fictional utterances is only indirectly connected to the reasons we see for imagining what we imagine. For what one imagines in response to a fictional utterance is correct in the first instance when and because it conforms to what the utterance presents. The condition to which our response conforms when it is correct may or may not be determined by value-based considerations – this is a question that Subproject 2 aims to resolve. But the correctness of our response can be said to be related to value-based considerations insofar as what we adopt as the criterion of correctness for our response – namely, presentational conformity with the fictional utterance at hand – is determined in the light of value-based considerations.

So far almost nothing has been said about what these considerations and corresponding values might be. We hope to gain specific insights regarding this question from the research undertaken in Subprojects 1 and 2. We suppose, though, that the proposal should be compatible with most standard answers that have been given to the question what the function or value of fiction consists in. Thus, imagining what is presented by fictional utterances (stories) might be taken to be entertaining, emotionally moving, or aesthetically appealing (Lamarque/Olsen 1994, ch. 17), to be instructive or to provide knowledge of some kind (Lamarque/Olsen 1994, ch. 17; Feagin 1996; Köppe 2008; Mikkonen 2013), to strengthen our empathetic capacities and our propensity to do good (Nussbaum 1995; Rorty 2001), to fine-tune our mental capacities and skills (Landy 2012), and so on (or any combination thereof).

A lot more needs to be said to motivate and clarify the account, of course. We only mention two of the many issues that have to be addressed by the subproject.

First, the goal to imagine what is presented by some given utterance(s) can be pursued with regard to any utterances with a presentational make-up, not only fictional utterances. For instance, we can adopt that goal when faced with a factual report (indeed, we could treat a factual report as a fictional story). There is no such flexibility when the attitude concerned is belief. We cannot choose the goal with which to form our beliefs, nor can we deliberately determine the constraints under which to form them. In particular, we cannot decide to believe what some utterance presents us with just because it seems worthwhile to do so. Beliefs are responsive to epistemic considerations related to truth, not to practical considerations related to value (see the discussion before (H3.1)). This is why the normative relation between fictional texts and imaginative thoughts cannot be assimilated to that between factual reports and beliefs.

Second, on the suggested proposal, the relationship between the reasons that our fiction-based imaginings are sensitive to and the aesthetic reasons that justify aesthetic evaluations is not straightforward. Perhaps the simplest connection is provided by the assumption that what renders it worthwhile to imagine what fictional

utterances present is that this imaginative response provides us with proper access to particular aesthetic qualities of the work concerned (e.g. its property to establish, and invite us into, a rich fictional world). This access is valuable insofar as it helps us to aesthetically appreciate the work and thus to satisfy our interest in aesthetic matters.

The results of this subproject can then be applied to the other subprojects - for instance, with respect to whether the actual normative practices in literary criticism, studied by Subproject 1, are really justified; or with respect to how the norms investigated and advocated by Subproject 2 can be legitimized.

2.5. The Significance of the Research

Analyzing the norms that govern our imaginative involvement as well as the aesthetic appreciation that is based on this involvement promises to have an impact on both theoretical and practical aspects of literary studies. As to the theoretical side, it makes an important contribution to our understanding of the norms of literary interpretation (which is still at the heart of literary studies as conducted in academia), and hence contributes to the methodology of the discipline. Moreover, by focusing on the ways in which certain narrative structures can be said to guide our imaginings, we get a better understanding of these very structures — especially since many of them must be taken to be response dependent properties of texts, thereby centrally involving the imagination. As to the practical side of literary studies, both Subproject 1 and Subproject 2 will enhance our understanding of certain prevalent interpretive disputes. (As a side effect, we also hope to gain a better understanding of ‘Der Sandmann’ and other fictions under consideration.)

Moreover, by centrally involving the notion of appreciation, all three subprojects bridge the gap between literary studies as an academic discipline and reading novels as conducted by the ‘layman’. While literary studies is often concerned with some more or less rigorous, ‘scientific’ notion of analysis, it should turn to furthering our understanding of what makes literary fictions valuable to us – or so we believe.

The main contribution of Subproject 3 to the philosophical literature on fiction and imagination is that it highlights and illuminates the normativity of an important relation that is often taken for granted but not well understood. It is often claimed that fictional texts invite, prescribe, direct, guide, demand, or ask for an imaginative response. Yet it is rarely discussed where the normative authority of fictional texts over our imaginings could derive from. The project is supposed to fill this theoretical gap. It thus opens a new field of discussion that is supposed to supplement the existing debates on the relation between fiction and imagination.

In particular, the observation that imaginative thoughts are intentional mental actions with a presentational make-up adds four new elements to the existing debates: (i) that the source of the authority of fictional texts lies in the values that we see in engaging with them; (ii) that imaginative thoughts can be normatively guided, despite lacking a direction of fit; (iii) that imagining is inseparably linked to presentational liberty; and (iv) the normative relation between factual reports and belief cannot serve as a foil for understanding the normative relation between fictional texts and imagination. These elements put the standard accounts of (NR1) into a new perspective.

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