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## On the Unconscious

### Abstract

This article presents what has been called the long past and the brief history of the psychology of the unconscious. Laying out the main developments in 18th-century psychological research, paranormal experimentation, and philosophy of mind, it expands on the belief, held by a few controversial but brilliant minds, that empirical science could put the foundations under some of the main tropes of romantic literature – and that the mysteries of the soul could be unlocked through systematic research. A thorough section on the phenomenon of somnambulism discusses the belief that radically differently personalities exist side by side in the human psyche, which doubles as a portrait of an era when scientists and artists appeared united in the pursuit of comprehending the human condition – and to some degree learned from each other in the process. The article also contains an analysis of Heinrich von Kleist's 'The Engagement in St. Domingo' and argues that it can be appreciated as a dramatization of some of the thinking and science discussed in earlier sections.

### Keywords

The psychology of the unconscious, Puységur, Kleist, Animal magnetism, Mesmerism, Hypnotism

### Foreword by Associate Professor Lilian Munk Rösing, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen

Uffe Hansen (1933–2016) held a Dr Phil in German literature with a minor in Egyptology. As Associate Professor of German and Reader in comparative literature at Copenhagen University, he was a transformative influence on several generations of students who benefited from his remarkable ability to combine subtle, close reading with perspectives from general history and the history of ideas.

His major research projects concerned an alternative trend in European thought: the hypothesis of the independent life of the spirit liberated from matter, which he located in Gnosticism and mesmerism, and traced through the works of

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Kleist, Schiller, Goethe, Kafka, and Lagerlöf. As well as a doctoral thesis (*Conrad Ferdinand Meyers: "Angela Borgia". Zwischen Salpêtrière und Berggasse*) and a book about the Danish hypnotist Carl Hansen (*Psykoanalysens fortrængte fortid* [The repressed past of psychoanalysis]), his publications include articles on narratology and psychoanalytic textual analysis. To this day, his work remains a source of instruction and inspiration for students of comparative literature in the Danish academy.

The necessary precondition for the observations that follow is the hypothesis that 'there existed in Europe a widely extended, clear, and fairly concurrent network of thoughts, opinions, and convictions which relate to the concept "romanticism"'.<sup>1</sup> Among the cognitive discourses partaking, in fictionalized form, of this network, romantic anthropology holds an important place, and within it 'the unconscious' represents a central problem. Simultaneously, it is historically specific in that it does not constitute a common central field of reference for either the immediately previous epochs (the Enlightenment and classicism) or the immediately subsequent epochs (realism and developments parallel to it) with respect to the specific 'Form der Weltzuwendung' [form of world attentiveness] of these epochs.<sup>2</sup> This is not to suggest that the relationship between rationality and 'its other' does not implicate individual authors, or groups of authors, before or after romanticism. The challenge is to determine what kind of 'unconscious' is unique to romanticism – which particular, historically conditioned, anthropology it engages. It would appear that we are looking at a core field so narrow that it is of no use as a general criterion for any text's classification as 'romantic'; however, as a core field, it extends to and touches other, less specific conceptualizations of the unconscious, of interest to romanticism – and beyond into the anthropology of the period.

In the same way, as psychology in general, the psychology of the unconscious has 'a long past and a brief history'<sup>3</sup>, by which I mean that the systematic explication of the relationship between reflexive consciousness and psychological processes, occurring beyond the subconscious, was introduced around the beginning of the eighteenth century. The word itself (the unconscious) emerges in 1751, in the Scottish philosopher Henry Home Kames's *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*. In the Germanic world, Ernst Platner is the first to employ the word 'Unbewußtsein', in 1776 in his *Philosophische Aphorismen* where it denotes faint, nearly unnoticeable perceptions. The corre-

1 Henry H. H. Remak, 'Ein Schlüssel zur westeuropäischen Romantik', in Helmut Prang, ed., *Begriffsbestimmung der Romantik* (Darmstadt, 1968), 429.

2 Wolfgang Iser, *Das Fiktive und das Imaginäre* (Frankfurt a.M., 1993), 24.

3 H. Ebbingshaus, *Grundzüge der Psychologie* (Lpz., 1919<sup>4</sup>), quoted in Ludwig J. Pongratz, *Problemgeschichte der Psychologie* (Munich, 1984<sup>2</sup>), 197.

sponding adjective is 'bewußtlos', which (but for one exception<sup>4</sup>) is the current and standard term all the way up to approximately the beginning of the nineteenth century when competition is exerted from 'unbewußt' / 'das Unbewußte'.<sup>5</sup> In the French-speaking domain, 'inconscient / l'inconscient' do not make an appearance until the mid-nineteenth century.

What was understood by this concept up through the eighteenth century? A brief historical presentation reveals that the background in this instance was a powerful counter-reaction around the year 1700 against John Locke's empiricism, and especially against Descartes's clear dividing line between the physical world (*res extensa*) and the soul (*res cogitans*). Descartes equated soul and *cogitatio* (reflexive consciousness). One consequence of this very narrow definition of the physical was that not only the external material world, but everything belonging to the human body not exhibiting the clarity of consciousness fell under the rubric of *res cogitans*, and in this way Cartesian dualism acquired a materialistic imbalance. Several alternative accounts stand in opposition to this view, each with its own conceptualization of the unconscious.

One encounters the first systematic exploration of the cognitive (i. e. perceptual) unconscious in Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716). Countering Descartes, his notion of psycho-physical parallelism makes his standpoint monistic. The processes of body and soul are akin to two watches carefully and mutually attuned ('prästabilierte Harmonie' [pre-established harmony]). For each bodily process there is a corresponding process in the soul, and only a small share of the latter ever reaches consciousness. The majority remain 'petites perceptions', i. e. faint, fleeting, obscure perceptions, conceptions, emotions, acts of volition, and pre-states to thought, below the threshold of reflexive consciousness. But this threshold is not absolute. The advancing levels, from the most obscure psychological processes to the most clearly conscious, constitute a gradual continuum, and that, which at one point is unconscious can under certain conditions in the memory be called forward into consciousness. We may then speak about the 'relatively unconscious' or the 'latently unconscious'.

This conceptualisation of the unconscious reappears in Christian Wolff (1679–1754), a student of Leibniz, as well as in a considerable number of thinkers after Leibniz, e. g. Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714–1762), Johann Georg Sulzer (1720–1779), Ernst Platner (1744–1818), and Johann Nicolaus Tetens

4 In Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *An der Mond* (1777), the adjective 'unbewußt' [unconscious] is used. In later versions of the poet, that word has been replaced by 'nicht bewußt' [not conscious].

5 The adjective-turned-noun 'das Unbewußte' has its first appearance in Jean Paul's *Vorschule der Ästhetik*, par. no. 13 (1804): 'Das Mächtigste im Dichter, welches seinen Werken die gute und die böse Seele einbläst, ist gerade das Unbewußte' [The greatest thing in the poet, which ushers in the good and the evil in his works, is precisely the unconscious].

(1736–1805) the latter of whom was a source par excellence for Kant’s psychological thinking.<sup>6</sup> Representing a relatively late, but obvious example of the force of the Leibnizean ideas, one could point to Platner’s ‘*Neue Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise*’ (1790) [New anthropology for physicians and the worldly-wise]. According to Platner, human beings possess ‘ein zweifaches Seelenorgan’ [a dualistic soul organ], namely ‘ein geistiges’ [a spiritual] and ‘ein thierisches’ [an animal] soul organ (p. 71), both of which affect the soul in different ways. While the spiritual soul organ’s field of competence is linguistically involved perceptions, remembrance of the external world, conceptual thinking, and moral judgements, we learn this about its counterpart:

Das thierische Seelenorgan ist das unwesentlichere und unedlere, und erweckt in der Seele jene verworrenen, aus iner zahlenlosen Vielheit undeutlicher Gefühle zusammengesetzten Vorstellungen von dem Zustande, theils des thierischen Körpers überhaupt, theils seiner einzelnen Werkzeuge, und die von diesen Ideen abhängenden angenehmen, oder unangenehmen Empfindungen

[The animal soul is comparatively less significant and noble and gives rise in the soul to confused notions, composed of innumerable indistinct emotions, about the state both of the animal body as such and about its particular tools as well as the agreeable or disagreeable sensations associated with these notions] (p. 72).

However, the cognitive unconscious is not limited to what at any one moment goes on beyond the threshold of perception and attention. In Sulzer’s estimation, Leibniz’s ‘*dunkle Ideen*’ [obscure ideas] include such ideas ‘*die sich von den Jahren unsrer Kindheit herschreiben, und welche die Zeit ganz verdunkelt hat*’ [which stem from our childhood and which the passing of time has shrouded in obscurity].<sup>7</sup> By dint of early-childhood conceptions’ ability to elude the control of thought and affect the person’s ‘*Empfindung*’ [sensation] directly, they can push rationality aside and force us to act ‘*gegen unser Gutbefinden*’ [against our well-being].<sup>8</sup> Aside from this significant ontogenetic dimension, which was to be a central issue for psychoanalysis, Sulzer points to a motivational dimension that is equally important:

In dem Innersten der Seele sind Angelegenheiten verborgen, die uns zuweilen auf einmal, ohne alle Veranlassung und auf eine unschickliche Art, handeln oder reden, und

6 Cf. Hans Adler, ‘*Fundus Animae – der Grund der Seele. Zur Gnoseologie des Dunklen in der Aufklärung*’, *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift* 62 (1988): 197–220.

7 Johann Georg Sulzer, ‘*Vom dem Bewußtsey und seinem Einflusse in unsre Urtheile*’ (1764), 110. This province of the unconscious was also a central concern for Karl Philipp Moritz (1756–1793), the publisher of the first European journal on psychology, *Gnothi Sauton oder Magazin zur Erfahrungsseelenkunde al sein Lesebuch für Gelehrte und Ungelehrte* (1786–1793).

8 *Ibid.*, 108. Friedrich Schiller employed this psychological motif in the play *Die Räuber* (1781/1782). Cf. Wolfgang Riedel, ‘*Die Aufklärung und das Unbewußte. Die Inversionen des Franz Moor*’, *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schiller-Gesellschaft* 37 (1993): 218–220.

ohne daß wir daran denken, Dinge sagen lassen, die wir schlechterdings verbergen wollen

[In the soul's innermost parts lie hidden those issues which, sometimes suddenly, unoccasionally and inappropriately, compel us to act and speak, and which, without any thought process, compel us to say things we strongly desire to hide].<sup>9</sup>

For this volitional unconscious, the terms 'Begehren und Wollen' [desire and will], 'Affekte und Leidenschaften' [affects and passions], and 'Bedürfnis und Trieb' [needs and drives] were used in the eighteenth century.

We now approach the other strand of eighteenth-century conceptualisations of the unconscious, namely the *vital* unconscious, also known as the *irrational* unconscious. Already, the German physician Georg Ernst Stahl (1660–1734) had rejected Descartes's mechanistic understanding of the human organism (described and explained by means of the categories expansion and motion) and claimed that the 'vital force' associated with the soul was the foundation of the physical organism, and that in the human body the soul was an omnipresent organizing and active force. The force under consideration here is, unlike what Leibniz thought, a psychological unconscious, which is inherently unavailable to consciousness. Stahl's vitalism elicited only a limited number of adherers at the beginning of the century, although, at the end of that century, it enjoyed a tremendous renaissance in France<sup>10</sup> and Germany. The aforementioned Ernst Platner, for instance, adopted the perspective of vitalism at the close of the 1780s and began to agree that

die Bewegungen der thierischen Werkzeuge als Thätigkeiten der Seelenkraft, welche, mittelst der den Nerven beygebrachten und bis zur Seele fortgepflanzten Reize erregt werden

[the movements of the animal tools are, like the activities of the soul power, aroused by stimuli brought to the nerves and are relayed to the soul].<sup>11</sup>

9 Johann Georg Sulzer, 'Zergliederung des Begriffes der Vernunft' (1758), in J. G. Sulzer, *J. G. Sulzer's vermischte philosophischen Schriften* (Leipzig, 1793), 261.

10 E. g. Paul Joseph Barthez, *Nouveaux élémens de la Science de l'Homme* (1778). Cf. Charles de Villers, *Le magnétiseur amoureux. Introduction et notes par François Azouvi* (Paris: 1978), 237.

11 Ernst Platner, *Neue Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Physiologie, Pathologie, Moralphilosophie und Ästhetik*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1790), 97. Cf. Anneliese Ego, *Animalischer Magnetismus oder Aufklärung. Eine mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie zum Konflikt um ein Heilkonzept im 18. Jahrhundert* (1991), 98:

Hatte im dualistischen System des Mechanismus die Seele zumindest beim Menschen ihre Daseinsberechtigung behalten, so kamen die Vitalisten, da sie Gefühle ohne Bewußtsein zuließen, ohne sie aus. Wer die Materie Seele sein läßt, läßt die Seele materiell sein

[In the dualistic system of mechanism, the soul had at least kept its right to exist in the human being. The vitalists manage without it, insofar that they permit feelings without consciousness. He who lets the material be soul, lets the soul be material].

This conceptualization of the unconscious emphasizes the psychophysical unit ('die Lebensseele' [the life soul]).

Resonating with vitalism is the thinking of Herder for whom Leibniz's cognitive unconscious was a much too circumscribed approach. His *Vom Erkennen und Empfinden der menschlichen Seelen* [On the human's soul's perception and emotion] (1778) contains this passage:

Der innere Mensch mit allen seinen dunklen Kräften, Reizen und Trieben ist nur *Einer*. ... Im Abgrunde des Reizes und solcher dunkler Kräfte liegt in Menschen und Thieren der Same zu aller Leidenschaft und Unternehmung. ... Vor solchem Abgrunde dunkler Empfindungen, Kräfte und Reize graut nun unsrer hellen und klaren Philosophie am meisten: sie segnet sich davor, als vor der Hölle *unterster* Seelenkräfte und mag lieber auf dem Leibnitzischen Schachbrett mit einigen tauben Wörtern und Klassifikationen von *dunkeln* und *klaren*, *deutlichen* und *verworrenen* Ideen, vom *Erkennen in* und *außer sich*, *mit sich* und *ohne sich selbst* u. dgl. Spielen

[The inner human being with all its obscure forces, attractions, and drives is only one ... In the abyss of the attraction force and such obscure forces lies, in human beings and animals, the seeds of all passion and initiative ... Such an abyss of obscure notions, forces and attraction is what our light and clear philosophy most dreads: it resists it as if it were the *nethermost* mental faculties' hell and would rather play on the Leibnizean chessboard with some deaf words and classifications of *obscure* and *clear*, *distinct* and *confused* notions, *recognition within* and *without*, *with itself* and *without itself*.<sup>12</sup>

From this inaccessible 'deepest abyss' of the soul, from the elementarily physiological, from the 'natural forces', the best emotional, moral, and creative life utterances well up. The powerful degree to which Herder's psycho-physical monism influenced Goethe is well known. In Goethe, we locate an insistent emphasis on this idea of continuity ('Steigerung' [increase]). It reached its perhaps clearest poetic expression in the novel *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (1809) (*Elective Affinities*), most particularly in the personality of Otilie in whom an extremely sensitive and aware sense of the unconscious life of the body – including even wholly nonorganic physical phenomena – blends with the highest intellectual, moral, and religious imaginings in a synthesis of personality. To Goethe, Luigi Galvani's discovery of 'animal electricity'<sup>13</sup> became the strongest indicator of a close connection between body and soul, a view he found fully defended in J. W. Ritter's *Der Siderismus oder neue Beyträge zur nähern Kenntnis des Galvanismus* [Siderism or new contributions to a deeper under-

12 Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by von B. Suphan, vol. 8, 178ff.

13 Luigi Galvani's *De viribus electricitatis in motu musculari commentarius* was published in 1791 and translated into German in 1793.

standing of galvanism] (1808).<sup>14</sup> A rather characteristic articulation of Goethe's Spinozistic belief in 'the one nature' appears in a letter to Zelter (June 22 1808):

Der Mensch an sich selbst, insofern er sich seiner gesunden Sinne bedient, ist der größte und genaueste physikalische Apparat den es geben kann

[The human being in itself is, insofar as it is utilizing its healthy senses, the greatest and most precise physicalist instrument in existence].

One commonality between these two major strands in eighteenth-century conceptualizations of the unconscious is the great emphasis on *continuity*, that is the gradual shadings connecting not only the 'obscure imaginings' and the reflexive consciousness, but also body and soul, spirit and nature. In the late eighteenth century especially, it became the norm to encounter a philosophical argument for this continuity notion in the emanation concept of Neoplatonism. Generally, notably in Goethe's and Schelling's works, Plotinus's spirit/material dualism was dismissed in favour of the gradual shadings from the divine unit (pleroma) through the spirit, the soul, and on to the material (kenoma) – all of which constitutes a monistic interpretation of Plotinus.

An important aspect of the cognitive conceptualization of the unconscious (as opposed to the vital one) is the emphasis on the unity of the psyche, the substantive identity of the I. It signalled in an energetic opposition to Hume's sensualism (among other things) according to which 'the I' is 'nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions united by certain relations' (*Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, 1748). Like Voltaire and others (including the encyclopedists and, especially, Condillac) had done before him, Hume – with this position – perpetuated Locke's empiricism, central to which was the thesis that consciousness is the result of passively received perceptions.

Empirical psychology (experimental psychology), the main contours of which I have briefly sketched above, was at an advanced developmental stage in the 1780s and boasted impressively perceptive descriptions and analyses of a broad range of unconscious factors, on which the highest conscious processes were assumed to be predicated or passively dependent. However, every theory of the unconscious – including the present ones – runs into the problem pointed out by Freud in his *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse (Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis)* (1916–1917) that the unconscious, on the face of it, appears to be 'eine Tatsache, die sich in ihrer Benennung selbst aufhebt und doch etwas Wirkliches sein will, eine *contradiction in adjecto*' [a fact, which dissolves itself when mentioned yet nonetheless aspires to be something real, a *contradiction in adjecto*] (SA, vol. 1, p. 188). Accordingly, the author of *Prob-*

14 Cf. Michael Holtermann, 'Thierischer Magnetismus in Goethes Roman "Die Wahlverwandtschaften"', *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft* (1993): 164–197.

*lemgeschichte der Psychologie* (1984), Ludwig J. Pongratz, declares 'the unconscious' to be a hypothesis, but then adds:

Gedankliche Konstruktion beziehungsweise Rekonstruktion ist nicht gleichbedeutend mit 'Artefakt'. Als solches wäre – vom empirischen Standpunkt – allenfalls ein substantialisiertes Unbewußte zu bezeichnen. Sofern das Unbewußte nicht unmittelbar gegeben ist, ist es im strengen Sinne aber auch kein Faktum. Immerhin ist es als *constructum*, als *cogitatum*, als *hypotheticum* eine unbestreitbare Erlebnisgegebenheit, die auf eine unbewußte Determination von hier und jetzt angetroffenem Erleben und Verhalten verweist

[Intellectual construction or reconstruction is not synonymous with 'artifact'. As such, from the empirical point of view, at best, a substantialized unconscious could be designated. Unless the unconscious is immediately given, it is not a fact in the strict sense. Yet, as *constructum*, as *cogitatum*, as *hypotheticum*, it is an indisputable experiential condition that points to an unconscious determination of the experience and behavior encountered here and now] (p. 238).

From the standpoint of science studies, then, there is not much that differentiates 'the unconscious' as an explanatory hypothesis and many of the theories of elementary physics. This, for the empirical psychologists, was a regrettable empirical defect.

And yet, in 1784 it appeared as if a means had suddenly emerged to enable the observation of unconscious psychological phenomena and their impact on not only consciousness but also the whole physical organism. That year saw the publication of the first volume of *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire et à l'établissement du magnétisme animal* [Memories contributing to the history and establishment of animal magnetism] by Armand-Marie-Jacques de Chastenet, marquis de Puységur (1751–1825). Puységur was a student of the German physician Franz Anton Mesmer who, starting in February 1778, was successful in his treatment of thousands of patients in Paris and other French cities using a method we might call hypnotic suggestion today. In the view of Mesmer himself, the universe was charged with a force whose vibrancy in living organisms depended on their being charged with 'animal magnetism'. In cases where an individual's charge was 'disharmonic', he could, through his own uniquely developed method, regulate the animal magnetism in his patients. Exposing his patients to direct touch or 'magnetising' objects, he would enable the magnetic 'fluidum' to stream into the patient and thereby catalyze their 'crisis' (convulsions, lethargy, trance-like states) which would eventuate their cure. The long and short of Puységur's pioneering contribution is that, following a series of practical experiments and rather brilliant analyses of his processes, he rejected Mesmer's physical theory and – eventually – replaced it with a purely psychological one. To Mesmer, the brief and dramatic crises were in themselves rather uninteresting auxiliary phenomena, whereas Puységur started giving his undivided attention

toward what really went on inside the patients during these transitional phases. He surmised that healing occurred during the latter rather than in the earlier process of 'magnetic charging'. By carefully 'magnetizing' the patient and refraining from intervening beyond that, he now realized that he could induce a brief sleep-like state which finally culminated in 'sommambulism' – a state in which the patient apparently woke up again and regained motor and verbal control. But the 'personality' now manifesting itself through action and speech was radically different from the default personality.

Disregarding the (for our purposes) less relevant curiosities (highly important though they be in a therapeutic context), the somnambulant personalities in different individuals appear to have the following things in common:

1. **Hypermnesia.** The somnambulant personality commands a much greater library of memories than the default personality. The highly detailed memories of early childhood, erased by oblivion in the default personality, are particularly striking. The veracity of the memories was amenable to corroboration through questions directed at elder family members.
2. **One-way amnesia.** The somnambulant personality possesses a complete recollection of not only previous somnambulant states but also of the default personality's experiences. However, the default personality has no access to the consciousness or recollections of the somnambulant personality.
3. **An increase in intellectual capability, and a marked change to the subject's language.** Speakers of a dialect were found to command the country's official dialect when in the somnambulant state, and, in some cases, they were even able to speak one or more foreign languages.
4. **A heightened sense of awareness.** It is true of all five senses that the threshold level of conscious perception is lowered to abnormal levels. The somnambulant personality may, for example, be aware aurally (or olfactorily) that a certain person is approaching the house much sooner than an onlooker to the experiment.
5. **The ability, thanks to greatly enhanced 'general perception'<sup>15</sup> to realize, i. e. visualize, the condition of one's own internal organs. The ability to psychically affect physical processes in one's own organism (the physical processes ordinarily lie beyond volitional command).**
6. **Between the magnetizer and the somnambulant person may arise a psychic interaction ('rapport') so powerful that thoughts and imaginings appear to pass from one person to the other.<sup>16</sup>**

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15 G. H. Schubert speak of 'einem geschärften Gemeingefühl' [a sharpened sense of community]. See his *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* (1808), 337.

16 I am here going to omit the controversial issue that the somnambulant person occasionally gained clairvoyant powers, i. e. the ability to perceive the surrounding world independent of

It was Puységur's and his students' conviction that every human being carries a latent somnambulant personality. The phenomenon of posthypnotic suggestion was held to legitimize the hypothesis that the somnambulant personality was not merely a brief abnormal state but rather constantly present under the default personality. Upon hearing a command from the magnetizer, the somnambulant person would, at some time after his return to the default personality, carry out the requested action regardless of its inherent absurdity and without allowing the normal personality to discover the true incentive.<sup>17</sup>

The psychological status of the somnambulant personality is bivalent. From the viewpoint of the default personality – the rational subject of the Enlightenment – it belongs to the unconscious domain, inevitably inaccessible to normal consciousness. Owing to one-way amnesia, it cannot be integrated into normal consciousness, and the posthypnotic experiment shows that even when an element from the somnambulant state intrudes to motivate actions in the life of the default personality, only the action can be appreciated, not the motivating incentive. On the other hand, the somnambulant personality – in its sensing, thinking, recollecting, speaking, and acting manifestation – possesses a clearly reflexive self-consciousness. As the somnambulant personality is superior to the default personality in practically every respect – and even boasts a greater internal continuity than that of normal consciousness, as a result of hypermnnesia and one-way amnesia (allowing, as it does, for full awareness of the contents of the normal consciousness) – it merits consideration as a more complete consciousness.<sup>18</sup> But, normally this consciousness is only latently present in the individual. Aside from a few spontaneous cases of shifts between the two types of consciousness, extraordinary means are required for actualizing it.<sup>19</sup>

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time and space. In this curious feature of the somnambulant person's perception of the world, Puységur's most outstanding student Joseph-Philippe-François Deleuze recognized an empirical confirmation of Kant's determination that time, space, and causality were the forms of the intellect, notably that pertaining to the normal state, whereas the somnambulant person's altered 'sensorium' was not hampered by these limitations. Cf. The Marquis de Puységur, *Histoire critique du magnétisme animal* (Paris, 1813), 281.

17 De Mouilleseaux, *Appel au public sur le magnétisme animal* [Strasbourg, 1787].)

18 G. H. Schubert (note 15): 'eine höhere Stufe des wahren Zustandes der Seele' [a higher level of the true state of the soul] (p. 348).

19 Ludwig J. Pongratz distinguishes between 'Mitbewußtes' [the 'co-conscious'] (that which is not available to the focus of conscious attention and which can be made conscious without substantial changes) and 'Unbewußtes' det ubevidste which is delineated thus: 'Es ist nicht wie das Mitbewußte mühelos der Präsenz zugänglich, sondern wird "schwer" bewußt; in der Regel sind gezielte Methoden nötig, um es klar bewußt zu machen. Ein drittes Unterscheidungsmerkmal kommt hinzu: Mitbewußten wird present, ohne das Erleben und Verhalten der Persönlichkeit bedeutsam zu verändern. Das Präsentwerden von Unterbewußtem hingegen hat personale Modifikationen im Gefolge. Auf dem Niveau der kognitiven Präsenz erscheint es mit dem Index der Verwunderung, Erleuchtung, Betroffenheit und dergleichen

Rather than speaking of consciousness *versus* unconsciousness, in the interest of defining the nomenclature, one ought to speak of di-psychism as a consequence of the discovery and investigation of the somnambulant personality.<sup>20</sup> The human being does not contain one but two functionally separate consciousnesses or personalities<sup>21</sup> of which the comparatively narrow one (the default or normal personality), in order to accommodate the current societal reality, is amputated, rudimentary.<sup>22</sup> It is with this insight that the new psychology (for which Puységur's was a trailblazer) brings into question the coherent rationality principle of the Enlightenment while also signalling the discontinuation of the continuity idea which, in thinkers from Leibniz to Schelling and Goethe, had been an important issue for all previous explorations of the unconscious. Let me add that this doubled as a break from Neoplatonism – or rather, its monistic articulation. Puységur's theory – on the di-psychism fundamental to human

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[It is not, like the 'co-conscious', easily available to what is manifest but is rather made conscious with 'difficulty'; generally, purposeful methods are necessary in order to make it clearly conscious. A third differentiation should be mentioned: the 'co-conscious' is made manifest without altering the experience and behaviour of the personality considerably. On the contrary, the manifestation of the unconscious catalyses personal modifications. At the level of cognitive presence it is to be recognized by such indications as bewilderment, illumination, trembling, and the like] (p. 240).

- 20 Marquis de Puységur, *Essai sur les probabilités du somnambulisme magnétique, pour servir à l'histoire du magnétisme animal*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam, 1784–1785), 20:

J'ai fait ce que j'ai pu pour lier leurs idées dans le passage d'un état à l'autre, soit en entrant en crise, soit en sortant, cela m'a été impossible. La démarcation est si grande, qu'on peut regarder ces deux états comme deux existences différentes

[I have done what I could to find linkages in the thoughts they expressed while passing from one state to another, either as they were entering into a crisis or coming out of one, but I was unable to do it. The difference between these two states is so pronounced that they can be seen as two different manners of being].

- 21 G. H. Schubert, who bases his understanding of animal magnetism on material from the German Puységurists (Eberhard Gmelin, Johann Heineken, Johann Nathanael Pezold, and Arnold Wienholt), presumes the existence of three personalities in one and the same individual, able to express itself as states of normal consciousness – or somnambulism, or 'Doppelschlaf' [double sleep] (note 15, p. 348).

- 22 Joachim Dietrich Brandis, *Über psychische Heilmittel und Magnetismus* (Copenhagen, 1818), 98–99:

Frey von allen Banden, welche die momentane sinnliche Außenwelt dem Leben Anlegt, frey von allem Fachwerk des Denkens, wo nur das zum momentanen Bewußtsein kommen kann, was in diese sinnliche Außenwelt für den Augenblick paßt, liegt dem Magnetisirten auf einmal offen, was je in seinem Leben vorgegangen ist, ungeordnet, aber auch ungebunden

[Free of all ties which the actual world of the senses imposes on his life, free of all the constraints of mind – where only that which in the world of the senses is appropriate for the present moment is allowed to enter his present consciousness – everything that has happened during his life lies open to the magnetized, disordered yet also unbound.].

Cf. Schiller who in *Über die ästhetische Erziehung* had spoken about 'durch Abstumpfung der Gefühle den Charakter sicher zu stellen' [securing the character by blunting the emotions] (NA XX, p. 351).

consciousness and the comprehensive impact from the human psyche on the physical organism – is closely related to the Renaissance which, around the same time, characterized dualistic Gnosticism that (in an extreme form) was presented in the writings of the French mystic Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743–1803).<sup>23</sup>

Nor were the eighteenth-century positions on the unconscious invulnerable to modification as a consequence of the studies of somnambulant consciousness. The reason was that as a consequence of the lowering of the threshold for perception, hypermnesia, and the enhanced general perception – both Leibniz's 'petites perceptions' [small perceptions], Sulzer and Moritz's forgotten, but unconsciously active, childhood memories, and Herder's physiological unconscious grew to be considered elements of somnambulant consciousness, the state from which they were easily verbalizable. Thus personality, as a concept, could lay claim to a much wider expanse and range than hitherto, although it became fractured and now emerged as a personality conglomerate, the joint existence of widely disparate psychological persons in one physical body. On top of that, the phenomenon of magnetic rapport revealed the streaming of imaginings from one individual to another without the conveyance of sense organs; e. g., the magnetizer's will could be seen to inhabit the magnetized person's will and through it elicit physical changes in him.<sup>24</sup> While the 'rationality subject' of the Enlightenment had enjoyed an ideally-perceived stable identity, clearly demarcated and imbued with a proportional, high degree of autonomy, the anthropology ushered in by animal magnetism left the same subject open and without

23 E. g. Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, *Des Erreurs et de la vérité* (1775). The German translation was done by Matthias Claudius and published as *Irrtümer und Wahrheit ...* in 1782. Also, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, *Tableau naturel des rapports qui existent entre Dieu, l'Homme et l'univers* (1782) On Puységur's relation to Saint-Martin, see Adam Crabtree, *From Mesmer to Freud* (New Haven and London, 1993), 68–69. See also Robert Darnton, *Mesmerism and the End of Enlightenment in France* (Cambridge, MA, 1968), 68. On Gnosticism in European culture, see P. Sloterdijk, *Weltrevolution der Seele. Ein Lese- und Arbeitsbuch der Gnosis*, ed. by T. H. Macho (Zürich, 1993). This title reprints an excerpt from *Des erreurs et de la vérité* (pp. 721–727).

24 Marquis de Puységur, *Essai sur les probabilités du somnambulisme magnétique, pour servir à l'histoire du magnétisme animal*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam, 1784–1785), 17: 'Le malade, dans cet état, entre dans un rapport si intime avec son magnétiseur, qu'on pourrait Presque dire qu'il en fait partie' [In this state, the patient enters into a rapport with the magnetizer so intimate that one could almost say he becomes part of him]. Cf. Tardy de Montravel, *Essai sur la théorie du somnambulisme magnétique* (London, 1785), 67: 'Les deux individus ne font plus qu'un seul instrument harmonique, dans lequel les discordances seules retentissent, & c'est aussi par cette raison que le Somnambule verra mon foie est malade' [The two individuals are no more than a single harmonic instrument in which only discordances resound, and it is for that reason that the somnambulist will see that my liver suffers from a malady]. The idea is that the diseased organ is perceived by 'the sixth sense' (*ibid.*, 70–71) because its condition deviates from harmony.

demarcation – inwardly to latent personalities and – outwardly to other individuals' wills and thoughts.<sup>25</sup>

The observations and theories of Puységur and his French students were already spreading rapidly – from Strasbourg (where the Puységurists cohered) to Germany – before the revolution, which put a temporary stop to practitioners of animal magnetism. The main figures of the German phase were the mathematician and physicist Johann Lorenz Böckmann (1741–1802), the anatomist and physicist Johann Heineked (1761–1851), the physician Arnold Wienholt (1749–1804), and – the most brilliant among them – the physician Eberhard Gmelin (1751–1808). It was on the work of these four pioneers that the physician and philosopher Gotthilf Friedrich Schubert based his presentation of animal magnetism (lectures 13 and 14) when in 1808 he published his *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* [Views from the nightside of science], a work which was to greatly influence the German romantics. Unlike the Frenchmen who overwhelmingly were interested in the therapeutic aspects, the German scientists tended to direct their attention to the general anthropological consequences. This is probably the reason why they had an evident impact on the poetry and philosophy of the day.

The hypothesis that the phenomenon of one-way amnesia had consequences for the identity of the I can be traced as far back as Eberhard Gmelin, who surmised that this was so. In his magnum opus, appropriately entitled *Materialien für die Anthropologie* [Materials for an anthropology] (1791), he follows Augustine<sup>26</sup> in equating 'personality' with the I's recollections of previous perceptions and reactions ('Gegenwirkungen', p. 65). Whether rendered som-

25 The concept of 'sympathy' (like the other *sym*-activities which greatly interested the German romantics) thus underwent a very specific increase in psychological significance. Tardy de Montravel claims that through the somnambulant experiment 'on découvre la cause physique des sympathies, des antipathies qu'on a connues, dont on a parlé de tout temps, sans pouvoir en rendre raison' [one discovers the physical background for the sympathies and antipathies one has been experienced and talked about all along, without being able to explain them] (*op. cit.*, p. 69). Cf. Chevalier de Barbarin, *Système raisonné du magnétisme universel. D'après les principes de M. Mesmer* (Paris, 1786), 80: 'On sait en second lieu, que les âmes ont la faculté d'agir les unes sur les autres' [Secondly, we know that souls are capable of influencing one another]. As evidenced by Schiller's letter to his friend Körner (17 May 1788), Herder too was among those greatly fascinated with this aspect of animal magnetism 'woraus er die Sympathien und Antipathien ... erklärt' [from which he explains sympathies and antipathies]. An equivalent viewpoint is expressed in the Swiss physician Johann Rahn's work *Über Sympathien und Magnetismus* (1789). An entire chapter in C. A. Eschenmayer's *Psychologie in drei Theilen als empirische, reine und angewandte* (Stuttgart/Tübingen, 1817) is devoted to 'Die Stufe der magnetischen Sympathie' [the level of magnetic sympathy] (p. 241 ff.). The literature on animal magnetism contains plenty of other examples detailing the attempt to nest the concept of sympathy inside magnetic rapport. Cf. Crabtree (note 23), 120–122.

26 Saint Augustine, *Confessiones*, book X.

nambulant spontaneously or via artificial means, it is true of the somnambulant person that

Es was also veränderte Persönlichkeit; es was eine andere Person, welche im Anfall handelte und empfand; eine andere, welche im natürlichen Zustan handelte und empfand

[It was a changed personality, then; it was another person who was acting and feeling during the attack; another person who, in a natural state of mind, was acting and feeling] (pp. 50–51).

And this ‘other person’ ‘bleibt also ein freies moralisches Wesen und ist kein bloß materielles Automat’ [thus remains a free moral being and not a mere material automat] (p. 253). Indeed, he ought to be regarded as occupying a higher state of development than the default personality, insofar that ‘Der ganze Mensch wird in den zu Einem vereinigten geistigen und thierischen Grundtrieben erhöht und veredelt’ [the whole person becomes one, elevated and ennobled, out of these combined spiritual and animal base drives] (p. 365). And – not surprisingly – the criterion for whether the test person really is somnambulant is ‘subjectiv erhöhtes Empfindungsvermögen und subjective erhöhte Seelenfähigkeiten’ [a subjectively raised emotional register and subjectively raised mental faculties] (p. 255).

What proved controversial was the evaluation of somnambulism. The author of *Versuch einer Darstellung des animalischen Magnetismus als Heilmittel* [Attempt to depict animal magnetism as a cure] (Berlin, 1811), Carl Alexander Ferdinand Kluge, sums up his notes on the curiosity of the somnambulant state this:

Wir wurden ... nicht abwärts zur Sinnlichkeit übergeführt, sondern stiegen vielmehr aufwärts, und näherten un simmer mehr dem inner geistigen Menschen

[We were not led downwards to sensuality but rather ascended and were getting closer and closer to the inner spiritual person].

What he had found was

keine Truggebilde einer exaltierten Phantasie, sonder höhere, erweckte Kräfte, die zwar ungekannt und ungeahnet in dem Innern des Menschen schlummerten

[no phantasm from an exalted fantasy but higher, aroused forces which nevertheless were slumbering in human beings] (1815<sup>2</sup>, p. 307).

In Schelling’s view, on the other hand, the somnambulant phenomena were indications of the human connection with what lies *beneath*, with the general psychical and chemical laws of nature, with the forces of the universe.<sup>27</sup> In this, he

<sup>27</sup> F. W. J. von Schelling, *Aphorismen zur Einleitung in die Naturphilosophie* (1806):

concurr with the rationalist Ernst Platner who (in *Neue Anthropologie*), as already stated, had declared that

Das thierische Seelenorgan ist das unwesentlichere und unedlere, und erweckt in der Seele jene verworrenen, au seiner zahlenlosen Vielheit undeutlicher Gefühle zusammengesetzten Vorstellungen von dem Werkzeuge, und die von diesen Ideen abhängende angenehmen, oder unangenehmen Empfindungen

[the animal soul organ is of comparatively less significant and noble and gives rise, in the soul, to both the confused notions about the state, composed as it is of innumerable indistinct emotions, and to the agreeable or disagreeable feelings that depend of these notions] (p. 72).<sup>28</sup>

Auch die hartnäckigste Angewöhnung, in der Natur die bloße Objektivität zu sehen, hätten längst die Erscheinungen außerordentlicher Zustände des Menschen, an welchen, selbst nach der gemeinen Vorstellung, die Seele keinen Theil hat, überwinden können, z.B. die geschickten und sicheren Handlungen des Nachtwandlers, die völlig so bewußtlos geschehen, und dennoch nicht selten ebenso viel Zweckmäßigkeit verrathen als die Handlungen der Thiere, der beständigen Somnambulisten

[Even the most obstinate habit of seeing mere objectivity in nature could no doubt long ago have been overcome by contemplation of man's extraordinary states, in which the soul, according to ordinary understanding, plays no role; for example, take the elegant and certain movements of the sleepwalker, which occur completely unconsciously, and yet not infrequently betray just as much effectiveness as the actions of animals, those constant somnambulists.].

28 From a psychoanalytic perspective, the phenomena of somnambulism must be categorized as belonging to the 'preconscious' or 'unconscious' system, or (in the nomenclature later adopted by Freud) the unconscious part of 'das Ich and das Es', the ego and the id. It is a fairly common understanding that these psychic areas or functions deserved to be viewed as rather primitive or infantile, the residual derivatives of atavistic drives and libidinous and aggressive ideas and energies. This portrait of the unconscious, however, seems incompatible with observations concerning the somnambulant unconscious which a large group of scientists collected and systematized over half a century starting in the 1780s. It goes without saying that the early magnetizers and Freud represent very different, historically determined 'Vorverständnisse' [preconceptions] with regards to what a human being fundamentally is. To the magnetizers, the three parts constituting a human being – mind, soul, and body – were equally real, while Freud in his premature declaration proved himself an heir of the political theory of liberalism, the ontological materialism of positivism, and Darwin's hypothesized idea that the primitive and undifferentiated evolved biologically to become highly developed and specified. Having said that, psychoanalysis is not quite as simplistic as is often assumed. It is interesting to note how Freud, in his life-long attempts to pin down 'the unconscious', 'the primary process', and 'das Es' (the id), oscillates between a low and a high taxonomy, as energetically pointed out by Anton Ehrenzweig (*The Psychoanalysis of Artistic Vision and Hearing*, 1953). As early as *Die Traumdeutung* (*The Interpretation of Dreams*) (1900), Freud presented the 'high' taxonomy, e.g. in the remark about 'die Hypermnesie des Traums' (SA II, 560) and in the following characteristic: 'In dem Traumgedanken fanden wir die Beweise einer höchst komplizierten, mit fast allen Mitteln des seelischen Apparats arbeitenden, intellektuellen Leistung' [In the dream thoughts we located evidence for a highly complicated intellectual achievement, involving all the means of the mental apparatus] (ibid., 561). In *Das Ich and das Es* (1923), the trend is even more evident:

Wir haben einerseits Belege dafür, daß selbst feine und schwierige intellektuellen Arbeit, die

Primarily, animal magnetism offered the romantic poets a picture of the anthropological consequence of di-psychism. The somnambulant state reveals the potentials inherent in the human being, reveals what it might become. Not considered by the developmental model (which includes the belief in human enlightenment and progress), this potential is already fully manifested in each human being and is not the result of an 'Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts' [The education of the human race], the long road from religious through metaphysical on to rational thinking, to borrow the French physiocrat Turgot's words from 1750. The view that progress would happen as a result of the passing of time is replaced by the notion of psychic epiphany, the emergence of the hidden; in other words, a qualitative shift to another latent personality system. This conception, combined with outright spiritualism, is in my view the core field of romantic anthropology. But this view entails the realization that 'romantics' like Schelling and Ritter, as far as their anthropological perspective is concerned, must be said to hold on to and promote the continuity-stressing cognitive and vital conceptualisations of the unconscious that were the product of the Enlightenment.

It is hardly a coincidence that Jean Paul (the first person to use the term 'das Unbewußte') who in the science of the period accords animal magnetism such centrality of place that it acquires an almost messianic dimension:

Es ist ein wohlthätiges Wunder, daß derselbe Magnet, welcher uns mit seiner Nadel die zweite Hälfte des Erdballs zeigte und gab, auch in der Geisterwelt eine neue Welt entdecken half. Schwerlich hat irgend ein Jahrhundert unter den Entdeckungen, welche auf die menschliche Doppelwelt von Leib und Geist zugleich Licht werfen, eine größere gemacht als das vorige am organischen Magnetismus; nur daß Jahrhunderte zur Erziehung und Pflege des Wunderkindes gehören, bis dasselbe zum Wunderthäter der Welt aufwächst

[It is an satisfying wonder that the same magnet whose needle gave us the other half of the globe also helped us discover a new world in the spiritual world. It is hard to point to another century in which a greater discovery was made by those who simultaneously shed light on the human double world of life and soul than the previous century with its

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sonst angestregtes Nachdenken erfordert, auch vorbewußt geleistet werden kann, ohne zum Bewußtsein zu kommen. ... Wollen wir zu unserer Wertskala zurückkehren, so müssen wir sagen: Nicht nur das Tiefste, auch das Höchste am Ich kann unbewußt sein [We are, on the one hand, justified in this because even fine and intellectual work, though it ordinarily demands challenging reflection, can be carried out subconsciously without being made conscious. Returning to our scale of value, we discover: Not only the deepest but also the highest in the I can be unconscious] (SA III, 295).

One need not turn to Ludwig Klages (*Der Geist als Widersacher der Seele*, 1929–1932), Jung, or Viktor E. Frankl (*Der unbewußte Gott*, 1949<sup>2</sup>) to locate contemporary parallels to Puységur and his followers.

organic magnetism: it takes centuries only to raise and nurture this prodigy before it grows into one capable of doing miracles in the world].<sup>29</sup>

Arthur Schopenhauer, ‘the greatest thinker of romanticism’<sup>30</sup>, offers an almost higher estimation. While writing the first volume of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (*The World as Will and Representation*, 1819), he still seems to share Schelling’s standpoint.<sup>31</sup> But in 1836, in the text *Über den Willen in der Natur* (*On the Will in Nature*), in which with regret he registers his lack of comprehension of the full consequences of animal magnetism (‘eine direkte Bestätigung meiner Lehre’ [a direct confirmation of my theory])<sup>32</sup>, he has altered his view considerably to share Puységur’s purely psychological conception, augmented with powerful philosophical implications:

Der animalische Magnetismus tritt demnach geradezu als die *praktische Metaphysik* auf ...: er ist die empirische oder Experimental-Metaphysik. – Weil ferner im animalischen Magnetismus der Wille als Ding an sich hervortritt, sehn wir das der bloßen Erscheinung angehörige principium individuationis (Raum und Zeit) alsbald vereitelt: seine die Individuen sondernden Schranken werden durchbrochen; zwischen Magnetiseur und Somnambule sind Räume keine Trennung, Gemeinschaft der Gedanken und Willensbewegungen tritt ein: der Zustand des Hellsehns setzt über die der bloßen Erscheinung angehörenden, durch Raum and Zeit bedingten Verhältnisse, Nähe und Ferne, Gegenwart und Zukunft, hinaus

[Animal magnetism therefore acts just like the practical metaphysics ... it is empirical or experimental metaphysics. Furthermore, in animal magnetism the will appears as a thing in itself, and we therefore see that the ‘principium individuationis’ pertaining to mere appearance is made superfluous: those barriers that separate individuals are penetrated; between the magnetizer and the somnambulant there are no separating rooms, (so) a community of thoughts and volition arises: an enlightened state transcends those realities appertaining to strict appearance and those realities merely dependent on space and time, nearness and remoteness, presence and future].<sup>33</sup>

29 Jean Paul, *Muthmaßungen über einige Wunder des organischen Magnetismus* (1814), in *Jean Pauls sämtliche Werke*, vol. 16, *Hist.-krit.*, part 1 (Weimar, 1938). More than 25 years before, Jean Paul had turned his attention to animal magnetism. He wrote notes to Eberhard Gmelin (*Über Thierischen Magnetismus* [Tübingen, 1787]) between 1788 and 1789 and to the journal *Magnetisches Magazin für Niederdeutschland*, ed. by J. H. Cramer (Bremen 1787–1788). Cf. Götz Müller, *Jean Pauls Exzerpte* (Würzburg, 1988).

30 Ludwig Marcuse, ‘Reaktionäre und progressive Romantik’, in Helmut Prang, ed., *Begriffsbestimmung der Romantik* (Darmstadt, 1968), 379.

31 Arthur Schopenhauer, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by Wolfgang Frhr. Von Löhneysen (Darmstadt, 1968), 1:224: ‘Der andere, diesem entgegengesetzte Fall ist der, wo ungekehrt das Licht der Erkenntnis in die Werkstätte des blindwirkenden Willens eindringt und die vegetativen Funktionen des menschlichen Organismus beleuchtet: im magnetischen Hellsehn’ [The other case, which runs counter to this, sees the light of realization penetrate into the blindly operating will’s workshop illuminating the vegetative functions of the human organism].

32 *Ibid.*, vol. III, 423.

33 *Ibid.*, vol. III, 429. As early as 1813, Deleuze had proclaimed that the phenomena of som-

And finally we have – in *Versuch über das Geistersehn und was damit zusammenhängt* (*Essay on Spirit Seeing and everything connected therewith*), Schopenhauer's great 1851 treatise which sums up the philosophical consequences of animal magnetism while anticipating important, but frequently-ignored aspects of Freud's psychoanalysis – his definitive opinion:

Der animalische Magnetismus ist freilich nicht vom ökonomischen und technologischen, aber wohl vom philosophischen Standpunkt aus betrachtet die inhaltschwerste aller jemals gemachten Entdeckungen; wenn er auch einstweilen mehr Rätsel aufgibt als löst

[Animal magnetism is – seen not from an economic or technological perspective but from a philosophical perspective – one of the most content heavy of all discoveries, in spite of the fact that it sometimes poses more riddles than it resolves].<sup>34</sup>

Some of the things which Schopenhauer realized philosophically relatively belatedly had, however, already been introduced into the conceptual repertoire of the poets in the early phase of German romanticism.<sup>35</sup> It is important here to

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nambulism provide and experimental proof that Kant was right to consider time, space and causality properties of the intellect (in its normal state, that is) and not properties existing in the world. This perspective reappears in the medical professor Dietrich Georg Kieser's foreword to volume 1 of his journal *Archiv für den thierischen Magnetismus* (Lpz., 1817).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. IV, 323.

<sup>35</sup> The very simple – and historical – reason why I am here talking about German romanticism exclusively is that the animal magnetism became a research discipline and general cultural factor much earlier in Germany than in other Western countries. The French Revolution of 1789 brought the exploration of animal magnetism to a screeching halt, and the hiatus lasted more than 25 years (cf. Dominique Barrucand, *Histoire de l'hypnose en France* [Paris, 1967], 31). In his historical overview of 1813, Deleuze (cf. note 16, 35) describes how any engagement with the controversial topic caused practitioners to be persecuted. One such victim was Puységur himself who suffered two years' incarceration and only saved his life because, being an artillery officer, he was more useful if sent to the army than the guillotine. Following the revolutionary wars the research started up again, but it never gained the same status and popularity as in romantic Germany. Only in Balzac (e.g. his *Ursule Mirouet*, 1841) can the influence be detected. The situation was unchanged until 1880 when it suddenly altered so radically that, from then on, research in France into the fields of hypnosis, suggestion, and paranormal phenomena was unrivalled by any other country in Europe. The central contributors were Hippolyte Bernheim and Pierre Janet (Freud's mentors). In England, Puységur's ideas gained a foothold in the 1790s (J. B. de Mainauduc and John Bell; cf. Crabtree [note 23]) but the situation changed after the turn of the century when the 'foreign' ideas began to be regarded with indifference or suspicion. In the following years, not much changed: 'The mesmeric movement in England from 1800 to 1837 was a pale and scattered shadow of continental activities. The movement had no public presence of any consequence in England for almost forty years', writes Fred Kaplan in *Dickens and Mesmerism. The Hidden Springs of Fiction* (1975), 11. On the other hand, that situation was redressed over a surprisingly brief time, due primarily to the pioneer John Elliotson (a medical professor in London) but also subsequently to the physician James Braid's outstanding work on hypnosis (his preferred term for animal magnetism) between 1843 and 1860. In the USA, specifically New England, the late 1830s and 1840s were booming times for animal magnetism (cf. Crabtree [note 23], 213). The traces hereof are evident in Edgar Allan Poe's writings.

distinguish between two entirely different ways of fictionalizing animal magnetism. The negative type places great importance on partly the dissolution of personality and partly the unsettling consequences of having a stranger's consciousness intrude into the will and imaginings of one's psyche. Conversely, in the positive perspective the flickering emergence of the unconscious personality is viewed as a way to reach a deeper truth about the human being and its infinite possibilities.

It is tempting to regard the negative perspective as a colourful and melodramatic fictionalization of the psychological body of problems. However, such an approach ignores the fact that the poets – with their plastic and tension-charged concretisations in which intra-psychic relations were dramatized as the conflicts between acting characters – frequently were able to present psychological insight far exceeding, in perspective and richness of nuance, the clinical and theoretical presentations. Exemplifying such a contribution to insight as a result of the symbolizing process are the literary motifs of the 'doppelgänger' and 'the heteronomous individual'.

It is not a long way from the anthropological idea of the fundamentally fractionated consciousness of human beings to the notion that the hidden personality might liberate itself from the total personality and, like some doppelgänger, physically and psychologically live its own life while, at the same time, separate from and intervening in the life of the person. The word 'doppelgänger' in European literature is first used by Jean Paul in the novel *Siebenkäs* (1796/1797). Alongside actual doppelgängers, his later novels also contain the motifs of the mirror image – specifically, the fear of uncanny mirror reflections. In these texts as well as in the works of other romantics (Hoffman, Brentano, and Chamisso), the doppelgängers or mirror-selves are unrecognized, or denied sub-personalities, incompatible with or unacceptable to the individual's previous self-image and, for that reason, frightening.<sup>36</sup>

It ought not be necessary to further pursue this familiar central romantic motif, which is so closely connected to the new ideas driving the anthropology of the era. Less clearly defined and less thoroughly explored as a literary motif is 'the heteronomous individual', subject to external orders and represented as the relationship between magnetizer and magnetized, in which the person ex-

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36 The best-known example from Danish literature is probably H. C. Andersen's 'Skyggen' [The shadow] (1847), which ingeniously unfolds an element of the poetic potential of Hoffmann's short story 'Das öde Haus' ('The deserted house'). Cf. Uffe Hansen, 'Det tomme hus. Om H. C. Andersens eventyr "Lygtemændene ere i Byen, sagde Mosekonen"', *Nordica* (1995). The similarly frequently occurring motif of the marionet must be comprehended with appeal to vitalism (although not in Kleist, as the following will show). The marionet is the machine (cf. La Mettrie, *L'Homme machine*, 1747) absent 'vital force'.

presses itself through actions, which unbeknownst to the person, have been implanted in him or her (posthypnotic suggestion).

Prior to romanticism, poetry is characterised by the almost inevitable feature that the forces determining the thoughts and actions of its fictional characters stem from their own autonomous personalities:

Handlungen und Ereignisse sollen ‘wahrscheinlich’ und auf die Absichten der Figuren widerspruchsfrei bezogen sein, diese müssen jene begründen und umgekehrt

[Acts and events need to be ‘plausible’ and consistently related to the intentions of the characters; these must justify them and vice versa].<sup>37</sup>

This also applies to ‘im Irrationalismus der Affekte’ [in the irrationalism of affects], where – in spite of all unreason – ‘eine weltumspannende Übereinstimmung des Menschen mit sich selbst’ [a total accord of the human being with itself] is present.<sup>38</sup> One might even justifiably argue that the more emphatically a character’s emotional quality, imaginative propensity, even folly, are represented, the more originally individual, unified although complex, and characterologically complete does the he or she appear. Autonomy is, therefore, not necessarily the equivalent to ‘sensible action’, but might also mean the concordance between a person’s actions and his collective cognitive, emotional, and volitional qualities. This is evident from the paragon examples of Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, Wieland’s *Agathon*, and Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister*.

But what about characters such as Hoffmann’s? Medardus, the little kind monk from the novel *Die Elixire des Teufels* (*The Devil’s Elixir*) (1815/1816) is, from a certain moment in the story, governed not by his own intentions nor passions but by forces which clearly operate from outside of his personality and which force him to relive the dissolute lives of his forefathers.<sup>39</sup> The clumsy, provincial student Anselmus, in *Der goldne Topf* (*The Golden Pot*) from 1814, whose spiritual horizon reaches no further than coffee with rum, beer, and girls, experiences all of a sudden a veritable invasion of strange visions and skills surprising to himself, all of which stem from the kindly, but demanding wizard and archivist Lindhorst. Considering Hoffmann’s great conversancy with the literature on animal magnetism and his familiarity with several of its practitioners, it is perhaps no wonder that he suggests a connection between the heteronomy of several of his characters and the alleged reality of telepathy so central to ‘magnetism’. The short story ‘Das öde Haus’ (‘The Deserted House’) (1817)

37 Rolf Grimminger, *Die Ordnung, da Chaos und die Kunst. Für eine neue Dialektik der Aufklärung*. Frankfurt a.M. 1990 (1986<sup>1</sup>), 45.

38 *Ibid.*, 89.

39 The ‘familial unconscious’ (cf. Pongratz [note 3], 224ff.), a favourite motif in romanticism, manifests itself, among other places, in the genre ‘fate tragedy’ and in anti-Bildungsromans such as Eduard Mörike’s *Maler Nolten* (1832).

features ‘ein junger, dem Magnetismus ergebener Arzt’ [a young physician dedicated to the art of magnetism], who offers an explanation of certain mysterious occurrences, puzzling to the first-person narrator, by referring to the common experience that a strange idea can suddenly take control over ‘our entire selves’. And he then rhetorically asks:

Wie wenn dies plötzliche Hineinspringen fremder Bilder in unsere Ideenreihe, die uns gleich mit besondere Kraft zu ergreifen pflegen, eben durch ein fremdes psychisches Prinzip veranlaßt würde? Wie wenn es dem fremden Geist unter gewissen Umständen möglich wäre, den magnetischen Rapport auch ohne Vorbereitung so herbeizuführen, daß wir uns willenlos ihm fügen müßten?

[What if the sudden emergence in our thoughts of these foreign images, generally manifesting themselves with remarkable force, is caused by a foreign psychic principle? What if under certain conditions it is possible for the foreign spirit, even without prior effort, to conjure the magnetic rapport so that we involuntarily must obey it?],<sup>40</sup>

As should be evident, the heteronomous personality offers a conceptualization of the unconscious that is quite different from the one emerging from the doppelgänger stories. Doppelgängers, mirror reflections, and shadows undeniably constitute separated parts formerly making up one and the same personality conglomerate, whilst the emotions and notions that govern the actions of the heteronomous individual are conveyed by psychic infusion, so to speak, from one or more *other* individuals. No doubt the guiding empirical evidence for such a trans-personality was the demonstration, provided by animal magnetism, that telepathy could occur in situations involving rapport; however, it would be wrong to reduce the meaning of the motive to a fictionalization of a more-or-less well-founded set of psychological – or parapsychological – observations. The opportunity for making new observations is highly dependent on the entirety of the historical moment, as well as the available enabling paradigms. In the context of history of ideas, we are, therefore, dealing with something rather more comprehensive, namely the gradual emergence of a doubt as to whether the autonomous rational subject of the Enlightenment and the organically growing personality in classicism really are so securely railed off from other psyches. The question is if the ‘kopernikanische Wende’ [Copernican turn] of individualism during the last half of the seventeenth century, the violent insistence on the ‘Einmaligkeit’ [singularity] of the individual and its autonomy (reflected in the poetry, philosophy, and political theories of the time) are not indicators of the fact that the individual has, at this point, become a *problem*. When so much is said on the subject, the reason may be that it is no longer self-evident; rather, the individual’s a priori right to be appears to be under attack from different sides which

40 E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Phantasie- und Nachtstücke*, (Munich: Winkler, 1967), 476–477.

necessitates that an argument and a defence for it be provided.<sup>41</sup> In a remarkable analysis, Rolf Grimminger has shown that the more rationalism keeps emphasizing ‘das zweckrationale Streben in die Zukunft’ [the instrumentally rational striving for the future], the less legitimacy is the individual granted:

So wird man zwar reich an rational planbarer Zukunft, aber auch arm an unverplant lebendiger Gegenwart. Man organisiert sich zum Mittel für Zukünftiges, das noch nicht ist, während, was ist, nicht bei sich selbst verweilen darf, weil es ständig voraus in die Zukunft verweisen muß

[One then gets rich in rationally calculable future, yet also poor in the unplanned living present. One makes plans as a means to a future, which as yet is not, while that which is, is not allowed to remain as it is, because it must always be relegated to the future].<sup>42</sup>

And Michel Foucault has described how, precisely in this period, when the individual is ideologically liberated from previous bonds, the power of institutions begins to dominate so powerfully that only ‘disciplinary individual’ is welcome, i. e. an individual who has absorbed and can regard foreign regulations as authentic parts of the self. From that perspective, those of Hoffmann’s characters who do not think their own thoughts exclusively or carry out their own authentic actions, gain a certain historical and socio-psychological dimension that reaches far beyond the merely individually psychological.<sup>43</sup>

My reason for describing these two motivational complexes as ‘negative’ variants of the anthropology of animal magnetism is the fact that they negate the ruling fundamental premise of personality psychology: ‘the I’ is an indivisible entity clearly separate from every other person’s I. But this negation of individuality might with equal plausibility be turned into a positive qualification. This is what happened when Schopenhauer, after the first publication of the first volume of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (1819), returned to the original understanding of animal magnetism and now decided to define the somnambulant personality as that in which ‘unser innerstes Wesen oder das Ding an sich’ [our inmost being or the thing-in-itself] were permitted to emerge.<sup>44</sup> In this radical rendition of Kantian idealism, the person could, utilizing his or her ‘Traumorgan’<sup>45</sup> [dream organ] (an ability to perceive unrestrictedly by the five senses and the a

41 Marianne Kesting, ‘Der Abbau der Persönlichkeit. Zur Theorie der Figur im modernen Drama’, in Werner Kellere, ed., *Beiträge zur Poetik des Dramas* (Darmstadt, 1976), 212.

42 Grimminger (note 36), 51–52.

43 The actual age of mass psychology was admittedly not before the 1880s – cf. Susanne Barrow, *Distorting Mirrors. Visions of the Crowd in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven and London, 1981) – but the psychological groundwork was already established by the time of animal magnetism.

44 Arthur Schopenhauer, *Versuch über das Geistersehen*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by Wolfgang Frhr. von Löhneysen (Darmstadt, 1968), 1:319.

45 *Ibid.*, 336.

priori forms of the intellect), realize the will ‘der ja der Kern des ganzen Menschen ist’ [which is the core of the whole person] as the true foundation of the phenomenal world. It is, however, Schopenhauer’s view that a person’s discovery that the ‘principium individuationis’ amounts to a trick of the will is predicated on this type of perception. These thoughts entail this significant insight (fundamental for Schopenhauer’s ethic):

Bejahung des Willens zum Leben, Erscheinungswelt, Diversität aller Wesen, Individualität, Egoismus, Haß, Bosheit entspringen an seiner Wurzel; und ebenso andererseits Welt des Dinges an sich, Identität aller Wesen, Gerechtigkeit, Menschenliebe, Verneinung des Willens zum Leben

[On the one hand, the affirmation of life, of the phenomenal world, of the diversity, individuality, egoism, hatred, and evil of all beings, springs from one root; and on the other hand, the same is true for the world in itself, for the identity, justice, and philanthropy of all beings and for the denial of the will to life].<sup>46</sup>

This sudden and brief appearance of a free and knowing personality – struggling with the bounded and restricted, but absolutely domineering, normal personality – is the foundational theme in the works of Heinrich von Kleist.<sup>47</sup> Instead of presenting the important function of the somnambulant personality in those of his works that thematize it *expressis verbis* (e.g. in the plays *Das Käthchen von Heilbronn* and *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*) I shall consider one of his short stories, ‘The Engagement in St. Domingo’ (1811), in which the problem of the dual personality may seem less evident but nonetheless determines the turning point of the story.

The historical framing is the Haitian Revolution of 1794, ‘in the days when the blacks were killing the whites’.<sup>48</sup> The old Negro, Congo Hoango, has butchered his master and his family and now wanders the surrounding area heading an armed throng, in order to kill white runaways heading for Port au Prince, the last of the French fortresses. He has left his partner, the old Babekan, and her beautiful, fair-skinned, 15-year-old daughter, Toni, on the plantation. The two women are tasked with luring passing white refugees into thinking it safe for them to rest

46 Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, vol. 2, in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by Wolfgang Frhr. Von Löhneysen (Darmstadt, 1968), 2:780–781.

47 Cf. Uffe Hansen, ‘I det gotiske laboratorium’, *Ny Poetik*, 1 (1993): 22–23; also, Uffe Hansen, ‘Der Aufklärer in extremis. Heinrich von Kleists “Die Marquise von O...” und die Psychologie des Unbewußten im Jahre 1807’, in *Aufklärung als Problem und Aufgabe. Festschrift für Sven-Aage Jørgensen* (Munich/Copenhagen, 1994), 216–234. Concerning Kleist’s earlier contact with the German branch of the Puységurians, cf. Uffe Hansen, ‘Der Schlüssel zum Rätsel der Würzburger reise Heinrich von Kleists’, *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 51 (1997): 170–209.

48 Heinrich von Kleist, *The Marquise of O- and Other Stories*, trans. by Martin Greenberg (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1973), 193. For the German original, see Heinrich von Kleist, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, ed. by Helmut Sembdner, 2 vols. (Munich, 1993), 2:160.

there a few days, upon which Congo Hoango is notified in order that he may happen upon the unsuspecting. They perform this task with the greatest cunning and without the slightest misgivings. One night, a young Swiss officer, Gustav von der Ried, knocks on the door and asks for help on behalf of himself and his relatives hiding in a nearby forest. With Toni as decoy, Babekan manages, under various pretexts, to persuade Gustav to stay the night and not let his relatives join him at the plantation until next day. Her plans, however, are foiled when Toni, suddenly gripped by 'a human feeling', chooses to tie her fate to the young Swiss and deceive her mother by pretending to still be in on the murderous plan. By dawn, just as Babekan has begun to suspect her daughter, Congo Hoango and his men suddenly show up and, in order to save Gustav from being killed, immediately, Toni ties the drowsy young man to the bed, pretending to have merely feigned love for him the whole time in an attempt to secure the delivery of him to his executioners. She is successful in warning Gustav's relatives enabling them to carry out a surprise attack and free the prisoner. Gustav, however, fails to realise Toni's self-sacrificing deceit and shoots her out of boundless disappointment and hate. His relatives inform him of the correct circumstances, and then, upon hearing the dying Toni's final words ('you should not have mistrusted me'), he fires a bullet into his head.

It is a blood-soaked tale of great and inexplicable love – or of man's difficulty grasping 'the mysterious ways of the world'. At any rate, this is how interpreters of the story have commonly received it. Literary scholars tend, when approaching psychological issues, to be painstakingly modest and ahistorical; in extreme instances, when everyday psychology (whatever that is) is deemed to be insufficient, say, then Freud – at his most biologicistic and therefore ahistorical – is revisited. But Kleist dramatizes a historically specific psychology. The story's underlying structure is the Puységurists' conviction that the di-psychism central to human beings endows it with two systems of cognition: the normal person's rational cognition and the somnambulant person's transcendental insight. In this context, the story's beginning and end are fully programmatic in that they both reveal the defects of the functional mode associated with normal personality. The backdrop to the main narrative – concerning Congo Hoango's relationship to his master Guillaume de Villeneuve – includes so many positive aspects that the logical conclusion should have involved the freed slave sacrificing himself in order to save his benefactor. But that is not how it turns out: the rational mind comes up short due to a series of unpredictable factors playing themselves out between the story's initial premise and outcome.<sup>49</sup> The same divide separating

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49 In Congo Hoango's case, one of these factors consists in his ignoring his own individuality and his own personal relations with Mr. de Villeneuve, and switching to the collective consciousness, 'remembering the tyranny that had torn him from his native land' (p. 194).

premise and outcome haunts the denouement of the story: the clear intellect of the freed Gustav must conclude that Toni is a diabolical hypocrite and opportunist. How in the world can he integrate into his normal perceptive apparatus the ‘wonder’ that is Toni’s – to herself – unfathomable and unconditional love for him, a stranger?

The ‘extraordinary event’ of the story is the psychological shift in her. Everything in her previous life – her unchallenged loyalty to Babekan and Congo Hoango, her coldblooded faux seduction act and complicity in the murders of a contingent of white men (p. 211) – would set her up to beholding in Gustav only a member of a despised race. When, nevertheless, her mental disposition, in one instance, is inverted, the narrator carefully omits all suggestion that this is either due to moral scruples, on the one hand, or blossoming love, on the other. Instead, what has happened is that she, to begin with, ‘took a seat next to him, her elbows propped on the table, and stared into his face as he ate’ (p. 201). A little later, ‘leaning her head pensively on her hand’ (p. 202), she reacts to Gustav’s tale of the young negress who, out of vengefulness, deliberately infects her white par amour with the plague by ‘looking down confused’ (p. 204). Her mental state when she is finally, on Babekan’s order, alone together with the stranger is given this description: ‘she hesitated dreamily for a moment ..., as a charming blush flamed in her sunburned face’ (p. 206), ‘dreamily’ (p. 206) and culminating in: ‘a feeling of compassion, awakened by many things, came over her; with an abrupt movement she followed him to the window, threw her arms around his neck, and mingled her tears with his’ (p. 208). Upon giving herself to Gustav, she enters a paralyzed, trance-like state: ‘hung lifelessly’ (p. 209). It should be clear that Kleist is weaving together keywords associated with the emergence of the somnambulant personality. Not until her departure from Gustav does consciousness of the present manifest situation make a return to her – although only to the degree that her subsequent conversation with an understandably puzzled Babekan is punctuated by her avowal of now having moral doubts for contributing to the unfolding ‘abominations’ (p. 211). Following this, her prior craftiness and imagination make a come-back, although this time these are guided by her noble motive engendered during her dreamily absent episode and still manifesting itself in her normal state (‘posthypnotic suggestion’, as described by De Mouilleseaux, cf. note no. 17).

A significant aspect of what I consider the emergence of her spontaneously somnambulant personality is that she, in Gustav’s eyes, at first unconsciously<sup>50</sup>

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50 Heinrich von Kleist, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, ed. by Helmut Sembdner, vol. 2 (Munich, 1993), 172: ‘Dabei fiel ihm eine entfernte Ähnlichkeit, er wußte noch selbst nicht mit wem, auf, die er schon bei seinem Eintritt in das Haus bemerkt hatte, und die seine ganze Seele für sie in Anspruch nahm’ [At the same time he noticed a faint resemblance to somebody, though

but later most obviously, blends with Mariane Congreve, his fiancé in Strasbourg, who during the revolution offered up her own life to save him from the guillotine – notably in an act whose clear Biblical allusions ('I don't know this man!' [p. 208]) casts it as the prototype of disavowal and faithlessness. What in Gustav's eyes is two women's 'amazing resemblance' (p. 207) can hardly be so due to external likeness given the narrator's explicit mention of Toni's 'sunburned face' (p. 206). The perceived similarity might be due, rather, to Gustav's unconscious and non-chronistic – in fact, clairvoyant – recognition that Toni's heroic devotion is congruent with Mariane's.<sup>51</sup> This identification – in which the principle of individuation is of no import – is a consequence of the somnambulant rapport with Toni in whom it actualizes the very same latent, ennobled somnambulant personality that Puységur and his successors all the way up to Schopenhauer had described.

If Toni is the apotheosis of the somnambulant personality, then Gustav embodies the tragedy central to the double personality. Just like the young man in Kleist's treatise *Über das Marionettentheater* [On the marionette theatre], who unconsciously possesses 'eine wunderbare Anmut' [a wonderful grace], which he loses upon learning that he possesses it, Gustav is incapable of holding on to his vision of a faith beyond all understanding and regresses – once he has returned to his normal social situation – to the kind of reasoning of which the rational personality is capable. In a few brief nocturnal moments, however, he embodies what in *Über das Marionettentheater* is described thus:

Wir sehen, daß in dem Maße, als, in der organischen Welt, die Reflexion dunkler und schwächer wird, de Grazie darin immer strahlender und herrschender hervortritt

[We see that in the organic world as thought grows dimmer and weaker, grace emerges more brilliantly and decisively].

This 'Grazie' [grace] is fundamentally different from both Shaftesbury's 'moral beauty' and Schiller's 'Anmut' [grace] as it is defined in the great treatise *Über Anmuth und Würde* [On grace and dignity]:

In einer schönen Seele ist es also, wo Sinnlichkeit und Vernunft, Pflicht und Neigung harmonieren, und Grazie ist ihr Ausdruck in der Erscheinung

[Thus it is in the fair soul that sensuality and reason, duty and propensity are in harmony, and grace is its manifest expression].<sup>52</sup>

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exactly to whom he himself could not say, which had struck him on first entering the house and which had won his heart completely].

51 An exact parallel to this appears in the contemporary drama *Prinz Friedrich von Hamburg* in the introductory scene of which the declared somnambulant prince clairvoyantly foresees the drama's ending.

52 Friedrich Schiller, *Schillers Werke. Nationalausgabe*, vol. 20, (Weimar, 1962), 288. Ironically enough, in 1793 Schiller approaches animal magnetism's concept of personality. He introduces di-psychism – under the strong influence of Puységur's most important German

According to Kleist, the dispute is not – as it is in Shaftesbury and Schiller – between the physical and spiritual (moral) aspect of the person but rather between the normal time-and-space-inhabiting normal personality (whom also social and cultural factors constrict) and the super-normal, intermittently emerging personality ‘wo die menschliche Natur die Anker nach einer schöneren Heymath lichtet’ [where the human nature weighs anchor in order to find a fairer home].<sup>53</sup>

It cannot be emphasised enough that the conceptualisation of somnambulant phenomena endorsed by the Puységurists is completely void of any occultism. In the interest of completeness, however, it should be mentioned that as far back as the 1780s – when Mesmer’s mechanistic and Puységur’s psychological understanding of animal magnetism were current – a new interpretation of somnambulant phenomena emerged which, owing something to Swedenborg and St. Martin, viewed such phenomena as either the communication of souls cut off from sensory collaboration or direct messages from the spiritual realm.<sup>54</sup> The former variant makes an appearance in the central figure of the so-called Lyon School, le Chevalier de Barbarin, whose viewpoints are expressed in the anonymous *Système raisonné du magnétisme universel. D’après les principes de M. Mesmer* [Reasoned system for a universal magnetism] (1786). In German romanticism, the radically spiritualistic viewpoint is primarily put forward by the poet Johann Heinrich Jung-Stilling in *Theorie der Geister-Kunde* [Theory on the knowledge of ghosts] (1808), which considerably influenced Clemens Brentano, Justinus Kerner, and others.

With such observations, we part with the conceptualization of the unconscious that is historically specific for the era of the romantic movement and approach a type of unconscious the universal quality of which is similar to that of demonology and spiritism. The historically unspecific mode is a characteristic of another conceptualisation of the unconscious, neglected in the present article: the *metaphysical* unconscious, i. e. an a priori determined unconscious whether ap-

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student, Eberhard Gmelin – as a psychological pattern in the *Wallenstein*-trilogy (1798/1799). Cf. Uffe Hansen, ‘Schiller und die Persönlichkeitspsychologie des animalischen Magnetismus. Überlegungen zum Wallenstein’, in *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft*, 1995.

53 G. H. Schubert (note 15), 360.

54 It goes without saying that the direction is strongly represented in Sweden, pivoting in the Swedenborgian *Exegetiska och Philantropiska Sällskapet*. Cf. Crabtree (note 23), 70–72, and Karin Johannisson, *Magnetisöremas tid. Den animal Magnetismen i Sverige* (Uppsala, 1974). Among other things, Johannisson’s book is remarkable in that it contains a much more precise and differentiated overview of the development of animal magnetism in Germany than the otherwise admirable pioneering work on the unconscious by Henri F. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious. The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York, 1970).

pearing as innate ideas (Platonic anamnesis) or as the underlying principles of the intellect (Kantian apperceptive unconscious).

In closing, I shall try to provide some answers to a question the sceptical reader is likely to ask: if the somnambulant unconscious is really so central to romanticism, how come it has inspired so few programmatic statements from the poets of the day? One answer is that the new conceptualisation of the unconscious was so far-reaching in its implications both theoretically and practically that it posed a challenge to the fundamental thoughts of European civilization far beyond the challenge posed by the familiar programmatic ideas of romanticism. While the new aesthetic opinions of romanticism were certainly controversial and pioneering, they were also fundamentally resonant with the brand of individualism which had increasingly characterized the thoughts of the second half of the eighteenth century. The same is true of both philosophy of nature – which across vast stretches of history completes the anti-Cartesian continuity notion – and historicism. The fact of the romantics' support for the national state and the community-generating new mythology was relatively compatible with the superordinate political trends in the era of the revolutionary wars. This was not true when it came to animal magnetism, as Jean Paul and Schopenhauer fully recognized.

For the contemporary scientific public it was true then as it is now that 'men learn only what their passions and their metaphysical prejudices allow them to learn', to quote from Aldous Huxley's caustic and carefully entitled essay on the history of hypnosis 'A Case of Voluntary Ignorance' (1956). Furthermore, the phenomena of animal magnetism were so extremely incompatible with dominant axioms that they were rejected out of hand as tall tales – or, to quote Puységur's student Jean François Fournel (1745–1820) on the reaction of several scientists: 'Even if they were permitted to behold these phenomena with their own eyes, they would not believe them'.<sup>55</sup> Alexander von Humboldt put it thus: 'And were I to see and feel myself all these wonders, I would not believe in them for they go against the perennial laws of nature'. This, the reader will agree, presupposes that these 'perennial laws' had been uncovered once and for all and were, therefore, not up for debate. The only investigation of magnetic therapy carried out by official medical practitioners (i. e. the 1784 report of the royal French commission) was so commissorially limited (the object was to explore Mesmer's claim that a hitherto unknown *physical* force was achieving magnetic healing) that the result was known in advance. The report concluded that the effects (which were not queried) were exclusively caused by patients' imagination, at which conclusion the authors of the report embarked on attempts to explain the

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55 Jean François Fournel, *Essair sur les probabilités du somnambulisme magnétique, pour servir à l'histoire du magnétisme animal* (Amsterdam, 1785), 20.

relevant 'imagination', including precisely which organic changes might be imaginatively elicited. Furthermore, Mesmer had been so bold – or naïve – as to claim that his cure could heal *all* maladies. As a result of his tremendous success, physicians across the board dreaded losing their livelihood, which, in turn, led the medical institutions to immediately threaten all members with excommunication if they implemented mesmeristic procedures while treating patients. This proved a strong contributing factor to the all but total usurping of animal magnetism, including Puységur's empirically scrupulous psychological scholarship, which consequently suffered being slandered as charlatanism.<sup>56</sup>

This unhappy status is the reason why Eberhard Gmelin entitled his 1791 magnum opus on the therapeutic possibilities of animal magnetism *Materialien für die Anthropologie*. He states in the preface that

Ich wählte die vorstehende Ueberschrift meines Buches deßwegen, weil ich wünsche, das gewisse Dilettanten des hier abgehandelten Gegenstandes darauf nicht aufmerksam, andere dagegen, welchen der gewöhnliche Name desselben nach ihrem eigenen Vorgeben Eckel erregt, durch die Ueberschrift gerade darauf aufmerksam gemacht würden

[I chose the above-mentioned title for my book because it is my wish that certain dilettantes of the topic in question will not become aware of it and, conversely, that others who abhor the common name for the same are made aware of it by precisely my title] (p. iii).

Similarly, at the midpoint of romanticism, G. H. Schubert deemed it mandatory to introduce chapter 13 of *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft*, in which somnambulism is portrayed as the pinnacle of human development, with the words

Ich weiß zwar wohl, daß die Gegenstände meiner heutigen Vorlesung, zu den am meisten anstößigen und verkannten gehören, und daß man sie, weil sie aus der gewöhnlichen Theorie nicht wohl zu erklären sind, lieber gänzlich abzuläugnen pflegt, ich werde mich jedoch hierbey mehr an dasjenige halten was wahr ist, als an das was mit der gewöhnlichen Meynung übereinstimmt

56 A late rehabilitation of 'the early magnetizers' occurred when one of the great French psychologists, Pierre Janet, in his 1889 thesis *L'automatisme psychologique* posited 'that there were real scientists among them who were so much more devoted to their science although they could win neither honour nor advantages of any kind. They dedicated their lives to studying phenomena of such extremely extensive and complicated natures that the scant hypnotism of today reveals nothing about it, and on this study they expended a patience, stubbornness, and astuteness which deservedly should have met a better fate' (p. 141). In light of the psychosomatic renaissance in the 1990s, this assertion seems well founded. Cf. the American psychiatrist Frank W. Putnam's work about multiple personalities, and Ian Hacking's *Rewriting the Soul. Multiple Personality and the Sciences of Memory* (Princeton, 1995). In Denmark, this branch of research is represented by, among others, the psychologist Bobby Zachariae (*Visualisering af helbredelse*, 1992).

[I know that the articles appertaining to today's lecture are among the most offensive and misunderstood and that because they are not explained by the ordinary theory they are generally rejected completely. I will, however, spend more time on what is true than on what agrees with general opinion].

A physician might, as in the example of Schelling, openly be an adherent of vitalism, regardless of the degree to which it was a speculative discipline – or even of Dr Gall's grotesque phrenology – but the line was drawn at the psychosomatic claims of animal magnetism.

Presumably, this tangible factor – i.e. the fear of being associated with a thought system dismissed or sceptically regarded by the majority of contemporary scientists – is a contributing cause to the poets' reservations or hesitancy when it came to programmatically expounding on animal magnetism. However, the fact that conceptual delineations are so few and far between does not preclude the fact that, either consciously or unconsciously<sup>57</sup>, the controversial new psychology of personality had an influence of the poetry of romanticism, including where it was not explicitly referenced. Conceivably, literature might 'function as a kind of asylum for difficult issues which the official scientific discourse has pushed aside and neglected to "solve" anthropologically'.<sup>58</sup>

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57 Graeme Tytler, *Physiognomy in the European Novel* (Princeton, N. J., 1988), xvii: 'There are ... implicit or incompletely explicit assumptions, or more or less unconscious mental habits, operating in the thought of an individual or a generation'.

58 Wolf Lepenies, 'Der Krieg der Wissenschaften und der Literatur', in Wolf Lepenies, *Gefährliche Wahlverwandtschaften. Essays zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (Stuttgart, 1989), 64.