

CHILDHOOD SEXUAL FLUIDITY:
FIRST LOVES IN *ANTON REISER*, *DAS MARMORBILD* AND *MANOR*

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ABSTRACT

CHRISTINA R. HUMPHREY: Childhood Sexual Fluidity:
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(Under the direction of Alice Kuzniar)

There is a surprising lack of analysis of sexual fluidity in children and pre-pubescent youth. It is my goal to focus on three *Sonderfälle* and provide a detailed analysis of the particular way in which three German authors dealt with the issue of sexual variance in youth and gender indeterminacy in teenage love. By employing current feminist and gender theories to adolescence, I will contrast the blossoming of adolescent sexuality in *Anton Reiser* written by Karl Philipp Moritz in the years of 1785 to 1790, with Florio's sexual fluidity in *Das Marmorbild* written by Joseph von Eichendorff in 1818. I will also examine the presentation of Har's sexual awakening in Karl Heinrich Ulrichs' *Manor* published in 1884. All three texts exhibit a fascinating array of sexual densities as the protagonists follow their *innere Stimme*, a natural, innate and unique voice within them, which easily transcends taboos and presents a realm of love which is sexually variable, open and undefined.

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To my daughters for their constant inspiration and to my husband for his unconditional support.

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INTRODUCTION

Middle sex, transgender persons, intersexuals, transsexuals, MTF (male to female), FTM (female to male), as seen in works by transgender activist and writer Leslie Feinberg, bisexual transman and writer Pat Califia, and such films as *Boys Don't Cry* and *Gendernauts*, are familiar buzzwords for the 21st -century. Gender ambiguity and sexual indeterminacy have enjoyed more media attention than ever, even on mainstream television. In the 2007 HBO documentary *Middle Sexes: Redefining He and She: America Undercover*, award-winning filmmaker Antony Thomas explores the blurring of gender as well as the serious social and family problems faced by those whose gender falls somewhere in between male and female. The movie starts with numeric facts: "In the United States 1 in 100 bodies is born not exhibiting what doctors consider standard male or female genitalia." It then accompanies transgender adults along their very personal journey to becoming who they are today. Thomas attempts to connect the recent documented increase in sex change operations with the gender indeterminacy of childhood, but a lot is left unexplained. The documentary acknowledges that different sexualities and gender indeterminacy exist in children, but it does not explore children's sexuality per se.

American avant-garde filmmaker Su Friedrich tries to broach the subject of child sexuality in her 1996 film *Hide and Seek*. She presents us with a documentary about lesbian women looking back at their childhood experiences during the 1960s, a time when most American families did not talk about sex. She pays particular attention to that moment when little girls first realized that they were "different." I found it most intriguing, that already as

girls these women remembered being reluctant to part with their childhood. They were painfully aware that puberty meant leaving that safety zone where gender and sexuality did not matter, and valued a time in their lives when sexuality and gender did not construct a person's identity. Since the subject of sex was taboo at home, children learned about it by observing their peers. It seemed completely natural for a girl to have a close relationship or a crush on another girl, in fact, most friendships started that way. Parents often termed these experiences "childhood fantasies" and considered them just a phase, nothing to be concerned about. During puberty however, parents expected this crush to progress into a serious "girl-loves-boy-crush" in preparation for marriage. Su Friedrich concludes that both a genetic disposition as well as societal factors have to be in place for women to be lesbians. She asks: at what age does it become abnormal to have a same-sex love? If the girls in her film clearly experienced varying degrees of sexuality and same sex feelings when they were children, then why is there so little research available on this phenomenon?

While fantasies of gender transcendence and dreams of sexual fluidity for adults have always existed, children's sexuality has historically either been ignored or deemed an inappropriate topic. It has been called repressed and potentially perverse by early 20th-century Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud and been classified as something that needs to be controlled by French philosopher and 20th-century post-modern theorist Michel Foucault. Sigmund Freud never actually observed children but based his theories on adult recollection. To him sexuality was not about choice, but about repression of desire. His psychoanalytic "oedipal" conflict describes a desire in the 3 to 5 year-old boy during his "phallic phase" for the opposite-sex parent. At this stage, when children first discover their sexual difference, conflict arises. The son desires his mother and at first

idealizes his father. He then secretly hopes to eliminate his father and possess the mother. According to Freud, this wish usually develops into a desire to marry someone like the mother, but the claim that a child's sexuality is something basic yet torturous has been made. Freud continuously maneuvers the contemporary heterosexual gender dyad and is therefore not able to see a child's sexuality as a fluid phenomenon outside of that structure. Freud's notions of childhood emerged in the earlier 20th -century, but what came before him?

By embarking on a historical inquiry of sexual fluidity in children, I hope to offer a new understanding of children's sexuality. My research is situated in the realm of children and will focus on polysexuality in children. Is a child's love "blind" when it comes to gender and sexuality? My answer is yes. For most children and young adolescents, love and desire are neither heterosexual nor homosexual, but wonderfully amorphous. I hope to contribute to the discussion of gender and sexuality in this literary analysis by demonstrating that the phenomenon of sexual fluidity already existed in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century German literary texts leading up to Freud. I will be elaborating on three fascinating works from 18th - and 19th -century German literature. I will discuss first loves in the example of the protagonist *Anton Reiser* written by Karl Philipp Moritz between 1785 and 1790. I will then analyze sexual fluidity in Forio in *Das Marmorbild* written by Joseph von Eichendorff in 1818. Finally, I will examine the presentation of the sexual awakening of "Min Jong" Har in *Manor* written by Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and published under his *Matrosengeschichten* in 1884 (Hohmann 272). By contrasting Anton's late 18th -century same-sex love with Har's late 19th -century homosexual awakening, the commonalities and differences between their versions of sexual fluidity will become apparent. Particular attention will also be paid to the different approaches taken by the authors, i.e. comparing Eichendorff's early 19th -century

“romantic” view of a continuum of a youth’s different sexual identities to Ulrich’s late 19th - century view of a decidedly defined homosexual identity.

As a parent, I have certainly observed gender-mediated differences between my daughters and their boy cousins throughout their childhood, especially now as they are entering early adolescence. As toddlers, they played equally happily with the *Little Tikes* play-kitchen, a car, and various other gender neutral toys that I purposely gave them. Now, as young adolescents that lovely “gender free” safety zone is disappearing at an alarming rate. Suddenly my daughters worry more about how they are being perceived by their peers than being true to themselves and nothing is more important than fitting in with their ascribed gender group. I know that they are saddened by this change and would prefer to cling to their childhood instead. What might seem to most parents like natural pre-teen development, confronts me like a criminal act, a forced adherence to an artificially imposed set of rules, restricting my children to behave within a tightly wound heterosexual matrix. How do I, as their parent, afford them a chance to live free from societal gender pressure until they have explored who they truly are?

I am interested in a child’s innate sense of self, regardless of its gender. By applying current feminist and gender theories to adolescence, my research differs from studies on homosexuality by Paul Derks and studies of androgyny and cross-dressing by Catriona MacLeod. It concerns itself with polysexuality in children, a topic that scholarship has to a large extent avoided. This avoidance does not mean one can discuss sexuality and sexual orientation without touching upon gender roles and gender identity.

What exactly is the relationship between gender and sexuality? The gender question has been explained by scholars like French philosopher, existentialist and feminist Simone de

Beauvoir, psychoanalyst feminist Jessica Benjamin, and poststructuralist feminist Judith Butler as a social phenomenon, an acculturation of sorts, a binary set of performative rules prescribed and adhered to by society. Butler ardently argues against fictitiously stable gender identities in *Gender Trouble*:

This perpetual displacement constitutes a fluidity of identities that suggests an openness to resignification and recontextualization; parodic proliferation deprives hegemonic culture and its critics of the claim to naturalized or essentialist gender identities. There is a contingent link between the imitation and the original, pleasure of performance and dramatization of cultural mechanisms. (137)

Gender is hence a property not of persons themselves, but of the behaviors to which members of a society ascribe a gendered meaning. If one takes this “postmodern performativity argument” one step further, gender is seen as a cultural construction and the body is simply a text upon which individuals are free to inscribe their gender choice, although social restrictions make this rather difficult in reality.

Scholars on the other end of the spectrum, like Louann Brizendine, the author of *The Female Brain*, explain gender as something not imposed by culture, but an expression of biological, hormonal and neurological changes influencing unique desires at the inner core of a woman’s body:

What we’ve found is, that the female brain is so deeply affected by hormones that their influence can be said to create a woman’s reality. They can shape a woman’s values and desires, and tell her, day to day, what’s important. Their presence is felt at every stage of life, right from birth. Each hormone state - girlhood, the adolescent years, the dating years, motherhood, and menopause - act as fertilizer for different neurological connections that are responsible for new thoughts, emotions and interests. A woman’s neurological reality (...) is constantly changing and hard to predict. (3)

Brizendine’s scientific findings also suggest that sexual orientation starts on a genetic level as early as during fetal development: “sexual orientation does not appear to be a matter of conscious self-labeling, but a matter of brain-wiring” (186). The latter theory perhaps in part

explains why persons born with female body parts and living as girls until adulthood would subject themselves to grueling monthly hormonal treatments in order to receive an even more painful sex change operation, knowing full well the possibility of being ostracized by society. The determination to change one's gender thus could be a response to a calling that resonates out of the depth of that person's inner core, something that has been there since childhood.

It is my opinion that, while there are different densities of sexual being at play at different ages with each child, there is a natural innate sense of one's sexuality, not in static form as the terminology "inner core" might suggest, but rather an openness to explore one's sexual continuum without shame. French philosopher Michel Foucault would disagree with this notion. In his book *The History of Sexuality*, children's sexuality is produced, hence needs to be controlled through discipline. Foucault speaks of the production of sexuality in children, calling it both "natural" and "unnatural" in what he calls the "pedagogization of children's sex":

a double assertion that practically all children indulge or are prone to indulge in sexual activity; and that, being unwarranted, at the same time "natural" and "contrary to nature," this sexual activity posed physical and moral, individual and collective dangers; children were defined as "preliminary" sexual beings, on this side of sex, yet within it, astride a dangerous dividing line. Parents, families, educators, doctors and eventually psychologists would have to take charge (...) of this dangerous sexual potential. (104)

I disagree with Foucault, because his theories on sexuality cannot fully explain the complexity of Moritz', Eichendorffs and Ulrichs', nor the characters' lack of awareness of stigmatization in these texts. In my opinion, these youth are following their innate "natural" urges. Any social stigmatization does not concern them. Their sexuality has not been produced and begs not be controlled. They feel no shame. Their sense of well-being comes precisely from living outside the dominant heterosexual matrix which awaits them in the

adult world. It is my suggestion that this absence of social stigmatization reflects not only the authors' understanding, but more importantly their condoning of the protagonists' changing sexuality.

In this thesis, I hope to provide an alternative view of a youth's eroticism, one that does not always expect to find a hetero-normative outcome. Prior to delving into a detailed analysis of these fascinating works, I would like to briefly touch upon several similarities. First, all three youths experience first loves and share the same initial astonishment at the intensity of their erotic feelings. It is suggested that they never had experienced these desires before. Second, none of the youths follow a mapped out path towards a constructed category of gender. Their first loves are not described as merely an adolescent phase that one passes through to live a heterosexual life as adults. None of the three stories has a heterosexual outcome. Third, none of the boys feels shame. There is a complete lack of inner censorship. These youths instinctively embrace their first loves and courageously accept their indeterminacy and unique desires as a natural fact of life. Fourth, the indeterminacy and sexual fluidity of adolescence is crucial to the story. There is no attempt to fix gender attraction in any of these stories, except perhaps in Ulrichs who, as one of the earliest sexologists, would have used the term "homosexuality" coined in 1869, by the time that *Manor* was written. Interestingly enough, this is the only story that depicts social censorship and attempts of coercion by the adult world which then lead to the protagonist's death. In this sense, *Manor* seems to follow the pattern Foucault designates for late 19th –century bourgeois society, a society that uses force to arrest seemingly "dangerous" childhood sexuality.

I have chosen the following three works because I find them particularly fascinating, perplexing and unique in the way that they demonstrate the amorphousness of youth. I am

not focusing on specific acts of sexuality but rather on the fascination and attraction burgeoning on the erotic in these adolescents. In these unique German literature cases, one can find evidence of a child's sexual fluidity moving effortlessly into same sex-attraction or orientation that calls into question "gender- appropriate behavior." The sexual variance displayed by the characters in these works reflects the natural desires coming out of their inner core, setting an example of love and humanity that all of us could benefit from. These gems of literature articulate their own discourse, opening up avenues for the expression of desires that resist being named, as naming would inevitably lead to the arrest of its wonderful fluidity.

CHAPTER 1: Anton's "Empfindungen"

This chapter will examine the sexual awakening and first love of Anton, the main character in the psychological and autobiographical novel *Anton Reiser*, written by the German author, teacher and journalist Karl Phillip Moritz between 1785 and 1790. It will focus on the sexual development of a young student constructed counter to social norms of the time. Anton's fluidity becomes especially apparent in his interactions with literature in his school environment. Scholar Claudia Kestenholz calls Moritz's novel a "wissenschaftliche Abhandlung in Romanform" (10). It is my contention, however, that underneath the apparent "scientific" description of Anton's life, more flexible views on gender are being promulgated by the author. I confined my research to a few passages of this extensive novel which illuminate Anton's sexual amorphousness. These provide a fascinating insight into the role that education, schooling and, in particular, teacher emulation, play in Anton's first love.

The autobiographical nature of this novel is evident throughout its pages. The author Moritz grew up very isolated, under poor circumstances and controlled by a strict and domineering father, whose intention was similar to Anton's father who wished "alle Leidenschaften zu ertöten, und alle *Eigenheit* auszurotten" (Moritz 6). It is said that his father forbade him to attend public school and raised him under the most disciplined rules of protestant pietism. Likewise, Anton's father is extremely strict and pious. He would beat Anton continuously for acting "inappropriately":

Er war wegen einer gewissen bösen Angewohnheit, die bei Kindern sehr gewöhnlich ist, oft mit der Rute gezüchtigt worden. Es hatte ihn aber, wie es auch gewöhnlich ist, immer sehr lebhaft geträumt, er habe sich an die Wand gestellt und... er stand oft lange da, ehe er es wagte dem Bedürfniss der Natur in Gnüge zu tun. (Moritz 66)

This quotation demonstrates Anton's blossoming autoerotic sexuality and possibly alludes to masturbation. More importantly, it shows a father's effort to control his son's burgeoning sexuality through corporal punishment, which also ties into the whipping Anton observed years later at his school:

Der Konrektor sowohl als der Kantor teilten Ohrfeigen aus und bedienten sich zu schärfern Züchtigungen der Peitsche, welche beständig auf dem Katheder lag; auch mussten diejenigen, welche etwas verbrochen hatten, manchmal zur Strafe am Katheder knien. (Moritz 113)¹

Anton experiences contrasting emotions of love and fear. He respects and fears his teachers yet he also greatly admires and loves them. Anton craves their attention and goes to great lengths to be noticed by them:

Reiser suchte sich auch auf alle Weise in der Achtung des Kantors immer fester zu setzen. Dies ging so weit, daß er auf einem öffentlichen Spielplatze, wo der Kantor hinzukommen pflegte, mit einem aufgeschlagenen Buche in der Hand auf und nieder ging, um die Blicke seines Lehrers auf sich zu ziehen. (Moritz 116)

These performative acts on Anton's part, show the artificial nature of his interactions with his teachers. He yearns for their approval and must avoid their punishment at all costs: "Reiser war der Gedanke schon unerträglich, sich jemals einer solchen Strafe von Männern zuzuziehen, welche er als seine Lehrer im hohen Grade liebte und ehrte, und nichts eifriger wünschte, als sich wiederum ihre Liebe und Achtung zu erwerben" (Moritz 113). It is interesting that love and respect are conjoined in this quotation: is "Achtung" and fear inextricable from desire? What certain is this quest for love motivates him to excel at school but – as I shall demonstrate - is not able to motivate him to forgo his innate desires in regards

¹ The pose is suggestive, as if praying for punishment. I would like to research this thought further.

to his sexuality. The previous passages provide evidence of the bourgeois effort (first by the parents, then by the teachers) to cement obedience in children through schooling and punishment during the enlightenment period in late 18th-century Germany.

The chief enlightenment ideals were *Empfindsamkeit*, pedagogy, utility, sensibility and humanity. Germany experienced an unparalleled increase in publications, a veritable *Lesewut* as some called it. Between the years of 1770 and 1850 more than 6000 novels were published, *Anton Reiser* being one of them. Noticing the immense popularity of *Trivalliteratur*, authors soon employed psychological and pedagogical works (for example *Die Geschichte des Fräuleins von Sternheim* written by Sophie LaRoche in 1771) to educate women and children, creating a new realm of bourgeois privacy where distinctively heterosexual values were promulgated². This type of education and pedagogy was instrumental in maintaining 18th-century gender norms. Within this discourse of utility, sexuality was typecast as well. In an age fixed on binary models of logic and scientific discourse, there was increased fear of a potentially uncontrollable sexuality in women and children. The principal goal of sexual intercourse became procreation, sexual difference was fixed, and the discipline of desire was formed into a heterosexual dyad. Catriona MacLeod calls this phenomenon “a scientific and literary inscription and codification of difference” with an emphasis on a dualistic hierarchical structure (13).

Society’s effort to discipline desires was also meant to be achieved through another popular concept of the enlightenment, namely the idea of learning through self-observation. Moritz advocated the idea of self-monitoring and published one of the first psychological journals, the *Magazin für Erfahrungsseelenkunde als ein Lesebuch für Gelehrte und Ungelehrte*, from 1783 to 1793. His magazine presented different case studies to enlighten

² This information was taken from my notes in Dr. Hess’ 18th-century literature class.

and educate its readers for the “moral betterment” of society. Believing in reason as the primary basis of authority, individuals were encouraged to express their inner desires within the scientific framework of a journal, rationalize them and learn from them. In this sense, the age of enlightenment also shed light on different sexualities. Whereas Moritz does not explicitly analyze sexuality in this magazine, he, in my opinion, does stretch conventional 18th-century gender norms in *Anton Reiser* by creating a child character whose sexuality has purposely been left undefined.

The novel *Anton Reiser* is intentionally psychological in nature and refers to the now familiar purpose of educating the reader by “die Aufmerksamkeit des Menschen mehr auf den Menschen selbst zu helfen, und ihm sein individuelles Dasein wichtiger zu machen” (Moritz 5). Moritz thus emphasizes the importance of the individual, whereas the bourgeois effort advocates the betterment of a collective. The underlying 18th-century ideal of educating the *Bürgertum* through literature within their domestic sphere is well documented. The *Bürger* would be encouraged to and confirmed in serving what patriarchy would call their *god-given* purpose: the husband would be responsible for working, providing money, shelter and protecting his family, whereas the wife would be responsible for maintaining the house, raising the children and serving her husband. Likewise, the focus on pedagogy and schooling for children was intended to raise proper young adults for a useful and ordered life according to bourgeois binary gender ideals.

Keeping that pedagogy in mind, one should look at Anton’s sexual development in childhood. At the age of 8, he exhibited a strong urge to be with boys: “und oft wenn er einen Knaben von seinem Alter sah hing seine ganze Seele an ihm, und er hätte alles drum gegeben, sein Freund zu werden” (10). This feeling of being drawn to boys was a natural

desire. Thereafter, Anton goes through two distinct phases of sexual awakening. Floyd Martinson, describes similar phases in his chapter “Eroticism in Childhood: A Sociological Perspective” in the book *The Sexual and Gender Development of Young Children*. He declares the first autoerotic awakening to take place: “when a person is aware of the capacity to tactilely stimulate self and has the volition to stimulate self (...) where masturbation is more volatile and organized.” According to Martinson, the second awakening is heteroerotic and sociosexual in nature: “rather than stimulating oneself, one is sexually stimulated by the touch, the sight or the thought of another person” (75). When Anton is about 12 years old, he becomes infatuated with his teachers and at 18 years of age, he falls in love with a fellow male student. A closer look at the passages I have selected shows the ambiguous state in which Anton finds himself. He is torn between impressing his teachers and striving to be an admired member of the heterosexual bourgeoisie (like the Rektor) or living according to his own homosexual desires. His ambiguity and indecisiveness are underscored by allusions to in-between spaces, where a decision is suspended: “Es fällt daher auch wirklich in der Kindheit oft schwer, das Wachen vom Traume zu unterscheiden” (Moritz 66). Much like protagonists Florio and Manor in chapters 3 and 4 of my thesis, Anton refers to that ambiguous realm between night and day with a sense of longing: “Auch pflegt man des Morgens beim Erwachen oft noch halb zu träumen und der Übergang zum Wachen wird allmählig gemacht (...) und so ordnet sich nach und nach alles übrige von selber.” (Moritz 66) In early Romanticism, it was precisely this time between night and day, between dark and light, between dreams and reality that created the impression that anything was possible. It was a realm where fantasies took hold and reality was suspended in a sort of magical disbelief, a safe haven that Anton yearns for. Anton’s puberty can be seen as such an in-

between time because Anton's sexual development is anything but symmetrical. Anton seems to want to adhere to the heterosexual social contract, but steps outside the norm of 18th-century gender fixation and definition. Anton's ambiguity becomes most evident in the tension between his public school life and his imaginary life within literature:

Allein sein Schicksal war nun einmal von Kindheit an, die Leiden der Einbildungskraft zu dulden, zwischen welcher und seinem wirklichen Zustande ein immerwährender Mißlaut herrschte, und die sich für jeden schönen Traum nachher mit bittren Qualen rächte. (Moritz 336)

Anton experiences literature as intensely liberating. It allows him to go within himself and listen to his feelings. Literature kindles his desires and helps him experience a most natural fluidity that is lacking within the day-to-day school conformity:

Allein wie er sich schon so oft aus seiner wirklichen Welt in die Bücherwelt gerettet hatte, wenn es aufs äusserste kam, so fügte es sich auch diesmal, daß er sich gerade im Bücherantiquarius die Wielandsche Übersetzung von Shakespeare liehe – und Welch eine neue Welt eröffnete sich nun auf einmal wieder für seine Denk und Empfindungskraft! Im Shakespeare lebte, dachte und träumte er nun wo er ging und stand. (Moritz 189)

Suddenly, by imbibing these books, Anton experiences a freedom he never knew existed:

“hier war mehr als alles, was er bisher gedacht, gelesen und empfunden hatte” (Moritz 189).

Literature has a transcendent quality for Anton; it becomes his constant companion, larger than life, influences his thinking and incites his emotions long after he is finished reading.

Moreover, it gives him permission to trust his feelings and follow his own desires. As he grows older, this innate sense facilitates resisting gendered constructions of the *Lateinschule* and the *Gymnasium* that try to contain and define him.

At the age of 18, Anton experiences a new dimension to his sexual awakening. He meets and falls in love with fellow student Philipp Reiser and their friendship is described as: “so wie zwei Wanderer, die zusammen in einer brennenden Wüste in Gefahr vor Durst zu

verschmachten (...) und sich wechselweise Trost einzusprechen" (163). Anton thirsts to share his literary excursions with "seinem romantischen Freunde" who understands his passion for literature and poetry: "seine größte Begierde war, das alles, was er beim Lesen desselben empfand [seinem Freund Philip Reiser] mitzuteilen" (Moritz 189). Not only does Anton experience erotic feelings when reading literature, he also shares his desires with Philipp and furthermore enjoys observing Philipp's physical reactions to those readings. Moritz presents Anton's voyeuristic pleasure as follows: "und auf alle dessen Empfindungen und Äußerungen dabei mit Wohlgefallen zu merken, war die grösste Wonne, welche Reiser in seinem Leben genossen hatte" (Moritz 189). Anton and Philip spend much time together during the day "sie blieben oft den ganzen Tag im Bette liegen" (164) and many nights together sitting close to one another on a small table reading, presenting a decidedly domestic idyll. Anton channels the benevolent father figure, who enjoys reading to Philip, who tends the room, makes the coffee and puts more wood in the oven. Philip is responsible for what some would call the more feminine duties of tending to the home. Simultaneously, Moritz interjects a decidedly homoerotic element into the text: "dann saßen sie bei einer kleinen Lampe an einem Tischchen – und Philipp Reiser hatte sich mit langem Halse herübergebeugt, sowie Anton Reiser weiterlas und die schwellende Leidenschaft mit dem wachsenden Interesse der Handlung stieg" (Moritz 189). Several erotic elements come into play here. First, both boys are sitting extremely close together on a small table in the dark illuminated only by a small light. Second, Philip's long and slender neck serves as a reminder of his childlike, even androgynous body. In addition, he is bending over Anton. Third, Moritz employment of the words "lang, schwellen, wachsend," insinuates a distinctly phallic reference. Anton has in a sense progressed from escaping to literature in complete solitude, to

effectively using literature to sexually awaken and erotically charged himself and his closest friend as well: “Durch den Shakespeare war er die Welt der menschlichen Leidenschaften hindurch geführt [...] denn er hatte die Empfindungen Tausender beim Lesen des Shakespeare mit durchempfunden” (Moritz 190). This erotic passage envelops the previously mentioned ideals of the enlightenment, stating that literature can promote a universal humanity through an identification with someone else’s inner monologue.

In eighteenth-century narrative, the idea of *Bildung* through literature is firmly connected with the inner psyche and bourgeois socialization. The influence of education and schooling on a pubescent child’s sexuality cannot be underestimated. Dorothea von Mücke explains this important connection in her study *Virtue and the Veil of Illusion: Generic Innovation and the Pedagogical Project in Eighteenth-Century Literature*: “The word *Bildung* with its multiple connotations of forming, shaping, molding, education, cultivation, creation, and construction, is applied in the eighteenth century (...) to the body and mind of the newly disciplined human subject” (161-162). Schools are segregated by gender and represent a state mechanism for controlling desire and for channeling childhood sexuality in the “proper” direction. School is the place where boys learn to be boys, and girls learn to be girls, separately, of course. Should a child experience same-sex love, he or she is expected to quickly pass through that phase and graduate having successfully acquired “correct” gender roles. Sigmund Freud writes about the benefits of such education in *Metapsychologische Schriften. Prinzipien des Psychischen Geschehens*:

Die Erziehung kann ohne weitere Bedenken als Anregung zur Überwindung des Lustprinzips, zur Ersetzung desselben durch das Realitätsprinzip beschrieben werden; sie will also jenem das Ich betreffende Entwicklungsprozess eine Nachhilfe bieten.
(36)

One finds several examples of utilizing pedagogy to overcome lust and desires at the *Gymnasium*. This environment thrives on hierarchy and strict adherence to rules. The teacher, a substitute for the “benevolent” patriarchal father, is in charge and the student becomes the dependent, controlled object. Any special attention from the teachers Anton which desires results in him being taunted by the other students. Moritz describes Anton’s awareness of being talked and laughed about:

Als er nämlich die ersten Male Prima besuchte, hörte er zuweilen hinter ihm zischeln: sieh da ist des Rektors Famulus (...). Dabei deuchte es ihm, als ob er allgemein von seinen Mitschülern mit einer Art von Verachtung betrachtet würde. (Moritz 138)

The cruel demeanor of his classmates propels Anton to retreat even deeper into literature. Within the covers of *Shakespeare*, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* and *Emilia Galotti*, to name a few of his favorite books, Anton immerses into a fantasy world and escapes his overly structured life. The love stories *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* and *Emilia Galotti* seem to hold particular significance for him, which is interesting, because both have a highly charged emotional and erotic content, and both protagonists sacrifice themselves for having followed their desires. Why does this literature move him so? Would he sacrifice himself for his desires? There is evidence for his identification with this sentiment: “Für den Kantor hätte Reiser alles aufgeopfert” (Moritz 115)³. Does Anton believe that he has sinned when he experienced his homosexual urges? Not in my opinion.

There is no implication in the text that Moritz finds Anton’s attraction to his teacher anything but normal. Moritz does not give the impression that homoeroticism even deserves a special mention. By not mentioning it, I think he underscores my argument that there are different sexual densities in Anton and that he moves along a normal flexible continuum of

³ There are additional passages that discuss Anton and Philip Reiser’s relationship and further bolster my argument. They will be discussed at length in my dissertation.

sexualities. No matter how much pedagogy and *Bildung* one puts in its way, a child's inner core will find a way to express itself.

Alice Kuzniar acknowledges Moritz' nonchalance in response to a student's infatuation with a fellow university student in the eighth issue of his *Magazine zur Erfahrungsseelenkunde*: "the underlying conviction being that the behavior examined was not aberrant but explainable with reference to social circumstance and (...) common" (24). In this section of the magazine, Moritz explains that affection between student and teacher can be understood as normal, yet circumstantial. This emulation and ensuing infatuation with teachers ties in with Moritz' belief that children learned best through emulation and repetition: "dieser bei allem Unterricht so notwendigen, wenn auch nur mechanischen Trieb der Emulation (...) hat viele Vorzüge vor so vielen neuern Methoden" (Moritz 124). A student's affection for his teacher was therefore an understandable development grown out of the desire to emulate. What Moritz does find troublesome is not the students' homoerotic love, Kuzniar explains, but his "excessive adoration," referring to fanatic pietism earlier in the journal. She continues: "The matter of fact attitude that prevails throughout this story prevents it from acquiring a confessional, revelatory, or shocking tone. The guilt-free account is not contextualized, moreover, as one today might expect, among a set of cases devoted to sexual self-questioning" (Kuzniar 25).

Ironically, while the piousness of Anton's father and the pedagogy of his teachers attempt to educate and control his sexual fluidity in order to create a "proper" heterosexual citizen, Anton's first love is a homosexual love. No matter how much he suffers and is beaten, he continues to follow his innate desires. Despite the fact that schools are attempting to harness sexuality during puberty, shaping sexual identities in children while they are still

undefined, Anton is able to resist that type of education. He affirms those desires his school is trying to contain, keep out, and from which it aims to protect its students. The importance of *Bildung* in late 18th –century enlightened Germany not prevent Moritz from presenting us with an account of a child who discovers and follows his natural desires. The immense power of literature, being a stimulant as well as a conduit for sexuality, is evident throughout the novel. Literature is able to suspend time and allows Anton to remain in that miraculous space between childhood and adulthood a while longer: “Was Wunder also, daß seine ganze Seele nach einer Lektüre hing, die ihm, so oft er sie kostete, sich selber wiedergab!” (Moritz 211). Literature is so valuable to him as it mirrors the dynamic process in his inner core. With adulthood fast approaching, Anton hangs on both literally and figuratively to his inner core’s desires, understanding full well the arrest of this freedom and fluidity once he grows up.

CHAPTER 2: Florio in Bloom

The authors of German Romanticism displayed a particular quest for total individuality, a hunger for the expression of their intellectual freedom, a thirst to quench their unique sexual desires and a yearning for the paradisiacal life of Greek antiquity, a life unconstrained by the rules of the bourgeois society they lived in. Searching for a freedom unattainable in their day to day lives, they exhibited a preference for fantasy that advocated the dissolution of all categories. They knew that there were deeper truths and inescapable realities in the world which could only be reached through emotions, feelings and intuition. In this quest for complete individual freedom, authors such as Ludwig Tieck, Friedrich Schlegel and Joseph von Eichendorff, explored the intersections of sexuality and gender.

Joseph von Eichendorff wrote *Das Marmorbild*, a fascinating example of adolescent sexual fluidity in German romanticism in 1818. Like many authors of romanticism such as his contemporaries, Novalis, Tieck, and Schlegel, he believed in the fantastic, dissolution of categories and pursued individual freedom. While most critics saw Novalis reinforcing gender normativity, they found Schlegel certainly reversing gender positions in *Lucinde*. Here, the woman makes love to a man like a man- which opens up a fascinating discourse of sexual and gender fluidity asking: are the characters both men? Eichendorff was a conservative Catholic. His religiousness explains both the need for the taming of desire and also the longing for certain eroticism in his novel. The solidification of gender norms around 1800 might be another reason for the delicate, indirect way in which Eichendorff addresses

sexuality while writing an erotic and sensual story. Thomas Laqueur writes about the creation of gender constructs of this time period:

The two-sex model was produced through endless micro-confrontations over power in the public and private sphere. They were fought in terms of sex-determinant characteristics of male and female bodies because the truths of biology had replaced divinely ordained hierarchies or immemorial custom as the basis for the creation and distribution of power in relations between men and women. (Laqueur 193)

A heterosexual gender hierarchy had been constructed. In Florio, however, Eichendorff creates a character which does not follow a mapped out path towards a constructed category of gender. His sexuality can not be limited to or be contained by existing gender categories, but rather moves easily and naturally from one sexual realm to the next. Florio's sexual fluidity glides on a continuum of non-normative categories from an asexual boy to a homosexual adolescent, and finally to a mature bisexual male in love with a cross-dressing female, or even with an androgynous being, combining both sexes perfectly within her.

Terms like 'heterosexual' and 'homosexual' did not appear until 1868 and established two sex-differentiated erotic categories in the late 19th century and with them the historically specific idea of the heterosexual was constructed glorifying the experience of a proper, middle-class, different-sex lust. After having establishing the acceptable, normal or ordinary categories of gender, patriarchy then had the power to enforce heteronormativity while simultaneously casting out the "abnormal" and "deviant" or "other" forms of sexuality. The problem with categorization is that there will always be human beings that will not fit into any established gender category. This form of labeling is a meek attempt to contain something that is simply uncontainable in nature.

I am going against both the constructivist and essentialist argument for gender, when insisting that human beings and their sexualities are always fluctuating and evolving. I am in agreement with Lisa Diamond, professor of Psychology and Gender Studies, who envisions a combination of both essentialist and constructivist arguments, while adding a crucial circumstantial factor in her claim for women's sexuality, as she writes:

Taking alone, neither essentialism nor social constructivism adequately explains women's sexuality. Pure essentialism, for example is blind to the powerful sociocultural forces that mold individuals sexual desires over the lifespan. Hence, investigations of love and sexuality must always include the multiple social and cultural factors that make some type of affection and eroticism acceptable for women, whereas other types are suppressed, punished or never even imagined. (Diamond 21)

I believe there are infinite varieties of sexual densities within each infinite version of sexuality that can be found within literature. Our limited system of language, however, has never been able to name all of the nuances within such categories. Thus the language we use continues to reiterate binary gender categories as if they had always existed. In *The Myth of Heterosexuality* Jonathan Ned Katz explains, "The human body was thought of directly constituting the true man and woman, and their feelings. No distinction was made between biologically given sex und socially constructed masculinity and femininity" (Katz 45). How does one categorize something like sexual fluidity? Eichendorff certainly seems to suggest that sexuality is as boundless as nature, not gender biased structure, not an end but a beginning where once should ask questions.

Das Marmorbild provides a multitude of discourses around various sexual desires. The ultimate goal of Florio's sexual maturing is not that he will leave the natural homosexual leanings of his youth behind to become an adult heterosexual male that marries an adult heterosexual female – to fit into an established gender category- but rather, that his maturing allows him to realize that he combines different densities of both male and female within

himself, and that his chosen partner Bianca, combines the same within herself. By placing Florio within different contexts, the author shows the different possibilities of gender. He opens up possibilities that one might be conditioned not to see.

The author consciously displays Florio's indeterminacy of sexuality and gender. I argue that Florio's overwhelming desire to love both men and women is only possible because of his youth, as at his age he is free from societal gender constructs or gender categories.

Judith Butler writes in *Gender Trouble* that the first, natural love for a child is loving someone of the same sex love. Only as the child grows up does the homosexual love become unspeakable. She deconstructs psychoanalysis and convincingly claims that the repression of a person's homosexual desires constructs what we know as heterosexuality today. The youth Florio challenges what patriarchal society means to define as specifically male or female. He lives a double life, torn between trying to live within the pattern set by bourgeois society, while exploring his own sexual desires. Eichendorff devises various layered characters, who draw out the hidden desires of Florio. He cross-genders his protagonists (Florio, Bianca and Fortunato) in the novella, but still operates within the constraints of stereotypical bourgeois gender roles, presumably in order to render the novella "appropriate" for bourgeois reading.

Following these prescriptive gender roles, women in the *Marmorbild* (excluding Venus) are described as non-threatening, quiet, demure, shy, well dressed; in short, the perfect accompaniment or accessory for men. The character of Bianca, one of Florio's female objects of desire, is the perfect example of the bourgeois woman. Even her name underscores the standards of the time: clean, white, empty and fair. Other adjectives used to describe women are "anmutig," "schweigend," "zierlich," "fast noch kindliche Gestalt," "verneigte sie sich errötend," "erschrocken" (Eichendorff 11-15). In contrast, the men in this novella are

usually described as active, strong, loudly singing and full of vigor. Ritter Donati, one of Florio's male objects of desire, is the epitome of masculinity. He is described as well-dressed, "hoher," "schlank," "schön," "blass und wüst," "wild," "zuckende Lippen," "hastig dunkelroten Wein in langen Zügen schlürfend," "schnell" (Eichendorff 17-18). His name means to grant, give and bestow. He is powerful, strong, wild, always rushing, rides fast like the wind, can not be held, comes and goes as he pleases, yet he is also beautiful in a scary kind of way. He initially represents the mature masculine sexuality that takes charge and can not be controlled. Florio and many women at the party find him frightfully attractive. Bianca, however, is instinctively afraid of his raw masculine power and prefers the gentler Florio. It turns out that Donati also has what could be called homosexual tendencies, which will be described later. Some adult males also exhibit gender and sexual fluidity to a lesser degree, but it is suggested that only adolescence is the perfect, "natural," fluid realm for a person. Only within childhood and early adolescence is one truly free of societal expectations.

Fortunato, Florio's other male object of desire, is described as much more effeminate, sensual, calmer and in touch with his feminine side. His name means fortunate, lucky, well-off, blessed and happy. He is a famous singer, "ein zauberischer Spielmann" (Eichendorff 10) and is much admired and respected by everyone at the party. He clearly exhibits a homoerotic attraction to Florio and portrays his feelings publicly by singing to him, taking his hands and leading him away:

Da gewahrte der Sanger den Jungling in der Ferne und kam sogleich auf ihn zu.
Freundlich fasste er ihn bei beiden Handen und fuhrte den Bloden, ungeachtet aller
Gegenreden, wie einen lieblichen Gefangenen nach dem nah gelegenen offenen Zelt.
(Eichendorff 12)

There is no shame or stigmatization because of Fortunato's desires towards a much younger man. Florio also feels no shame: "Es gibt noch sanfte und hohe Empfindungen, die wohl

schamhaft sind, aber sich nicht zu schämen brauchen, und ein stilles Glück, das sich vor dem lauten Tage verschliesst und nur dem Sternenhimmel den heiligen Kelch öffnet wie eine Blume, in der ein Engel wohnt” (Eichendorff 24). A closer look at the protagonist and his placement within the context of the novella is required. The very first suggestion of Florio’s gender fluidity and ensuing gender inversion can be found in his name. It means something plantlike, budding, not yet ripe. Names of flora, vegetation, plant life were often used by the Romantics but were predominantly used to describe women, the “Blütenkelch” symbolizing the vagina, for example. The relationship between sexuality and the language of flowers becomes evident as flowers exist naturally in a variety of sexes. Some flowers can either be seen as asexual, other flowers can morph from a male sex to a female sex and vice versa, and yet others are able to combine both the male and female sex within one plant. One could presume that Florio first is asexual like a plant and that the budding homosexuality of his youth is natural. Perhaps Florio is also searching for an androgynous ideal, combining both sexes within himself. Further references to Florio’s likeness to plants and to a young woman are achieved through the clearly gendered language. He is a “junge blühende Gestalt” (Eichendorff 12). Florio stands “in blühende Träume versunken” (Eichendorff 27). “Am folgenden Morgen, als Florio soeben seine Traublüten abgeschüttelt hatte.” (Eichendorff 30). The reader is thus presented with different possibilities of interpretation.

It is within Florio’s character that the novella’s sexual and gender fluidity finds its fullest expression. Florio’s erotic life begins with the question whether he loves a boy or a girl or both. Eichendorff opens sexuality up to a multitude of interpretations. Florio is attracted to both men and women and is equally desired by both men and women. The bright, safe environment “der Tag” (Fortunato und Bianca) and the mysterious dangerous

environment “die Nacht” (Donati, Venus) are both extremely attractive to Florio. Within the multitude of Florio’s homosexual (Donati, Fortunato) and heterosexual (Venus, Bianca) desires is a cosmos of different densities of masculinity and femininity.

Denis Riley advocates convincingly in “Does Sex Have A History?” that the invented classification and category of woman (or man) assumes that there is only one female identity as well as one male identity, not taking into account the fluctuations each person goes through. In a sense, any given woman will easily transcend the category of femininity, however it is defined. Riley calls these fluctuations “densities of sexed being.” “If being a woman is more accurately conceived as state which fluctuates for the individual, depending what she or others consider to characterize it, then there are always different densities of sexed beings in operation, and the historical aspects are at play here” (Riley 22). Bracketing out specific historical factors, this passage from Riley explains what is happening to Florio in this novella. He remains undecided because of the “different densities of his sexed being” at play. That is the reason why he is drawn to both men and women in equal measure. He exhibits “different densities” throughout his journey of self-recovery. This theory stands in opposition to Judith Butler who considers subjectivity, gender, and sexuality not essential unitary categories, but discursive constructs. One of Butler's arguments is that the coherence of the categories of sex, gender and sexuality is not naturally given, but culturally constructed. She theorizes gender, along with sex and sexuality, as performative within the heterosexual matrix of established norms. The French feminist, Simone de Beauvoir, is also known for claiming that the “sexed body is a situation” (Moi 60). However, the youths Bianca and Florio escape those cultural constructs, as they have not yet been indoctrinated with societal cultural norms because of their age and naiveté. They are not forced to

performing according to gender categories like the adults Donati and Fortunato, who are presenting other, non-normative models, but constructs just the same. Only adolescents like Florio and Bianca are free to live outside of constructs and able to break out of the heterosexual matrix.

The terms “Jüngling” and in particular “das Blumenmädchen” are used to “de-gender” these youthful bodies, giving them an ethereal quality defying any stigmatization as man or woman. The neuter “das” indicates that Bianca is not yet a “die” woman, but the ensuing quote also warns that her naïve carefree days are numbered: “Die arme war mitten in ihren sorglosen Kinderspielen von der Gewalt der ersten Liebe überrascht worden” (53). While Bianca’s childlike purity and innocence will be destroyed by the violent force of first love, Florio continues to remain in a transitional state and is being described with even younger attributes, no longer a youth but a fragile child: “der zierliche Knabe, hatte unterdes auch, wie Blumen vor den ersten Morgenstrahlen, das Köpfchen erhoben” (Eichendorff 53). Eichendorff underscores the antecedent state of being both masculine and feminine by selecting the same descriptive language for both youth. He effortlessly shifts from using male to female language, often intentionally contradicting the established norm. He underlines the ethereal nature of everyone by repetitively using the word “anmutig,” (graceful, charming, daintily, gracious, svelte) and “zierliche Damen und Herren” (airy, daintily, delicate, diminutive, graceful, petite) to describe both men and women (Eichendorff 9). Other words often used for both sexes are “zitternd, schlank, schüchtern” (Eichendorff 11-13).

Florio’s gender is thus best described as a continuum, a fluid expression of wonder, passion and pleasure that easily moves between the realm of men and women. He is in a state of becoming and moving rather than a static being. “Er konnte den Zwang nicht länger

aushalten. Sein Herz war so voll und gepresst und doch so überseelig” (Eichendorff 39). It is precisely this, his innate desire that provides the energy behind this fluctuating dynamic. We find evidence of his inner core throughout the novella. His inner core knows the truth: “alles was ich mir heimlich nur wünschte und ahnte” (10), it takes all fear away “alle blöde Bangigkeit war von seiner Seele genommen” (13) and makes him deliriously happy “mir ein heimlich Singen geblieben in der tiefsten Brust” (21). As Florio floats in and out of different modes of representation, he struggles to understand this tension within himself: “ein tiefes unbekanntes Verlangen war von den Erscheinungen der Nacht in seiner Seele zurückgeblieben” (24).

In the next phase of his sexual fluidity, Florio comes to terms with what one might call homosexual feelings. Florio and Fortunato are obviously attracted to each other. The homoeroticism and sexually charged tension between them shows itself in different ways: “Florio wurde über und über rot, ...dabei ruhten seine großen geistreichen Augen (Fortunato) mit sichtbarem Wohlgefallen auf dem schönen Jünglinge, der so unschuldig in die dämmernde Welt vor sich hinaussah” (Eichendorff 10). Fortunato cautions him later against the “Spielman” that lures the young into the magic mountain from which they can not escape (Eichendorff 10). One gets the sense that he is referring to himself, suggesting that he wants to “abduct” the much younger Florio. Alice Kuzniar explains this phenomenon:

At the base of this model is Freud’s view, subsequently historically corroborated by Foucault that in ancient Greek society a boy treated as a passive erotic object like a woman, would later graduate as a free citizen to being the desiring subject. The adult subject might thus be said in loving the youth, to love a femininity which was once his own, but which has become encrypted or sealed up. (12)

Likewise, Fortunato’s first song is dripping with homoerotic desire “mit Lilienkrone erscheint er bekränztes Jünglingsbild” and “sein Mund schwillt zum Küssen” (Eichendorff

16) at a celebration where each man holds a “Liebchen” in his arm. Again, the gender neutrality of the word “das Liebchen” is consciously signifying someone’s love interest, while leaving it open to imagine what the gender of the “Liebchen” might be. Is his loved-one a woman, a man, an androgynous being? It is at this time when Florio’s adolescent sexual fluidity morphs into an interest in the same sex. He is attracted to Fortunato’s body, his voice and his essence:

Dem jungen Florio dünkte die schlanke Gestalt des Fremden, sein frisches keckes Wesen, ja selbst seine fröhliche Stimme so überaus anmutig, daß er gar nicht wegsehen konnte,...Florio hatte sich fest vorgenommen ihm so recht seine Liebe und Ehrfurcht, die er längst für ihn hegte zu sagen. (Eichendorff 14)

He passes the phallicised Fortunato that stands “hoch aufrecht” in his boat fingering the guitar. Florio feels “heimliche Schauer” when he sees Fortunato the next time (Helfer 313).

Bianca, at this juncture in the novella, symbolizes the bourgeois woman, and - by extension - bourgeois society’s fear of anything outside the heterosexual matrix. She suddenly sees Florio’s homoerotic desire as something sinister and dangerous, something that will take him away from her. She is afraid, as he does not fit into the constructed norms. Therefore, at the close of the novella, “nur manchmal blickte sie unter langen Augenwimpern nach ihm hinauf, die ganze klare Seele lag in dem Blick als wollte sie bittend sagen: Täusche mich nicht wieder” (Eichendorff 53). It is important that she represents the bourgeois women here, because in her social status, she is completely powerless and has to trust that Florio has come back to her for good. But Florio’s journey along the continuum of different sexualities continues. His next phase manifests itself in gender inversion as he is increasingly described with traditionally female attributes, which culminates in Eichendorff describing him as a dreaming girl riding between his two same-sex objects of desire, Fortunato and Donati: “Es war Florio recht sonderbar zumute, als er sich plötzlich so allein mit Donati und dem Sänger

auf dem weiten leeren Platze fand,... Florio noch im Nachklange der Lust, ritt still wie ein träumendes Mädchen zwischen beiden” (Eichendorff 18). His gender seems to move more towards the feminine side of the mobius strip as the story continues. Eichendorff increasingly describes him with characteristics of a young girl. Thus he becomes less active and more withdrawn, “dachte Florio still bei sich und sein Herz schlug heftig” (Eichendorff 31). He becomes passive, more silent, sentimental, dreamy and is being led instead of leading - characteristics usually attributed to ladies in bourgeois society.

There is a considerable attraction between Ritter Donati and Florio as well. Both Donati and Florio fail to deny their mutual attraction. As the masculine opposite to the feminine Fortunato, Florio is attracted to him precisely because he is so “stürmisch” and exudes a “leidenschaftliches” erotic element, but Donati is also a dark demonic character. “Da erschien Donati erschrocken, drang beinahe ängstlich in Florio, ihn zu begleiten, der es aber beharrlich verweigerte,[...]fort hinaus, rief endlich der Ritter halblaut und wie aus tiefster, geklemmter Brust herauf, drückte dem erstaunten Jüngling die Hand und stürzte aus dem Hause fort” (Eichendorff 30). He feels a strong attraction to Florio, but as an adult, he does not act upon his feelings, precisely because they are so deep, recessed in his bosom. It is the kind of attraction that even he, the strong knight Donati, is afraid of.

Eichendorff’s yearning for the social norms of ancient Greeks, who were more acceptable of same-sex relations than 19th century Germany, is conceivably demonstrated by the reference to reading the “alten Meister,” to a life closer to the gods, where homoerotic, bisexual love was more acceptable and the sexual realm of possibilities seemed endless: ”Aber wenn ich da wieder die alten Meister las, wie da alles wirklich ist und leibt und lebt, was ich mir manchmal heimlich nur wünschte und ahnte, da komme ich mir vor wie ein

schwaches, vom Winde verwehtes Lerchenstimmlein” (Eichendorff 10). The phrase “leibt und lebt” is a common German expression and emphasizing eating and living, thus making reference to the basic desires of the carnal body whereas Florio’s transitivity and ethereal quality is accentuated by being tossed by the wind, being able to be molded easily. Additionally, the diminutive of “Lerchenstimme” underscores his childlikeness once more and emphasizes his individual freedom.

Therefore, Fortunato believes in the right of each individual to live and love in a way that makes them happy, a representation of a typical view of the German Romantics. “Jeder lobt Gott auf seine Weise,” since only all voices together can “Frühling machen” (Eichendorff 10). And Florio - making his own reference to sexual freedom - agrees:

Ich befinde mich jetzt wie aus einem Gefängnis erlöst, alle alten Wünsche und Freuden sind nun auf einmal in Freiheit gesetzt. Wie lange habe ich da die fernen blauen Berge sehnsüchtig beobachtet, wie der Spielmann durch unsern Garten ging und von der wunderschönen Ferne verlockend sang und von großer unermesslicher Lust (Eichendorff 10).

Even if just for a moment, Florio is experiencing the Romantics’ dream, the individual’s freedom to explore everything, including the physical, the mental, and the spiritual. He feels free, because at least for a while he is able to accept his indeterminacy. Florio is for once deliriously happy and expresses his profound joy by singing to himself, unable to clarify (which gender) his love is addressing:

Die Freude kann nicht gleich verklingen, und von des Tages Glanz und Lust ist so auch mir ein heimlich Singen geblieben in der tiefsten Brust. Er musste über sich selber lachen, da er am Ende nicht wusste, wem er da Ständchen brachte. Denn die reizende Kleine mit dem Blumenkranz war es lange nicht mehr, die er eigentlich meinte. (Eichendorff 21)

Rather than relying on fixed adult categories of self-designation, Florio is finally able to express his own sexual desires and dreams free from societal constraints and it does not

matter what gender the loved one is. But this happiness is short and before long Florio finds himself again undecided as to which path to take: “Er wusste nun selbst nicht mehr, was er wollte, gleich einem Nachtwandler, der plötzlich bei seinem Namen gerufen wird” (Eichendorff 24). He had just secretly committed to following his sexual fluidity and desires and even celebrated the joy of being true to himself by singing, yet self-doubt catches up with him again. Once again, because he is approaching adulthood, he is confronted with having to make a decision to fit into a prescribed adult category, but he oscillates between them, refuses to commit and tries to stay a youth a while longer: “Was er heimlich gehofft, dass fand er nirgends und er machte sich beinahe Vorwürfe, dem fröhlichen Fortunato so leichtsinnig auf dieses Meer der Lust gefolgt zu sein” (Eichendorff 33).

The yearning for events past, the desire to return to ancient times through songs and memories is a recurring element in the novella. The concept of recognition, evident at several instances in the novella, underscores this yearning: “Florio stand in blühende Träume versunken, es war ihm als hätte er die schöne Lautenspielerin schon lange gekannt und nur in der Zerstreuung des Lebens wieder vergessen und verloren [...] und rief ihn unaufhörlich, ihr zu folgen” (Eichendorff 27). Florio has the distinct feeling of recognizing people and places, but is never able to place them. Could there be another reference to the ambiguity of gender roles? Since gender roles are defined by social constructs enforced by bourgeois society, once those structures are removed, one is faced without a frame of reference to recognize, define, and categorize a person. Nothing is stable or static, all is fluid, everything is possible – inviting a variety of diverging and conflicting interpretations. “Florio fuhr ordentlich zusammen, als der Seltsame ...ihn als einen früheren Bekannten in Luca willkommen hieß...denn er wusste sich durchaus nicht zu erinnern, ihn jemals gesehen zu

haben” (Eichendorff 17). Has he known this man’s identity before? Why is he not able to place him?

The same failure to recognize and identify people around him occurs again at the masked ball. “Die Masken sprachen viel und seltsam durcheinander, die eine Stimme schien ihm bekannt, doch konnte er sich nicht deutlich entsinnen” (Eichendorff 35). The appearance of masks clearly adds another layer to the issue of gender and sexual fluidity within the novella. The masks not only prohibit Florio (and the reader) from knowing the identity of the person; they also prohibit a gender definition: “Viele waren maskiert und gaben unwillkürlich durch ihre wunderliche Erscheinung dem anmutigen Spiele oft plötzlich eine tiefe, fast schauerliche Bedeutung” (Eichendorff 32), suggesting that if one is attracted to a person behind a mask, it does not matter what gender the person happens to be. This acceptance can be frightening: “Die hin und her schweifenden Masken mit ihren veränderten grellen Stimmen und wunderbarem Aufzuge, nahmen sich hier in der ungewissen Beleuchtung noch viel seltsamer und fast gespenstisch aus” (Eichendorff 34).

Masks not only obscure the gender of a person, masks also create a new realm of individual privacy and suspend shame as recognition is obscured, as Elisabeth Krimmer points out *In the Company of Men*: “The practice of social masquerade is both enticing and disconcerting. For the clothes make the man, that is, if one can be out on and off at one’s discretion, the social order itself is not a God-given hierarchy, but an arbitrary institution” (Krimmer 162).

While Florio does not seem to exhibit shame, he creates his own realm of privacy in his bedroom. He remains virginal until the end of the novella, but satisfies his sexual desires in private. Undetermined with whom to consummate his love, he masturbates- the novella delicately suggests- alone in his room. There are several instances in the text where he lays

on his bed while dressed. He behaves secretly. “Florio warf sich angekleidet auf das Ruhebett hin, aber er konnte nicht einschlafen. In seiner, von den Bildern des Tages aufgeregter Seele wogte und hallte und sang es noch immer fort” (Eichendorff 20). Is Florio thinking about Fortunato or Ritter Donati? They were part of the most recent experiences of his day:

Er sprang von seinem Bett und öffnete das Fenster. Auch da draußen war es überall in den Bäumen und Strömen noch wie ein Verhallen und Nachhallen der vergangenen Lust, als sänge die ganze Gegend leise, gleich den Sirenen, die er im Schummer gehört. Da konnte er der Versuchung nicht widerstehen. Er ergriff ...die Gitarre. (Eichendorff 20)

Could “die Gitarre” be a symbol for the masculine anatomy? Does it matter that it is Fortunato’s “Gitarre” that he grasps? This scene is reminiscent of the “phallized” Fortunato standing upright in his boat playing his guitar. It is also interesting to point out that Florio feels an urge to masturbate. It is as if his body is forcing him to grow up even though he would rather remain a child.

Er konnte den Zwang nicht länger aushalten. Sein Herz war so voll und gepresst und doch so überselig. Er eilte hinab. Das Fenster in seinem Zimmer war offen und er blickte flüchtig noch einmal hinaus. Er schloss das Fenster fast erschrocken und warf sich auf sein Ruhebett hin, wo er wie ein Fieberkranker in die wunderlichsten Träume versank. (Eichendorff 39)

This quote indicates that Florio is maturing fast. Throughout this ordeal, he is described as sick with fever and consumed by his blossoming sexuality, indicating that his approaching adulthood is a destroying force, something that has taken hold of him.

At first glance, Florio’s journey of self-discovery and gender fluidity stand in stark contrast with the last paragraph of the novella, when Florio and chaste “wife” Bianca head into the morning’s glory. Florio seems to choose the path of least resistance and return to gender categories of bourgeois society to live “happily ever after.” He seems to have given

up and succumbed to heteronormativity. But why then, does he mention that he feels like he has been reborn, that everything could still be good in the end, as if the Romantic ideals, his individual freedom could still win, just when he was about to give up hope?

Da sagte Florio, zu Bianca gewendet: Ich bin wie neu geboren, es ist mir, als würde noch alles gut werden, seit ich Euch wiedergefunden. Ich möchte niemals wieder scheiden, wenn Ihr es vergönnt. Bianca blickte ihn, statt aller Antwort selber wie fragend, mit ungewisser, noch halb zurückhaltener Freude an und sah recht wie ein Engelsbild auf dem tiefblauen Grunde des Morgenhimmels aus. Und so zogen die Glücklichen fröhlich durch die überglänzten Auen in das blühende Mailand hinunter. (Eichendorff 54)

At second glance, the ending encapsulates many of the characteristics of gender flux already encountered throughout the novella: “Der zierliche Knabe, welcher Pietro begleitete, hatte unterdes auch, wie Blumen vor den ersten Morgenstrahlen, das Köpfchen erhoben. Da erkannte Florio mit Erstaunen Fräulein Bianca. Er erschrak so sehr wie sie so bleich aussah”, “Um ungehinderter reisen zu können und zugleich alles Vergangene gleichsam von sich abzustreifen, hatte sie Knabentracht anlagen müssen” (Eichendorff 53). The likeness to flowers used to describe gender neutrality is combined with Bianca’s paleness, reminiscent of Donati’s paleness, the repressed homosexual in the novella.

Additionally, the importance of Bianca becoming Florio’s bride precisely when she dresses as a boy cannot be dismissed. By dressing Bianca in boy’s clothing at the “happy end” of the novella, Eichendorff could be suggesting that Bianca has undergone her own journey from the chaste pure asexual girl, to a heterosexual young female (ready to enter bourgeois society), and finally to a transgender or androgynous person. As Catriona MacLeod confirms in “Embodying Ambiguity,” women in men’s clothing and men in women’s clothing were common motifs in the literature of German Romanticism. This choice of dress facilitated traveling as a woman, but that does not preclude the possibility of

cross-dressing in order to transgress gender polarity: “The androgynous ideal of beauty is, from the onset, set apart from the natural world, above it, floating above time.” She continues: “The word *androgynē* is a composite, suggesting in itself a forcible bringing together of polar opposites, an artful fusion” (Macleod 31, 29). I argue that this melting of seemingly polar opposites has been masterfully achieved in both Florio and Bianca.

While Bianca’s appeal is initially androgynous and homoerotically tinged, she now embodies all of Florio’s sexual desires precisely because she embodies both male and female. In the end, Florio has found what he was searching for all along, a person who defies gender categorization like himself.

CHAPTER 3: Har's Supernatural Love

Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, the founder of homosexual studies, wrote and published *Manor* in 1884. In this chapter, I will cover the same-sex sexual development of Har, a young boy whose sexuality is constructed counter to social norms of the time. I will show this through the fluidity of the roles for the two main characters, Har and Manor and the language used to describe these characters and their interactions.

Ulrichs, a prominent defender of same-sex love, argued tirelessly for the rights of homosexuals throughout his lifetime. Ulrichs had a sense of himself as being considerably more feminine than the average man. "He also thought his effeminate nature had exposed him to a good deal of undeserved humiliation as a child" (Kennedy 15). As a young child he wore girls' clothes, preferred playing with girls, and in fact expressed a desire to be a girl: "He recalled that as a child of three to four years he wore girls' clothes and found it painful when he first had to put on boy clothes" (Kennedy 15). As a young adult, he was sexually attracted to virile young men, especially to soldiers in uniform: "after the ball, when I went to bed in my room in the Willmann House, alone and unseen by anyone, I suffered real torture, gripped by the memory of those beautiful young men" (Kennedy 19). Ulrichs became most famous for introducing new sexual names and theories in 1862, defending the love of men who loved men, the "Uranier" or Urning, whose erotic desire is as natural occurrence. These terms are considered the precursors of 'homosexual'. Hubert Kennedy explains in *Ulrichs: Life and Works*: "Ulrichs never used the term 'homosexual', which was coined seven years later by Karl Maria Kertbeny" (50). Ulrich also published *Forschungen über das Rätsel der*

mannmännlichen Liebe in 1864, twelve essays which were banned in several German states. By classifying the terms Urning and Dioning, he established the theory of a sexual desire focused on the other sex. His theory linked biology with psychology to account for the development of sexual orientation. The embryo could have the physical characteristics of a male, but the mental development of a female. Individuals, being neither totally male nor totally female, constituted the “third sex:” “Ulrichs saw the two as so distinct that he asserted: We make up a third sex!” (Kennedy, 50).

His biggest contribution to the field was perhaps his discovery of what ties to my theory of sexual fluidity in children, namely the existence of “Urano-dionings,” who are persons attracted to both men and women or are bisexual. He had an understanding that intermediate degrees of sexual identification and orientation are in existence which are not fixed but rather move continuously. Their desire, he argued, was contrary to the normative “sexual instinct” but was biologically inborn and natural to them, and therefore should not be punishable by law. In 1867 he held a speech before the Congress of German Jurists in Munich, in which he appealed for the abolition of the sodomy statute paragraph 175. This paragraph of the German penal code, inherited from the earlier Prussian code, made sex between men a felony punishable by imprisonment for up to six months. It was actively enforced by police surveillance, by entrapment, and by the use of informers; and roughly 500 men are said to be imprisoned under paragraph 175 each year.

As the founder of homosexual studies, he inspired German sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld, who reprinted Ulrichs’ works shortly after his death in 1895 and popularized many of his ideas. In his 1904 essay *Berlins Drittes Geschlecht*, Hirschfeld continued Ulrichs’ political activism by advocating a “gerechte Beurteilung der Homosexuellen,”

distinctly naming and classifying homosexual persons as “das dritte Geschlecht,” breaking apart the man/woman binarism and emphasizing their commonalities with heterosexual “Normalsexuellen” (Hirschfeld 11). Like Ulrichs, Hirschfeld subscribed to the theory that homosexuality was a natural disposition: “Dann erkannte [er] mehr und mehr, dass sein Sohn den er über alles liebte, von Geburt an homosexuel gewesen war “ (Hirschfeld 43). His entire work was intended to desexualize homosexuals and remove the stigma of perversion by providing documentary evidence to the normalcy of their lives, in order to defy paragraph 175. He comments on the plight of homosexuals being persecuted: “Unglückliche, Entrechtete, die den Fluch eines geheimnissvollen Rätzels der Natur durch ihr einsames Leben schleppen [...] und die sich doch unter dem Druck eines mittelalterlich grausamen Gesetzesparagraphen scheu und heimlich zusammenfinden müssen, fern von den normalen Glücklichen” (Hirschfeld 77). Ulrichs also influenced early 20th- century sex researchers and psychologists such as Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung, who all played a distinctive role in the naming and theorizing of sexual normality and abnormality. In particular, the Austrian neurologist and psychologist Sigmund Freud stabilized and normalized the new heterosexual ideal. Notions of what constituted bourgeois privacy were defined as to what remained hidden. Freud believed that sexuality was not about choice but about repression and, while everyone had made a homosexual object choice in their life, even unconsciously, sex for pleasure only was a perversion.

I chose the story of *Manor* written by Ulrichs in 1884 for my research, as *Manor* promotes all of Ulrich's theories as previously discussed, but, additionally, it strongly supports my argument of childhood polysexuality. In this story, the biological fluctuating reality is not denied to maintain a binary set of sexes. At first glance, Ulrich presents an

openly homoerotic love story of two adolescent boys. Underneath the obvious love story, one finds a rich discourse on sexual variance, androgyny, vampirism and an impressive commitment to follow one's inner desires even if that means death.

By locating the setting on a far off island, in the midsts of ferocious, untamable nature, Ulrichs achieves a safe haven for his protagonist's first love and more importantly avoids being criticized by his contemporaries for suggesting such love could take place in Germany at his time:

35 Inseln, einsam und verlassen, öde, felsig, wolkenumschleiert (...) umrauscht von brandenden Wogen, fast stets in Nebel gehüllt (...) rauhe Felsen, düstere Schluchten, Tannenurwälder, tausende von Quellen, die sich oft aus großer Höhe tosend und schäumend hinabstürzen von Block zu Block. Die Ufer tiefeingeschnitten von Buchten und Fjorden; fast unnahbar von hohen Felsen umsäumt. Das Meer klippenvoll; hie und da gänzlich verrammelt; beunruhigt von Wasserwirbeln; von wilden Strömungen durchwogt. (Ulrichs 271)

As evidenced by this quotation, nature in this story is described as untamable, unpredictable, moving and fluid. It is beautiful, yet frightening, because it is all-powerful, all-consuming and in control. Much like the young boys' natural, exuberant and all-consuming feelings, the natural elements in this story mirror the strong inescapable emotions being felt in this account of first love. The island as such represents the perfect conduit for their love, an idealized place where love and humanity are valued above all. Karl Müller quotes Ulrichs in *Aber in meinem Herzen sprach eine Stimme so laut*: "Das positive Institut der Ehe ist kein Institut für uns. Für uns existiert also der rein menschliche Naturzustand: wie für die Vögel unter dem Himmel und die Tiere auf dem Felde" and then concludes: "Das uralte Liebesbündnis (...) legitimiert sich moralisch- rechtlich mit der gedachten wüsten Insel. Die Insel als Metapher Ort der Naturnähe und der Zivilisationsferne, lokalisiert einen anderen Rechtsraum: den der natürlichen Rechte" (Müller 61). This idyll is underscored by the fact

that organized religion and laws have not yet gained control over the islanders because of their remote location: “mancher Ortsname erinnert an die Zeit, da noch keine Kirchen standen und der alte Glaube noch nicht vertrieben war” (Ulrichs 271). By choosing a far away age, Ulrichs alludes to a simpler time, a time when superstition and the mysterious were an accepted part of life. Being placed in this environment “gleich fern von Schottland, Island und Norwegen” (Ulrichs 271) away from contemporary German bourgeois standards, the villagers exhibit no qualms about believing in same-sex love or in a young vampire who rises from the dead to visit his young lover. This occurrence is explained as follows:

Ein Toter ist oft mächtig erfüllt von Sehnsucht nach einem oder dem anderen unter seinen zurückgelassenen Lieben, so mächtig, dass er nachts das Grab verlässt und zu ihm kommt. Denn das ist ein alter Glaube, dass Urda manchem um Mitternacht kurzes Halbleben zurückgibt und dann seltsame Kräfte von jenseits des Grabes verleiht. Kommt besonders vor bei jungen Leuten, die in der Blüte der Jahre der bitter Tod weggraffte. Den Zurückkehrenden erfüllt zugleich große Blut und Wärmebedürftigkeit. Darum lechzt er nach dem frischen Blut der Lebenden und, wie ein Liebender, nach Umarmungen. Aber er teilt auch grosse Sehnsucht mit und bereitet dadurch oft heftige Qual. (Ulrichs 274)

By choosing the remote island setting, Ulrichs creates a space where two young adolescents experience the freedom to follow their feelings and desires safe from judgment, persecution and stigmatization. It points to an age long ago, perhaps even to ancient Greece, but certainly to a pre-civilized state prior to the solidification of bourgeois society's rules and regulations, a time where same-sex love was considered normal and as such accepted. There are several instances of “Aberglaube” and mysterious appearances throughout the story that I will refer to as part of my analysis of this intense story of young love.

The idea of pursuing one's individual freedom outside of societal constraints is reinforced by the anti-patriarchal family structure in which both Har and Manor find themselves. The typical patriarchal ruler of the family has been removed as both boys are

fatherless. Har is fifteen years old living at home with his doting mother, who loves him unconditionally. After his father drowns, there is no mention of another authority figure in his life until he meets Manor. Being the complete opposite of a bourgeois patriarch, Manor is a loving, tender, father-like figure, offering a distinctly anti-Prussian notion of what parental care and love should be. He is a young “Schiffer” nineteen years of age, indicating that he is an outsider independent from society. He is described as: “kühner Schwimmer, schlankgewachsener, jugendfrischer Bursche” with “kräftige Arme” (Ulrichs 272). The term “Bursche” is used by Hirschfeld to describe a postpubescent, virile, tough guy, the kind to whom he refers as “Die rohe Natur dieser [...] schien auf ihn eine unwiderstehliche Anziehungskraft auszuüben” (21). At sea, Manor is surrounded by male companions for months at a time and clearly lives outside of the day-to-day bourgeois constraints of the heterosexual dyad. His atypical lifestyle of being at home everywhere while being a stranger everywhere coincides with the notion of his outlaw (homosexual) sexuality. As the story develops, outsider Manor falls in love with a young boy and is seen infiltrating bourgeois society’s most vulnerable, their children and can not be stopped.

At the beginning of the story, Manor saves Har from certain death by drowning and holds him in his arms like a child: “sprang in die Wellen, schwamm zwischen die Klippen, ergriff den treibenden Körper, zog ihn ans Land, hegte den Halberstarten auf seinen Knien in seinen Armen” (Ulrichs 271). This action shows his manliness and strength. The younger, more feminine Har awakes from his deathlike state and envelops the larger Manor with an enthusiastic, childlike hug: “Dankbar umschlang beim Abschied der Knabe den Hals des Retters” (Ulrichs 271). Har is innocent and naïve, and easily infatuated with the strong young man who saved his life. The verb “umschlingen” is used throughout the story to describe

moments of physical closeness between the boys and exudes a particularly carefree, naïve, passionate, uncontrolled way of embracing someone. The childlike, lovingly way in which Har embraces Manor shows his honest, natural exuberance. The second time it is Manor who embraces the boy in that manner, cementing their love as a natural kind.

Throughout most of the story, Manor is the initiator, the agent who takes charge of their ensuing relationship: “Hatte ihn liebgewonnen. Sehnte sich ihn wiederzusehen” (Ulrichs 271). He rows or swims to visit Har in the early evenings, where the boys spend several idyllic hours and even make plans to leave the island together. “Sie ruderten, sangen, tauchten, entkleideten sich, schwammen, gingen spazieren, plauderten; machten Pläne – kam einmal ein Schiff das auf den Walfischfang segle, wollten sie beide mit” (Ulrichs 272). Their initial friendship deepens and an infatuation develops: “sassen sie so auf dem Stein, dann legte Manor seinen Arm um Hars Schultern und nannte ihn “Min Jong” und dem Knaben war nicht wohler, als wenn Manor ihn so umschlungen hielt” (Ulrichs 272). The term Knabe is clearly used to identify Har’s prepubescent state, but the use of the word “Min Jong” at this particular juncture, where their love is for the first time represented physically, holds a particular fascination. “Min jong” – a North German (Ostfriesland) dialect of “Mein Junge” – is reminiscent of the French term “mignon” often translated as “little one” or “tiny”, and within German literature used to signify a child bride. This concept is said to have originated out of the ideal of the muse of Dante and Petrarca, was cast in Renaissance times as the ideal of the androgynous Madonna, and became an adolescent female lover in 1800 Klassik and Romantik, as for example the “Mignon” figure in Goethe’s “Wilhelm Meister” novels. The fact that the androgynous child bride is represented in this story as the pubescent boy Har is a novelty. It alludes to the fluidity of sexuality and gender inherent in Har’s young “in-

between” body. The attractiveness of the androgynous bride lies precisely in being an innocent, pure, diminutive childlike version of a human being with indeterminable gender. This child bride fantasy, Michael Wetzel argues in *Mignon: Die Kindsbraut als Phantasma der Goethezeit*, could only exist at the beginning of puberty, at that moment between childhood and adulthood, like that place between dream and reality, at a time where a person’s gender holds no significance, and sexuality first awakens. Har, likewise, is fluid and easily transcends his physical maleness to take on the role of the more passive feminine love object throughout the story. With the usage of the phrase “Min Jong,” moreover, Ulrichs clearly establishes the power structure of the relationship with Manor. Manor takes on the manly, active, initiator role; he is the powerful subject, but he adores. Har is a more feminine, passive, innocent object, the adored. He enjoys being pursued and being the object of affection, he “fühlte sich so glücklich konnte er bei Manor sein” (Ulrichs 272). But Har too worships his beloved. In fact, Har’s faithfulness could also be considered feminine as his agency clearly lies within his adoration. This adoration becomes apparent in his loving description of Manor’s dead body:

Da brachte man auch Manor’s Leiche, legte sie auf das Stroh. Lag nun vor ihm da mit nassem Haar, aus dem Seewasser hervortroff, geschlossene Augen, kalt, mit erblassten Lippen und bleichen Wangen, aus denen das Blut gewichen, schlank von Gestalt, im Tode noch schön anzuschauen. (Ulrichs 273)

Ulrich creates a new aesthetic in this moment of despair stating in this quote that even a wet, lifeless body and a bloodless, cold face can be stunningly beautiful in death. Additionally, Har shows his agency for the first time as he declares his love for Manor loudly in front of the village community: “So also, Manor, muss ich Dich wiedersehen” rief er aus, warf sich schluchzend über den geliebten Körper und kostete noch einen Augenblick die Wonne der Umarmung” (Ulrichs 273). Ulrich employs direct speech here, allowing the dramatic effect

of immediate psychological insight into Har's soul. The image of a fisherman's wife mourning her dead husband is invoked, once again pointing to Har's fluidity and androgyny.

Soon after his death and interment, Manor begins his nightly rendezvous with Har in his bedroom. Manor can be heard, seen and felt not only by Har, as a figment of his lovesick imagination, but also by the villagers. First a fisher noticed "eine Gestalt die mit der Geschwindigkeit eines grossen Fisches durch die Wellen hindurch schoss. Ein Fisch war es nicht" (Ulrichs 273) and later he observes a "schwimmender Mensch, wie bisweilen Matrosen schwimmen, bekleidet mit einem Totenhemd" (Ulrichs 274). Manor is described as being wet and cold, having the physical characteristics reminiscent of his death. He is able to move effortlessly out of his coffin, manipulate the window to Har's bedroom and climb into his bed: "Die Gestalt seufzte. Ihm klang's als wolle sie sagen: mich triebe die Sehnsucht zu Dir! Ich finde nicht Ruhe im Grab" (Ulrichs 273). Har hears, understands, and wants to help him. He enjoys being kissed and embraced by Manor but is afraid to breathe, as if he might wake up from this magical dream. He becomes motionless, almost doll-like, while Manor becomes more and more animated. By playing the role of the non-threatening, grateful child, he fulfills the common "Knabenmädchen" fantasy alerted to earlier. As Michael Wetzel writes in *Mignon*:

Mit der Suche nach der Wahrheit des Erwachens kindlicher Lust stellt sich auch die Frage nach dem geschlechtsspezifischen Charakter der Verführung: dem Ursprung der Weiblichkeit (oder Männlichkeit) aus dem geschlechts-unspezifischen Kind, nach der geschlechtlichen Differenz und ihrer Repräsentation. Während nämlich mit der genitalen Reife der Endlust Begehren sich als Heterosexualität spezifiziert, wird die Erotik der Kindsbräute als geschlechtsindifferent erlebt: Sie sind immer auch Knabenmädchen, androgyne Doppelwesen. Es sind Wesen bei denen die spielerischen Übergänge eine Lust jenseits von Männlichem und Weiblichem versprechen. Sie scheinen also gleich und stellen für die Männer eine intersexuelle Identifikationsmöglichkeit dar. (Wetzel 53)

Already in ancient Greece one finds the “erotisch codierte Knabenliebe,” not exclusively honoring maleness but rather honoring the child, the youthfulness and innocence of the child person. Wetzel calls this the “erotische Neutralisierung des passiven Objektes” which Har clearly represents in the next passage: “Er wagte nicht zu sprechen. Zu atmen wagte er kaum” (Ulrichs 273). Har is unable to describe what he is feeling, it is a new experience for him and, while it is perhaps frightening to him on one hand, it is certainly equally delicious on the other.

Ulrich furthers his gender play in the next passage just as the power dynamic between the boys is starting to change. Instead of using the masculine personal pronoun for the visiting Manor, he employs “sie, die Gestalt” to signify Manor as the feminine subject “die den schwellenden warmen Knabenmund mit eiskalten Lippen küsste” (Ulrichs 272). Up to this point, Manor has always been described as manly, strong, cold and wet: while Har was described as childlike, feminine, soft, warm and feverish. Here however, he reverses their attributes and briefly identifies Manor as a feminine form, indicating that there is no adherence to an existing construct when identifying these boys. Additionally, the word “schwellend” used to describe Har’s lips could be a reference to the male sex organ. It is used, however, to describe Har’s warm mouth, which conjures up an image of lips (and by extension the female sex organ) in like manner, emphasizing Har’s androgyny or, better yet, his hermaphrodite characteristics due to his youth.

Both the intensity and yearning the boys have for each other increases dramatically with each rendezvous. On his first visit, Manor approaches slowly, lays down besides him in bed, gently caresses the boy’s cheeks (presumably facial cheeks) until Har “durchschauerte Fieberfrost” (Ulrichs 273). Ulrich uses the word “Fieberfrost” a “Kompositum” of opposites

in this eroticized passage that beautifully encapsulates the fiery heat and freezing cold embodied in the desire that consumes Har's body. On his second visit, Manor's longing has increased even more: "kam Manor wieder, eiskalt wie gestern, doch verlangender" (Ulrichs 274). Manor kisses Har's "Wange und Mund, legte den Kopf ihm auf die weiche Brust. Har erbebte. Ihm fing das Herz zu pochen an bei dieser innigen Umschlingung" (Ulrichs 274). Again Ulrich uses the word "umschlingen" to insinuate the passionate, childlike embrace eluded to earlier. For the first time in his life, Har is feeling sexually alive. His heart is pounding strongly out of passion mixed with fear. Once again, his femininity is emphasized by his "weiche Brust", which stands in opposition to Manor's masculine, strong body. Most importantly in this passage, bodily fluids are exchanged and Manor's urging rises to a new level of intensity. While Har lies motionless, Manor "begann zu saugen, verlangend, wie ein Säugling an der Mutterbrust" (Ulrichs 274). This reference to the most natural of unions, the love of mother and her breastfeeding child suggests yet another element of gender variance. Har becomes the mother-like figure who nourishes Manor, who has transitioned into a vampire, a predator stuck in that realm between the human and the dead, between life and death. Har clearly perceives Manor as exhibiting animalistic qualities "als ob ein saugendes Tier sich an ihm vollgesogen" (Ulrichs 274). Does this reference to animals imply a natural, instinctual behavior? Could a vampire's behavior be considered natural? Isn't a vampire the embodiment of the unnatural, the undead? Ulrichs' equation of the most seemingly natural nourishment of a baby suckling breast milk with a blood-sucking vampire, invokes a discussion of what is considered natural and unnatural in the 19th century. It also seems to correspond to Freud's idea of suckling as the prototype of infant sexual gratification. Manor's

reddened cheeks call to mind Freud's description of the satiated child at the mother's breast as a "picture of sexual gratification" in later life.

The supernatural element of Manor's return to his lover after his demise corresponds directly to the general popularity of vampire stories around the time Ulrichs wrote this story. It is said that the origin of these kinds of vampire stories are closely linked to scientific observations on the decay of human bodies. One also finds the classic erotic element of the sexually active undead who engages in erotic acts with the living. Vampires have the unfailing ability to fascinate, because they exist somewhere between disbelief and fact, between illusion and disillusion, between desire and fear. Ken Gelder explains in his book *Reading the Vampire*: "Dracula is a character whose ability to circulate freely- to traverse national boundaries- signify nothing less than his irreducible Otherness" (13). It is my opinion that Ulrich uses the vampire as an allegory to refer to the otherness of homosexuality (and other sexualities) that clash with bourgeois heteronormativity. A vampire's variability, transcendence, and eroticism could also suggest sexual excess, variability, and fluidity similar to the element of sexual daring in childhood. Gelder continues: "The reader is manipulated by fear to consent to the political order of things and horror is used to destabilize the prevailing order demonstrating the impossibility of closure or perfection" [of the bourgeois heterosexual binary] where "the reader is offered no moral vantage point" (19). In other words, Manor the vampire, must be exorcised because he represents society's very own real condition [homosexuality], and his existence reminds us of repressed natural desires and the fluidity of sexuality. The heterosexual gender dyad therefore is exposed and discarded as the exclusionary, flawed construction it is. I would agree with Diane Fuss in "Inside/Out:"

the homo in relation to the hetero, much like the feminine in relation to the masculine, operates as an indispensable interior exclusion- an outside which is inside interiority

making the articulation of the latter possible, a transgression of the border which is necessary to constitute the border as such. (Fuss 3)

She clearly illustrates how “homosexuality is produced inside the dominant discourse of sexual difference as its necessary outside” (Fuss 5) and “the fear of the homo codifies the very real possibility and ever-present threat of a collapse of boundaries, an effacing of limits, and a radical confusion of identities” (Fuss 6). By employing a homosexual vampire, Ulrich opens up new possibilities and calls binary sexual opposition into question.

On his third visit, Manor finds Hars sleeping: “er erwachte dann in seiner Umarmung. Jedesmal suchten die Lippen die weiche Erhöhung über dem Herzen” (Ulrichs 274). Gender indeterminacy is suggested once again, as a feminized Har exhibits the beginnings of breasts, like a young pubescent girl. He also notices little droplets of blood on “seiner linken Brustwarze” (Ulrichs 274) where Manor was just feeding before. Har’s blood increases Manor’s strength, it keeps him “alive” even though he is dead. “Sein Gesicht ist ja fast frischer als damals,” (Ulrichs 276) notices one villager as they open his grave. Should Manor, who is clearly in love and acting out of love, be seen as a selfish and remorseless vampire?

As the story continues, a struggle to fasten Manor to his coffin ensues, and different prototypes of stakes are fashioned by the villagers. The villagers decide to put an end to Manor’s and Har’s relationship not because of its homosexual, but because of its necrophilic nature. A wise village woman to whom Har’s mother turns for help prophesizes: “Eure Gräber schliessen nicht. Einer verlässt sein Grab jede Nacht und kommt herüber zu uns; saugt sich voll am Blut dieses Knaben” (Ulrichs 275). The continued hammering of stakes, a decidedly phallic retribution, stands in stark contrast to the passionate, yet tender love both boys feel for each other. Manor’s body had to be fastened to the coffin multiple times in

order to arrest his fluidity and make him stationary. Elisabeth Bronfen explains in her book *Over her Dead Body* that:

Revenant tales feed of the notion that after death the body has a second destructive life, that while it is decomposing, it is still changing, and still involved in the world. If they remain the dead they are a potential source of danger because death is thought to come from the dead body. The second killing puts an end to this double's life by holding the dead body in one place and rendering it inert, incapable of undergoing further changes [thus is] no longer dangerous" (Bronfen 296).

As if illustrating Bronfen's point, the villagers try to keep Manor from infiltrating and hurting one of their own children. They believe this would end Manor's double life, but it soon becomes clear to Har, that only he can give him peace and eternal rest. It is at this point in the story, when Har's agency and transition to adulthood really comes into play. He accuses his mother of going against his will: "Mutter, warum hast Du mir das angetan" (Ulrichs 276). He also makes the attempt to help Manor rise from the dead at daylight. He is overwhelmed by the prospect of his love being staked and not being able to visit him anymore. He is taking a stand against the villagers and against his mom. He hugs his love inside the grave, tries to protect him and pleads with him: "Manor! Manor! Sie wollen Dich pfählen! Manor, erwache! Schlage die Augen auf! Dich ruft Dein Har!" (Ulrichs 276). Ulrich here once again employs direct speech to dramatize the seriousness of Har's emotions. One is also reminded of Har's victim status emphasizing that he is still a child who needs protecting. He is treated like a child, and his wishes are ignored. He is completely powerless, has no control over what is happening to both him and Manor, and he desperately clings onto Manor inside the coffin. More importantly, however, Har has matured and made his choice. He would rather die than to live without him. "Har wollte ihn nicht loslassen. Sie rissen ihn weg. Setzen Manor die Spitze des Pfals auf die Brust. Ächzend wandte sich Har. Fiel der Mutter um den Hals. An ihrer Schulter barg er sein Gesicht" (Ulrichs 276). Like any

pubescent teenager torn between independence and parental guidance, he is torn now between the disdain for his mother's action and his need for her to comfort and console him. "Har trugen sie halbohnmächtig davon" (Ulrichs 276).

Har has entered a new phase in his development towards adulthood and voices his disgust against what the villagers are doing. He is speaking out and declaring his love: "Wie hab ich ihn so lieb gehabt!" (Ulrichs 275). Unfortunately, the moment he comes out is also the moment when he becomes deathly ill. Surprisingly, instead of becoming weaker because Manor is consuming his blood, Har's weakness becomes more pronounced when Manor is prevented from visiting him. The author Ken Gelder writes about the strengthening effect a vampire can have on his object: "The vampires although they are supposed to bring death, thus also have an animating function: the object is more alive than he otherwise was" (47). Similarly, Har is described as "kummervoll," "müde und matt," "friedlos und ruhelos" (Ulrichs 276) while waiting for Manor's fourth visit. He lies with him, caresses him, and again imbibes his blood. But when he does return: "Er sog verlangender denn zuvor und dürstender" (Ulrichs 277). Additionally, the blood on Har's bed sheet has in the meantime increased to large spots of "Leichenblut" gushing from Manor's gaping wound. Har "durchfuhr ein Grauen, aber es war mit Wonne gemischt" (Ulrichs 273). The villagers are relentless. After finding evidence that the dead had left the grave once again, a new stake with a wider top is forced into Manor's body by the villagers.

Manor's fifth visit happens when Har is lying near death. Unbelievably, it has only been four weeks since Manor's death by drowning, yet the tragedy has taken its course and cannot be undone. Har continues to grow weaker with each day. "Har härmte sich ab in vergeblichem Sehnen, zehrte ab; konnte sich nicht mehr vom Bett erheben. Mutter, sagte er,

nun ist's aus mit mir" (Ulrichs 277). Shortly before his death, he confides in his mother that Manor will come to take him on his final visit. "Er zieht mich zu sich hinab" (Ulrichs 277). Har's innocence, faithfulness, and accepting nature is evident in his last words: "Er ist wieder bei mir gewesen, wir haben geredet, sassen auf einem Stein unter der alten Buche im Walde wie sonst; er schlang seinen Arm wieder um meinen Hals und nannte mich: "Min Jong" (Ulrichs 277).

Har's changing relationship with his mother echoes his maturing in clearly outlined phases within the story. He moves from an innocent child to a pubescent boy and then to a sexually active teenager in love with another teenager. As a child, he clearly had a good relationship with his mother, whose unconditional love knows no limits. She is his compass and his guide: "Lära aber sagte jammernd: Bist Du mein einzig Kind. Deinen Vater verschlang mir die See. Du willst mich verlassen? Har blieb. Manor ging" (Ulrichs 272). He chose to stay home with her, instead of joining Manor on a two months whale fishing trip.

Once Manor appears and Har falls in love for the first time, the yearning for this new love takes over his life. He goes through puberty, becomes an adolescent and his relationship with his mother changes. For the first time, his mother is not able to give him solice. "Lära wollte ihn trösten. Er aber wollte keinen Trost; er fluchte den Göttern" (Ulrichs 275). His mother no longer understands him. Mother and son are clearly living in different realities. Har wanting to become more independent separates himself from his mother and claims the right to live his life. Her goal is still to protect her child from getting hurt. "Nun hast Du Frieden vor ihm. Er hat Dich so gequält!" to which he responds "Oh Mutter! Mutter! Er hat mich nicht gequält!" (Ulrichs 277).

With the words, “Mutter ich muss sterben,” (Ulrichs 278), Har finally accepts his fate. He takes full ownership and responsibility for what has happened. He has matured and accepts that he must die to fully be with Manor. The child is now ready to leave his mother: “Heut Nacht will er wieder kommen, und will mich zu sich holen. Er hat es versprochen. Ich kann es nicht aushalten ohne ihn” (Ulrichs 278). His mother is inconsolable. “Mein armes Kind! sagte sie und legte ihm ihre Hand auf die Stirn. Sie beugte sich über ihn und ihre Tränen flossen reichlich auf sein Bett. Sie wachte bei ihm am Bette” (Ulrichs 278) and called him her good son. There is no shame, there is no guilt. His mother loves him unconditionally. In a sense, both he and his mother are anti-patriarchal and succeed at it. Last but not least, a matured Har makes his own funeral arrangements: “Legt mich in sein Grab, Ja? Und zieht ihm den schrecklichen Pfahl aus der Brust. Oh bei ihm muss es sich so süß liegen im Grabe.” At midnight with the words: “Sieh Mutter da kommt er”, he expires. His mother ensures that his last wishes are honored “Und sie taten, wie er gebeten” (Ulrichs 278). Har therefore even controls his public representation after his death. Both boys did not experience shame or guilt for their behavior.

Why did these boys have to die? What sins did they commit? Were they not simply following their undeniably natural instincts and desires of first love? Clearly, one should take a closer look at the relationship of both boys vis à vis the society they live in. Har is introduced as a prepubescent child, who lives at home. Fifteen years old, he is still under his mother’s tutelage and displays no agency of his own until he falls in love with Manor in the latter half of the story. When he has a chance to leave town with Manor, he is torn but makes the decision to stay with his mother, indicating his need to remain with her a while longer.

Even if he is conflicted between a sense of duty and his own freedom and desires, he is not quiet ready to leave his childhood behind.

It is this in-betweenness that surfaces throughout the story that I would like to pay closer attention to: both boys are adolescents, no longer children but not yet adults. They meet in the evenings, that time between day and night. Har's prepubescent body exhibits physical characteristics of being androgynous and is later described as having hermaphroditic elements. Manor, the sailor, is a member of society while being a stranger to society. Once he drowns, he surfaces as a ghost and a vampire dead yet undead, trapped in the realm between alive and dead. He starts to visit Har around midnight when he is half asleep, neither sleeping nor awake. This in-between state is extremely frightening to bourgeois societies because of its instability and opaqueness. It can not be clearly defined or labeled, and it instills fear [as Ken Gelder points out]: "the boundaries dividing imagination and reality, the animate and the in animate, the living and the dead, can never be properly distinguished" (44). This can be linked to back to Romanticism as well.

It is crucially important to the story that once young Har admits his love for the outsider (Manor), he has to die. He also suffers and dies a painful, slow death "Här quälte sich den ganzen Tag und härmte sich. Mit Ungeduld aber erwartete er die Nacht und ersehnte sich die wonnigen Schauer der mitternächtigen Umarmung" (Ulrichs 275) and he "härmte sich ab in vergeblichem Sehnen" (Ulrichs 277). I want to pay particular attention to the circular relationship of Manor and Har, as they seem to engage in an exchange. First, they are described as complete opposites. Manor's first description by Ulrich is "kühner Schwimmer, schlankgewachsenen, jugendfrischer Bursche" (Ulrichs 272) - while Har's first description is "treibender Körper, halberstarrt" (Ulrichs 271). Har's likeness to a child is evident in the

language Ulrichs uses. Initially, Har is the one who almost dies. Manor's love seems to wake him from his dormant, death-like state. He awakens Har's sexuality and with it, wakes him from his socially conformative, comatose state. The implications of this sexual awakening are equally beautiful and fatal. Once they admit their love to each other, both suffer terribly and death awaits them. Their happiness is short lived and leads up to an early, unnatural yet inescapable death, their fluidity coming to an abrupt halt.

To summarize this somewhat circular development: Har, the young boy, is saved by the stronger Manor who, despite being an excellent swimmer, drowns soon after they declare their love to each other. While alive, Manor starts to visit Har later and later in the evenings, sometimes after the boy has already gone to sleep, foreshadowing his ghostly midnight arrivals after his death. "War es schon spät, ging er leise, klopfte er an die Scheiben und Hars stahl sich zu ihm. Fühlte sich so glücklich, konnte er bei Manor sein" (Ulrichs 272). Har is often described as being "im Halbschlummer" (Ulrichs 273) when Manor visits, which is significant as it embodies that realm between sleep and being awake, between dream and reality, a space where fantasies take hold and the unusual can happen. It is precisely during this in-between time when both boys' fantasies become reality. Soon after being visited by Manor, Har selflessly sacrifices himself for his love and he dies. Both boys are buried in one single coffin together, signifying their close bond. Likewise Manor must die once he gives in to his homosexual love. He becomes a ghost and has to retreat to the fringes of society, perhaps mirroring Ulrichs' reflection on bourgeois society's casting out of people who practice same-sex love. As Manor's nightly visits increase, so does the intensity with which he kisses the boy, until he draws blood. There is a sense of urgency and time is running out. He then becomes a blood-sucking vampire, an interesting allegory employed by Ulrichs that

could be interpreted in a number of ways. First, he comes to visit at night, when all the “good” bourgeois “Bürger” are asleep in their beds. Those beds are undoubtedly the most private space in bourgeois life, a place where everyone, especially children, are believed to be most safe. It is this space that Manor (and his homosexuality) is invading. Secondly, he cannot exist in the daylight, i.e., he has no place within bourgeois society. He appears around midnight and disappears as the sun rises, suggesting perhaps the way homosexual people in Germany had to live in the shadows, being pursued under Paragraph 175.

However, in the end, the bourgeois society is unable to keep these lovers apart. This love is stronger and more powerful than anything the German society can do trying to keep the “abnormal” outside. Manor, the blood-sucking homosexual allegorically represents all that threatened the heterosexual dyad. However, this “other” can not be conquered by society by using force. No matter how much force they use and how many stakes they fabricate, they can not contain Manor in his coffin and prevent both boys from meeting again. Manor’s love for Har is so powerful that it is able to overcome death. Har’s completely natural inner voice commands him to rather die and be buried with his first love, than continue living a “lie” within society. There’s is an all-encompassing, supernatural love that transcends the realm between life and death. However, it is only during those precious fleeting moments between childhood and adulthood that this realm of sexually fluidity exists. At the end of this story no one wins: a young “Knabe” tended to by his doting mom is not safe in his childhood bed, a mother loses her young son despite countless efforts to save him, a strong young “Schwimmer” drowns, and the villagers bury two young boys in a singular coffin without having learned a thing.

CONCLUSION

“Ich folge Dir, innere Stimme! Und wenn es in den Tode wäre.”

(Heinrich Hössli, 1784-1864)

As I have shown in this thesis, sexuality in children and adolescents is the natural expression of an instinctive yet fluctuating identity. There is evidence of different sexual densities at play within each child at different times throughout their lives. These fluid expressions of sexuality cannot simply be structured in a heterosexual dyad. A particular spike in sexual fluidity and gender indeterminacy is found during that “in-between time” of puberty and early adolescence, just as sexuality first awakens. For children, love and desire seem to be neither heterosexual nor homosexual but decidedly more fluid. They seem to remain permanently in flux on a continuum that is neither specifically male nor female. When children love, they simply follow their innate “natural” urges with complete affection and adoration. On the one hand, openness exists in exploring one’s sexual continuum without shame. On the other hand, children seem to instinctively understand that childhood is a “gender free” safe zone that they are forced to leave behind once they reach adulthood. In my thesis I was not interested in specific sexual acts but was primarily concerned with children’s innate sense of self as it applies to their sexuality. I was able to find evidence that this phenomenon of sexual fluidity in children existed prior to Freud’s notion of childhood by analyzing three fascinating works of late 18th -, early 19th - and late 19th -century German literature. To reconstruct and historicize childhood is a difficult endeavor. Author James

Schulz contemplates this in his book *Knowledge of Childhood in the German Middle Ages, 1100-1350*. He argues that French historian Philippe Ariès as well as Austrian scholar Ignaz Zingerle tried to analyse the past from a modern perspective and therefore either did not believe in „concept childhood,“ since it was so different from childhood today or imagined, that children were exactly the same as today even though there is lack of evidence to support such an argument: „While Ariès looks at the past and finds nothing familiar, Zingerle looks at the past and finds familiar things that aren't even there.“ (Schulz 5) Childhood innocence portrayed in the works I selected is certainly a result of its contemporary social construction. All three works display a vision of childhood that is both representational and controversial. The texts are certainly unique, yet they explore something that I argue is common to all children.

In conclusion, I would like to address the commonalities and differences of these works by Moritz, Eichendorff and Ulrichs. All the main characters – Anton, Florio and Har – respond to a calling that resonates out of their inner core. These accounts of adolescent sexual development are anything but symmetrical, yet all three yearn to remain in that special realm of puberty for as long as possible, understanding full well that ensuing adulthood would arrest their polysexuality forever. All of them seem to resist bourgeois education and gender norms for that reason. A painful awareness exists that they might only be able to live out their dreams, fantasies and sexualities in this in-between time. All three protagonists are hovering between childhood and adulthood, immersing themselves instinctively and completely in the most sexually polymorphous of their life phases. All of them long to remain in this polymorphous state. The danger presented by adulthood is that sexual maturity brings differentiation, and thus fragmentation. Volatile and unpredictable, they resist all

fixity. What could be considered a celebration of sexual fluidity is also represented as far from harmonious in any of these stories. A considerable amount of suffering, fear and death is present in each account. Likewise, all three authors purposefully place their protagonists outside of the bourgeois family structure and succeeded in cloaking sexuality (which would most probably be perceived as deviant) in the realm of fantasy in order to avoid censorship. The three youths own up to their innate feelings and take responsibility for their actions. They accept the consequences of their sexual choices. Rather than treating childhood as a time of uncertainty and powerlessness, these protagonists display an unparalleled agency, instinctive knowledge and faithfulness that they are doing the right thing by following their hearts' desire even though they have to suffer.

Anton, the enlightened protagonist in *Anton Reiser*, is able to find this “Zwischenwelt” within literature, where he can experience a first love that could not possibly exist in bourgeois reality. Michael Wenzel agrees: “es geht um eine Erfindung der virtuellen Realität, die zugleich eine Entscheidbarkeit zwischen Phantasie und Realität möglich werden lässt” (13).

Florio, in the Romantic story *Das Marmorbild*, explores a dizzying array of childhood sexualities in this love story that bursts with romantic metaphors of nature and botany and androgyny. He moves along his path of gender indeterminacy and self-discovery, floating in and out of a continuum of sexual identities as I discussed in my third chapter. In the fourth chapter, Har in *Manor* presents us with a more homoerotic story. Ulrichs employs elements of the fantastic with ties to romanticism and androgyny similar to the ones we encountered in Florio. In what could be perhaps be described as fantastic realism, both protagonists eventually follow their natural desires into death. In both *Anton Reiser* and *Das Marmorbild*,

produced during literary movements of the Enlightenment and Romanticism respectively, Anton's and Florio's freedom to explore their feelings is valued above all else. While Anton finds his freedom only in works of literature and dreams as an escape from his structured life, Florio is free to pursue his desires and feelings openly in his day to day life. In *Manor*, written in the late 19th century, labels of homosexuality and heterosexuality have already been constructed. While Har and Manor's movement along the continuum of sexuality is different than Florio's, it still exhibits a wonderful exchange of the feminine and masculine of both lovers. I see a trajectory when moving from the 18th - to the late 19th -century in terms of the sexual fluidity depicted in literature that is tied to social stigmatization, the insufficiency of language, and the arresting effects of language. Once ambiguity is named, its fluidity ceases.

As pointed out, one cannot apply a Foucauldian reading to explain the complexity of *Anton Reiser*, *Das Marmorbild* and *Manor* nor the lack of stigmatization in all three texts. There is no shame, no inner censorship evident in the protagonists. The youths follow their innate "natural" urges and desires to a fault. Their sense of well-being comes precisely from living in that "in-between time" of puberty, a place outside the dominant heterosexual matrix which awaits them in the adult world. As far as shame induced by social censorship of adult society is concerned, there is evidence in *Anton* of a society that attempts to restrict his sexuality through pedagogy and fear. In *Manor*, the bourgeois value system tries to protect the protagonist from outlawed sexuality, giving testament to the existence of "acceptable" gender parameters and pushing the "unacceptable" sexualities to the fringes of society. Most importantly, however, none of these stories present a heteronormative outcome. While childhood sexual fluidity as an ideal should promise endless possibilities and openness, it

also highlights the perpetuation of rigid gender binaries in adulthood. I believe these literary representations of dreams and desires of children have a bigger purpose. They serve to question adult stereotypes and artificial constructs of adult gender norms and present a realm of love which is sexually variable, open and undefined.

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