The Normative Relations between Fiction, Imagination and Appreciation

1. Summary

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

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

The general aim of the research project is to investigate the nature of these two normative relations between fiction, imagination and appreciation, which may be characterized in the following general way:

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

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

With respect to each fictional text, there are specific instances of (NR1) and (NR2), which tell us what to imagine when reading the text, and also how to aesthetically assess it in light of what it asks us to imagine.

Although certain important aspects of (NR1) and (NR2) have already been discussed in detail in the literature (e.g. how it is generally determined what is fictional relative to a given text), many others have not (e.g. what the value of fiction-based imagining is, or what literary scholars actually think about these normative issues). A bit surprisingly, there has so far been no comprehensive, systematic investigation of the normative role of imagining and its normative connections to fiction and appreciation — something that this research projects aims to remedy.

The neglected issues that we intend to address can be divided into factual, normative and foundational questions (not unlike the division into applied ethics, normative ethics and metaethics). In line with this division, our research project consists of three subprojects.

Subproject 1: Factual Issues (Literary Studies / Fribourg). The first subproject explores the interrelation between imagination and appreciation in the practice of literary studies. By examining argumentative structures and evaluative components in a comprehensive sample of 'expert interpretations' of a literary work, the subproject aims to gain empirical evidence for answering the following general question concerning the normative dimension of 'doing interpretation' in literary criticism:

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

In particular, with respect to (NR1), the subproject studies the principles and rules that, in scholarly interpretations, form the actual basis for the imaginative construal of fictive worlds. And, concerning (NR2), it asks how the imagination of fictive worlds is in fact related to the appreciation of fictional works in the context of literary studies.

In order to answer these questions, the project will proceed in two steps: (1) Based on an evaluation of established attempts to illuminate the argumentative composition and evaluative alignment of critical discourse and to analyze the interplay of different operations involved in it, the first part of the subproject elucidates the basic categories and guiding procedures of the meta-critical study. (2) The second part develops an empirical account of the normative practice of interpretation in literary criticism, taking the extensive controversy elicited by E.T.A. Hoffmanns 1816-novella 'Der Sandmann' as a test case. By analyzing a sample of about 60 contributions to this scholarly debate, the project aims, firstly, to uncover the norms that underlie the ascription of fictive facts and, secondly, to determine how the generation of fictive worlds is connected to the attribution of aesthetic value in the context in question.

Subproject 2: Normative Issues (Literary Theory / Göttingen).

(Q2) Which specific instances of (NR1) and (NR2) *should* govern our imaginative and appreciative engagement with fictional texts?

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

(Q3) What is the source of the normative authority of the specific instances of (NR1) over our imaginative engagement with fictional texts?

We have a good grasp of why assertive texts (e.g. reports) possess the normative power to direct our beliefs: because assertion and belief aim at the same value, namely truth (*). So, the question arises whether something similar holds of fiction and imagination; or whether the normative relation between the two has to be accounted for in different terms. So far, this issue has been primarily addressed in negative terms, in the shape of the observation that neither fiction, nor imagining are aimed at truth (*). Our goal is instead to provide a positive answer to (Q3). ***

Institutional Setting. Göttingen is an ideal location for Subproject 2 due to the longstanding close cooperation between philosophy and literary studies established at the Courant Research Center 'Textstrukturen' where Tilmann Köppe is head of the research group 'Analytic literary theory' which currently hosts one postdoc and five doctoral students. Also, the German Department hosts the 'Arbeitsstelle für Theorie der Literatur' (ATL), of which Tom Kindt and Tilmann Köppe are members. The ATL features a strong focus on analytic literary theory (cf. Köppe 2008a; Köppe/ Winko 2010) which makes it a natural cooperation partner for the planned project.

2. Research Plan

2.1. State of Research

The three subprojects approach the normative relations (NR1) and (NR2) from different angles. Whereas the first subproject studies the factual issue of which specific norms are *de facto* in play in literary practice, the second asks the normative question of which specific norms *should* be followed, while the third addresses the foundational issue of where these norms derive their authority from.

Subproject 1: Factual Issues (Literary Studies / Fribourg)

The Emergence of 'Practice Analysis'. Inspired by the so-called 'practice turn' in science studies and the history of science, literary criticism has — in the course of the last two decades — developed a steadily growing interest in illuminating its own practices (cf., e.g., Brenner 1993; Schönert 2000; Martus/Spoerhase 2009; Albrecht et al. 2015). On the one hand, this trend has resulted in sociologically oriented investigations of different spheres of activity in literary studies; on the other hand, it has revived the endeavor that the subproject attempts to carry forward, namely, the endeavor of an empirical analysis of the practice of interpretation guided by philosophical and linguistical theories of speech acts and argumentation.

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

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

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

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

Third, one of the basic operations involved in scholarly interpretation, the act of evaluation, has found particular attention in newer approaches to illuminating elements and compositions of critical, scientific and other forms of specialized discourse: From the perspective of linguistic discourse analysis, Thompson and Hunston have analyzed evaluation as a 'stance taking' that is at hand if someone verbally expresses any kind of attitude towards an object (cf. Thompson/Hunston 2000). Following speech act-theoretical conceptions, Winko and von Heydebrand have proposed a more restrictive notion of evaluation; they have systematically explicated the operation as the

usage of 'value-terms' to ascribe or disavow value to objects, and they have exemplarily illuminated acts of evaluation in 'expert interpretations' of different critical schools from the 19th to the 20th century (cf. von Heydebrand/Winko 1996).

Subproject 2: Normative Issues (Literary Theory / Göttingen)

Theories of Truth in Fiction. Current theories of fiction maintain that what is the case in the story world of a literary work of fiction is centrally determined by what recipients are prescribed to imagine by the work (Evans 1982; Walton 1990; Everett 2013; Walton 2013). Thus, if it is the case in the story world of a Sherlock Holmes novel that Holmes is a detective, then the novel prescribes us to imagine that Holmes is a detective. Fictional facts are, in short, facts to be imagined. An indispensable part of most, if not all, interpretations as conducted in literary studies consists in determining what is the case in the story world of particular works of fiction. The philosophical debate on the determination of fictional content has identified several general difficulties for this interpretive endeavor. In particular, it is clear that the fact that a work contains 'p' is not necessary for p being the case in the story world. In the fiction, Sherlock Holmes has two lungs, although the novels do not say so explicitly. Readers draw all kinds of inferences from what is said in a story, and they assume that certain (but certainly not all) facts from the real world hold in the story world, whether the text says so or not (Currie 1990, 60; Bareis 2009). Yet there is a broad consensus that there are norms constraining content ascriptions. In particular, it seems that there are certain 'import rules' that govern what must or must not be imported from the real world to a given fictional world. However, there are different candidates for such import rules, and with respect to particular cases, they lead to more or less intuitively plausible, and sometimes conflicting, results (cf. Köppe 2014, for a recent summary). This has led some to maintain that there is no general 'principle of generation' for fictional facts (Walton 1990, ch. 4; Lamarque/Olsen 1994, 94; Zipfel 2001, 90), while others maintain that one may keep searching for a meta principle that allows us to choose among the existing principles (Petterson 1993, 91), or that such a principle would at least explain the sometimes considerable agreement amongst interpreters (cf. Livingston 2005, 192). Still others maintain that the search for overarching principles is misguided from the start, and that the principles invoked in the philosophical discussion are not what guides the interpretations that are actually being conducted by literary scholars (Lamarque 1990; 1996, ch. 4).

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

Walton 1990; Lamarque/Olsen 1994), it seems natural to inquire into the relationships between these aspects of the theory of fiction and of narratology. (Subproject 2 will pursue this line of reasoning.)

Appreciation and Interpretation. There is a debate on how the goals of interpretation should be conceived of. Some claim that literary interpretation is all about discovering meaning (cf. Stecker 2005, ch. 7); others claim that we have to distinguish between different types of meaning, or different meanings of 'meaning' (Stout 1982), while still others want to establish a difference between *understanding* what e.g. a sentence or utterance mean on the one hand and the *appreciation* of a work of fiction on the other (Lamarque/Olsen 1994; Lamarque 2009, 148-173). Also, since there is a plurality of types of interpretation that are prevalent in literary studies, it is not clear whether there are any general criteria that are applicable for all given interpretations (Dennerlein/Köppe/Werner 2008; Köppe/Winko 2011). Since interpretive disputes often concern what is the case in a given fiction, this debate has an obvious bearing on the debate on *truth in fiction* (see above).

Subproject 3: Foundational Issues (Philosophy / Fribourg)

On the views which say that fictional texts invite or prescribe us to imagine certain things (e.g. what makes up their content), the utterances constituting a work of fiction, and the contents they express, are more than mere psychological triggers of our imagination. They also provide normative guidance for, and put normative constraints, on the imaginative responses we give, determining which of them are correct and which are not. Much philosophical work in this area is devoted to characterizing what it is that guides and constrains our imaginative responses. Thus, many have offered a systematic account of (the principles that determine) the content of a work of fiction (see e.g. Lewis 19**78**; Currie 1990, **ch. 2**; Walton 1990, **ch.?**; Lamarque & Olsen 1994, **ch. 4**; Davies 2007, ch. 4) and of the kind of acts or utterances by which that content is expressed (Searle 1975a; Currie 1990, **ch. 1**; Lamarque and Olsen 1994, **ch. 2**; Davies 2007, ch. 3). But the underlying question of how utterances of that kind — with the sort of content they are presumed to have — could be apt to provide any normative guidance for imagination, and how various forms of imaginative thought (and possibly also experience) could be subject to normative directions and constraints in the first place, has received much less attention. Our research aims to address these foundational issues by elucidating the structural features that are presupposed by the idea that fictional utterances can serve as normative guides for imaginative thought.

The Seeming Analogy with Reports and Beliefs. A natural way of approaching the issues is suggested by how fictional utterances and the corresponding imaginative responses are usually characterized. What someone who tells a fictional story like a fairy tale, say, does is often described as resembling, or even being parasitic on, what is done in a factual report. More specifically, the person telling the fictional story is taken, not to report, but merely to pretend or make as if to report (Searle 1975a; Lewis 1978; Kripke 2011), to imitate reporting (Ohmann 1971), or to do what very much looks like reporting but is done with a different, distinctly fictive intent (Currie 1990**, ch. 1**; Lamarque & Olsen 1994, ch. 2; Davies 2007, ch. 3). Similarly, what the reader or hearer of a fictional story does when she adopts the 'fictive stance' and forms the relevant imaginative responses is often characterized as something that is closely connected to belief. In particular, she is sometimes taken not to believe, but instead to make-believe that what she is being told is the case (Currie 1990; Walton 1990), or to make-believe that it is being told with the standard

communicative commitments in force (Lamarque & Olsen 1994, ch. 2). Alternatively, she may be said to entertain contents as unasserted, rather than as asserted like in the case of belief **(Carroll 1997).**

Given these similarities in input and output, it is tempting to assume a similar parallel between the two forms of communication with respect to their underlying normative structure. Accordingly, we are supposed to imagine what is presented by a fictional story as much as as we are supposed to believe what is represented by a factual report. That is, the fictional utterances constituting a fictional story may be said to normatively guide and constrain what we imagine in a similar fashion as the assertive utterances constituting a factual report normatively guide and constrain what we believe. Indeed, the accounts that are offered in the fictional case are usually framed in the same terms as those given in the non-fictional case, namely in terms of speakers' communicative intentions and commitments (Currie 1990; Carroll 1997; Davies 2007), discourse-specific conversational rules and practices (Walton 1990), or combinations thereof (Searle 1975a; Lamarque & Olsen 1994). It is generally accepted that the intentions, commitments or rules that govern the non-fictional case are missing or somehow suspended in the fictional case. What is striking, though, is that the accounts remain remarkably unspecific when it comes to positively explaining how intentions, commitments or rules can endow fictional utterances with the normative authority over imaginative thoughts that they are supposed to have.

(*** Too long. ***) More precisely, fictional utterances are commonly said to lack the commitment to truth that is characteristic of assertive utterances (Ohmann 1971; Searle 1975a), just as imaginative thoughts are assumed to lack the sensitivity to truth that is exhibited by beliefs (Velleman 2000b; Searle 2002, ch. 2; Burge 2010, ch. 8). This shared indifference towards truth might be expected to explain why fictional utterances can serve as guides to imagination, just as the shared connection to truth helps to explain why assertions are apt to guide beliefs. But this expectation is misguided. We have a rough idea of the sense in which genuine assertions are said to guide or constrain what we believe: beliefs are cognitive states whose function it is to be true and which are sensitive to evidence in favor of (or against) their truth (Velleman 2000a; 2000b; Shah 2003; Burge 2010, ch. 8; McHugh 2012), while assertions are utterances that involve a commitment to truth and thus seem to provide evidence for the truth of, and hence for believing, what is asserted (cf. Burge 2013a; 2013b; **Owens 2006**). In the fictional case, by contrast, the appeal to truth only serves to indicate which fundamental features fictional utterances and imaginative thoughts do *not* possess, and it is difficult to see how the absence of these features could account for the normative relation that is supposed to hold between utterance and response: * That fictional utterances lack a commitment to truth only suggests that they lack the normative force that genuine assertions possess, not that they have any normative force of their own; and the observation that imaginative thoughts are insensitive to truth suggests only that they are insensitive to the evidential considerations that guide beliefs, not that they are sensitive to any other kind of normative considerations at all.

In their attempt to offer a more positive characterization of the normativity of fiction-based imagining, some accounts appeal to the notion of a fictional practice that is regulated by specific communicative rules according to which we are required to respond to fictional utterances by forming corresponding imaginative thoughts (Searle 1975a; Walton 1990, **ch.?**; Lamarque and Olsen 1994, ch. 2). But this idea is hardly any progress. For saying that there are rules that require us to imagine certain things in response to fictional utterances does not amount to more than saying that fictional utterances have normative authority with regard to our imaginative

thoughts. What we are trying to understand is why, or in virtue of what, these rules apply and what makes them normatively binding in the first place.

The most popular idea in this context is the assumption that fictional utterances are made with a specific communicative intent, namely the intention to get the reader or hearer to form certain imaginative thoughts, rather than to adopt certain beliefs as in the case of assertion (Currie 1990, ch. 1; Lamarque and Olsen 1994, ch. 2; Davies 2007, ch. 3; Stock 2011; Mikkonen 2013, ch. 2). Yet it is unclear how an intention like that could have any normative impact on its own. Intentions in themselves do not constitute normative reasons, and so there is nothing wrong or incorrect about not carrying them out (cf. Raz 2011, ch. 8; Kolodny 2014; or Scanlon 2004). In the case of assertions, it is not the intention that is of normative significance. As already indicated, what is significant is rather the fact that the intended beliefs are cognitive states which are sensitive to truth-supporting evidence, and the supposition that the assertions themselves provide such evidence (however weak or defeasible it may be). In the case of fictional utterances, by contrast, we merely know that these fundamental connections to truth and evidence are missing, which brings us back to the problem that we lack a positive account of the corresponding feature(s) that produce the normative force instead.

The Second Normative Relation. In contrast to the normativity of fiction-based imagining, the normativity of appreciative responses to fictional texts is relatively unproblematic. The main reason for this is that we already have a fairly good grasp of how aesthetic appreciation works (Goldman, Budd, *) and, in particular, of the fact that aesthetic judgements are structurally similar to perceptual or descriptive judgements in that both are experience- or evidence-based (* Sibley, McDowell, Goldman, Schellekens, Dorsch). Whenever the fact that a given fictional text invites a certain imaginative response gives us a prima facie reason to ascribe a certain aesthetic value to the text, this happens because — and to the extent to which — the fact contributes to the text's aesthetic value and thus ensures that our matching aesthetic evaluation is appropriate. For example, we are entitled to treat X as a great masterpiece partly because …helps to realize the aesthetic greatness of X. Of course, there is the factual issue of why certain prescriptions to imagine are merit-constituting properties, and others are not (see subproject %). But this issue has no bearing on the more general truth that our recognition of the aesthetic qualities of a fictional text – which typically includes its property of inviting us to imagine certain things — justifies us in ascribing a certain aesthetic value to the text precisely because the qualities partly constitute the value and thus render its ascription likely to be correct.

One might still doubt that imaginative responses could rationally ground aesthetic evaluations since, while imagining cannot provide support for the adoption of a judgement-like attitude (e.g. imagining p and *if p, then q* may license us only to imagine p, but not to judge q), aesthetic evaluation does involve such an attitude (Dorsch 2015). But this worry is misguided, given that our aesthetic assessment of a fictional work is not the result of reasoning the premisses of which comprise what we imagine. Rather, our appreciation is grounded in a special kind of feeling or sentiment in response to our partly imaginative experience of the work (Hume; Kant; Budd; Goldman; Walton; Levinson *); or, alternatively, in reasoning that starts off with considerations about the work's aesthetic qualities, among them facts about what the text invites us to imagine (Bender *; Dorsch 2013).

Accordingly, the foundational part of the research project focuses largely on the issue of how to best account for the first normative relation, as well as the issue of which implications such an

account has for our understanding of the link between the two normative relations (e.g. whether one can be derived from the other).

2.2. State of Own Research

Tilmann Köppe's work in literary theory has focused on several topics at the intersection of philosophical aesthetics and literary studies. In particular, he has worked on fiction as a source of knowledge (Köppe 2007; 2008; 2009; 2011), the methodological foundations of literary interpretation (Dennerlein/Köppe/Werner 2008; Köppe/Winko 2011; Köppe 2012a), and Problems in the theory of fiction Köppe 2005; Gertken/Köppe 2009; Köppe 2009a; 2014; 2014a; 2014b; 2014c; Klauk/Köppe 2014b; Klauk/Köppe/Rami 2014). In his current research, Köppe focuses on the textual foundations of 'higher-order' narrative features such as *narrative closure*, *narrative unreliability* (Köppe/Kindt 2011) or the concept of a *narrator* (Köppe/Stühring 2011; 2015), and *narrative distance/telling* vs. *showing* (Klauk/Köppe 2014; 2014a; 2015). Importantly for the present research proposal, this research builds on the assumption that our understanding of the relation between higher-order narrative phenomena such as a 'narrator' can be enhanced by considering the theory of fiction.

The subproject in closely linked to some of the core areas of Tom Kindt's past and present research, especially, to the endeavors of a historical appraisal of literary studies' development since the 19th century and a systematic clarification of interpretation as one of the discipline's fundamental activities. Pursuing the first of these two enterprises, several of Kindt's publications examine instructive episodes of the history of the humanities and of literary criticism in particular, in order to illuminate the structural architecture of approaches to literature and their linkage to general cultural developments (cf., e.g., Kindt/Müller 2004, 2005, 2008). The second endeavor mentioned is reflected in the theoretical focal point of Kindt's publications: In a series of studies, he has, on the one hand, aimed to elucidate central aspects and traditions of scholarly interpretation. The publications in question explicate their object as a normative practice composed of different lower level operations (like description, classification, explanation, evaluation, etc.) and develop proposals for distinguishing between theories, methods and heuristics of interpretation (Kindt/Köppe 2008; Kindt/Müller 2003; Kindt 2007; Köppe/Kindt 2014; Kindt 2015a). A recent contribution of this type relates these distinctions to the interpretive debate about E.T.A. Hoffmanns "Der Sandmann" and outlines a text-based explanation of why the novella has induced such a long-standing succession of controversial statements (Kindt, in press). On the other hand, Kindt's emphasis on meta-theoretical issues becomes manifest in a couple of publications that analyze and attempt to optimize the interpretive usage of highly disputed critical concepts like 'implied author' (Kindt/Müller 2006, 2011), 'unreliable narration' (Kindt 2008; Köppe/Kindt 2014), 'fantasy' (Kindt 2011), or 'literary epoch' (Kindt 2015b).

* Dorsch / Bodrozic / Klauk

2.3. Detailed Research Plan

While Subproject 3 aims to uncover normative principles that (*de facto*) guide content ascribing interpretations as conducted by literary scholars, the Subproject 2 examines arguments in support of such principles.

Subproject 1: Factual Issues (Literary Studies / Fribourg)

Subproject 2: Normative Issues (Literary Theory / Göttingen

The current subproject focuses on literary fiction and examines the influence of *literary appreciation*

on what a work of fiction prescribes us to imagine. In particular, we want to contribute to answering the following question:

> (Q 1) Does appreciation influence what literary works of fiction prescribe us to imagine, and if so, how?

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

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

> (H1) A content-ascribing interpretation I_1 is (other things being equal) better than its alternative I_2, if imagining in accordance with it leads to an intrinsically more valuable experience. (Cf. Goldman 1995, 102)

However, both the details and the validity of (H1) are far from clear and need to be carefully scrutinized. For instance, the example discussed suggests that whether the dispositional quality of 'allowing for a scary reading' counts as a merit-constituting property of a work depends on the genre (cf. Walton 1970). Suppose that we read *The Turn of the Screw* as a psychological novella instead. Doesn't, in the context of this reading, the claim that in the fiction, there is a deluded governess (q), rather than ghosts, constitute the more rewarding reading experience, and hence counts in favor of the claim 'in the fiction$_W$, q? Also, (H1) seems to imply that aesthetic experiences can be compared (cf. Budd 1995, 42f., on the incommensurability of aesthetic value). And, given that the *appropriateness* of experiences of aesthetic value depends on the quality of the interpretations the experiences are based on, (H1) moreover seems to imply that the appropriateness of experiences of aesthetic value depends on the degree of value ascribed by the interpretation. Both implications of (H1) are clearly problematic. Our first sub-question, then, becomes:

> (Q 1.1) Does the realization of aesthetic merit help to determine which of two (otherwise equally well supported) content-ascribing interpretations I_1 and I_2 is to be preferred, and if so, how?

(H1) is concerned with the rather simple case of two alternative interpretations which are *ex hypothesi* equally well supported in all other relevant respects. However, interpretations can be more or less convincing according to several different criteria (Strube 1992). For instance, content-ascribing interpretations may be judged according to the purely formal criterion of how many (important) textual features they explain (Føllesdal et al. 2008). Now, suppose that we have two (otherwise equally well supported) incompatible interpretations, I_1 and I_2, such that I_1 ascribes a merit-constituting property as explained above (say, 'in the fiction$_W$, p'), while I_2 ascribes another property (say, 'in the fiction$_W$, q'), thereby having greater explanatory scope with respect to other (important) properties of the work than I_1. Which one should be preferred? Our second sub-question therefore becomes:

> (Q 1.2) Do merit-constituting properties trump other criteria for content ascriptions, and if so, how?

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

> (Q 1.3) How are we to decide between two (incompatible) interpretations, I_1 and I_2, of work W, such that I_1 involves the claim that 'in the fiction$_W$, p', thereby giving rise to literary merit M_1, and I_2 involves the claim that 'in the fiction$_W$, q', thereby giving rise to literary merit M_2?

In working on part one of the subproject, we need to keep two methodological points in mind. Firstly, one may be tempted to claim that (Q 1.1), (Q 1.2) and (Q 1.3) need to be answered on a case to case basis. Literary interpretation is often regarded as holistic insofar as one has to trade the total package of pros and cons of I_1 off against the total package of pros and cons of I_2 ...I_n (Köppe 2008, 86f.). The results of Subproject 3 (#Tom#) will hopefully contribute to our understanding of the matter. But even if holism gives us the correct picture with respect to content-ascriptions (both *de iure* and *de facto*), we certainly want to know what types of reasons guide, and ought to guide, our decisions in typical cases. Secondly, maybe there is no best interpretation to be had, but rather only optimal ones (in the sense of Currie 2003, 293). We turn to some implications this may have for the notion of prescribed imaginings below, as part three of this subproject.

Part two of the current subproject asks for the influence of literary appreciation on *how* to imagine. It does so by identifying three narrative-structural features the appreciation of which will be argued to make special claims on the imagination. Thus a case will be made that certain narrative structural features not only normatively constrain the content of our imaginings but also

how to imagine it. We focus on three such features, namely *unreliable narration*, the distinction between *telling vs. showing*, and *internal focalization*.

Unreliable narration comes in many forms (cf. Kindt 2008; Köppe/Kindt 2014, ch. 4.4). One form involves the reader's misinformation about the contours of the story world. Readers of Bierce's *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* are told that the protagonist escapes from a life threatening situation, only to learn later on in the story that the escape was nothing but the hallucinations of the dying man (Stühring 2011). This narrative strategy, then, centrally involves a distinction between what is the case in the fiction and what is but *seemingly* the case in the fiction. However, we surely cannot say that only the former is what is important to appreciating the work. For, arguably, appreciating the short story involves that you first faithfully follow the protagonist's hallucinations (without knowing that they are but hallucinations, that is), that you gain hope and be awaked, and probably disappointed, in the end. So, what do we have here in terms of prescriptions to imagine? In previous work, we have proposed to distinguish between prescriptions to imagine and *prima facie* prescriptions to imagine (Köppe/Kindt 2011). Readers are, in other words, mislead by the story concerning what it is that they are prescribed to imagine. This solution leaves untouched the idea that prescriptions to imagine establish fictional facts. But it does not seem to capture the idea that, in order to appreciate the story in accordance with its narrative strategy, one actually *needs* to be mislead concerning what is the case in the fiction. The work, as it were, prescribes us to imagine what it does not prescribe us to imagine. This needs explanation. A variant of this account has been proposed by Stühring (2011) who claims that passages of unreliable narration give readers a reason to imagine what (as might only be seen from an all things considered perspective) is not the case in the fiction. Again, however, the details are far from clear; in particular, it is not clear how the accounts relate to what has been identified as a major functional effect of the story, i.e. its propensity of elicit a particular emotionally qualified imaginative response (cf. Köppe 2012). Our research question thus becomes:

> (Q 1.4) How can we accommodate that in certain cases of unreliable narration literary fictions seem to prescribe emotionally qualified imaginings that, moreover, do not establish fictional facts?

Besides unreliable narration, we shall examine two more narrative-structural features of literary fictions and argue that they have a bearing on the *way* the works ask us to imagine what is the case in the fiction. The second feature under consideration is *internal focalization*, i.e. the telling of a narrative from the perspective of one of its characters (Genette 1980, 185ff.; Klauk/Köppe/Onea 2012). Take the sentences 'Peter looked out of the window. The cars were green.' Presumably, readers are supposed to imagine that the focal character, Peter, sees the green cars, or that the cars looked green to Peter. Accordingly, we have a necessary condition for internal focalization, spelled out in terms of prescribed imaginings. We might, very roughly, represent it like this: 'If a passage of text t with a content c of a fictional narrative is internally focalized through a character C, then readers are prescribed by t to imagine that 'C perceives c'.' It is a common assumption, however, that the appreciation of internally focalized passages of text not only involves grasping what is the case in the story world. These passages rather invite you to imaginatively perceive the situation *from the character's perspective* (Lindemann 1987, 6; Habermas 2006, 505; Stanzel 2008, 16). The passages, in other words, invite you to put yourself, imaginatively, in the character's shoes. Thus for the Peter-case, you are invited to imagine seeing the green cars. But again, we need to spell out the details. Recently, the related claim that point of view shots in cinematic fiction prompt readers to imagine seeing things from the character's point of view has been put to criticism (Choi

2005), and a similar case can be made for the effects of internal focalization, it seems. Hence, our research question is:

> (Q 1.5) Do passages of internal focalization prescribe us to imagine the content of what is said from the point of view of the focal character, and if so, how?

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

> (Q 1.6) Are passages of *showing* special with regard to the way of the imaginings they prescribe?

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

If the picture of literary interpretation sketched above is correct, then it might turn out that prescriptions to imagine do not issue from works of fiction *tout court* but need to be construed as being somehow sensitive to types of interpretation. (We can think of an interpretation that seeks to promote intrinsically valuable experiences and 'historical interpretation' as two types of interpretation here). This gives rise to the following research question:

> (Q 1.7) Are prescriptions to imagine sensitive to types of interpretation, and if so, how?

There are at least three *prima facie* options to answer this question (cf. Lamarque 1996, 64): Firstly, what a work W prescribes to imagine could be said to have no unconditional validity, but may be represented as 'hypothetical imperatives': 'When you engage in an interpretation of type T of W, then you are prescribed to imagine … by W'. It is, however, unclear whether all prescriptions to imagine have this hypothetical form or only some. In other words, do we have different kinds of prescriptions to imagine in the appreciation of literary fictions, some with unconditional force and others conditional upon types of interpretation? Secondly, we might opt for the de-emphasis of prescribed imaginings that are not 'apt' to a particular type of interpretation T, in the context of engaging in a T-type interpretation. Walton recommends to de-emphasize fictional facts that do not fit into certain games of make-believe, meaning that there is a prescription to imagine in these cases, but we somehow do not take it seriously (Walton 1990, 182). This strategy does not touch the unconditional force of prescriptions to imagine. However, it rearranges the relation of interpretation and prescriptions to imagine considerably, for interpretations here do not only aim at determining prescriptions to imagine, but also at their evaluation. As a third strategy, we might opt for a 'disjunction', claiming that work W may have different story worlds SW_1, SW_2, …, where each SW depends on the type of interpretation T adopted. In this picture, prescriptions to imagine have unconditional validity but are relativized to types of interpretation. The pros and cons of these alternatives need to be evaluated, and they need to be supplemented by further options.

In our exposition of part two of the current subproject, we have considered three examples of narrative-structural features that seem to have an influence on the way of imagining that is

prescribed by works of fiction. The notion of 'way' here refers to a mixed bag of phenomena: *à propos* unreliable narration, we have considered the notion of imagining in an emotionally qualified way (such that we, say, are invited to *confidently* imagine that the protagonist escapes) as well as the distinction between *prima facie* and all-things-considered prescriptions, and the idea that imaginings may be supported with different strengths of reasons. /'*A propos* the narrative modes of internal focalization and showing (vs. telling), we have considered the ways of imagining something from a character's perspective, or imagining something in a vivid manner. Our final research question, then, generalizes over the particularities of these cases:

> (Q 1.8) How do prescriptions to imagine extend beyond the content of what is to be imagined to the *way* of imagining?

Subproject 3: Foundational Issues (Philosophy / Fribourg

2.4. Time Schedule and Main Benchmarks

	Subproject 1	**Subproject 2**	**Subproject 3**
First Year (2016–17)			
Second Year (2017–18)			
Third Year (2018–19)			
Planned Output			

2.5. Importance of the Research & Planned Publications

Bibliography