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**COMING TO TERMS WITH FEAR: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SIMILAR
TRAJECTORIES OF SCROOGE AND NATHANIEL**

PORTO ALEGRE

2019

**UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO GRANDE DO SUL
INSTITUTO DE LETRAS
TRABALHO DE CONCLUSÃO DE CURSO**

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TRAJECTORIES OF SCROOGE AND NATHANIEL**

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Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso apresentado ao Instituto de Letras da UFRGS como requisito parcial para obtenção do grau de Licenciado em Letras pela Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul.

**Porto Alegre,
2019**

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Michels, Daniel Maggio

Coming to terms with fear: an analysis of the similar trajectories of Scrooge and Nathaniel / Daniel Maggio Michels. -- 2019.

47 f.

Orientadora: Márcia Ivana de Lima e Silva.

Trabalho de conclusão de curso (Graduação) -- Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Instituto de Letras, Licenciatura em Letras: Língua Inglesa e Literaturas de Língua Inglesa, Porto Alegre, BR-RS, 2019.

1. A Christmas Carol. 2. Charles Dickens. 3. The Sandman. 4. E. T. A. Hoffmann. 5. Sigmund Freud. I. de Lima e Silva, Márcia Ivana, orient. II. Título.

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Porto Alegre, 13 de dezembro de 2019.

Resultado: Aprovado com conceito **A**

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AGRADECIMENTOS

Gostaria de agradecer...

...à Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, pelos 85 anos de ensino público, gratuito e de qualidade (Restaurante Universitário, Biblioteca, Pista de Atletismo, Anfiteatro, etc.)

...ao Instituto de Letras da UFRGS. Agradeço aos professores, à direção e aos funcionários por propiciarem as melhores condições possíveis para facilitar o processo de aprendizado dos alunos. (Solarium, Salas de Estudos, Toca, Wi-fi, etc...)

...aos professores Valéria Silveira Brisolará, Márcia Ivana de Lima e Silva, Ubiratã Kickhöfel Alves, Sandra Sirangelo Maggio, Ana Beatriz Areas da Luz Fontes, Claudio Vescia Zanini, bem como a todos os professores bons que tive no Ensino Básico e Médio, por me darem condições para escrever este trabalho.

...aos professores Claudio Vescia Zanini e Sophia Celina Diesel, pela gentileza de lerem o trabalho, contribuindo com sugestões para a fase do acabamento.

...em especial, à minha orientadora Márcia Ivana de Lima e Silva pelos seis anos de ensinamento, supervisão e amizade. Obrigado por estar sempre por perto e mesmo assim me deixar ter o meu próprio ritmo de produção. Obrigado pelas inúmeras oportunidades proporcionadas dentro da Letras.

...à Pro-Reitoria de Graduação pelos dois semestres de bolsas de Monitoria recebidas em 2015/1 e 2015/2.

...ao Ministério da Educação pelos oito semestres de bolsas PET (Programa de Educação Tutorial) recebidas entre 2016/1 e 2019/2.

...aos meus pais, por facilitarem tudo para mim em termos de afeto, segurança, educação e sustento desde que nasci.

*Semente, semente, semente
Semente, semente
Se não mente fale a verdade
De que árvore você nasceu?*

*De onde veio
De onde apareceu
Porque que o meu destino
É tão parecido com o seu?*

*Eu sou a terra
Você minha semente
Na chuva a gente se entende
É na chuva que a gente se entende
Oh semente!*

...

*Semente eu sei
Tem gente que ainda acredita
E aposta na força da vida
E busca um novo amanhecer*

*Lá vem o sol
Agora diga que sim
Semente eu sou sua terra
Semente pode entrar em mim*

Semente, semente, ...

Armandinho, "Semente"

*He fled. I married her.
Here's the coach.
That's her head.*

Charles Dickens, *The Pickwick Papers*

RESUMO

Este trabalho estabelece uma aproximação entre os personagens Ebenezer Scrooge, da novela *Uma História de Natal*, de Charles Dickens (1843) e Nathaniel, do conto “O Homem da Areia”, de E. T. A. Hoffmann (1816). Os dois protagonistas têm grande dificuldade em interagir com as pessoas com quem se relacionam. Na raiz de seus problemas estão episódios ocorridos nos tempos de infância. Em ambas as histórias não são as palavras que conectam estas situações distantes e distintas, mas sim os silêncios. A presente monografia tem por objetivo fazer uma leitura crítica desses silêncios, que conduza a respostas para as seguintes perguntas: (a) Qual a relação entre o comportamento apresentado por Scrooge e Nathaniel e os acontecimentos de seus passados que nos são mostrados? (b) Qual a importância do que aconteceu nos períodos das vidas dos protagonistas omitidos pelos silêncios das histórias? (c) O que faz com que Scrooge consiga transcender suas limitações e Nathaniel afunde com elas? (d) Em que medida os problemas verificados nesses personagens representam também as sociedades em que eles se inserem? Estas questões serão abordadas por um viés psicanalítico. Como apoio teórico, utilizo dois ensaios de Sigmund Freud. O primeiro, “As Neuropsicoses de Defesa” (1896), apresenta o conceito de Formação de Compromisso (*Kompromissbildung*); e o segundo, “O ‘Estranho’” (*Das Unheimliche*) (1919), trata sobre o Duplo, o Medo de Castração e o Narcisismo. Espero, no final da análise, apresentar respostas para as quatro perguntas postas. E também espero, principalmente, ressaltar como essas duas histórias, bem como as interpretações de Freud, permanecem atuais e ainda revelam muito sobre o mundo em que vivemos hoje.

Palavras-chave: *Uma História de Natal*. Charles Dickens. “O Homem da Areia”. E. T. A. Hoffmann. Sigmund Freud. Crítica literária.

ABSTRACT

The present work establishes an approximation between two characters: Ebenezer Scrooge, protagonist of the novella *A Christmas Carol*, by Charles Dickens (1843), and Nathaniel, protagonist of the short story “The Sandman”, by E. T. A. Hoffmann (1816). Both characters clearly present difficulties facing human relationships. In the root of their problems there are episodes that took place in their childhood. However, neither of the stories makes use of words to connect these two distant and distinct situations. Instead, the facts are hidden in silence. The goal of this monography is to investigate this silence through a critical reading that aims to find answers to the following questions: (a) What is the relation between the behaviour presented by Scrooge and Nathaniel and the episodes of their past selectively shown to us? (b) What is the influence of the silenced moments in the problems faced by the characters in the stories? (c) What allows Scrooge to transcend his limitations, whereas Nathaniel dives into them? (d) In what aspects do the problems verified in these two characters also represent the societies in which they are inserted? The answers to these questions are pursued with the help of a psychoanalytical support, with two essays written by Sigmund Freud. The first, “Further Remarks on the Neuro-Psychoses of Defense” (1896), presents the concept of Compromise-Formation (*Kompromisbildung*); and the second, “The Uncanny” (*Das Unheimliche*) (1919), covers the concepts of The Double, Fear of Castration and Narcissism. I hope, at the end of this analysis, to find appropriate answers to the four questions. I also hope to highlight the fact that these two stories, just like Freud’s interpretations, remain significant and still reveal aspects of the world in which we live today.

Keywords: *A Christmas Carol*. Charles Dickens. “The Sandman”. E. T. A. Hoffmann. Sigmund Freud. Literary criticism.

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INTRODUCTION: THE GAP TO BE FILLED

Both Scrooge, protagonist of *A Christmas Carol* (cf. DICKENS, 2004), and Nathaniel, protagonist of “The Sandman” (cf. HOFFMANN, 2015), present difficulties in dealing with the world which surrounds them. Scrooge reflects all the coldness of the weather in which his story takes place when it comes to relating to people. Nathaniel, though keen on trying his best in human relationships, fails to act normally, ending up stressed out and becoming a dangerous threat to those who are near him. Both characters are presented as adults who are socially dislocated. However, even though they are presented as grown men, parts of their stories take us to their childhood, and show that they have not always been so problematic.

How do the stories show this change in their ways, then? In their childhood, both Scrooge and Nathaniel were quiet, timid and imaginative children who had a good life with their families until a certain point, when something happened and they had to deal with a very bad event. These events are described in each story. However, what is not shown is the process in which, after the bad traumatic events, the two normal children became such excentric and problematic adults. Instead, the two authors, Dickens and Hoffmann, preferred to speak through silence - that is, leaving blank spaces for the reader to fill. The question that opens this paragraph relates to the purpose of the present work: to investigate why and how this switch in personality took place in the two characters.

In order to reach this goal, the present work relies on a theoretical background formed by psychological studies applied to literature, namely two essays written by Sigmund Freud: “Further Remarks on the Neuro-Psychoses of Defense” (cf. FREUD, 2016), written in 1896, and “The ‘Uncanny’ (cf. FREUD, 2015) ”, from 1919. The former contributes the concept of Compromise-Formation, and the latter with the concepts of Double, Castration-Complex, and Narcissism. Applying Freud’s notions on the two stories will help us to understand how the characters’ minds were affected by the bad events of their childhood, and the reasons why they later seem so changed.

Concerning the structure of the work, the two stories are not constantly approached together. Though the answers I aim at could successfully be reached by using this formula, my supervisor and I agreed that comparing both stories all the time would end up causing a tiresome reading. Thus, two different phases were settled in order to provide a more dynamic reading to the reader. In the first half I present Scrooge, Nathaniel and the theoretical

background individually, without mixing them. Only afterwards, when we have already formed a solid global understanding of things, I put them together and thread what has been built so far.

The first half of the work is richer in quantity (forming three out of the four chapters of the research) and it presents the necessary contextualization for the discussion to be developed. In the first chapter we focus on Scrooge mainly: we learn about his problems and I already establish the basis that should sustain each and every analysis made of him in this work. Still in the first chapter, towards its ending, Freud comes into play. There is an approximation between him and Charles Dickens, which is relevant to the arguments presented. The second chapter has the purpose of demonstrating the two theoretical concepts utilized, which in the original, in German, are called “*Kompromissbildung*” (cf. FREUD 2016) and “*Das Unheimliche*” (cf. FREUD, 2015). Closing the first half of the work, the third chapter is the part in which Nathaniel is presented. It is in the middle of the first and the second half in terms of content, since some Freudian concepts are already applied but the two characters are not yet side to side in the analysis.

The second half is richer in quality (forming one chapter that takes more pages than the three previous ones) and it carries out the analysis. This part is longer and has more subdivisions too, so that all the aspects considered relevant may be tackled. Here we have the approximations between Scrooge and Nathaniel and we use the theoretical tools. We follow Freud in his considerations about “castration-complex”, “the double” and “narcissism”, that say much about the difficulties presented by the two protagonists, especially in relation to the opposite sex. The conclusion, named “A Happy Ending, a Death”, closes this research by considering the drastically different narrative outcomes in *A Christmas Carol* and “The Sandman”.

Literature is important in many ways. It provides good entertainment, and helps us understand the world, history, life and the human soul. After reading a book we acquire a whole new perspective of what surrounds us, but it might not be so clear sometimes. Studies such as this are helpful to turn a feeling or an impression we get after finishing a book into an idea or a concept. They can make things less vague and more concrete, and, because of that, easier to assimilate. This is the contribution that the present study aims to offer for literature. Limiting this idea to this specific corpus of analysis, this means filling the blanks in the reading of *A Christmas Carol* and “The Sandman”, through a Freudian point of view.

1 PRESENTING SCROOGE

A Christmas Carol (1843) is the most widely read among the more than twenty Christmas stories written by Charles Dickens, and Ebenezer Scrooge is one of his best known, and most liked, characters. The plot of the story is well known: Scrooge, an old scrimp, undergoes a transcendental experience after being visited by four ghosts in the story: first a lost soul (Marley, his dead partner) and then three spirits of past, present and future Christmases. They lead Scrooge into a self-awareness trip molded in the Gothic structure of a story within a story. Part of the story is openly presented, but much is left unsaid. This stimulates the reader to engage and try to fill the blanks. As a consequence, many questions about this enigmatic character arise: How has Scrooge become this peculiar solitary person? Why does he avoid interacting with people? Why is he so attached to money, if he does not use it? What does money mean to him, after all? What makes him so interesting, so fascinating – considering he has survived almost two hundred years as a literary icon?

The plot develops on Christmas' Eve, a time when the harsh cold of the winter should contrast with the warmth in people's hearts, cultivated by the sense of solidarity that surrounds this time of the year. There are exceptions, though, such as Scrooge, the cold man with the "tight-fisted hand at the grind-stone" (DICKENS, 2004, p. 11). We can perceive the state of things through our five senses: our ears hear the Christmas' carols echoing along the streets, our nose captures the fragrant of the roasts being prepared, our sight seizes the snow falling over the embellished houses. Our touch feels the cold air surrounding Scrooge and our taste detects the tasteless food he eats at night. In the gloomy room in which he lives, the fire in the fireplace is so low that it barely heats or illuminates the place. This strategy of attacking all our five senses well represents the kind of author Charles Dickens is, and his ability to set the atmosphere in his stories.

Dickens is also a great creator of characters. According to the English author and theorist E. M. Forster (who created the expressions "flat character" and "well-rounded character" in 1924, in his book *Aspects of the Novel*), Dickens is a great creator of flat characters, which are based on the medieval "types", characters that are constructed around a single idea or quality, full of intensity. (Cf. FORSTER, 2005) . Forster says that "Part of the genius of Dickens is that he does use types and caricatures, people whom we recognize the instant they re-enter, and yet achieves effects that are not mechanical and a vision of humanity that is not shallow." (FORSTER, 2005, p. 71). Ebenezer Scrooge has such a

marked manner that his name became an adjective that can be found in any English dictionary, meaning “miserly” or “tight-fisted”. Scrooge has also influenced many other characters that were yet to come. Perhaps the most famous one is Disney’s Scrooge McDuck, Donald Duck’s uncle. Scrooge McDuck took after Ebenezer’s name, clothing and manner, and ended up becoming, just like him, though a miserly old man, dear to all of us.

Scrooge’s days are all equal. For many decades he has walked the same path that connects his house to his workplace and his workplace to his house. He is known, feared and avoided by everyone who is near, and people know that he prefers to be left alone. “The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shriveled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice” (DICKENS, 1843, p.2). Scrooge seems to have a need that things happen always the same way. He passes his days at the office with his poorly paid clerk, Bob Cratchit, to whom he gives no attention. When addressed to by his nephew, who comes to invite him to a Christmas dinner, he makes it plain that neither the visit nor the invitation are welcome. However, soon we find out Scrooge is not so unaffected as it seems. This nephew is the son of a deceased sister that once had been very important to Scrooge. At that very night all this repression will blow out, originating the apparition of the four ghosts in the story.

1.1 THE ORIGIN OF SCROOGE’S PROBLEMS

In order to explore Scrooge’s miraculous switch of behavior, I have defined three pillars that will sustain my analysis of this character from now on. The first pillar is the scene describing the visit Scrooge pays to his past with the Spirit of the Past Christmases. The second pillar is a specific scene in Scrooge’s past that echoes something that occurred to Charles Dickens himself. The third one is an isolated sentence, insignificant at first sight, but relevant to my analysis. It is situated in the part in which Scrooge comes across Marley’s ghost. I believe that with the help of these three pillars it is possible to make a meaning out of some important silences in the story.

Thus, we start by observing Scrooge’s trip to some strategic key moments of his childhood and youth. At the remotest stage of the time travel, that starts with the following exchange,

“Who, and what are you?” Scrooge demanded.
 “I am the Ghost of Christmas Past”.
 “Long Past?” inquired Scrooge: observant of its dwarfish stature.
 “No. Your past.” (DICKENS, 2004, p. 52).

Scrooge is taken back to the village of his childhood, where “He was conscious of a thousand odours floating in the air, each one connected with a thousand thoughts, and hopes, and joys, and cares, long, long, forgotten” (DICKENS, 2004, p. 54), in the time he was one of the happy and carefree children “who called to other boys with gigs and carts” (DICKENS, 2004, p. 55). Advancing a few Christmases in the trip, we watch the children going home to celebrate the date with their families – all of them but one, who is left behind, in the school. That is Scrooge. He is alone in an empty classroom, entertaining himself with his own fantasy – Ali Baba, Robinson Crusoe’s parrot, for instance. Advancing even further in time, we find a slightly older Ebenezer boy, much tormented, walking in circles in a dark room that looks like a warehouse. This is an important scene. The door opens, bringing light into the place, and through it it enters little Fanny, his younger sister. She is very happy, and tells him that she came to take him home. She tells that things are getting better, that their father is much changed, and that he even gave permission for the son to come back home. An important authority of the place in which he was – a frightening and imponent figure – leads him to a carriage, and they go away.

This is all the information we have in *A Christmas Carol* concerning the mystery of Scrooge’s childhood. A reader can perceive a balance between what is said and what is silenced in the first spirit’s trip, and this balance is enough for the story to go on perfectly. However, in order to go deeper and explore the meaning of the absences, I will ask permission to perform a dangerous movement and cross the limit between the fictional text and the author’s life, having in mind that Dickens’ narratives usually are autobiographical.

Then we reach the second pillar, where we find some information about the life of the person Charles Dickens, that was used by the author Charles Dickens to build the mental frame of his character Ebenezer Scrooge. All the facts narrated here are retrieved from the biography *Charles Dickens: A Life* (2011), written by Claire Tomalin. When Dickens was eight, his family moved from the countryside to the Camden Town, in London, which is the same place where Scrooge’s clerk Bob Cratchit lives with his family. The Cratchit family is poor when it comes to money and health, but very rich when it refers to loving one another. In some way, this may represent Dickens’ idealized remembrance of a good childhood time.

After some time living in the capital, Dickens' father lost control of his finances, got into debts and ended up in jail. Dickens' mother and his younger siblings went to live in the prison too, because they could not manage to keep themselves without his income. Charles, the elder son, was eleven years old and was sent to work in a shoe polish factory called *Warren's Blacking Warehouse*. His work consisted in sticking labels onto ink recipients. Anyone who has read some books by Dickens knows what he has to say about the working condition for children in London at that time. However, the worst problem was not working in the factory, but what came next, when the father was released. The family went home, but nobody came to pick him up. Charles had to wait for a long time until his younger sister came for him, in a very similar scene to the one we have in *A Christmas Carol*. When he finally arrived home, his mother made it very clear that he should not have returned.

The third pillar is an isolated sentence situated in the scene of Marley's frightful apparition which apparently has nothing special. However, if scrutinized, this sentence holds a hidden key meaning. "To say that he was not startled, or that his blood was not conscious of a terrible sensation to which it had been a stranger from *infancy*, would be untrue". (DICKENS, 2004, p. 32) This is the way Dickens contrives to show that in the past Scrooge has experienced things that are much worse than the horrible situation of meeting a ghost. The sentence indicates what has been silenced in the story: that the worst fear Scrooge has ever felt has to do with his family, his home and his infancy. Connecting the three pillars, we can fill in the blanks and realize that Scrooge's traumatic experience took place when his father failed in his role of providing for the family, when he was first estranged from home, and then repelled from it. Neither the father nor the mother figures come out very favorably in this context.

1.2 FREUD, A DICKENS READER

If in the previous section I explored a connection involving Scrooge, the creature, and Dickens, his creator, now I propose a brief approximation between Freud, the theorist used in this monograph, and Dickens, creator of characters responsible for a psychological deepening in English literature.

Dickens was born in England in 1812, lived fifty-eight years, in pre-Victorian and Victorian times, witnessed the process of industrialization that took place, was influenced by it and positioned himself about the changes that took place. Freud was born in Austria in

1856, when Dickens had already published eighty percent of his works. As we can see, Dickens and Freud are contemporary, and both lived in European countries that were going through a changing process of modernization. They were influenced by their time, and responded to it, Dickens writing fiction and Freud studying how this process of constant change would affect the human mind.

Freud read Dickens as he grew up. Many Dickens novels had been translated into German, and Freud could read English too. Peter Gay, in his biography of Freud, presents Freud as an optimistic child, full of expectations for the future, who liked to read *Bildungsromans* (Cf. GAY, 2012), a kind of novel where we accompany the growth of a protagonist. Dickens was a master in that genre, which basically portrays young characters who run through barriers and overcome difficulties in order to become successful adults, satisfied with what they have achieved in the end. Another biographer of Freud, Ernest Jones, tells us that Freud grew up reading Dickens, who was his favorite author at an early age. His favorite Dickens novel was his Bildungsroman *David Copperfield*. (Cf. JONES, 1961)

In an article called “Dickens and Psychoanalysis”, Allie Duzzett tells us that the first present that both Dickens and Freud gave to their fiancées were books. The interesting fact about Freud’s present to his fiancée Martha was that he gave her *David Copperfield*. (Cf. DUZETT, 2016) If Freud grew up reading Dickens, in a society similar to the one in which Dickens lived, it is stimulating to think of how the migration of thoughts between the two of them might have occurred. It concerns two different approaches – one of the artist and the other of the analyst. Both of them explore moral and psychological fragilities of the two similar contexts in which they are inserted. We know that reading Freud helps to interpret Dickens’ works (that is precisely what we are doing in this research). Freud’s ideas, applied to Dickens’ texts, enlighten aspects that might not be realized at first. But what I like to think about is the other end of this chain. I like to think that young Freud, reading so much Dickens, might end up being influenced by the English author’s approach to life. So much so that the literary critic Arthur Hirsch remarks that the way Freud writes (his style) is very similar to Dickens’. (Cf. HIRSCH, 2011). The fascinating thing is that reading much Dickens might have contributed to the intellectual, mental and psychological development of Sigmund Freud. This can be one of the ingredients Freud needed in order to **become Freud, and one day** formulate his theories. I like the idea that there is some Dickens in the way Freud sees the world.

On one side, psychoanalysis helps a reader to read Dickens. Psychoanalysis helps literature to be interpreted – life inspires art. On the other side, Dickens instigates Freud to sharpen his thinking arsenal, and therefore collaborates to the foundation of Psychoanalysis. Literature helps Freud to create psychoanalysis – art inspires life.

2 TWO FREUDIAN STUDIES

The theory written by Freud plays a big role in this study, because when it comes to understanding what happens to Scrooge and Nathaniel we are strictly exploring their psychological reactions. Freud offers some concepts that apply to both characters. The two essays used here are: “Further Remarks on the Neuro-Psychoses of Defense” (2016) and “The ‘Uncanny’” (2015) In this section, I will briefly comment on the two essays, concentrating on the concepts that prove useful for the analysis of Scrooge and Nathaniel, concepts such as “trauma”, “symptom”, “compromise-formation”, “castration-complex”, “narcissism”, and “double”.

2.1 THE SYMPTOM OF COMPROMISE-FORMATION (*KOMPROMISSBILDUNG*)

Reading “Further Remarks on the Neuro-Psychoses of Defense”, published by Freud in 1896, I could understand what he means when he refers to a “symptom”. Freud explains that the process that occasions the appearance of a symptom is divided into four stages. I will refer to each of these stages, and connect them to some scene or aspect of *A Christmas Carol*. As we have not discussed “The Sandman” yet, in section 3, when we get to Hoffmann, the symptoms will be resumed.

Stage 1 begins with a Traumatic Event. Experiencing a very bad situation can provoke a trauma, and everything that follows is originated from this trauma. Concerning Scrooge, we have spent the whole first section collecting evidence that leads us to the understanding that his trauma originates in a sudden separation from his family, in his childhood.

Stage 2 consists of the Assimilation of what has happened. Freud says that people often feel ashamed and uncomfortable in this phase. Scrooge demonstrates this when we see him walking to and fro in the warehouse, under care of that frighteningly imponent man. The child seems desperate, and as we have found out in the third pillar of the first section, that was the most terrible sensation he has faced in his life.

Stage 3 is the Period of Apparent Health. As it follows the second stage, it can deceive people, since one is not so well as one seems to be, or thinks to be. Actually, what seems and feels as a cure is a problematic mechanism of defense that internalizes the problem. This

stage can be dangerous, because usually this is the time when people take bigger steps than they can handle, which makes things worse. In *A Christmas Carol* we have the breaking up of Scrooge and Belle. He seems so busy and self-sufficient, and – as he is not ready to get engaged – acts in such a selfish way that he practically forces Belle to depart.

Stage 4 brings the Symptoms. If the root trauma is not properly treated, it can be internalized, flourishing as symptoms. We do not usually recognize their connection with the traumatic event, since many times the symptom is not linkable with its root directly or rationally. Usually the person does not even notice that symptoms have risen at all, and only when somebody tells them that something is not right will they start to become aware of that. This is what happens in Scrooge's case. He cannot recognize his excentric behavior as a symptom of the psychological wound that has not been healed. The consequence is that he settles an unconscious "compromise" of not being involved in other people's lives. The symptoms of his compromise are isolation and greed.

If we pay attention to the title of Freud's essay – "Further Remarks on the Neuro-Psychoses of Defense" – we realize that it is the continuation of a previous essay, "The Neuro-Psychoses of Defense", published in 1894, about repressed feelings that emerge as neurotic and psychotic disorders as hysteria, obsession, phobia, and hallucinatory psychosis. It is in this first essay that Freud introduces the idea of "symptom", developed two years later in the essay that we use here.

Freud deepens his considerations about what a symptom is when he analyses the ethiology of Hysteria. He understands that depression, anxiety and obsessive thoughts and acts (main symptoms of hysteria) are signs of a defensive battle, never an aggression. They constitute a natural mechanism of protection generated by the human body. Later on, Freud also analyses cases of Chronic Paranoia, which are much applicable to the second character of this analysis: Hoffman's Nathaniel (we will get to him soon). Freud explains that the whole process of apparition of symptoms is the same, but that people that are prone to do so may develop a psychotic defense, characterized by delusions and hallucinations.

We have exemplified the process of compromise-formation with Scrooge, a character we already know. However, there is another character we are yet to meet: Nathaniel (no surname presented), from E.T.A. Hoffmann's short story "The Sandman". Just like Scrooge, he faced a very hard situation as a kid and developed his own symptoms. But before analyzing Nathaniel, we will examine Freud's second essay, "The 'Uncanny'", in which Freud himself has something to say about "The Sandman".

2.2 THE ‘UNCANNY’ (*DAS UNHEIMLICHE*)

Alix Strachey’s 1924 translation of “*Das Unheimliche*” into English, for the Standard Edition, presents the word ‘uncanny’ between inverted commas, because the English word choice does not cover the nuances contained in the original expression in German. Freud himself, in the first part of the essays, has much to say about this word. But before that I would like to inform that, in German, adjectives are written in small letters, whereas nouns begin with capital letters. If we say that somebody’s behavior is strange (adjective), we write “*unheimlich*”, in small letters; but when we turn this idea into a concept, such as when we refer to Freud’s essay, we capitalize it: “Unheimliche.”

Freud starts by examining the word *Heim*, a noun that means “house”, in the sense of “home”, “family” or “homeland”. In the three cases we have the idea of belonging, identity and comfort. The prefix “un”, however, subverts these images, evoking their opposites. It destabilizes what is supposed to be harmonic, creating an impression of hostility, fear and mistrust.

In “The ‘Uncanny’”, Freud continues a study that had been initiated by another author, Ernst Jentsch, in 1906. Jentsch was the one who first gave a noun form to the adjective *heimliche*. In his text “On the Psychology of the Uncanny” (1909), Jentsch proposes that, in Western psychological and cultural organization, what is traditional, inherited, usual and known is agreeable to most people; whereas what is new, uncommon and strange, is bound to cause fear. Freud, thinking outside the box, searches for weak points in this logic and raises the following idea: for different people, different things are terrifying. Freud goes after each single level of meaning of the word *heimliche* to find out that, at a certain point, the meaning of the word is exactly the opposite of the most common entry in the dictionary. At a certain point, what is familiar can become unfamiliar. Developing from this point, the essay develops the argument that terror and horror can sometimes come from where they are not supposed to come: from the *Heim*, which should be a safe harbour, a fountain of comfort.

We are prepared to fear the unknown, but it is difficult to accept that what provokes fear is exactly what is close to us – something that could be hidden for a long time without our knowledge. “Thus *heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*” (FREUD: 2015, p 226). In this way, what provokes the ‘uncanny’ “is in reality nothing new or alien, but something

which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression". (FREUD, 2015, p. 241) Freud uses as an example the phobia many people have of getting stuck into small places, like being buried alive and waking up inside a coffin. According to Freud, these impressions might derive from memory remnants (that we are not aware of) of our intrauterine stage. (FREUD: 2015, p. 244)

After defining the word *unheimliche*, Freud moves on to an analysis of the short story "The Sandman", written by the German author E. T. A. Hoffmann. In the next chapter, I will firstly sum up Hoffman's story, and then we will come back to the second part of Freud's essay "The 'Uncanny'" where he analyses it. After finishing these two parts, I will establish the links that connect Nathaniel (protagonist in "The Sandman") and Scrooge from a psychological point of view, and we will finally see both of the characters together.

3 PRESENTING NATHANIEL

3.1 THE ORIGIN OF NATHANIEL'S PROBLEMS

Just as it happens with *A Christmas Carol*, where we have a story inside a story because of Scrooge's time travels, the same effect is achieved in "The Sandman" through the letters switched between Nathaniel (the protagonist) and Clara (his fiancée) and Lothaire (Clara's brother). In the first letter we are introduced to facts about Nathaniel's childhood, showing that the memories he has of his past home alternate between harmonic moments (*heimlich*) - when the family is united and on their own - and moments of fear and tension (*unheimlich*) - in the nights when they receive the visit of a mysterious man, an attorney called Copellius. On such occasions the father gets nervous; and the mother seems frightened. The maid in the house puts the children to bed and says "The Sandman is coming". She means that the children had better sleep soon, otherwise this folklore entity, the Sandman, would throw sand upon their eyes, pick them out and steal them. But, as Nathaniel's parents are expecting a visitor, and the maid says "The Sandman is coming" every time they are visited by Copellius, Nathaniel ends up believing that the attorney is the Sandman.

One night, the boy takes courage and hides inside the room where Coppelius and his father usually meet to work in some secret experiment. They seem to be practicing some illegal alchemy experience. The father's behavior is submissive, and Coppelius, ruthless, keeps repeating "Eyes, here! Eyes!" (HOFFMAN, 2015, p. 3) At a certain moment, they notice the boy's presence. Coppelius takes up a handful of ember and threatens to throw it at the boy's eyes. Nathaniel's father begs him not to do that, and Coppelius stops. Nathaniel is so horrified that he falls ill, has fits of convulsions, faints and spends weeks sick in bed afterwards. About one year later, another accident happens while the two men are working. A spontaneous combustion provokes a fire that kills Nathaniel's father. After this episode, Coppelius disappears from the family's life and is never heard of again.

At the time Nathaniel writes the letter that tells this story, he is studying at university. There is a curious peculiarity about this letter: he wrote it to Lothaire, but at the moment of posting, he mistakenly sent it to Clara. Afterwards, when he found out that Clara had read the letter, he felt very annoyed and distracted. In the letter, Nathaniel says that these facts only came back to his mind because he has just met a new neighbor, a lens seller called

Coppola, and he is in doubt whether the man is Coppelius or not, because they look alike. The second letter in the story is Clara's answer to Nathaniel. She tries to calm him down, saying that she believes it is just his imagination. In a third letter, Nathaniel seems to be convinced that, indeed, Coppola is not Coppelius, because Coppelius was German and Coppola is clearly Italian. He comments that Coppola has a business with another neighbor of his: professor Spalanzani, who has a daughter called Olympia.

During his vacation, Nathaniel spends some time with Clara and Lothaire. His behavior alternates between normal and tormented. He writes poems about Coppola and reads them aloud to Clara. In one of these poems, Coppola comes to their wedding and tries to take Clara's eyes off. The more Clara tries to calm Nathaniel, the more irritated he becomes, because she does not seem to believe in his fears.

Back at university, Nathaniel buys a telescope to get rid of Coppola, who is insisting to sell him something. Because of an accident involving a fire in the university, Nathaniel had just moved into a new dormitory. So, he used his new telescope to look through the window and started to observe Prof. Spalanzani's house. There he sees Olympia, and immediately falls in love with her, who seems so enchantingly calm, peaceful and serene. He starts to pay visits to Olympia. He reads his poems to her, and is delighted with the fact that she does not consider them odd. However, there is a thing Nathaniel does not realize: Olympia is not a woman, she is an automaton doll. When he goes to a party and dances with Olympia, he sees that the others looking strangely at him, but he interpretes that as if they are envious of his relationship with Olympia. Thus, the day comes when Nathaniel decides to propose to the lady. When he arrives at the professor's door, he perceives that there is an argument going on inside. He enters and sees the professor and Coppola fighting over Olympia's body, each pulling it to his side, just as in a tug of war. They are arguing about Olympia's eyes. Coppola takes them off the doll, breaks them and leaves, carrying Olympia with him. Spalanzani tells Nathaniel that Coppola is in fact Coppelius, and that they have been working on that doll for twenty years. The professor picks up the pieces of Olympia's bleeding eyes from the floor and throws them at Nathaniel, blaming him for letting the man steal her. Nathaniel, in a fit of rage, tries to strangle the professor, but some people come and separate them in time. Nathaniel loses control and "is taken raging to the mad-house." (HOFFMANN, 2015, p. 15)

In the last part of the story, Nathaniel is recovering at Clara and Lothaire's house. Things are already arranged for his marriage with Clara, and they decide to go for a walk.

Nathaniel and Clara walk up a tower, and from up there, he believes he sees Coppelius on the ground. In a sudden crisis, Nathaniel tries to throw Clara from the tower. Lothaire manages to get there in time to save her, but Nathaniel, still in the fit, jumps down and dies. In the last paragraph of the narrative we can see Clara in the future, glad and peaceful, sitting next to another man (very much like we have with Scrooge and Belle in the other story). The narrator closes the story by saying that that would be an impossible scene if she had Nathaniel sitting by her side.

3.2 FREUD READS HOFFMANN

Here we resume the comment on Freud's essay "The 'Uncanny'", presenting his reading of Hoffmann's "The Sandman", focusing on the irrational fear Nathaniel has of having his eyes extracted by Coppelius. Freud observes that this is a common nightmare among children and adults too. "A study of dreams, fantasies and myths has taught us that the anxiety about one's eyes, the fear of going blind, is often enough a substitute for the dread of being castrated." (FREUD, 2015, p. 231). Freud goes on:

I would not recommend any opponent of the psychoanalytical view to select precisely the story of the Sandman upon which to build his case that morbid anxiety about the eyes has nothing to do with the castration-complex. For why does Hoffmann bring the anxiety about the eyes into such intimate connection with the father's death? And why does the Sandman appear each time in order to interfere with love? (FREUD, 2015, p. 231)

Freud develops a series of concepts while analyzing Nathaniel. I will just introduce them here at first and, as the monograph develops, they will be better developed. My brief reading of Freud's reading of Nathaniel is that the character suffered a "traumatic event" that triggered the "castration-complex", which is characterized by the repression of a series of factors. So far, this is pretty much the basis of what we have seen of compromise-formation. The repression provokes a "narcissist behavior". This narcissist behavior is the symptom on which Freud focuses the most. He explains that, in this character's specific case, the narcissist behavior is characterized by the repetition of similar situations (mania) and by a series of role fragmentations (delusion, confusion), which arise as the multiple doubles we have in this story. Further on we will see that Nathaniel and Scrooge react to their traumas

in a similar manner, sharing exactly this same progression: after the process of compromise-formation, they develop a narcissistic behavior, which leads to the apparition of multiple doubles.

To explain the final product of this equation, Freud uses Otto Rank's essay "The Double" (1914) on the fragmented father-figure Nathaniel builds up. Freud explains that this fragmented figure bifurcates into negative representations (Nathaniel's father and Coppélius/the Sandman) and positive representations (Prof. Spalanzani and Coppola). Although Freud does not pursue this in his essay, the feminine image is also fragmented. We have the good mother, who says that the Sandman does not exist, and the bad maid, who says he exists. There is the good Olympia, who never contests what Nathaniel says or does, and the bad Clara, who constantly contradicts him. When it becomes too difficult to deal with certain situations, a mechanism of defense identifies the complexity, separates it from the initial problem and liberates it as two extreme points of view of the situation – the double.

This explains the series of repetitive facts and misunderstandings that take place in "The Sandman". For example, Nathaniel writes the first letter to Lothaire; but, not paying attention to what he is doing, addresses it to Clara. But he gets offended when she writes back to him, and believes that she has read her brother's letter. In the same way, Nathaniel does not demonstrate any remorse for falling in love with Olympia, although he is engaged to Clara. He seems unable to connect one situation to another.

Freud comments on Nathaniel's fury when Prof. Spalanzani says that Coppola has "taken the eyes off" after the struggle over Olympia's body. The fit of rage that follows is justifiable if Nathaniel has interpreted that as a reference to Coppélius having stolen his eyes (virility) when he was a kid - a symbolic castration. This makes it impossible for him to interact with a real woman, as Clara. However, at the present moment, the doll is the one who has the eyes taken off, not the protagonist. To Freud, Olympia works as the representation of all that is repressed within Nathaniel. Olympia's father represents the positive aspects of the father-figure, and the doll is his idealized version of what a girlfriend should be. She would not contradict him, because she is a projection of himself, like the projection of Narcissus in the water, in the Greek myth. According to Freud, "The subject identifies himself with someone else, so that he is in doubt as to which his self is, or substitutes the extraneous self for his own." (FREUD, 2015, p. 234).

4 SCROOGE AND NATHANIEL

4.1 A FREUDIAN VIEW

Todorov (2008), in his discussion about the Fantastic genre, makes use of the French word “*Étrange*” to define ambiguous situations such as the ghosts of *A Christmas Carol* or Nathaniel’s visions. He explains that the episodes can either be supernatural or psychological facts (Cf. TODOROV, 2008). Both in Nathaniel’s and in Scrooge’s cases, we might ask ourselves whether what has happened is a fact or just product of their imagination. Whatever the answer may be, to Freud, it does not make any difference. Firstly because, in the fictional world, rules are stipulated inside specific contexts; secondly because, either real or imaginary, it concerns a psychic reality anyway.

Besides the bifurcation between what is real and what is not, we also have in the stories a bifurcation of spotlights. When the characters visit their childhood memories, we witness two distinct situations. The less detached ones, in which home and family are treated as agreeable and comforting things (*heimlich*), and the ones to which more attention is given: the moments in which the boys find themselves in the midst of fear and solitude (*unheimliche*). We can perceive that the focus is divided between two extremes and that the negative one tends to prevail when the characters revisit their past.

In *A Christmas Carol*, the element that triggers the “uncanny” is the appearance of the four ghosts. To Freud, ghosts represent different aspects of the double. Here, for instance, they can be either haunting or protecting spirits. “The theme of the ‘double’ has been thoroughly studied by Otto Rank (1914). He has gone through the connections which the ‘double’ has with reflections in mirrors, with shadows, with guardian spirits, with the belief in the soul and with the fear of death”. (FREUD, 2015, p. 235). However, the ghosts are not the only manifestations of the double in Dickens’ story. Besides them, the father-figure – just as in Nathaniel’s case – also switches between two poles, the positive and the negative. We can perceive this in the way Scrooge’s little sister refers to their father, telling Scrooge how he unbelievably changed for the better.

Parting from the ghosts, that can be both uncanny and protecting figures at the same time, passing by the paternal figure, which according to Freud is intrinsically connected to

the castration-complex, we reach the protagonist's change of ways, which is the most remarkable symbol of the double in *A Christmas Carol*. We have the stingy Scrooge in the beginning of the story and the kind Scrooge at the end of it.

In the other story, as we have seen, Freud says that what provokes the 'uncanny', i.e., this tendency to pessimism in Nathaniel's case, is a symptom of the "castration-complex", which results in the rise of another series of doubles – Coppelius and Coppola, Clara and Olympia, Nathaniel's father and professor Spalanzani.

Observing this phenomenon, we start to notice that there is a reason for the appearance of all these doubles. The characters' fears and the characters' hopes are characterized by their doubles. An example is the way Nathaniel gets obsessed with professor Spalanzani. Since his father's weakness emotionally castrated him in the past (fear), he sees Spalanzani as his salvation (hope) and tries to share everything he can from the professor's life.

This reminds us to the symptoms Freud lists in "Further Remarks on the Neuro-Psychoses of Defense" (on the concept of compromise-formation). He refers to "anxiety" as one of the most common symptoms originated from a traumatic experience. Anxiety prevents a person from staying calm to take analytical decisions. The fear of the past might make one take what has happened as something totally bad. Anxiety might make one rush to find a solution. If so, it ends up causing a precipitated decision that aims for the extreme opposite of what the original problem has been (the double), which is now seen as a one hundred percent good thing. The problem is that things should not ever be taken as totally right or totally wrong. There is good and bad in everything, and Scrooge and Nathaniel work very well to prove that.

Scrooge is very radical twice in the story – first when he becomes the cold man we know and second when he becomes the good old man in the end. The whole story is there to tell us how wrong his ways were in the past, but it was a radical belief for him that the way he led life was a hundred percent right and that whatever people said on the contrary was "humbug". (DICKENS, 2004, p. 16) Then he is radically and too quickly pushed towards the exact opposite of what he was, and the story ends. How can we be sure that he was not stolen, or even kidnapped or killed after that? How ready was he to be so open to everybody and to trust everyone so much? He had just seen, in his visit to the future Christmases, strangers dividing all of his assets and speaking unkindly of him, but he does not seem to remember that when he wakes up. Anxiety makes him too euphoric to analyze the situation

as a whole, and so he rushes to the solution that most probably had been his father's fault in the beginning!

Concerning Nathaniel, Freud uses him to exemplify most of the symptoms to explain how "the double" might be connected to the concept of "narcissism". Presenting the same progression just mentioned, Nathaniel tries to approach Prof. Spalanzani, in the hope of turning Spalanzani into a substitute for the weak father-figure he had. But is the professor comfortable with that? Nathaniel is placing his will in front of the others'. However, the biggest example of narcissism we find in Olympia. There, again, he finds an easy, sudden, unhealthy solution for the problems he has been facing with Clara. Why is this an instance of narcissism, though? First, because he is betraying Clara – again putting his wants in front of others'. But, not only that: we cannot forget that he fell in love with a doll. He reads his poems to her, just as he did to Clara, and he describes the adorable lack of feedback as follows:

Never had he known such an admirable listener. She neither embroidered nor knitted, she never looked out of the window, she fed no favorite bird, she played neither with lapdog nor pet cat, she did not twist a slip of paper or anything else in her hand, she was not obliged to suppress a yawn by a gentle forced cough. In short, she sat for hours, looking straight into her lover's eyes, without stirring, and her glance became more and more lively and animated. Only when Nathaniel rose at last, and kissed her hand and her lips did she say, 'Ah, ah!' to which she added: 'Good night, dearest.'
(HOFFMANN, 2015, p. 14)

Nathaniel has found what his narcissist tendency has searched for the most, a lover that does not contradict him. Much different from Clara, who points out the problems both in his poems and in his perception of things. Much different from Clara, who talks and thinks. Much different from Clara, who is a human being. Olympia is a doll, and a doll does not move the eyes from you, and does not talk. It has a glossy skin that can reflect an exact projection of what you are. In other terms, Nathaniel, narcissist as he is, is dating no other than himself.

4.2 WOMEN, TRY THE NEXT DOOR

It is interesting to think that, when Freud analyzes “The Sandman” in his essay “The ‘Uncanny’”, he focuses on the eyes and on the father-figure and therefore disregards other uncanny factors about this story. A vast theme put aside by him are the complications concerning women. We have already seen that Nathaniel’s love for Olympia has a marking narcissist root, but there is more to be mentioned: there are complications concerning every single female character in “The Sandman” – and in *A Christmas Carol* too.

Chevalier & Gheerbrant, in the entry about the Sandman in their *Dictionary of Symbols* (1996), say that “When the Sandman takes off the children’s eyes, he takes them to the other side of the moon. The moon is an image associated with the feminine.” (Cf. CHEVALIER; GHEERBRANT, 1996). Turning this into Freudian terms, when the Sandman (the trauma) takes off the children’s eyes (castration-complex), he takes them to the other side of the moon (unconscious consequence). The moon is an image associated with the feminine (the consequence affects the feminine). This is why Freud observes that the Sandman always comes up “to interfere with love” (FREUD, 2015, p. 231). It is at the tensest moments involving responsibility towards the feminine figure that Nathaniel’s crisis bursts – when he is going to ask Olympia’s hand and, afterwards, when he is about to marry Clara.

Also in Scrooge’s case, it is at the tensest moments involving the feminine figure that both the double and narcissism outcrop. Firstly, it is from the perspective of his girlfriend that we get to know that he is changing. She is there in the only scene selected by Dickens to show the process of his becoming the harsh man we know. Secondly, in the beginning of the story, it is after his nephew’s visit that the whole supernatural thing begins. We cannot forget that his nephew is Fanny’s (his deceased little sister’s) son, and we just do not know how much her death affected Scrooge, for it is not mentioned in the story. We know, however, that Charles Dickens’ (the author) younger sister (Fanny as well) death in 1848, only five years after *A Christmas Carol*’s release, made him terribly upset (Cf. TOMALIN, 2011). The same year Dickens wrote his last Christmas story called *The Haunted Man and the Ghost’s Bargain* (1848), where we find this moving sentence: “My sister, doubly dear, doubly devoted – lived on to see me famous, – and then died – died gentle as ever, happy, and with no concern but for her brother” (DICKENS, 2016, digital source). When writing *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens could not have guessed that his sister would die so soon – she

was healthy in 1843. However, he probably could imagine how terrible it would be if he lost her, and this might indicate the reason why Scrooge's ghosts showed up right after the unexpected visit of his nephew, Fanny's only child.

4.3 SONS AND LOVERS

We have seen so far that the weak father-figure could not prevent the dreadful father-figure from castrating Nathaniel, and we have also seen that the Sandman is always there to "interfere with love" (FREUD, 2015, p. 231). Now it is time to establish a connection between these two factors. It is very easy to see the problems concerning Nathaniel and Scrooge's fathers, because they are responsible for the bad situation of their childhood. However, stating that the fathers are the only ones to blame for the children's traumas would not be fair. We also have to consider their mothers' situation. Freud has left this point completely aside when he studied "The Sandman", but he touches it indirectly when he analyses Nathaniel's anger towards Prof. Spalanzani, when Olympia's eyes were stolen. Freud explains that Nathaniel's fit occurred because he was divided, in between himself and someone else. Why did he feel divided, though? And what does his mother have to do with that?

We have just seen that Olympia, but not only her: Prof. Spalanzani as well, are great representations of narcissism in the story. Is it a coincidence that father and daughter are connected in this case? According to the line of thoughts of this work, it is not, because they are put together as a result of something that has already been connected in Nathaniel's past. What the protagonist finds in Olympia and prof. Spalanzani is exactly the opposite of the connection he had in his past (here again we come to the idea of anxiety, since he rushes for the extreme opposite). In his past, Nathaniel did not have a responsible father and felt he was responsible for his mother, and now he gets hold on a responsible father and on a "woman" who asks for no responsibility.

Why, did he feel responsible for his own mother? Freud refers to this issue in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), when he starts to shape the famous concept of Oedipus Complex (Cf. FREUD, 2016b). In Nathaniel's specific case, he did not observe his weak father-figure distantly. He was inside the familiar environment and he had a role in the situation. He could see how that bad situation affected his mother, and one of the ways he

could perceive that was by feeling how disappointed and unsatisfied she felt towards her husband. This situation falls over the son, who sees himself obliged – even though in a symbolic way – to become not exclusively the cub, but the protector/provider of the mother as well. In this way, he starts to take over a role that does not belong to him, losing track of his own proper growth cycle and abandoning the leadership of his own story.

Sons and Lovers (1912), written by D. H. Lawrence, is a great novel to explain this feeling of division. It is a book built around this concept. Paul Morel, the main character in the novel, just like Scrooge and Nathaniel, has a very negative father-figure and sees how this affects his mother. He grows up feeling responsible for her, and when the time comes for him to start a life of his own, he just cannot leave his mother alone. He gets paralyzed every time he finds in a woman the chance to switch the life he led beside the mother, and, just like Scrooge and Nathaniel, he faces these problems until the story is over and he no longer has a mother.

The mothers might not have been guilty for what has happened, but just the fact that they are there triggers worse things than the initial problem itself, because this provokes in their sons this notion of division. This idea of division naturally causes a sense of confusion in Scrooge and Nathaniel. They do not know until which point they are sons and until which point they are lovers. This can also explain why they look so childish when they relate to their girlfriends, not listening to them. They look like children also when they cannot see how their attitudes affect other people. It seems as if they cannot tell real life from their own fantasy, making moves in their imaginary world that can hurt the people around them. It seems as if they are seeking, later in life, for something they did not have in the past, which gives us a clear feeling of regression.

Now, if we try to analyze the protagonists' mothers concerning the plot of the stories, we get to a shouting aspect: the silences surrounding them. Of Scrooge's mother, absolutely nothing is said. Of Nathaniel's mother we know a little. We only read about her in the beginning of the story, when we learn the memories he has of her through his letters. He remembers her demonstrating signs of fear and depression on the days that anticipate Coppelius' visits. Nathaniel was just a child at the time, very susceptible to his mother's feelings, and this was a bad start to his relationships towards women. Not to speak of the maid, who represents the negative aspect of the mother-figure, threatening him with stories about the Sandman. After his father's death, however, we know as much of her as we have

ever known of Scrooge's mother: she could possibly have died and we would not know about it, because she is not mentioned anymore whatsoever.

4.4 SCROOGE AND DICKENS

We have already (not) seen Scrooge's mother. Now, considering siblings, we only know three things about Scrooge's sister in *A Christmas Carol*: she is the one who comes to rescue him from the imponent man in the warehouse; she died early; and she is the mother of the nephew who invites Scrooge for Christmas dinner, right before the supernatural events. We can also see in the story that Scrooge is very distant from his nephew, which indicates that he was apart from his sister before she died. Another aspect that indicates this separation is his clear lack of knowledge about the family she raised: everything he says when she mentions them is vague. Therefore, we raise the possibility that, before getting apart from the whole world, Scrooge might have previously separated from his sister. What might have been the reason for that? It is one more thing whispering through the silences of the story.

Logically, concerning the plot of the story only, jealousy might have been a reason for that. Older siblings are universally known for being jealous of the new baby who has come to steal the attention of their beloved parents. Now, if that gets to the proportion of the story, when one kid is sent away to face a bad situation as the other kid stays safe at home, this jealousy might reach another level. Utilizing the second pillar proposed in the first section of this work (which connects the stories with the authors' life), we find evidence that, though Charles Dickens (the author) loved his little sister, he often felt jealous of her. Claire Tomalin refers to the moment when their parents chose Fanny to go to the Royal Academy of Music instead of him. Dickens's friend John Forster revealed how the author felt about that: "He has told me what a stab to his heart it was, thinking of his own disregarded condition, to see her go away to begin her education, amid the tearful good wishes of everybody in the house." (FORSTER In TOMALIN, 2011, p. 128) The jealousy Dickens felt of the preference their parents gave to Fanny is felt in other works. The situation is recaptured, for example, in the novel *Great Expectations* (1861), in the struggle Miss Havisham and her brother had when they were young. Their parents gave preference to the girl, leaving the biggest portion of the inheritance to her. Her brother gets vexed about that,

since the fact that she was a woman contradicted the English traditional system of transmission of property of that time. It is his vengeance that makes Miss Havisham become what we find in the book: one of the most iconic characters in Dickens. Also in *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841) Little Nell's brother is obsessed with a nonexistent inheritance that might be in her name.

After the silences concerning Scrooge's mother and the series of emotions connected with Fanny's figure, we have the third and most enigmatic scene: the one that shows the protagonist's breakup. It is not clear if the woman with him is his girlfriend, his fiancée or maybe even his wife, but through the conversation we understand that Scrooge has been dating her for a long period of time. The woman explains why she is leaving. She has perceived that amidst Scrooge's new values, there was nothing left in her he could still admire. As he watches her departure, the tripping Scrooge suffers very much for perceiving that the young man with her – himself in the past – does not understand what she is talking about. Now that he is old he understands that, and regrets immensely what he has lost. He asks the Ghost of the Past to interrupt the trip, but instead, the spirit advances in time and leads him to the future of that woman without him. She is older and looks even handsomer. She seems happy and she is surrounded by her children. The oldest daughter is a perfect copy of the girl Scrooge once dated. Then her husband arrives, who calls her by the name "Belle" (only at this part of the story do we get to know her name, or nickname). In the conversation, he mentions a trifle, he tells her that he came across her old acquaintance – Scrooge. When he says that, both of them twist their faces into an expression of sadness, though there is a bit of mockery in there too, as if they pitied the destiny Scrooge has had.

We can relate this episode to some references of Charles Dickens' life once again according to Claire Tomalin's biography. In his youth (possibly at about the age Scrooge met Belle), Dickens also fell in love with a girl. Her parents opposed to the relationship, considering him not good enough for their daughter. This made Dickens determined – perhaps obsessed – to conquer prestige and wealth so as not to be rejected by anyone ever again. After overcoming this passion Dickens married a woman who gave him ten children. One day, out of the blue, without any rational explanation, Dickens asked for divorce, claiming she was not a good mother. (Cf. TOMALIN, 2011) We can perceive the separation and the greed, two factors that are gathered together in *A Christmas Carol*.

Besides Scrooge, we have many other examples of male protagonists in Dickens who cannot relate well to women. For example, David Copperfield (1851) and his disappointment

towards his first wife, Dora; and Mr. Pickwick (1836), who was already becoming an elder and was still single, claiming he had never been acquainted with society of women and had no experience in the subject whatsoever. We have Sydney Carton, in *A Tale of Two Cities* (1959), who does not believe he would ever deserve Lucie's love; and Pip, protagonist of *Great Expectations* (1961), who takes such a long time to understand that Stella does not want him. Concerning this proximity between Dickens' life and the characters he creates, E. M. Forster says that what turns Dickens' type characters so credible, is the fact that they are impregnated with the author's personality: "Probably the immense vitality of Dickens causes his characters to vibrate a little, so that they borrow his life and appear to lead one of their own". (FORSTER, 2005, p. 71)

4.5 HOFFMANN AND NATHANIEL

Have you, reader, wondered? We have covered many Charles Dickens' biographical aspects throughout the paper, but none of Hoffmann. This light-reading (and quite long) subsection is dedicated to that, and just like the flow has been so far, the similarities between the trajectories of author (Hoffmann) and character (Nathaniel) will be stressed and discussed. All information was extracted from *E.T.A. Hoffmann, a biographical memoir*, written by J.T. Bealby in 1890.

Ernst Theodor Amadeus Wilhelm Hoffmann was raised by his mother's family. His father was a man of considerable talent and intelligence, but irregular in his habits and given to reprehensible practices, so that little Hoffmann was soon taken into the house of his maternal grandmother. His father never seems to have troubled himself further about him. His mother, differently from his father, was educated in the strictest moral principles. Adding to her conventionally limited routine, a weak and sickly body condition made of her, for the most part, a confirmed invalid. The parents' influence upon young Hoffmann's education was practically nil.

We have in Hoffmann a similar childhood condition to Nathaniel's. Neither of them could count on their parents, which was all they had when they were beginning to understand this world. What has been put about Nathaniel previously, when I said that his mother "was a bad start to his relationship with women", can be applied to the author just the same. Hoffmann's father, however, differed from Nathaniel's in the sense that he was not weak.

On the contrary, he was an influential man. Adding this intimidating aspect to his absence might even have caused a toxic impression to young Hoffmann, which allows us to relate his father not only to Nathaniel's father, but to Coppelius as well.

Even though there were similarities in parenthood, there was a difference in the way author and character positioned themselves later in life, and there is someone who might be responsible for that. Among a number of people who added nothing to his childhood environment, there was an uncle who took over the boy's care. It is a consensus that this uncle acted as a dead weight upon young Hoffmann's high-spirits, but, nevertheless, his efforts to mould the nephew's intellectual development planted certain seeds which proved to be of permanent service throughout the boy's evolution.

In Hoffmann, we find a big gap between what he expected before having a partner and what he achieved after having one. He said of the first girl he fell in love with in his youth: "Since I can't interest her with a pleasing exterior, I wish I were a perfect image of ugliness, so that I might strike her attention, and so make her at least look at me." (BEALBY, 2014, digital source). Some time later, he fell in love with another girl, who had a fine taste for art matters, but who was separated from him for their social position. Yet, she returned warmly his affection for a brief period of time. When a trip he had to take forced their separation, he told a friend:

I cannot possibly demand that she should love me to the same unmeasured extent of passionate devotion that has turned my head — and this torments me. (...) I can never leave her; she might weep for me for twenty-four hours and then forget me — I should *never forget her*." (BEALBY, 2014, digital source)

Contradictory as this may sound, he got into another love affair as soon as he got to his destination, with a girl called Maria, who would become his wife - and to whom he would never demonstrate as near such intensity in his love as he did to his first temporary affairs. It seemed he had got what he wanted, just like Scrooge and Dickens and Nathaniel at first. All of them had a lonely childhood and at some point found somebody to stay with: a girlfriend. Nevertheless, soon Hoffmann started to feel really bad - like he had never felt before. The solution he found to heal his spirits was to have a trip one more time. When he got to his destination, he rushed to find a nice job, and establish himself in there. It did not take long until he adopted a bohemian lifestyle. He seemed to be fairly happy, finally.

However, soon he learnt that a daughter had been born, and after some months, his consciousness started to speak, sending him back to where his family was.

Back to the place in which he had felt bad previously, he married Maria. That was a small city and he spent two years in there, a period of his life which he describes as he “was buried alive,” and “walked in a morass covered with low thorny shrubs which lacerated my feet” (BEALBY, 2014, digital source). This lack of enthusiasm reminds us of Nathaniel and his fiancée Clara. During his escape, Hoffmann turned his attention to music and authorship. In a way, what made this research possible (the fact that Hoffmann started writing) is another a link between author and character, because just like Hoffmann, Nathaniel also adopted writing as a relief from the difficulty he had in staying with Clara. He even attempts to read aloud his very bad poems about Coppélius to her, and prays for her understanding.

Soon after their wedding, Hoffmann and Maria lost their daughter. Bealby’s biography does not emphasize this point, but it probably has some connection with the fact that Hoffmann felt free to spend the rest of his life traveling. Often the couple changed the place in which they lived; sometimes he did that alone, other times he spent more than a year apart from Maria. By analyzing that, one thing gets clear: he preferred not to settle in one place, and he did not mind leaving Maria for long periods of time. However, he always had in mind that part of what he was doing was in order to provide for her.

At some point in the couple’s life a curious incident took place in a social event in Bamberg. He was stressed for many reasons, and he was by her side at the table when he raised and spoke aloud,

See there — there — that ugly little pigmy — see what capers he cuts. Pray don’t incommode yourself, my little man. You are at liberty to listen to us as much as you please. Will you not approach nearer? You are welcome.” (Here, and occasionally, he would accompany his words with violent muscular contortions of the face.) “Pray what will you take? Oh! don’t go, my good little fellow.” (BEALBY, 2014, digital source)

All of this, and similar disconnected phrases, Hoffmann uttered with his eyes fixed upon the place where he affirmed he saw the vision; and whenever his words were doubted or he was laughed at, he would frown his eyebrows and in great earnest appeal to his wife’s support, saying, “I often see them, don’t I, Mischa?” (Mischa was Maria’s nickname).

Clearly there are autobiographical elements in “The Sandman” too. We have here

covered some of them: childhood, parents, suffocating relationships, even the poems and the delusions. However, there is one point in which Hoffmann is radically different from his character, and this was the long-term relationship established between him and his wife. Hoffmann is similar to Nathaniel in a sense that neither of them could spend long periods of time in monotony beside their partners, but he never seemed to forget about Maria's existence or to do the cruel things Nathaniel did to Clara. The reason why Hoffmann was smarter - in a sense that he understood that he needed space and went after it for the better - and much more responsible than his creation, might be explained by the fact that he had an uncle who took over his education when he was a child. Actually, this is the main considerable difference between author and character, and it is fair enough to connect it with the considerable difference author and character presented afterwards, one ending up quite well as the other ended up in tragedy.

* * *

As we can see, Scrooge and Nathaniel are not the only ones to have difficulties relating with the opposite sex – by not succeeding in becoming good partners to their women, and not praising their friendship and loyalty. Also their authors present similar problems. It is easier to explain Hoffmann and Nathaniel's case, since what happened to the author precedes the writing of "The Sandman" (1817) and could have been an inspiration (or at least a model) for Nathaniel's creation afterwards. In Scrooge and Dickens, however, we have a more complex psychological factor, because Scrooge (1843) came before Dickens started to become similar to him (mid-50's). The most puzzling factor about Scrooge is that, in 1843, he already was an old man. Could be Dickens anticipating some of the things that would happen to him later in life? The movie *The Man who Invented Christmas* (2017) is about the hurricane of problems in the middle of which Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol*. The author (played by Dan Stevens) had no time or money, many companies did not believe in him anymore and he was blocked and lacking creativity. All that ends up in a scene in which Dickens meets Scrooge and Marley, his creations, (played respectively by Christopher Plummer and Donald Sumpter) inside his writing room, and they talk. Throughout a very dark scene, in which Dickens seems desperate. At the end of it we witness an epiphany, when the ghost of Marley, instead of addressing Scrooge, addresses Dickens himself, and

says the sentence “It’s not about me, its all about you, Charley!” (1:03:31) Which, according to the line of thoughts presented in this work, could not be more accurate.

CONCLUSION: A HAPPY ENDING, A DEATH

The picturesque aspects of Scrooge's and Nathaniel's personalities are not usually questioned when *A Christmas Carol* and "The Sandman" are read for the first time. Some readers might even take for granted that this is the only thing they are: shallow flat characters destined to have parallel trajectories with opposite endings. However, after researching on the theme, I concluded that although the stories seem so simple, in fact they are more profound than we might expect. In the process of verifying the complexity of the two protagonists I was helped by the psychoanalytical help offered by Freud, and by information found in articles and biographies. This support allowed me to scrutinize the entire texts of the stories. Through the rationale developed in this study, I found out that there are reasons for every single thing that happens in the stories. The two protagonists became worldly famous for many reasons. Among them, we can say that they represent a great number of people who are like them, people who become sick because they cannot adapt to the norms of a society that is also sick; so much so that in Freud we find some medical explanations that can apply to Scrooge and Nathaniel.

Respectively, Scrooge suffered his traumatic event when he was sent away from home to stay at the warehouse and is not retrieved by his family; and Nathaniel when Coppélius made the illegal visits to his father and threatened to pick out the boy's eyes. These bad episodes are connected with Freud's concept of the 'uncanny' in the sense that, for the two children, "family" and "home", ideas that should bring comfort and protection, turn out to be the hidden place of horrors.

Then comes the silence of the stories: the period between their childhood and their adulthood. This silence is intimately connected with the period in which their organisms are creating a mechanism of defense. Freud explains, in his essay on compromise-formation, that after suffering a traumatic event the body takes time to process the wound. Sometimes the mechanism of defense is successful, sometimes it is insufficient and the trauma remains, but hidden, detached from one's conscious mind. All that can be perceived are some symptoms, of which the sick person may be unaware. The symptoms do not have to be directly connected with the primary trauma. Indirect symptoms are much more common, actually. When we meet Scrooge and Nathaniel in their stories they are adults and their symptoms are fully developed. Scrooge develops what Freud categorizes as "maniac symptoms" (cf. FREUD: 2016), while Nathaniel develops what Freud categorizes as

“psychotic symptoms” (cf. FREUD: 2016). Maniac symptoms can be exemplified by the obsession Scrooge has with making money, whereas psychotic symptoms not only embrace the maniac aspects, but also include delusions: Nathaniel’s engagement to a doll (an automaton), for example. “Narcissism” “Castration-Complex” and “The Double” are fundamental to further specify these broader symptoms (cf. FREUD, 2015). We can connect “castration” with loss of virility, “narcissism” with selfishness and regression and “the double” with the rush for a solution that is based on the opposite of the original problem. All of them can be connected (indirectly or directly) with the characters’ situation as children, and ultimately end up causing an aversion to women in their adulthood.

In the end of the stories Scrooge is able to change his ways, whereas Nathaniel definitely does not have the same luck. Is it by chance that Scrooge succeeds? Arthur Hirsch, in his essay “Dickens: Ghost of a Freudian Future” (2015), compares Scrooge’s experience to a successful therapy process. He begins with the joke that Scrooge would never invest a cent in psychotherapy, therefore it does not matter that by that time it had not been created yet. Furthermore, Scrooge does not need it, since he counts on the ghosts to lead him through a great self-discovery trip (Cf. HIRSCH, 2015). Especially the Ghost of the Past leads Scrooge gently back to crucial moments of his past, enabling him to see himself as a child again, but looking from an external perspective. This distance allows him to reconsider and to comprehend, as an adult, how things happened. His past is a key for two reasons: because it shows Scrooge he has not always been the way he is now, and because that is where he can find the origins of his trauma.

I would like to mention a curious fact about the illustrations to the first edition of *A Christmas Carol*. Charles Dickens was very demanding about the images that would come together with his text, and the author had the privilege to choose among the best artists available. Dickens chose to work with John Leech, a man very committed to social causes, especially the fight against poverty. According to Philip V. Allingham, in “John Leech: Cartoonist and Illustrator” (2017), Leech can be considered the first political cartoonist. To Allingham, “his depiction of Ignorance and Want in *A Christmas Carol* (1843) is a graphic exemplar of how the artist with a social conscience may address such issues”. (Cf. ALLINGHAM, 2017, digital source)

Leech and Dickens came to an agreement on how to portrait Marley and two of the ghosts. For the Ghost of the Present, they chose a good-natured and exuberant big man, with a cornucopia (Cf. LEECH, 2017b). The Ghost of the Future would evoke an allegory of

death, wearing a black mantle (Cf. LEECH, 2017c). But when it came to the Ghost of the Past, they could not decide what to do, and left the image for the readers to figure out. Dickens' text describing it lists a sequence of significant contradictions: it is young and old, strong and delicate, wears summer clothes in the winter, spreads light but carries its own light holder. (DICKENS, 2004, p. 51)

Later, in 1868, another illustrator, Solomon Eytinge, represented the Ghost of the Past as a girl (Cf. EYTINGE, 2017). From that moment on, Eytinge's decision of representing it as a feminine figure was adopted practically by every *A Christmas Carol* illustrator. The reason why I mention this fact is that, in "Dickens: Ghost of a Freudian Future", Arthur Hirsch stresses the fact that the Ghost of the Past has the attributes of "patience, caring and receptivity", characteristics "essential to the effective therapist" (HIRSCH, 2015, p. 3) that are connected to the feminine sphere. It is funny and a bit contradictory to think that, according to Hirsch, the most important entity to Scrooge's salvation has the figure and the qualities of a woman, and even more so when we stop to think that she is camouflaged, as if both Dickens and Scrooge were too afraid to recognize that.

Scrooge's plunge into the past is so intense that – if we think in terms of literature – it breaks the structure of the narrative. *A Christmas Carol* is a story told in the third person, but when it comes to the scene that shows Belle's life without Scrooge, this scene is written in the first person, possibly without the author's awareness. In the middle of the long paragraph that shows Belle's life after she parts with Scrooge, she is happily playing with two children. We have an interesting first person monologue directly from Scrooge's thoughts,

What would *I* not have given to be one of them! Though *I* never could have been so rude, no, no! *I* wouldn't for the wealth of all the world have crushed that braided hair, and torn it down; and for the precious little shoe, *I* wouldn't have plucked it off, God bless my soul! To save my life. As to measuring her waist in sport, as they did, bold young brood, *I* couldn't have done it; *I* should have expected my arm to have grown round it for a punishment, and never come traight again. And yet *I* should have dearly liked, *I* own, to have touched her lips; to have questioned her, that she might have opened them; to have looked upon the lashes of her downcast eyes, and never raised a blush; to have let loose waves of hair, an inch of which would be a keepsake beyond price: in short, *I* should have liked, *I* do confess, to have had the lightest licence of a child, and yet been man enough to know its value. (DICKENS, 2004, p. 76) (Italics mine)

If we consider Hirsch's idea of the return to the past as a metaphor for a therapy process, it is noteworthy that until this point we always had two Scrooges present: the old man, who is accompanying the Spirit of the Past; and the child (or the youth), who is being observed. However, in this scene they come together and Scrooge, instead of being narrated, leads the text. Scrooge fuses with the narrative voice and takes over the situation. And this is what a therapy process should do: to turn the patient into the owner of his own speech.

On the other hand, in the next scene Belle does the opposite and splits in two. She is the older woman - the mother - who soon disappears from the scene. The whole attention goes to her young image, transferred to the daughter who starts representing her. The girl who is being attacked by her younger siblings in a play reminds Scrooge of the girl he once loved. It seems as if all these fragmentations are necessary for the process through which he is passing to occur effectively. Scrooge mourns the fact that he cannot be there with them. We cannot know if Dickens made this inversion on purpose or not. It is possible that a few readers do not even perceive that it happens, but it is a fact that this switch of voice to the first person greatly reinforces this scene emotionally. I believe that when Dickens does these narrative movements, he is writing instinctively. In the Twentieth Century, when we reach a more formal approach to the theory of literature, theorists would speak of "indirect free speech". Or, as Bakhtin informs us, there are moments in which the voice of the author and the voice of the hero can eventually merge. (Cf. BAKHTIN, 2006, p. 167)

When we connect Scrooge's case with what we have learnt from Freud's two essays on compromise-formation and on the 'uncanny', we conclude that there is a nucleus of fear and terror behind the easy-reading and simplified situations in the narrative. Not a terror that comes from the outside, but one that comes from within Ebenezer Scrooge's personality and life choices. As Freud says, many times the unknown is inside what is known, and what torments is retained in the trap of what seems to be cozy. In order to escape the trap he created for himself, Scrooge has to leave his comfort zone and undo the "compromise" he has settled with life – in which each stays at one side and no one interferes with the other. Helped by the ghosts, seen by Arthur Hirsch as the pioneers of psychoanalysis, Scrooge confronts his greediness (the main symptom of his compromise) and, considering only what is written in the plot – excluding the silences and any projection for the future – he achieves the utmost success in the end.

Nathaniel, on the contrary, dies in the end. By chance or by predisposition, he could not live long enough to find an eventual salvation like Scrooge did. Maybe his clinical condition is more dangerous, which according to the plot of the story probably is true, since he presents some life-threatening symptoms such as fighting and jumping from towers. Maybe, because Scrooge lived enough to become old, he is more mature and can cope with ghosts that would have killed him if he faced them with Nathaniel's age. I prefer to think that Nathaniel is not so lucky as to live in the same fantastic fictional world of Scrooge, whose story is the story of a Christmas miracle. Scrooge's spirits worked as doctors, and the fact is that Nathaniel never had a chance to analyse and solve his situation, which, unfortunately, ended up provoking his fatal crisis. Unable to seek for help at any point, untouchable his whole life, Nathaniel bids us goodbye as he hits the ground in the way down from a high fall.

* * *

Hoffman, in his short story, revives a folkloric Northern Europe figure, the Sandman, and turns it into a literary classic. Dickens' Scrooge is now a word in dictionary entries. This reminds me of what E. M. Forster says about types (or flat characters), that they vibrate in a manner that expresses intense vitality. (Cf. FORSTER, 2005) The final result is that they end up as iconic figures. Will Eisner, the famous comics author, speaking of caricatures, says that they have a greater impact on the reader than more realistic drawings, because they are psychologically very dense. (Cf. EISNER, 1999) In this sense, Scrooge and Nathaniel provide such a solid representation of their symptoms that they can be turned into patterns to be analysed. Freud literally did that, in the case of Nathaniel, in "The 'Uncanny'".

These two stories can be read in many ways. They can be explored through philosophical, sociological, historical and many other lines. I made use of the psychological line and went deep into it to find one definite perspective. It is not the only possible answer, but it is a fully developed one.

As a final word, I would like to say that I have been reading Dickens for more than ten years now, and that writing this monograph was a great opportunity to rationally understand several things that before were only feelings and impressions. This was a process of turning subjective ideas into objective concepts. Literature is not only a good entertainment, it is also a field that can open new insights to see the world. During this

research, reading Freud I could learn about concepts such as “trauma”, “symptom”, and so many others.

I would like to direct the biggest contribution of this study towards the broader public, not formed by academics only. The more we read, the more freely we can move. Dickens, Hoffmann, even Freud, can be appealing to every reader. Therefore, I hope that by reading this work a casual reader of *A Christmas Carol* or “The Sandman” can also learn how to open his/her way both as a person and as a reader.

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