

“Citizenship in a Nightmare Country:” German Expressionist Film and Freud’s Dream Theory

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Part I: Introduction

German Expressionist cinema is a movement that began in 1919 after the devastation of World War I in Weimar Germany. Before the outbreak of the war, artists across Europe were eager to stray from realistic, everyday imagery found in realist art forms and aimed to work towards distortion, shock, and rebellion. In Germany, this translated into Expressionism, where beginning in 1910 media such as literature, music, and paintings aimed to counteract the bourgeois and falsely optimistic sentiment found during the latter half of nineteenth-century Wilhelmine society (Barlow 16-17). Max Reinhardt, one of the most influential stage directors of the era, quickly brought this style to the theater, establishing the Expressionist aesthetic with minimal stage décor, exaggerated lighting, and stylized performances (Eisner 44). The political, cultural, and economic climate of post-war Germany paved the way for Reinhardt and other actors and directors to explore the cinema's Expressionist possibilities. The first fully Expressionist film of the era was Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, a production that began in 1919, catalyzing a film movement that was at its height commercially and stylistically throughout the early half of the 1920s. German Expressionist films, highlighting topics such as madness and internal emotional conflict through anti-realistic and fantastic imagery, helped the Weimar film industry establish its identity (Hake 28) and were widely circulated in domestic and international markets.

Expressionist film is marked by distinct visual features and performance styles that rebel against prior realist art movements (Fig. 1). In order to externalize inner emotional states "in the most direct and extreme fashion possible" (Thompson and Bordwell 91), films from this era borrowed from Expressionist painting and theater. Defying Renaissance perspective, which implied depth on a two-dimensional surface, Expressionist backdrops were intentionally flat, evoking the stylization of the movement's painting styles (91). Doorframes, windowpanes, and buildings were constructed using elongated lines, instead of traditional 90° angles, in an attempt to further the externalization

of deep emotional conflict. Jerky, exaggerated performance styles, where actors violently flailed their limbs, conformed to the jagged shapes of walls and doors, morphing into the twisted scenery that surrounded them. Scholars such as Lotte Eisner in *The Haunted Screen* and John Barlow in *German Expressionist Film*, have highlighted the importance of Expressionist cinema's use of dark color and chiaroscuro lighting. Straying away from bright color and subtle shading, Expressionist cinema opted for "considerable contrasts between light and shadow" (Barlow 25), using heavy, cast shadows to mirror the darkness and despair of the characters' psyches. These unusual features defined the emotional intensity of the Expressionist era of film and provide a glimpse of the anxieties of post-war Germany. As German film historian Sabina Hake characterizes the movement, Expressionist films "aimed at a radical transformation of the visible world, a projection of psychological states into a highly constructed filmic process" (29).

Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920) and Fritz Lang's *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* (1922) are two of the films made during the Expressionist period of German film. *Caligari* tells the story of Francis (Friedrich Feher), who in flashback recalls to an older companion his encounters with the strange Dr. Caligari (Werner Krauss) and his slave-like somnambulist Cesare (Conrad Veidt). After murders plague the town, including that of his friend Alan (Hans Heinrich von Twardowski), Francis suspects that Cesare is the possible murderer, and decides to spy on the somnambulist and Caligari. Cesare then kidnaps Jane (Lil Dagover), who Francis loves, and he dies escaping from his pursuers. Francis' investigation leads to his discovery that Caligari is insane, and the villain is eventually captured and locked away in an insane asylum. In a surprising twist, the film returns to the frame story that reveals that Francis is a patient of the asylum, where the evil Caligari turns out to be its kindly director. *Mabuse* chronicles the criminal exploits of the mysterious Dr. Mabuse (Rudolf Klein-Rogge), a master of disguise and omnipotent threat to modern society. After successfully controlling the stock market, Mabuse proceeds to

hypnotize and kill members of the upper class, including Edgar Hull (Paul Richter) and Count Told (Alfred Abel). Mabuse also causes his lover, Cara Carozza (Aud Egede-Nissen), to kill herself and kidnaps and imprisons the Count's wife, Countess Told (Gertrude Welcker). Learning of Mabuse's crimes, Prosecutor von Wenk (Bernhard Goetzke) becomes a part of an elaborate cat-and-mouse game with the villain. Von Wenk's persistence pays off during the film's finale, where Mabuse is captured in his own money factory, and faced with the ghosts of his conscience, becomes insane and powerless.

Although there are notable differences in style and technique, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* nevertheless both use Expressionist strategies to create fantastic worlds and characters that appear dream-like. By constructing a distorted dream landscape, *Caligari* and *Mabuse* exploit the unstable, fragmented identity of post-war Germany. I will argue that the films present ideas of the fragmented modern self that appear similar to the ideas on subjectivity in Freud's work on dreams. Three areas in each film that can be directly connected to Freud's dream theory are: the frequent motif of dreaming and sleeping, the dream-like content that the films present, and the multiple dream perspectives found in both films.

More than twenty years prior to the Expressionist movement, Sigmund Freud published *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1899, a groundbreaking study that links dreams to unconscious impulses. In 1901, Freud published a condensed copy of the text, *On Dreams*, so that his ideas would become more accessible to a larger audience. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, *The Interpretation of Dreams* became more widely known within intellectual circles – in addition to *On Dreams* in 1901, seven other editions of the book were published between 1909 and 1930 (Strachey xi). Scholars including Peter Gay often note that Freud's ideas were widely circulated in this period (35), and Hannes Meyer, an architect during the period, who chronicles the psychoanalytic movement in his

1926 essay "The New World," claims that by the 1920s psychoanalysis had become "the common intellectual property of all" (446), with Freud highly regarded among intellectuals in the nation. As Frank J. Sulloway details in *Freud: Biologist of the Mind*, both *The Interpretation of Dreams* and *On Dreams* were "widely and favorably reviewed in popular and scientific periodicals" (347). By 1902, Freud's theories were well known within the scientific community and were also known to popular audiences across the world; most importantly, these ideas were circulating in Germany by the time the Expressionist movement began.

Also by 1926, German filmmakers were interested in Freud and dream analysis, as is clearly demonstrated in the production history of the 1926 G.W. Pabst film *Secrets of a Soul*. As Bret Wood details in his notes on the film, Pabst, along with producers from the German film industry Ufa aimed to develop *Secrets of a Soul* as a feature-length narrative that mapped out the processes found in psychoanalysis, particularly the role of dream analysis. According to Ann Friedberg's "An Unheimlich Maneuver between Psychoanalysis and the Cinema: *Secrets of a Soul*," although the group contacted Freud in an attempt to feature him as chief consultant for the film, they were turned down. Freud claimed that his major concern about the production of *Secrets of a Soul* was that film could not accurately depict abstract topics in his dream theory. In a letter to Karl Abraham, a close colleague working with Ufa on the project, he wrote: "I do not feel happy about your magnificent project...My chief objection is still that I do not believe that satisfactory plastic representation of our abstractions is at all possible" (Freud quoted in Friedberg 43-44). Faced with these challenges, Pabst and Ufa instead engaged Freud's colleagues Abraham and Hans Sachs as consultants who kept Freud updated on the progress of the film. In spite of Freud's objections, the final product features the elaborate Expressionist dream sequence of its protagonist, Martin Fellman (Werner Krauss), who is disturbed by an unusual fear of knives and a desire to kill his wife – a case similar to those found in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. While the majority of the film has a realist aesthetic, the dream

sequence within the film is filmed in the Expressionist style (Fig. 2-4). A large, phallic-shaped tower is the focal point of Martin's dream, rapidly emerging from the ground while staircases magically appear and surround the dreamer. The final scene depicts Martin stabbing a ghost of his wife in his laboratory with a sharp, angular blade, with deep shadows enveloping the room. In the film's second half, a kindly psychoanalyst offers to treat Martin, and during the treatment analyzes the manifest content of the dream as expressions of repressed latent wishes to start a family. Martin then overcomes his neuroses and fulfills his wishes with the birth of his child. Despite the unusual imagery of its dream sequence, Ira Konigsberg notes that "[t]he film was well received after its opening in Europe and the United States" (3). However, the question that still remains is whether Expressionist films made prior to *Secrets of a Soul* can be linked to Freud's dream theory.

Over the years, many scholars have attempted to link Weimar films made before *Secrets of a Soul* to psychoanalysis, taking the vocabulary used by Freud and applying it to several films of the era. Their work can be characterized in one of two ways – as the analysis of Freudian motifs in relation to cinema, or as analysis of a larger analogy between dreams and film. Four central figures of the former method of interpretation are Siegfried Kracauer, Lotte Eisner, Thomas Elsaesser, and Patrice Petro; Thierry Kuntzel is a seminal figure of the latter approach.

Siegfried Kracauer's groundbreaking *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film*, published in 1947, established the study of the Expressionist genre in film studies. In the text, Kracauer argues that beginning with *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, films made between World Wars I and II reflect the collective feelings of escapism and political unrest found prior to this era. Asserting that figures of authority within several films are forces that point to future repression instilled by Nazism and Adolf Hitler, *From Caligari to Hitler* maps out a reversal of Freud's Oedipal conflict: rather than symbolically showing a

son being repressed by and rising against his father, post-WWI German films show a son powerless against the father's control. Kracauer supports this interpretation through the analysis of the framing story in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* – “[w]hether intentionally or not *Caligari* exposes the soul wavering between tyranny and chaos, and facing a desperate situation: any escape from tyranny seems to throw it in a state of utter confusion” (74).

For decades, *From Caligari to Hitler* was considered the seminal work on German Expressionism; this changed upon the 1969 publication of Lotte Eisner's *The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema and the Influence of Max Reinhardt*. Noting that Expressionist artists were “concerned solely with images in the mind” (24) and with a “morbid Freudianism” (17), *The Haunted Screen* stresses Expressionism's projection of a complex internal psyche (23) onto an external environment. Whereas Kracauer connects Expressionist film to the collective German psyche, Eisner centers her argument primarily on earlier art history movements that influenced Weimar cinema. While the expression of inner subjectivity through distortion (21) was a clear deviation from prior nineteenth-century art forms, Eisner argues that elements of the supernatural and psychological are shared between the two eras. “It is reasonable to argue,” Eisner concludes, “that the German cinema [was] a development of German Romanticism, and that modern technique merely lends visible form to Romantic fancies” (113).

More recently, Thomas Elsaesser also directs his studies in Weimar cinema towards psychoanalytic motifs in German Expressionist films, but situates himself against Kracauer and Eisner's arguments. In “Weimar Cinema, Mobile Selves, and Anxious Males: Kracauer and Eisner Revisited,” and “Social Mobility and the Fantastic: German Silent Cinema,” Elsaesser claims that Siegfried Kracauer only draws upon certain films and their sequences to display the binary relationship of authority and repression, not fully accounting for motifs of mobility and the overcoming of authority. In opposition to Kracauer, Elsaesser-

er points out that the films from this era are about a repressed desire for social mobility on the part of the working and middle classes that cannot be faced directly (“Social Mobility” 16). On Eisner in “Weimar Cinema Mobile Selves, and Anxious Males,” Elsaesser suggests that the German fantastic genre not only borrowed from nineteenth-century Romanticism, but from children’s literature and lower culture as well. Elsaesser succeeds in both connecting and revising the arguments of Kracauer and Eisner in “Social Mobility” by pointing out that Romantic and fantastic motifs found in German Expressionism allow for the transposition of Weimar political history onto an internalized psyche (25).

Another reading of the films of German Expressionism in relation to psychoanalytic motifs comes from Patrice Petro in “The Woman, the Monster, and The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari.” In her article, Petro deals predominantly with the situation of female representation, spectatorship, and subjectivity in the films of the Weimar period. Reacting to scholars including Kracauer and Elsaesser, Petro’s analysis shows that the specific plight of women in Weimar culture has been projected onto the screen, and in effect points to the ways in which representation and spectatorship can engage the female viewer. Using Freud’s notion of doubling, Petro highlights the monster figure as a distorted representation of the woman on the screen (210); this, in effect, creates a composite image that poses a threat to the film’s patriarchal narrative structure.

The arguments found in the readings of Kracauer, Eisner, Elsaesser, and Petro follow a pattern of connecting German Expressionist film to topics found in *The Interpretation of Dreams* and psychoanalysis as a whole. Whether alluding to the representation of a complex internal psyche or using deliberate Freudian terms in their analysis, these four scholars have been able to successfully correlate the Expressionist genre to psychoanalytic concepts. Conversely, several scholars have taken another approach, asserting that film is symbolic of the dream work.

Thierry Kuntzel's "The Film-Work 2," published in 1980, is a prime example of the ways in which film can be interpreted as allegory for the dream, bridging the gap between the two fields. A continuation of "The Film-Work" and stemming from semiotics, Kuntzel's piece aims to find connections between the processes of interpretation found in the dream work and film work. "The Film-Work 2" begins by stressing the patterns and codes inherent in film that create a seamless narrative structure; Kuntzel refers to this process as the film work. Parallels can be made between the film work and the dream work described by Freud, where both allow for a creation and breaking of codes that signify meaning, accessed through careful interpretation. In effect, transformed images are created in a film, lending themselves to the fantastic. Much like the dreamer, the spectator of a film enters the realm of the fantastic as the film begins, experiencing images with combined or transformed meaning; as the film ends, the spectator reenters the world of reality, similar to the dreamer as he or she enters the waking life. However, Kuntzel stresses that a key difference between the film work and dream work is the level on which they operate – while dreams manipulate latent content into manifest images, classical narrative cinema works with manifest-to-manifest content. That is, according to Kuntzel, symbols and motifs have already been rendered by the director in some way as manifest content when a film begins, eliminating their latent sources.

One of the things that these scholars do not do, however, is compare German Expressionist films specifically to Freud's dream model. Although they sometimes use the language of condensation and displacement, they do not directly associate Expressionist films with dreaming or dream-like processes. Rather, critics such as Kracauer, Elsaesser, and Petro for instance use Freudian psychoanalysis to explore Expressionist film's connection to the Oedipal conflict, as opposed to asserting the film's broader connections to the dream work. This thesis argues that the unexplained, dream-like imagery and motifs found in Expressionist

films, especially in *Caligari* and *Mabuse*, can be seen in terms of Freud's model of dreaming.

In *On Dreams and The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud identifies that "the dream reveals itself as a wish fulfillment" (Freud's emphasis, *The Interpretation of Dreams* [1899] 97) and defines manifest and latent content as the two levels of dreaming. According to Freud, manifest content is the dream's surface matter, or the "dream-content" (211). More importantly, latent content is the underlying meaning of symbols and material in the dream, or the "dream-thoughts" (211) revealed through analysis. The unconscious process by which latent content transforms into manifest is defined by Freud as the dream-work (*On Dreams* 8). The four mechanisms of dream formation are condensation, displacement, representability, and secondary revision. Two of these have particular connections to construction of Expressionist imagery. The first, condensation, consists of several different mechanisms of combining or condensing structures from waking life – creating figures formed from physical traits of two or more people is one method of such process. The second, displacement, involves the transposition of significant and arbitrary figures in the dream. Wish fulfillments, the primary component of dream formation, are repressed unconscious desires that are ultimately unearthed during the dream work (Robertson xiii). Freud asserts that the sources of unrealized wishes are diverse, and include everything from concealed sexual desires to the desire to sleep. An inherent component to the dream work that counteracts the realization of wish fulfillments, however, is internal censorship, or repression. Obscurity in the dream work is caused by this "desire to conceal these thoughts" (Freud's emphasis, *On Dreams* 32), creating unfamiliar and unpleasing images. A consequence of the process of repression is the creation of an anxiety dream, occurring when the dreamer has experienced an unfulfilled wish in waking life (Robertson xiii). Ultimately, working through the manifest content of a dream allows the interpreter to find the repressed dream material in the latent content and to identify an underlying wish.

Through their reliance on motifs such as dreaming, sleeping, and the doppelganger or double, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* effectively connect to Freud's dream theory as described in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. However, this is not the only link between the films and the psychoanalytic text. Both *Caligari* and *Mabuse* use images created by Expressionist décor and lighting in order to convey extreme internal states of confusion and chaos, in a way that is similar to how the dream work conveys latent thoughts through manifest dream content. The films construct characters, scenes, and certain motifs through condensation and displacement, and in effect, reveal the underlying wishes of the characters. These wishes are repressed through antagonists that represent internal censorship, using magical, hypnotic powers to control their victims' psyches. The unexplained, incoherent motifs in the films, often depicted through the Expressionist *mise-en-scène*, serve as latent dream material that is translated into the films' overall surface matter, or manifest content. While *Caligari* has a more pronounced use of an anti-realistic aesthetic and *Mabuse* features modernity and realism, both films present a distinct dream perspective that is supported by an Expressionist aesthetic, mirroring the mechanisms of dreaming in Freud's analytic text.

Part II: The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (Robert Wiene, 1920)

What is dreamt in a dream [...] is what the dream-wish seeks to put in the place of an obliterated reality. (Freud, Interpretation of Dreams [1930] 338)

Robert Wiene's 1920 film *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, considered the first to translate Expressionist motifs from theater and art into the cinema, uses a pronounced, exaggerated style that lends itself to the construction of a dream-like world. The decision to hire set designers Hermann Warm, Walter Reitmänn, and Walter Röhrig for the production of *Caligari* because of their background in Expressionist art allowed for the construction of visual moments in the film that feature Expressionism and the fantastic. Sharp, jagged buildings and houses enveloped in dark shadows project Francis' internal emotional conflict; Cesare and Jane's dramatic, almost pain-stricken gestures emphasize their distorted mental states; Caligari's extreme makeup and costuming externalize the grotesque and fantastic – all of these aspects contribute to the impression that the world depicted in *Caligari* is dream-like. Moreover, the fractured sense of self that is built into the characters in the film, surrounded by a jarring mise-en-scene and gaps in narrative structure, strengthens the sense of a distorted, destabilized dream-like world.

Most German reviewers hailed the film as an example of modern art upon its release in Berlin on February 26, 1920, and they connected its Expressionist imagery with themes of extreme madness and schizophrenia also found in other contemporary art forms. Some conservative reviewers, however, negatively reacted to this aspect of *Caligari*, exploiting the notion that the film used “madness as an excuse for an artistic idea” (Budd 54-55). In 1921, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was released in the United States to generally positive reviews. For example, reviews in both *The New York Times* and *The New York Herald* applauded the film's use of “cubist” design (Budd 82-83) and another *Times* review, “‘The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari’ at the Capitol Theater, a Notable Revolution-

ary Achievement in Motion Picture Art,” called it a “genuine and legitimate thriller” (18:1). American reviewers also made the important connection between the Expressionist film and madness. One article, from *The New York Daily News* on April 4, 1921, sums up Caligari’s themes of madness in its headline: “Film at Capitol is a Mad Imagination of an Insane Man” (Budd 165n). In the *Times* review entitled “A Cubistic Shocker,” the reviewer writes that the film’s “sets are a little mad. Everything is awry” (2:1). A *Variety* review, entitled “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,” notes that the film’s settings “squeeze and turn and adjust the eye and through the eye the mentality” (Leed). A review in *Musical America* notes that, quoting S.L. Rothafel, who was the artistic director of the Capitol theater, “[t]he music had, as it were, to be made eligible for citizenship in a nightmare country” (Thompson 141). Reviewers at the time of the film’s release also noted that the Expressionist elements were part of an overall design that at times favored narrative disruption and challenged classical narrative structure. In “A Notable Revolutionary Achievement,” the reviewer stated that “[i]f an entire setting is staged in the cubist manner and suddenly a character appears – a character with lines in lovely curves, lines which jar with the cubist setting – obviously there is a loss of unity” (18:1). Also, an article in *Variety* points out that although its stylized and unusual sets are disturbing at first, the film soon becomes “coherent [and] logical” (18:1). As this reviewer suggests, the potentially disturbing modernist elements were not enough to make the film incoherent to its contemporary audiences, and the film was a commercial success. A 1959 article entitled “Erich Pommer,” which profiles the film’s producer, suggests that “[o]nly after Pommer hypnotized Berlin with posters and handbills reading [‘You Must Become Caligari’] did it become a Berlin sensation – early in the spring of 1920;” however, newspaper reports note that the opening night of *Caligari* in several German theaters were packed with eager audience members who reacted positively and enthusiastically during the film’s premiere (Thompson 136). Audiences had also reacted positively to the Expressionist architecture in many theaters, like the one where *Caligari* premiered. One description of a theater in 1920 stresses that its “color

combinations were quite astonishing, yet one gradually became accustomed to them, and there were soon loud exclamations of wonder [from audience members]" (139). This helped with the audience's acceptance of the overall Expressionist style of the film.

Despite German and U.S. critics in the 1920s acknowledging the imagery of distorted reality, the disjointed narrative, and the representation of extreme, subjective states of mind, none appeared to draw a connection between *Caligari* and psychoanalysis or Freud's dream theory. While elements of fantasy and the supernatural are emphasized, critics neglect to interpret the film as dream-like. On the other hand, modern scholars including Kracauer and Elsaesser have interpreted *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* in psychoanalytic terms, linking the film to expressions of the German social psyche, yet their readings do not propose a distinct relationship between the Expressionist film and Freud's dream theory.

Recent scholars have linked *Caligari*'s Expressionist aesthetic to psychoanalytic and psychological concepts, describing the use of modernist settings and themes as "the adequate translation of a madman's fantasy" (Kracauer 70), "representing the complexity of the psyche" (Eisner 23), and "the figment of [a] diseased mind" (Otto 142). However, only a few critics (Budd, Elsaesser) have described elements of the film using the terms in Freud's dream theory. For example, Thomas Elsaesser argues in "Social Mobility and the Fantastic: German Silent Cinema" that the film's versions of narrative perspective have an "economy [of] condensation, itself the outcome of a series of displacements which de-center the narrative, while at the same time creating entry points for a number of distinct and different spectator fantasies [...]" (23). Although Elsaesser uses Freudian language to interpret the narrative structure of *Caligari*, he does not explicitly make the connection between the film and Freud's model of the dream. This thesis argues that *Caligari*'s stylized Expressionist aesthetic creates an anti-realistic, modernist narrative in which dream-like figures exist in a dream-like world and struggle with repressed unconscious desires and internal censorship.

Frequent motifs of sleeping and dreaming, as well as the binary between day and

night, help establish the fantastic world of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* as dream-like. In the opening frame of the film, the motif of sleeping is immediately established through images of a mysterious woman in a trance-like state. Later introduced as the female protagonist, Jane, the woman's movements simulate sleep walking, acting as a transition from the realistic settings of the frame story into the film's hyper-stylized dream narrative. As the film progresses, dreaming is suggested in two scenes involving the attacks on both Jane and Francis' friend and rival, Alan. Alan, during the second act of the film, is attacked while asleep at night and murdered by an anonymous figure holding a blunt, elongated weapon. Frequent cuts and disjointed imagery, featuring closer shots of a struggling Alan contrasted with elongated silhouettes of the murderer, further the nightmarish tone of this scene. Likewise, Jane is also attacked while asleep at night and kidnapped during the third act of the film. Although she is physically unharmed and eventually rescued, the attack on Jane is nevertheless disturbing because of the fragmented visual composition of the scene, which cuts between Jane's frightened movements and Cesare's ruthless attack. The composition and tone of both scenes underscores the film's motif of sleeping and dreaming.

The most blatant use of a sleeping/dreaming motif in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, however, is the character Cesare the somnambulist. In a perpetual state of sleep, Cesare is the grotesque star of Dr. Caligari's sideshow at the fairgrounds, caught between the worlds of dreaming and waking life. Caligari introduces his somnambulist to onlookers as the "miraculous Cesare who has slept day and night for 23 years without interruption," his slumber being "death like." Intrigued by the monster-like figure, Alan and Francis enter the crowded fairgrounds to witness Caligari's dream-like, horrific spectacle. After being summoned by Caligari to awake from his "dark night," Cesare slowly emerges from the coffin to the horror and amusement of the audience, his eyes widening in a close-up shot to expose exaggerated black rings that stretch down to his cheekbones suggesting an overabundance of sleep (Fig. 5). Cesare's grand entrance predicts the death of Alan that propels the narrative forwards, but the most significant part of the somnambulist show is its

suggestion that the worlds of dreaming and sleeping can overtake waking life. Cesare cannot escape from the realm of sleeping – even under Caligari's control, the somnambulist is still in a dream-like trance, moving drowsily towards the sideshow patrons. Francis, Alan, and eventually the viewer are drawn into the nightmare world of Cesare's eternal slumber.

The pattern of the binary day/realism and night/fantasy is also addressed throughout *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Realistic elements that are found in the film's frame are associated with daytime – as Francis has a conversation with an unidentified, older man in the courtyard of the asylum during the opening frame, their surroundings are not deformed or exaggerated, as the scene is set during the day. Furthermore, the closing frame that reveals Francis' madness also occurs during the day, and features realistic décor of the insane asylum's foyer. Conversely, fantastic and Expressionistic motifs are prevalent throughout the main narrative, and are especially emphasized at night. Distorted angles of two-dimensional houses line the streets, as deep shadows (natural and painted onto sets) surround Francis and the townspeople during scenes located on the fairgrounds. The mysterious Dr. Caligari, adorned with a black cloak and heavy makeup, haunts Francis throughout the film, and the equally frightening Cesare blends into the angular scenery with frantic movements during Jane's attack. Fantastic imagery is closely associated with nighttime and dreaming, whereas more realistic elements such as the courtyard/asylum scenes are tied to the waking life.

Critics such as Budd have pointed out that the realistic aesthetic that dominates film's frame story also informs the décor of Jane's house in the main narrative. Circular shapes, mirroring those of the courtyard and foyer of the insane asylum, are a main feature of Jane's living quarters, in stark contrast to the angular shapes of the village fairground. In addition to décor, Jane's costuming stands out against an Expressionist backdrop, her white flowing nightgown contrasts with the dark clothing of the main characters (Fig. 8). Francis' tale to the unidentified listener in the asylum courtyard is motivated by Jane's unusual appearance and begins the Expressionist portion of the

film. Jane's costuming throughout narrative, although seemingly out of place, recalls the opening frame and allows the audience to easily identify her from the courtyard scene. However, as Francis' story comes to a close, Francis is not only revealed to be insane, but Jane's dream-like trance during the opening frame is explained: she is mad herself, thinking of herself as a queen. Her claims justify the circular décor of her home during the main narrative, her extravagant bedroom fit for royalty. Jane's realistic appearance, contrasted against the Expressionist landscape, completes the idea that Francis is insane – elements of the asylum form a story that has been pieced together in a fit of madness. Consequently, Jane's realistic appearance completes the motif of dreaming and sleeping and connects to the dream-like qualities of the film's main Expressionist narrative.

The Expressionist distortions and dream-like motifs in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* parallel the kinds of distortions in the manifest content of dreams that Freud describes in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Freud's model proposes that four processes form a dream's manifest content: condensation, displacement, representability, and secondary revision. Two of these have particular connections to construction of Expressionist imagery. The first, condensation, involves several different mechanisms of combining or condensing structures from waking life – creating figures formed from physical traits of two or more people is one method of such process (*On Dreams* 14). In *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, condensation is the most prevalent technique used, in that it constructs many of the lead characters. The second, displacement, involves the transposition of significant and arbitrary figures in the dream, and is featured in various scenes of the film where action or settings are duplicated in some way.

The film's strongest example of condensation is its protagonist, Francis, as noted by Frank Tomasulo, in "Cabinet of Dr. Caligari: History/Psychoanalysis/Cinema." Drawing upon the Oedipal conflict and processes including duplication, Tomasulo, as well as Siegfried Kracauer, Thomas Elsaesser, and Patrice Petro, characterizes Francis as the double of both Caligari and Alan. Caligari, articulated as figure of patriarchal suppres-

sion, assumes the role of father figure to Francis. The manipulation and duplication of scenarios in the film emphasize Caligari's repressive nature and project Francis' unconscious Oedipal feelings. This psychoanalytic process, labeled by Tomasulo as transference (5), ultimately causes Francis to identify with the "father" and become Caligari. In the same way, Alan is Francis' double or doppelganger, sharing equal affections for Jane. Much like Caligari, Alan is a repressive figure that inhibits Francis from his ultimate goal of winning Jane, but unlike the evil doctor, Alan's power over Francis does not last. As predicted by Cesare, Alan is murdered after attending the sideshow performance.

The murder sequence begins with Alan and Francis' pact: regardless of which man Jane chooses as her lover, the two will "remain friends." An iris closes on the two as they walk home, with the intertitle "Night" marking Alan's subsequent murder. As Alan sleeps, a shadowy figure whose face is never shown on screen emerges from the end of his bedpost, its size dominating the frame and making Alan look miniscule in comparison. Alan awakens in horror after feeling the presence of the unknown figure; he looks off-screen as if he were begging for mercy. The scene takes a dream-like, unrealistic turn with a rapid editing sequence. The palms of Alan's hands pointed towards the camera; a longer shot of the shadow drawing closer to its victim; Alan writhing in bed as his face widens in terror; and the silhouette of Alan struggling for his life with the figure, ultimately being stabbed with a long, sharp weapon and dying (Fig. 6). Arguably, Francis is the true killer of his friend/double and explicitly shows his guilt after being informed by the police – his responses are exaggerated, quickly fidgeting with his clothing and having visions of a smiling Alan (5). This murder scene subsequently acts as a wish fulfillment on the part of Francis, rising against power if only for a moment. The combination of Caligari and Alan, two characters who assume dominant patriarchal roles, condense to form the image of Francis, who uses his own power to control Jane.

Condensation also creates Cesare, the central dream-like figure in the film, from the characters Caligari and Jane. Like Caligari, Cesare is a censoring agent to Francis,

inhibiting his advances towards Jane. During the final act, Cesare attacks and kidnaps Jane while she sleeps, an aggressive representation of the power that Caligari wields over the victim. Furthermore, as Caligari is father figure to Francis, the doctor also has patriarchal control over Cesare. Cesare is shown having already projected his Oedipal feelings onto the father, Caligari, identifying with and succumbing to the power of his master. This defenselessness against Caligari leads to another connection – between Cesare and Jane. Patrice Petro, in “The Woman, the Monster, and The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,” stresses the concept of the woman-as-monster, or a monster figure as the distorted representation of the woman on screen (212). Secluded from the rest of society, Cesare and Jane inspire repulsion and attraction from their patriarchal environment and are mere objects of a voyeuristic gaze. Like Jane in the film’s opening, Cesare’s passive trance-like state marks him as victim of Caligari and later Francis, and as Petro notes, becoming a spectacle to voyeuristic onlookers. Cesare’s link to Jane is furthered through his sexually ambiguous traits that neither define him as neither wholly masculine or effeminate. Elizabeth Otto, in “Schaulust: Sexuality and Trauma in Veidt’s Masculine Masquerades,” points out that Cesare’s “heterosexual masculinity is evinced through his murderous power and his desire for Jane,” yet his subservience to Caligari and fitted clothing suggest an overly effeminized, nearly homosexual character (143-144). This will connect Cesare to the later characters Count Told and Spoerri in *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*, where their slender frames and clingy clothing are characterized as effeminate or homosexual. The binary between active/male and passive/female allows for an interpretation of Cesare as the condensed image of Caligari and Jane. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, condensation is powerful because it helps to construct the manifest content of the dream and reveal a dreamer’s unconscious desires. Similarly, in *Caligari* condensations allow each character to hint at their own hidden wishes and overcome the repressive powers of Dr. Caligari.

Displacement, or the exchange between arbitrary details with those that are more important, is a prevalent device throughout *Caligari* that constructs various motifs in its

main narrative and reproduces different scenes to emphasize repressed dream-like material. The circular shape of the courtyard in the opening frame, for example, is displaced throughout the film, particularly in Jane's living quarters. Likewise, the chaos of the fairgrounds as the main narrative begins is later displaced onto the film's closing frame revealing the insane asylum; patients frantically move around the space, mirroring the cluttered, claustrophobic festival. As Kracauer notes, the circle motif "denotes a state of chaos" (83) both in *Caligari* and *Mabuse*, and in *Caligari* it is displaced from the fairgrounds into Caligari's asylum, a key location in the final acts of the film. Another specific displacement to consider in the film involves the early death of a town clerk in Act I. After denying Caligari a permit for his somnambulist show, the town clerk is murdered by an unknown criminal. The attack momentarily attracts attention, but does not have enough primacy in the narrative to be focused on. While seemingly unimportant, the town clerk's attack is displaced into Alan's murder, a scene that catalyses Francis' investigation of Caligari/Cesare.

Displacement is most powerful during the final sequence of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, where the main narrative irises into the closing frame. Upon discovering Caligari's evil murder plot and finding the lifeless body of Cesare, Francis and a group from the asylum prepare to confine the evil doctor in a jail-like cell. The men grab Caligari as he struggles to break loose from their grip, moving left as they cross the asylum's crooked, strangely painted hallway. They eventually enter the asylum, strapping a straightjacket onto Caligari as he lays helpless onto a bed; the main narrative ends here, with an iris revealing Francis and the unknown listener in the asylum courtyard. The repetition of Caligari's mannerisms, as well as the overall direction of movement of the characters, is displaced to this final moment in the film. A group of doctors grab either side of Francis, moving in the same direction as the previous scene to carry their patient away. As many critics including Budd have noted, the angular sides of the walls are still covered in unusual shapes despite a thin coating of white paint, and the room that Francis enters is in the same location as Caligari's cell. The men strap a strait

jacket onto Francis as he is lowered onto the bed, the film ending with the image of Caligari addressing the character's madness. The duplication of the scenes arguably reaffirms Francis' mental state and the idea that the main narrative is the product of a madman. Furthermore, the position and movements of characters in Francis' confinement are dream-like visual displacements of Caligari's capture in the scene before. This final sequence, which displaces Caligari's insanity onto Francis, has been the most widely debated element of the film amongst scholars (Fig. 7). Fraught with conflict from its inception, the frame story was rumored to have been added at the last minute by Robert Wiene against the will of scriptwriters Carl Mayer and Hans Janowitz, resulting in the incorporation of a classical narrative structure into highly dramatized set design and performance. According to Siegfried Kracauer, the original screenplay for the film concluded with the menacing Dr. Caligari locked away in an insane asylum, a display of revolutionary action. Wiene's controversial inclusion of the realistic frame story, Kracauer asserts, "glorified authority" (67), rendering the revolt as merely the product of a madman's fantasy. This, according to both Kracauer and screenwriter Janowitz, had serious implications: by sending protagonist Francis to an insane asylum during the closing frame, the film answers to the collective subconscious of Weimar Germany and discourages an uprising against society.

Mike Budd, however, claims that the infamous frame story tale as told by Janowitz and Kracauer is indeed false, pointing to copies of early scripts for the film. Before Wiene's involvement in the film, the screenplay did have an opening frame that takes twenty years in the future, with Francis telling dinner guests of his unusual encounters with Caligari (29). Furthermore, Budd stresses that the inclusion of Wiene's frame story had numerous positive results. Unlike Kracauer, Budd argues that the framing device successfully attacks irrational authority in Weimar Germany. That is, Caligari's power throughout the main narrative is undermined and even mocked through the reversal in the frame story; instead of being an omnipotent figure of repression, he is portrayed as a meek, kindly scientist, "a tragic figure" (32). This debate over the transference of madness between Caligari and

Francis is echoed in reviews from German and American critics during the film's release. Significantly, the issue of Francis and Caligari in the frame story also suggests the importance of the use of displacement in constructing the dream-like landscape within the film. While Kracauer and Budd note the transference of power from Francis to Caligari, they neglect to establish its connection to this concept of dream theory. The frame story's displacement is a primary source of the film's ambiguity, as chronicled in the ongoing debate between modern scholars, and gives it its lasting dream-like power and influence.

Elements of the dream theory Freud outlined that are found in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* lend themselves to specific questions involving multiple dream perspectives. One approach to this argument involves breaking down the film into three acts: excluding the frame story, each of the film's segments depicts the dream world of either Francis/Caligari or Jane. Conversely, the second way to examine perspective in the film is to consider each act through the split perspectives of Francis, an echo of Freud's process of over-determination, which combines multiple dream-thoughts into one (Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams* 216).

According to Tomasulo's argument about transference, Francis slowly becomes Caligari, therefore causing the two characters to be regarded as one. As a result, the first two acts of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* are shown through the perspective of the combined character of Francis/Caligari. Following the opening frame of the film, Act I begins by showing the town clerk's rejection of Caligari's sideshow permit, the first instance of internal censorship in the dream. In the same sense, the introduction of Francis' friendship with Alan during the act continues the motif of repressive dream material, with Alan being a figure that inhibits Francis from romancing Jane. Wish fulfillment, or overcoming suppressive dream material (Freud, *On Dreams* 11), is achieved in Act I through the town clerk's murder. Caligari surpasses the obstacle set forth by the town clerk and is able to begin his sideshow performance, carrying over to Act II.

The second act of the film begins with Alan and Francis entering Caligari's sideshow, intrigued by the performance of a somnambulist. As the show begins, Cesare is

revealed in his casket in a process that is similar to accessing dream material, where onlookers observe the abnormal imagery of the somnambulist as he emerges from his casket. Followed by Cesare's death premonition, Alan is eventually attacked and murdered in his sleep, a scene that is fragmented and dream-like. Alan's death is the second wish fulfillment in the film – not only is Francis spared from being killed, but the one figure that prevents his relationship with Jane is eliminated as Act II draws to a close. Francis' relief from internal censorship is only momentary, however, lasting until the end of Act III and closing frame. Caligari in Act III uses his mystical control to suppress Francis, and can be identified as Francis' own unconscious censor. Moreover, in the closing frame Francis is confined to an insane asylum under the control of Caligari, shown as a kindly psychiatrist. However, as will be the case with the evil Dr. Mabuse in *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*, Caligari as the head of the asylum is in fact the latent source of censorship inherent in Francis' dream world, repressing the character in a small, prison-like cell.

Conversely, other scenes of the film are displayed through the perspective of Jane. Jane, as she investigates Caligari's tent in an earlier sequence, discovers Cesare and freezes in terror. Petro asserts that this scene does not simply show Cesare's power over the character, but rather points to issues of perspective: "what this scene also permits is a different structuring of point of view, since our perspective is no longer aligned with a single (male) character but is split between [...] the woman and the monster" (212). Referencing the doubled figure of Cesare/Jane, Petro also highlights Jane's perspective in the film. Instead of presenting its narrative through the point of view of male characters, such as Caligari/Francis or Cesare, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* considers the perspective and subsequently shows the dream material of its female protagonist. The same can be argued of Act III, featuring Jane's attack and kidnapping. A displacement of Alan's murder scene, the attack on Jane is displayed in a similar fragmentary, dream-like fashion (Fig. 1).

Beginning with Jane asleep, the sequence quickly cuts to Cesare entering her living quarters, his arms outstretched and blending in to the angular exterior of the house. Mov-

ing hesitantly and steadily, Cesare creeps up to Jane's bedroom and climbs through her windows with a long dagger, the same weapon used on Alan. A diamond-shaped iris focuses on Cesare, focusing on the dream-like Expressionist figure as he penetrates Jane's realistic living quarters. Whereas Alan's murder scene was rather short, ending only with the shadows of victim and murderer, Jane's attack is shown in a different fashion. Cesare's face is shown, whereas he remained an unseen killer in Alan's death, and instead of following through with the murder, Cesare is enamored by Jane's beauty. The somnambulist stops and stares at the sleeping body (Fig. 8), and as critics such as Petro have suggested, Cesare possesses the same voyeuristic gaze as the patrons at Caligari's sideshow. Jane suddenly awakens and fights for her life, in a similar way to Alan, but Cesare does not want to kill the woman – he wants her all for himself. As the scene cuts at a frenetic pace, Cesare grabs Jane's body and throws her over his shoulders, carrying her body across the town's crooked Expressionist anti-realistic landscape. The scene's dream-like tone is emphasized through the cross-cutting of the attack with Francis' investigation of Caligari. The motif of sleeping used in this segment indicates that the dream material belongs to Jane, signaling a break in Francis/Caligari's perspective. The incoherency that is attached to the shifting perspective between Francis, Caligari, and Jane consequently parallels the uncanny dream logic explored in several dreams in *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

Freud's model stresses that the dream work transforms latent dream thoughts into manifest material. Thierry Kuntzel has denied that films include latent content, arguing that the motifs and symbols found in classical narrative cinema operate on a manifest-to-manifest level (19). However, critics including Budd have noted that although *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* utilizes a traditional narrative structure in order to appeal to a broader commercial audience, the film undermines conventional storytelling in its use of Expressionist imagery which remains as a type of modernist excess. On the controversial frame story, Budd stresses that the juxtaposition between classical and modernist techniques constructs a dream-like world. "Along with the contin-

uation of the expressionist settings,” Budd explains, “this resemblance suggests less the confident reestablishment of sanity, order, and authority [...] than the uncanny dream logic of repetition returning with the smooth, repressive surface of classical narrative action” (30). Although he does not continue to analyze the connection between the film and dreams, Budd implies here that this world includes latent dream material.

With this in mind, the film operates on a level of latent-to-manifest content, against Kuntzel’s definition. Manifest content can be found in the majority of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*’s narrative; that is, the strangeness of the Expressionist aesthetic style of *Caligari* can be classified as latent content, in that the visual moments of the film provide a sense of dreaming. For example, a scene where the words “You Must Become Caligari” erupt out of the screen and surround Dr. Caligari is similar to latent material emerging from the subconscious. Unexplained images surrounding the world of the film, such as the strange, amoeba-like shapes covering the walls of the asylum, are not the only material that is classified as latent content. Rather, the overall use of Expressionist décor, acting, and staging are the latent content in the dream world of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, constructing the dream-like landscape of the film.

Latent and manifest content are not a singular point of convergence between the dream-like imagery found in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic text. Rather, all of the film’s Expressionist and anti-realist elements evoke the dream worlds constructed in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. These unusual images connect to processes of the dream-work, especially condensation and displacement, furthering the link between Expressionism and dream theory. Additionally, the incoherent narrative structure found in dreams is echoed in the gaps in continuity in other Expressionist narratives, especially Lang’s *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*. Mike Budd points out that like all modernist art movements in the early parts of the twentieth century, Expressionism to some extent “promote[s] disunity over unity” (13) and develops a disjointed narrative structure that complicates the issue of subjectivity. The fractured narrative found

in the film, as well as disjointed imagery found in most scenes, correlates to the lack of causality Freud found in dreaming. Incoherent narrative structure and striking narrative visuals used in *Caligari*, then, have a strong connection to Freud's dream theory.

The *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* explores the fractured sense of self-identity through the externalization of the grotesque, bizarre, and fantastic. This unusual visual landscape, in contrast to the more modern, realistic settings of films including *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*, is a result of the deliberate attempt by Wiene and others to have an increased emphasis on Expressionist style. Consequently, the film succeeds in detailing the unstable post-war identity of Weimar Germany through these anti-realistic devices. Much like the dreams analyzed by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Caligari* highlights fragmented visions of reality the self through the lens of the fantastic.

Part III: Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler (Fritz Lang, 1922)

It is not for us to deny the demonic element which has played a part in constructing our explanation of dream work. (Freud, *On Dreams* 37).

Released in two parts two years after *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* in Germany on April 27 and May 26, 1922, Fritz Lang's *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* depicts the tense social and economic climate of post-war Berlin. The set designers on *Mabuse* incorporated the Expressionist set designs and distorted perspectives that were introduced in *Caligari* (Pflaum, "Mabuse's Motives"). Critics such as Thomas Elsaesser and Mike Budd have noted the juxtaposition between realism and the fantastic in Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, where Expressionist imagery destabilizes its traditional, anti-Expressionist narrative (Elsaesser, "Social Mobility" 23). Critics such as Tom Gunning and E. Ann Kaplan have noted a similar juxtaposition in *Mabuse*. *Caligari*'s story takes place in the past and the film stresses Expressionist chiaroscuro lighting, *mise-en-scene*, and acting to emphasize in a displaced way the sense of anxiety in post-war Berlin. *Mabuse*'s story, however, takes place in the present and the film focuses on images of modernity and the real in order to display Berlin's post-war climate, and then frequently transitions to the grotesque and supernatural. It is through the Expressionist aesthetic that *Caligari* and *Mabuse* construct similar distorted dream worlds, although *Mabuse* sets its dream world within the context of contemporary Berlin. German reviewers had a unanimously positive response towards *Mabuse*'s portrayal of modernity and the real, deeming the film "a playful re-enactment and a mirror of life" (*B.Z. am Mittag*), "an excellent portrait of high society" (*Die Welt am Montag*, 1 May 1922), and "a mirror of the age" (*Berliner Lokalanzeiger*). The first "'German film in modern dress' to have a worldwide success" (quoted in Gunning, "Coordination and Control" 94), reviewers applauded Lang's successful representation of post-war Germany, enthusiastically

responding to the film's concentration on the symptoms of war, such as decadence, violence, and hyperinflation. A particular point of interest amongst reviewers was the film's alternating use of "unreality and documentation" (Eisner, Lang 66), evident in its frantic, dizzying rhythm. Shots of fast-paced city streets, along with action-packed chase sequences, were appreciated by reviewers and audiences alike. Berliner Lokalanzeiger reported that during the opening screening of *Mabuse*, the "first big applause which spontaneously arose in the large auditorium [...] occurred at the night scene in which cars are racing through the streets," with an equally positive response for the rapid movement of a train in another scene (63-64). "Speed, horrifying speed characterizes the film," wrote *Neue Zeit*; "[i]s there better proof of a gripping story?" (4 May 1922). The motif of speed used throughout *Mabuse* clearly marked the film as an accurate portrayal of modernity.

Reviewers also lauded the motif of hypnotism and its connection to madness and extreme emotional states, agreeing that it effectively expressed the social chaos that Germany suffered immediately following World War I. This is evidenced by their fascination with Lang's use of certain camera techniques that provide the illusion that *Mabuse* was hypnotizing the audience. Such devices, including irises and movements reminiscent of a zoom or dolly in, captivated viewers, who were unaccustomed to these technological advances. "It is astonishing [...] how the hypnotic gaze of Dr. Mabuse casts its spell over the public as it does over his victim," declares a reviewer from the journal *B.Z am Mittag*, "how psychological processes are externalized" (66). A reviewer from *Das Tagebuch* stated that *Mabuse* was successful with its representation of the post-war climate through the motif of hypnotism, "because millions of people who sense dimly the confusion of our time are confronted tangibly and visibly in this visual and highly rhythmic embodiment with the collapse and madness with which we are all forced to live" (6 May 1922). Roland von Berlin continues this sentiment, expressing the view that Lang's interpretation of Norbert Jacques' novel throws "a phosphorescent glow of the grotesque unreality over the hectic dance of death going on during those unbalanced, hysterical

post-war years [...] at last a film that has something to say to us" (4 May 1922). Although reviewers of *Mabuse* saw themes of hypnotism and madness, like the reviewers of *Caligari*, they did not make the connection between the film and Freud's model of the dream.

While *Caligari* was seen as an Expressionist film upon its release, both German reviewers in 1922 and contemporary critics have argued over whether *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* can be classified as an Expressionist film. Reviews from *B.Z. am Mittag* and others often supported the claim that the film was part of the Expressionist film canon because of its use of Expressionist décor, notably during scenes at the Tolds' residence and various nightclubs. However, Lotte Eisner in *Fritz Lang* claims that reviewers falsely interpreted the film as purely expressionistic. "The only genuinely Expressionist feature," Eisner argues, "is the restaurant with its flame walls, where Wenck and his friend (played by Falkenstein) have dinner" (61). According to Eisner, few moments in the entire film use an Expressionist aesthetic, namely only those scenes that employ chiaroscuro lighting or have a dark, intense mood. Furthermore, a report from a round table on Expressionist film from the 1967 Venice Film Festival concludes that "*Mabuse* wasn't Expressionist. In films, Expressionism is no doubt the use of décor such as that in *Caligari*, or else shadows, grotesque gestures, and exaggeration, in one sense to photograph things which are exceptional, which are not..." (*Fritz Lang: Interviews* 92). For Eisner and others, *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* employs elements of realism to construct its visual and thematic landscape, deviating from Expressionist motifs such as exaggeration and anti-realistic imagery.

Interviews with Fritz Lang complicate the issue of Expressionism in not only *Mabuse* but in his other German films. In an interview with Gretchen Berg in 1965, Lang states that he was "very influenced by Expressionism. One cannot live through an epoch without being influenced by something" (Grant 58). Conversely, Lang contradicted himself in the same Berg interview by stressing that "I am always counted among expressionists, but I personally place myself among the realists" (58). An interview in 1961 with Jean-Claude Philippe makes Lang's opinions on Expressionism all the more confusing, as he stated,

“I don’t know the difference between an expressionist and a non-expressionist mise-en-scene. I produce what I feel” (Grant 26). Lang’s inconsistent statements about Expressionism further the debate on whether *Mabuse* can be considered an Expressionist or realist film. However, contemporary film histories include the film in their list of Expressionist films made between 1919 and the mid-to-late 1920s (Cook 96; Thompson and Bordwell 92).

Anti-realistic, highly stylized Expressionist sequences are in fact present in *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*, and contrasted with the film’s more realistic, modern settings and characters, they make prominent a dream-like world like the dream landscape of *Caligari*, echoing Freud’s model of the dream. The film is split into two parts – *The Great Gambler: A Picture of the Times* and *Inferno: A Game of People of Our Time* – with critics often identifying the first half as more realistic and the second as Expressionistic. However, this split between realism and Expressionism is not as straightforward as many critics have noted. Rather, both parts of the film repeatedly switch back and forth between realistic and non-realistic worlds that both expose the unstable, highly corrupted climate of post-war Germany and emphasize the horrors of the evil Dr. Mabuse. In combining the two styles, Lang is able to expose the feelings of emptiness, unease, and alienation that are hidden within Berlin’s ruling class. Mabuse typifies this imbalance and chaos between reality and the fantastic, moving “freely between worlds, donning many disguises and playing roles” (Kaplan 405). His hypnotic powers expose the vulnerability of the upper class, making the conman all the more horrific. Mabuse distorts the world around him in order to gain control of and censor the upper class, acting as an internal source of repression that censors the behaviors of high society. The film exchanges realistic images of 1920s Berlin with the fantastic and absurd, allowing repressed material to be externalized in a similar way to the way the dream work causes repressed material to surface in a dream.

Moreover, the Expressionist combination of realism and the fantastic in *Mabuse* challenges the classical narrative and representational techniques found in realist art forms. *Mabuse* follows in the tradition of films such as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* in its deliberate

blend of realistic elements with an Expressionist mise-en-scene: eerie lighting; distorted furniture and architecture; gigantic rooms and hallways, nearly swallowing passersby; and the creation of twisted, monstrous characters similar to Dr. Caligari. Defying traditional codes of film, the world of Mabuse is presented through “non-continuous editing, disruption of linear cause-effect relations and of time-space constructs” (Kaplan 405) that distorts perspective and presents an unconventional narrative structure. The stark contrasts between realism and Expressionism connect Mabuse to the dreaming and dream-like processes, presenting a world that is illogical, incoherent, and bizarre. The incoherency of the images in the film recalls the process of the dream-work, as outlined by Freud. What Freud called the “absurd” (Interpretation 1899, 277) images in dreams transform thoughts into pictures (Robertson xiv) – in the case of Mabuse, illogical images externalize feelings of unease in post-war Germany. The juxtaposition between realism and an anti-realist, Expressionistic aesthetic lends itself to the formation of dreams through the dream-work, taking latent dream thoughts (the unexplained, underlying images throughout Mabuse) and passing them through to manifest dream content (the film’s overall narrative structure).

The incoherent structure of dreaming described by Freud is paralleled in the overall narrative of Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler. While a clear example of the film’s disjointed, nontraditional narrative is the patterning between realistic and anti-realistic imagery, another instance is found in certain scenes that digress from the main narrative. One key example is during the first half of the film, *The Great Gambler*. Hull meets with his new lover, Cara Carozza, and speaks to her about his encounter with Prosecutor von Wenk. She warns Hull against befriending someone so close to the police, and he assures her that everything will be fine. This scene ends with the couple fawning over each other, but cuts immediately to a bizarre montage-like sequence introducing the nightclub called Schramm’s Barbecue. A montage of images of spinning tables filled with exotic foods and a corpulent man feasting at a long table with an Expressionist backdrop (long, shadowy lines painted onto a wall, intersecting with his body) introduce the sequence that tours the

restaurant-nightclub, showing every angle of the extravagant location. The film then cuts to a flashback of proprietor Emil Schramm's humble beginnings and corrupt rise to power. A rather cynical approach to a rags-to-riches story (Kalat), the scene ends with Schramm counting stacks of money, with an intertitle reading "Hard work yields rewards." Although the inclusion of this scene is a clear depiction of the social situation of 1920s Germany (Kalat), it has no clear significance to the storyline of Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler, featuring a character that never reappears in the remainder of the film. The Schramm's Barbecue sequence is a nonsensical divergence from the film's overall structure, rapidly touring a bizarre, Expressionistic nightclub at a dizzying pace, an instance where traditional narrative structure is subverted and takes on the appearance of an illogical dream-like sequence.

Dr. Mabuse's takeover of the stock market in *The Great Gambler* is one powerful use of a disjointed, incoherent narrative structure, combining Expressionist motifs with elements of realism. The mesmerizing sequence begins with a long shot of the crowded stock market floor, with men swarming around in a state of chaos; a large, lit clock hangs over the space, a motif that signifies Mabuse's uncanny powers over those around him. The scene then cuts to news reports of stolen banking paperwork (intricately robbed by Mabuse in a prior scene), followed by crowds of men pushing and weaving through the area as Mabuse looks on in delight. Rapidly showing the worried financiers and stocks dropping to dismal amounts, the scene intercuts with Mabuse's reactions, hidden amongst the masses as he orchestrates his crime. Evoking the overall panicked tone of the scene, the editing style displays contrasting, disjointed imagery that uses different angles of the location and financiers, and comes to an abrupt halt after the market closes. Ending with the bare stock market floors, Mabuse's head magically appears in a superimposition, morphing into several of the con's disguises (Fig. 9). Critics such as Gunning have stressed the significance of the use of this editing technique, as it both displays the importance of disguise in Mabuse's crime schemes and marks the villain as a "demon of abstraction, disguise and control – of modernity" ("Control and

Co-ordination”104). The stock market scene’s fractured imagery, paired with a building frenetic editing pace that ultimately ends with a strange, haunting close-up of the many faces of Dr. Mabuse, serves as one of the film’s most striking dream sequences. Setting the tone for the rest of Mabuse, the stock market crash exhibits the nightmarish powers of Mabuse and establishes the villain’s dream-like omnipotence (103).

The evil Dr. Mabuse can arguably be seen as an unreal dream-like figure, in that his hypnotic powers penetrate his victim’s subconscious and take full control of their actions. This is displayed in a scene where Mabuse disguises himself as hypnotist Sandor Weltman, where he conjures an “Oriental” show out of thin air and hypnotically commands von Wenk to drive head-on into a rock quarry, using the trigger word “Me-lior” to taunt the character as he nears death. Mabuse’s fantastic, dream-like powers are consistently connected to violence and crime, shown in the heart of Berlin’s gritty streets. Mabuse’s counterfeit money factory, for example, is one of the chief locations where the conman can carry out his supernatural crimes. Tucked away in a seedier part of the city, the factory houses elaborate jagged machinery that magically produces money under the powerful control of Mabuse. Ultimately, Mabuse’s factory is transformed into a horrific nightmare space during the film’s final sequence, where ghosts of the con’s past come back to haunt him and machines turn into monsters. Mabuse’s lair/apartment is also treated as a dream space: taking on the appearance of a mad scientist’s laboratory in some scenes, the apartment is the dream-like place where Mabuse morphs into different characters, a microcosm of the process of condensation.

Dream-like worlds take shape in the extravagant gambling parlors and other nightclubs in Mabuse; as the film moves from one nightclub to another, the atmosphere and locations become more extravagant, unusual, and Expressionist. The Folies-Bergeres, although having more realistic architecture than other city locations, has the most dream-like entertainment, in that it utilized bizarre, hyper-sexualized imagery. Cara’s bizarre dance, surrounded by gigantic heads with phallic noses, is a clear example of this un-

explained material in the theater. Club 17+4, where Mabuse hypnotizes Hull, features large circles that surround the club goers; this circle pattern is dream material because it is displaced throughout the first half of the film, in settings such as Excelsior's rotunda and Schramm's Barbecue. The Petit Casino, the last nightclub shown in the film, takes on the most elaborate appearance of any gambling den, with opulent architecture and nude entertainers emerging from the ceiling and floor (Fig. 10). As the nightclubs and gambling dens progressively become more outrageous (Kalat, Mabuse Film Notes), they each take on a more dream-like appearance, becoming more unusual and featuring images that are unexplained to both the viewer and main characters. As a result, these absurd images take the viewer deeper into the dream world of Mabuse.

Ranging from the realistic to the Expressionist, each nightclub also increases the stakes for the victims of Mabuse. David Kalat, in his notes on the film, claims that as the nightclubs become more extravagant, so do the fates of Mabuse's prey. Mabuse, for example, victimizes Hull in Club 17+4, a location that is arguably less extravagant than the Petit Casino. Although Hull eventually dies from the power of Mabuse later in the film, the aristocrat is merely hypnotized and has to pay an IOU to Mabuse, disguised as Balling. In Schramm's Barbecue, however, the fates of both Countess Told and von Wenk are much more severe. Von Wenk, Mabuse's prime opponent, nearly gets killed twice after encountering Mabuse in the luxurious gambling den, perpetually battling with the conman mentally and physically. Countess Told, introduced in Schramm's Barbecue as Lady Passive, has an equally gloomy fate, being kidnapped by Mabuse and becoming widowed after her husband, Count Told, commits suicide. Viewed at this angle, the progression from relatively simple to outrageously extravagant nightclubs not only delves deeper into a dream-like world, but represents an increasingly frightening nightmare, one marked by the omniscient, evil powers of Dr. Mabuse.

Inferno, the second half of Mabuse, also features the juxtaposition of realism with dreaming and dream-like images. However, this part of the film arguably uses some of

the most effective Expressionistic and dream-like images in the film, featuring angular décor, exaggerated performances, and other techniques that mimic the process of the dream work. *Inferno's* Expressionistic, dream-like imagery is featured in a scene depicting the hallucinations of Count Told, referred to by many critics as Told's "fever dream." After learning that he apparently cheated on a card game in *The Great Gambler*, Count Told seeks council from Mabuse, who is disguised as a psychoanalyst. Mabuse's role as psychoanalyst has two important connections to Expressionist film and the field of psychoanalysis. Firstly, Mabuse-as-psychoanalyst connects him to Dr. Caligari in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* as the director of the insane asylum, who locks away Francis after deeming him insane. Both characters, taking on the appearances of doctor, access the psychical material of their "patients" and diagnose them as insane. Moreover, their roles as doctor, instead of being beneficial, are forces that Kracauer describes as "omnipresent threat[s] which cannot be localized" (83). Secondly, Mabuse's disguise as a psychoanalyst is a reference to the psychoanalytic movement of the time. Whether Lang directly parodies Freud in Mabuse's disguise as a psychoanalyst or otherwise, this reference is still a reminder of the connection between the dream worlds as analyzed by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* and those presented through the narrative of Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler. The sequence is introduced with Dr. Mabuse's special orders to Told to have no contact with the outside world, revealed later in the film as a part of his evil scheme to have control of Told's wife, Countess Told. Extremely depressed and fueled on alcohol, Told walks aimlessly through a gigantic hallway decorated with jagged, geometric shapes. Entering another room, surrounded by odd furniture and tall African warrior statues, Told begins to hallucinate, seeing a ghost of himself shuffling a deck of cards. Horrified, Told approaches the table where his ghost invites him to gamble, a haunting reminder of the Count's guilty conscience. One by one, more ghosts appear around the table, dressed in white with heavy, black eye makeup (Fig. 11). A ghost throws the deck onto the table, as another hand picks up a card with which Told supposedly cheated. The ghosts

multiply and chase Told, who dramatically collapses onto the floor. The superimposition of Told's ghosts, in addition to the fantastic, anti-realistic Expressionist décor of the palace, lends itself to dream-like images described in Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, in that it presents incoherent images created by Told's psyche out of guilt and anxiety. Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler, like Calgari, uses the processes of condensation and displacement to construct its dream-like landscape. References to the doppelgänger or double create characters in a way similar to condensation; scenarios and certain motifs are distorted and repeated throughout the narrative in a way that mimics the process of displacement. These processes also reveal the sources of censorship in the dream worlds of different characters. Through these devices, the film effectively carries out the formula for dreams, stated by Freud in *On Dreams* as the "concealed realisations of repressed desires" (Freud's emphasis, 34). Condensation, which constructs dream elements by combining the features of two or more people, is the most prevalent technique used in *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*, primarily in the depiction of the main character, Dr. Mabuse. From the beginning of the film, Mabuse assumes the identities of various men in order to conceal his appearance, assuming "an identity that is proper for the situation he puts himself into" (Gunning "Control and Co-ordination," 101). His disguise as aristocrat Hugo Balling, for example, is used in order to permit him to assimilate into an extravagant nightclub setting; Mabuse's disguise as Sandor Weltman, on the other hand, is used to convince audiences during his hypnotist performance. Mabuse's appearance becomes more exaggerated with each costume, yet even though he uses heavy layers of makeup and hairpieces they never completely cover up his "real" appearance. His costumes, instead of fully transforming the con into one man over another, are transparent and merely draw attention away from his striking natural features (Kalat). In one sense, these seemingly ineffective costumes allow for the identification of Mabuse in each scene, which would eliminate some confusion on the part of the audience. However, the transparency of each disguise effectively simulates a condensation of Mabuse's persona and the appearances of other people. Mabuse has no bedrock identity or social

class distinction (Kalat), and although his distinct facial features are not fully covered by prosthetics or makeup, Mabuse's ultimate goal is to disguise himself in each class rank. Instead of fully turning into one person over another, he uses their profession, role in the social hierarchy, and economic status to con people, carefully assimilating into the world of the ruling class. As Tom Gunning stresses in "Mabuse, Grand Enunciator: Control and Coordination," it is Mabuse's control over such appearances, faulty or otherwise, that makes him the ultimate symbol of control. A *tabula rasa*, or blank slate, Mabuse's power lies in his "ability to assume different identities [...], his extraordinary control over appearances which allow his nefarious activities to occur under the appearance of everyday, simple or even negligent actions" (100). In assuming multiple personae, Mabuse exhibits the process of condensation, constructing an evil villain from unique physical features and the characteristics of other men. The sense of the grotesque in these changes is also dream-like, constructing images that are off-putting and unfamiliar and that are reminiscent of uncanny figures of censorship that are not explained in the dream work. According to *The Interpretation of Dreams*, condensation is one process of the dream work that reveals the unconscious desires of the dreamer. In a similar way, condensation constructs many of Mabuse's victims in order to highlight their repressed desires to be freed from the villain's control. One of these characters is Cara Carozza, Mabuse and Hull's lover, who can arguably be interpreted as a condensed image of Dr. Mabuse and Countess Told. Cara and Mabuse both have an appetite for destruction, as exemplified in their manipulation of Hull during the first half of the film. David Kalat, in Mabuse's film notes, stresses the motif of the *femme fatale* in the character of Cara, as she uses seduction and feminine wiles to ultimately destroy her lover, Hull. Similarly, Kalat notes that the motif of the *homme fatale*, embodied in Mabuse, is also present in the film, where instead of using his sexuality, Mabuse uses his uncanny perception of human weakness and hypnotism to defeat victims. The difference between Cara and Mabuse, however, is Cara's weakness and victimization by Mabuse, whereas the villain actively controls the wills of

others. It is her difference from Mabuse that figures in her connection to Countess Told. As many critics including Gunning have argued, Cara is the double of the Countess. Both women, who physically resemble each other, are each victimized by the evil Dr. Mabuse. Whereas Cara actively participates in Mabuse's schemes, the Countess is initially characterized as passive (her nickname in a gambling parlor is "Lady Passive), yet Mabuse has a strong force over the two women. This is shown through their imprisonment either from a connection to the villain's crimes or directly by Mabuse himself. On one hand, Cara is arrested because of her participation in Mabuse's evil schemes – she is locked in a small prison cell, covered in stylized, Expressionistic shadows. Eventually, Cara commits suicide in the prison cell, out of loyalty to and love for Mabuse. On the other hand, Mabuse abducts Countess Told after her husband, Count Told, cheats at a card game. Slung on his back, in a sequence reminiscent of Jane's kidnapping in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, Mabuse drags the Countess' lifeless body into his apartment, where he locks her in a small, circular room serving as a prison cell. While Countess Told does not have a tragic fate like Cara, critics including Gunning stress that the two women share the will for self-destruction in being Mabuse's victims, as they risk their lives for their male counterparts. Condensation, in the form of the passivity characterized in Countess Told, combined with the power to control others that Mabuse aptly possesses, creates the tragic and conflicted character of Cara Carozza. Two other secondary characters are also the product of condensation: Spoerri (Robert Forster-Larrinaga) and Count Told. Spoerri is introduced as Mabuse's timid servant, a middle-aged man with a small, wiry build. A cocaine-addict, Spoerri moves strangely around Dr. Mabuse, perpetually intoxicated while tending to the con's costumes and prosthetics. Similarly, Count Told is shorter with a slender body and, as described by Lotte Eisner in *Fritz Lang*, is "sensitive, self-centered, and spineless" (60). As he becomes a victim of Mabuse's hypnotism, Told becomes as indebted to the villain as Spoerri; both men are portrayed as weak-willed, especially under the control of Dr. Mabuse, and have

been viewed by critics such as Kalat and Eisner as caricatures of homosexual men. As in the case of Cesare the somnambulist in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, homosexuality in this context is seen as physically and mentally inferior in comparison to the more active, heterosexual Mabuse. Spoerri and Count Told are doppelgangers or doubles of each other, and in their homosexuality are passively under the command of Mabuse and suffer an ultimate fate of death or arrest. Furthermore, the characters also function as the doubles of Hull and von Wenk, two of Mabuse's male heterosexual victims. Von Wenk and Hull, repressed by the hypnotic powers of Mabuse, cannot fully achieve dominant male heterosexuality and are rendered as passive, just as Spoerri and Told are passive objects of their villainous master. The condensation of Spoerri and Told with other heterosexual characters functions as the representation of repressed homosexual desires that are otherwise censored by Mabuse, a character that symbolizes the overall restrictive nature of society. Displacement is the second technique in the film that allows for repressed internal wishes of the characters to be revealed. One major displacement occurs in Mabuse through the motifs of circles and money. Circles first appear in objects including clocks and wristwatches, signifying Mabuse's hypnotic and unchallengeable control over time in each of his crimes (Gunning "Control and Co-ordination," 113). Likewise, critics including Kracauer have noted the circle's denotation of chaos, much like the same motif in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. As the film progresses, circles appear throughout the décor of nightclubs and hotels such as in the Petit Casino and Club 17+4. In addition to representing the cyclical nature of time or Mabuse's total control, the shape can also be seen as representing the impenetrable social "circles" of 1920s Berlin (Kalat). Circles are then displaced into the séance scene at the Told residence; partygoers sit around a large, circular table, clasping hands as they try to speak with the spirit world. Switching from important (representing social class and time) to seemingly unimportant (the formation of people in the séance), the circle appears as a displacement in both the objects and décor within the film. Money, another common motif in Mabuse, is shown as an extremely valuable com-

modity within the film, yet is blatantly displaced during its first half. After the heist of banking documents by train, Mabuse plans his next crime, which is a takeover of the stock market. In a white wig and fake beard, Mabuse orders Spoerri to give him a few bank notes locked away in a large vault. The film cuts to a close-up of Mabuse's hand – like a scrap piece of paper, Mabuse casually writes his plans onto the bank note. Despite being an indication of a callous disregard for money in a time of hyperinflation, the bank note sequence literally turns an object of value into something that is not significant (Gunning 104), a blatant instance of dream-like displacement. The role of displacement in *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* takes shape in the repetition of ways that characters are staged or positioned in different scenes (Fig. 12). For example, Hull's card game with Mabuse-as-Balling has Hull on screen left and Mabuse on the right. Later in the film, where von Wenk and Mabuse gamble, the men are seated in the same way: von Wenk on the left, Mabuse on the right. Told's fever dream, while it does not feature Mabuse gambling with the Count, is staged in a very similar way. Told, after being invited by his ghost to play a game of cards, sits on the left-hand side of the table. Starting at the head of the table, each ghost appears opposite Told, which is coincidentally on the table's right-hand or "Mabuse" side. The repetition of the character's position in either gambling scene is a displacement of the idea that Mabuse gambles with the lives of others, excelling at games of life-or-death with the ruling class. Using cards and money as weapons, Mabuse successfully wins over their money as well as dominating their lives, taking control of them mentally, emotionally, and financially. Card games, a trivial pastime enjoyed by Mabuse to deliberately penetrate the social circles of Berlin (Kalat), are also analogous to Mabuse's overtaking of the stock market in *The Great Gambler*, of playing with Berlin's troubled economy. Condensation and displacement utilized in *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*, as well as motifs of dreaming, lead to questions regarding narrative perspective in the dream-like world in the film. However, this issue is very complex because of the intricate character and narrative

structure in *The Great Gambler and Inferno*. It can be argued that, through the frequent motif of sleeping and awakening, the film depicts the dreams of multiple characters in either half. In this regard, the film's dream matter can be attributed to the perspective of either Cara/Countess Told or Mabuse's gang members. Conversely, *The Great Gambler and Inferno* can be approached separately, the former resulting in the wish fulfillment dream of Mabuse and the latter as either the anxiety dream of Mabuse or the wish fulfillment of von Wenk. In many ways, the film's dream-like world is shown through the perspective of the doubled characters Cara and Countess Told. Cara is first introduced in the film through the dream-like sequence at the Folies-Bergeres, where she dances in a bizarre stage show with large head sculptures; the access to Cara's dream material begins at this point in the film. Characterized as a performer, Cara actively attracts the attention of male theatergoers through seduction and spectacle, including the disguised Mabuse who is revealed to be her lover shortly after this scene. As a sort of wish fulfillment, Cara's performance fills a void that has been left by a romance with Mabuse that is otherwise shallow and manipulative (Kalat). Cara's wish to be loved is also fulfilled through her fleeting relationship with Hull, even though she seduces the aristocrat because of Mabuse's evil scheme. Similarly, Countess Told's performance as Lady Passive is a wish fulfillment, in an attempt to quell the listlessness in her own life. Voyeuristically observing the behavior of others, living her passions through those around her, as critics including Gunning and Kalat have stressed that the Countess takes on the role of performer like Cara Carozza in order to vicariously feel the passions of the gamblers. The desire for wish fulfillment on the part of both characters, however, is eventually censored through repressive dream material, represented in a number of ways. Mabuse, the primary figure of suppression in the entire film, serves as one major source of censorship for Cara and Countess Told. Just as dreaming joins repression/censorship with the realization of unfulfilled desires, Mabuse provokes and entails the repressing powers of the evil Dr. Mabuse in the dream worlds of Cara/Countess

Told. It is through his unrelenting power that the unfulfilled, repressed wishes of the two female leads can be fully realized throughout the dream-like narrative in the film. Cara, initially under the command of Mabuse in his scheme to destroy Hull, gets arrested and confined in a women's prison. Suppressing her sexuality and contact with the outside world, the prison cell represents Mabuse's power over the character, who falsely believes that the two are in love. Countess Told is equally repressed by Mabuse, dragged away from her life of voyeurism and luxury and locked away in a small room in his apartment. Furthermore, the Countess' perpetual boredom is the source of her ultimate undoing and serves as repressive dream material. Incapable of concentrating (Eisner 60) even at the most exciting events, Countess Told gradually tires of passively living through the lives of others, of having a "detached curiosity" (Gunning "Control and Co-ordination," 107) in gambling. Even as von Wenk enlists the Countess to actively participate in his investigation by visiting the imprisoned Cara and interrogating her, she bows out and refuses to continue at the last minute because of Cara's impassioned speech about her love for Mabuse. Nearly censoring herself from the thrills of gambling and role-playing, the Countess subsequently maintains her title of Lady Passive. Cara Carozza and Countess Told, while equally sharing the same desires and internal repression, have vastly different fates, yet they each fulfill their desire to be free of imprisonment. Cara eventually poisons herself, while Countess Told is saved after Mabuse's shootout. The motif of looking and being looked at, of spectatorship and voyeurism, is a primary mechanism for aligning the viewer with the perspective of Cara/Countess Told. While many critics including Kalat and Gunning have noted that voyeurism is directly associated with Mabuse's hypnotic powers, the power of Cara/Countess Told's gaze indicates their own perspective in the dream-like world of Mabuse. Cara, as a performer, is the center of attention during all of her performances, yet she actively controls the gaze of her male admirers. Cara's gaze is also addressed during the prelude of *Inferno* – a shot of Cara in her prison cell begins the scene, where she is looking off in the distance. The film then cuts to

the reactions of other characters, including Count Told and von Wenk. The way that the sequence is edited aligns the perspective of the audience with that of Cara, because it begins with Cara's initial look; it is as if Cara is watching Told as he is confined in his mansion, and von Wenk as he investigates Mabuse. Countess Told is also defined by looking, in that she carefully watches the people around her (Fig. 13), a passive spectator wanting to live out the gambling exploits of others (Gunning "Control and Co-ordination," 107). Since Cara and the Countess are shown to be looking at people, eventually using the power of the gaze to their advantage, the dream-like world of Mabuse is aligned with the two women. The motif of sleeping is also an indicator of the alignment with a particular dream perspective. In the case of Countess Told and Cara, the motif of sleeping is tied to the characters at the beginning of *Inferno*. Beginning with a prelude entitled "People who cannot sleep," the opening shot shows Cara, locked away in her dark prison cell, fighting off the urge to sleep. Later on in the scene, an intertitle introduces Countess Told as she is locked away in Mabuse's chambers: "The sleeping woman." Following this, a shot of the Countess in deep sleep is shown, an iris closing in on her face to transition to another location. The blatant use of sleep in this segment of the film reaffirms Cara and Countess Told's perspective, and allows us to see them as the dreamers and the narrative as providing access to their dream worlds. Throughout the film, motifs of sleeping and awakening are also connected to Mabuse's gang members. Depicted as drunkards and cocaine addicts, Mabuse's gang of criminals are perpetually in a state of haziness and confusion, bordering on what appears to be sleepwalking. Spoerri is one example of this sleepy behavior as he drowsily helps Mabuse put on his costumes, his eyelids drooping over and revealing puffy, dark circles that signify sleep deprivation. The opening of *Inferno* depicts the gang's inattentive state, as they lie around Mabuse's apartment after a long night of drinking. Slouched over in chairs and falling on the floor, Mabuse's gang of misfits remains half-asleep, staying between the worlds of dreaming and reality. Much like the dream material of Cara and Countess Told, Mabuse is the primary figure of repression

in the dream world of the criminals, controlling their every move for his own advantage. Their wish fulfillment comes towards the end of the film, as Mabuse goes mad and is defeated by von Wenk. Sleeping, in this regard, indicates the dream perspective of Mabuse's gang members and their dream of freedom from their villainous leader. Another way to identify the perspective of the dream worlds present in Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler is to analyze *The Great Gambler* and *Inferno* separately. Taken in this context, the dream material of the film belongs to Mabuse, with the first half being a wish fulfillment and the second being an anxiety dream, fraught with censorship from von Wenk. Kalat, Gunning, and other critics have noted that *The Great Gambler*, referred to as "A Picture of the Times," emphasizes the documentary-like, realistic qualities of the film's first half. Many scenes in this film, where Mabuse plans and executes his money crimes, serve as day's residues for Mabuse's dreams. Using precise planning and modern technology, Mabuse successfully takes control of the German economic system, fueling his desire to take over the ruling class. These realistic elements supplant the fantastic dream situations in *The Great Gambler*, as portrayed through hypnosis and gambling. The stock market scene, which is gambling on a larger scale (Gunning "Control and Co-ordination," 103), is displaced onto Mabuse's crimes involving magic and mind control. Mabuse's desires in waking life, consisting of having total economic control, are fulfilled through his success in mental control of others in the dream world. *Inferno*, entitled "A Game of People of Our Times," signals the manipulation of reality, much like games and toys are distorted visions of actual things. In this sense, the second half of the film depicts the dream of Mabuse that fully expresses his wishes for total power. As this section of the film opens, Mabuse is in a drunken rage as his gang members lie around, too intoxicated to properly function. In a fit of anger, Mabuse declares his wishes for ultimate power: "I want to become a giant – a titan, churning up laws and gods like withered leaves!" In connecting intoxication to the motif of dreaming and sleeping, this scene depicts Mabuse, in a dream-like state, vocalizing his desire to fulfill his wishes for control,

power, and success. However, von Wenk restricts the innermost wishes of Mabuse in an intricate cat-and-mouse game that marks the remainder of *Inferno*. Towards the end of the film, von Wenk and other police officers engage in an intense shootout with Mabuse and his goons, penetrating the walls of the villain's hideout. In accessing the core of Mabuse's criminal activities, von Wenk is able to supersede the villain's control over others and censor his behaviors. A figure of internal censorship, von Wenk outwits Mabuse and prevents him from reaching his ultimate goal of power. In many ways, von Wenk is representative of the restrictive nature of society, indicating that the social hierarchies of post-war Berlin were inevitable (Kalat) and unable to be destroyed by even the most masterful criminal. The final sequence, in which Mabuse is defeated, can be read from the perspective of either Mabuse or von Wenk as dreamer. Mabuse, faced with the ghosts of his past, loses his grip on reality, becoming a victim of fate just as the other characters in the film; he is powerless and lame, eventually arrested by police. The sequence functions as an anxiety dream for Mabuse, showing the negative consequences of the power that he once demanded. It also exhibits the restrictive power of von Wenk, who effectively restrains the evil Mabuse. On the other hand, the sequence can be read as a dream of wish fulfillment when looked at through the perspective of von Wenk. Until this point, von Wenk's strong desire to capture the villain was thwarted by Mabuse's hypnotic power over him, that power functioning as a mechanism of internal censorship. Von Wenk's freedom from Mabuse's supernatural control in the dream-like narrative indicates that he has overcome the (internal) power restricting his desire. Latent and manifest content are two important levels of dreaming that catalyze the dream work and eventually reveal the unconscious desires of the dreamer. Similarly, latent and manifest content are sources of the dream-like material depicted in Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler. Mabuse, as an unrelenting source of power with no distinct identity, can himself be classified as the latent content within Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler. From the opening frame of the film, Mabuse is shown only through the guise of other fictional characters, such

as Hugo Balling and Sandor Weltman. The many faces of Dr. Mabuse, fanned out in a deck of cards, are the first images of the villain that are seen, identifying the villain with people other than himself. His presence is never explained, and his true persona is never revealed; the only way to characterize Mabuse is through his hypnotic powers, which are also never fully clarified in the film's narrative. Latent content in the formation of dreams consists of the seemingly unexplained, random elements that construct the landscape of the dream world. In controlling and manipulating those around him, Mabuse constructs the dream-like imagery throughout the film, much like latent content forms dream material. Exotic, unusual phrases in several of the film's scenes are also reminiscent of latent content in the dream world. Created by Mabuse as a trigger in the minds of his victims, the phrases Tsi-Nan-Fu and Melior are never translated and have barely any meaning. Furthermore, physical manifestations of the words appear from thin air, haunting characters including Hull and von Wenk. For example, when von Wenk gambles with Mabuse in Club 17+4, Tsi-Nan-Fu appears on von Wenk's cards and on the gambling table, popping up at random. Directly linked to Mabuse, these unexplained phrases are latent material in the dream world of Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler. Evoking the dream worlds described in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler explores the fragmented sense of reality and identity that was prevalent in post-war Germany. Using a sometimes incoherent narrative structure, juxtaposition between realism and the fantastic, and striking visuals, Mabuse visualizes what Gunning describes as the "'disembedded' nature of modern identity, of a money economy and of the fascination of gambling" ("Control and Co-ordination" 100). Through the use of an Expressionistic aesthetic, the film externalizes the urge to rebel against social norms and deep emotional states, taking the world of 1920s Berlin and distorting it to highlight internal turmoil. Mabuse's concern with contemporary social and emotional conflict is translated into its Expressionist imagery. Mabuse's dream-like world of repression and desire operates in a way that mirrors the way dreams work in *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

The final sequence of *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* is easily the most critically discussed segment of the film because of its over-the-top, nightmarish imagery, culminating in the destruction of the film's omnipotent villain (Fig. 14). Consisting of the trapping and arrest of Mabuse, the finale exhibits a wealth of Expressionist detail that creates a frightening dream-like sequence. The scene plays out as follows: on the run from von Wenk and authorities, Mabuse hides in his money factory; however, he fails to remember until it is too late that the special locks on all doors will prevent him from escaping. Trapped in the small space and haunted by his guilty conscience, Mabuse has several nightmarish hallucinations that are cross-cut with von Wenk's final investigation. The disjointed editing style utilized in this sequence, switching back and forth between reality and the fantastic, parallels the incoherency in dreaming described in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. In each corner of the factory, the ghosts of Mabuse's victims appear, dressed in all black clothing: Hull, Told, Cara, and one of his assistants, Pesch. These figures, haunting reminders of Mabuse's past, serve as uncomfortable, unpleasing dream material comprising the villain's anxiety dream. Making long, exaggerated movements, Mabuse draws back as his victims begin to play a game of cards; in a cruel twist of fate, the very weapon used to control others is now terrorizing Mabuse. After the ghosts disappear, Mabuse's hallucinations grow more terrifying, as a strange wall clock, a crane-like machine, and a printing device, each turn into gruesome monsters. These unexplained images, waiting to destroy Mabuse, act as the latent material for the anxiety dream, transforming and appearing mysteriously without any clear context. These monster-machines are eventually displacements of Mabuse himself. As Tom Gunning describes "*Fritz Lang's Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler (1922): Grand Enunciator of the Weimar Era*," these hallucinations function "like an extended vision, revealing to Mabuse the true nature of his power" (111). Much like the criminal up to this point, the frightening visions have the capability to destroy and control the mind, leading to Mabuse's downfall. Von Wenk, once one of Mabuse's helpless victims, now represents the repressive mechanism of

internal censorship, preventing the villain from exercising his hypnotic power over others. As Mabuse is locked away in his money factory – a displacement of the confines of Cara and of Count and Countess Told – his hallucinations serve as a sort of anxiety dream, one that takes away his power to control and subjects him to the will of more powerful beings. Expressionist chiaroscuro lighting, paired with grotesque machine-monsters and images of the dead, are the latent content of Mabuse's dream, the surface matter of which his nightmares take place. Fast-paced editing that parallels some of Mabuse's great chase scenes marks the twisted dream sequence, and as Mabuse begins to lose his mind, images of his past transform and condense into one large, omnipotent monster. The scene eventually comes to an abrupt halt as Mabuse collapses on the floor, littered with counterfeit bills. These images, which chronicle Mabuse's defeat, constitute the most powerful dream-like sequence of the film. Bookended by two climactic, dream-like sequences – one marking the sheer power of Mabuse and the other chronicling his defeat – Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler expresses the fragmented post-war self through Expressionist imagery. Through a more pronounced Expressionist aesthetic, the unusual mise-en-scene of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* projects the collective feelings of uncertainty and unrest in German society onto images of the past. However, the explicitly contemporary social context of Mabuse makes issues of identity all the more powerful. Despite this difference, both films use the modernist aesthetic of Expressionism to shape dream worlds that parallel the dream model developed by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. *The Cabinet of Caligari* and *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* depict the post-war anxieties of Weimar Germany and through disjointed narratives, inviting their audiences to explore the grotesque dream-like worlds of their characters.



Fig. 1 – Expressionist mise-en-scene, from The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari



Fig. 2 – Tower in Secrets of a Soul



Fig. 3 – Martin Fellman, *Secrets of a Soul*



Fig. 4 – Martin stabs wife, *Secrets of a Soul*



Fig. 5 – Cesare, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari



Fig. 6 – Alan's Attack, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari



Fig. 7 – Asylum, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari

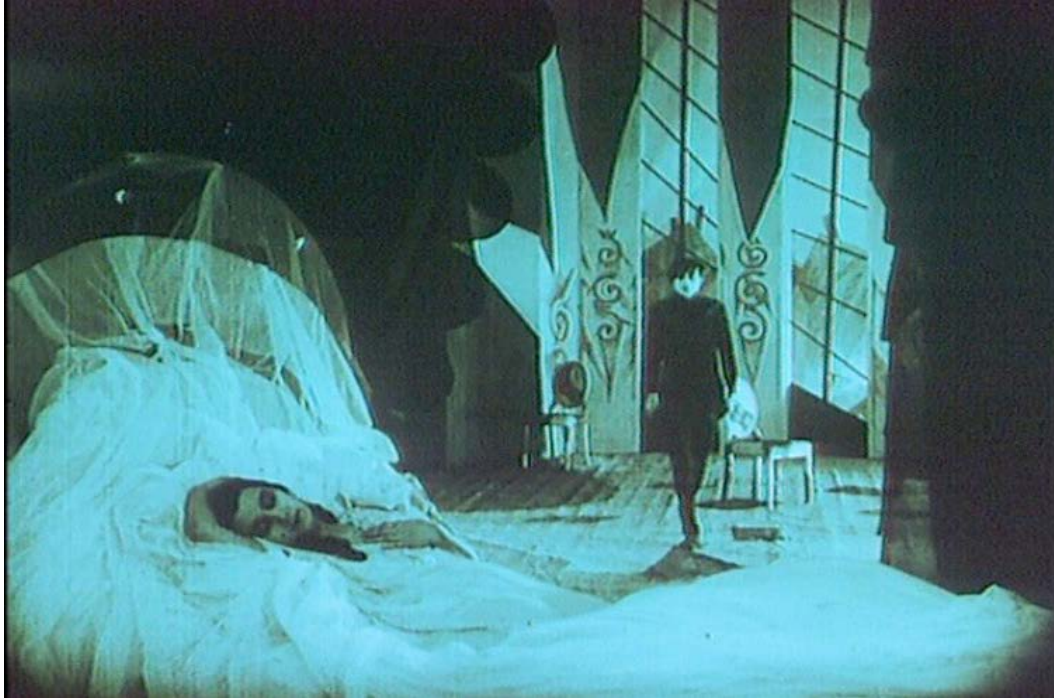


Fig. 8 – Jane's attack, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari



Fig. 9 – Stock Market Takeover, Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler



Fig. 10 – Petit Casino, Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler



Fig. 11 – Fever Dream, Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler



Fig. 12 – Displacement (staged screen right), Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler



Fig. 13 – Countess Told, Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler



Fig. 14 – Mabuse's defeat, Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler

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