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Beyond the Looking-Glass:
The Intensity of the Gothic Dream in Nineteenth-Century British Literature

by

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A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts
Major: English

Under the Supervision of Professor Peter Capuano

Lincoln, Nebraska

July 2013

Beyond the Looking-Glass:

The Intensity of the Gothic Dream in Nineteenth-Century British Literature

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University of Nebraska, 2013

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The dream is a contested space in terms of allegory and affect, the non-conscious intensity associated with feelings and emotions. Readers tend to express disappointment when a narrative turns out to be “just a dream,” yet the dream is uniquely capable of evoking powerful affective intensity. Yet most scholarship approaches the literary dream through representational interpretation, which not only overlooks the intensity of affect, but dampens it. The dreamer cannot interpret the dream while engrossed in dreaming. By taking into consideration the perspective of the dreamer, this thesis moves beyond the reflective lens of symbolic interpretation to explore the intensity of the dream in British literature of the long nineteenth century with the purpose of clarifying the role of affect. This thesis focuses on the Gothic dream with the caveat that this may serve as a point of departure for a future study expanded to include other literary dreams. Conceptualizing the “dream” in nineteenth-century terms, one finds that the very efforts to rationalize it only confirm its non-rational, affective force. Moreover, this research reveals remarkable commonalities with Deleuzian affect theory. Informed by these sources, this thesis analyzes Gothic literary dreams throughout the long nineteenth century, ultimately revealing that it is the struggle between the dialectics of waking reality and the non-rational, affective world of the dream that drives the Gothic novel of the long nineteenth century.

Acknowledgements

My first expression of gratitude is to my mother, Glennis Nagel, for her continual encouragement and unwavering support. I also owe a debt of gratitude to my fiancé, Damion Meyer, for his cheerful assistance, without which I might still be wandering the labyrinthine depths of Love Library. I am also thankful to Daniel Nyikos for acting as a sounding board and contributing to my list of nineteenth-century literary dreams. Furthermore, I am tremendously grateful to my advisor, Pete Capuano, for his guidance, feedback, and patience while I was amassing an unwieldy amount of research and struggling to narrow my focus. I must also thank Marco Abel, whose class on affect theory inspired my interest in the affective potential of literary dreams and whose teaching provided invaluable insight into this subject. In addition, I am exceedingly thankful to Stephen Behrendt for his much needed enthusiasm and suggestions. And finally, I am deeply appreciative of the willingness with which Pete Capuano, Marco Abel, and Stephen Behrendt have graciously agreed to serve as my committee members despite their demanding schedules.

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Introduction

Through the Looking-Glass

And certainly the glass was beginning to melt away, just like a bright silvery mist.

~ Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, 131

Upon the publication of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in 1865, the reviewer for the *Illustrated Times* described Lewis Carroll's fanciful text as "too extravagantly absurd to produce more diversion than disappointment and irritation."¹ According to the reviewer, the "grotesque objects" that Alice encounters serve merely to "prove the author to possess a most fertile imagination." Yet these imaginative elements, which the reviewer finds "grotesque" and "extravagantly absurd" (Phillips 7), emerge only within the context of Alice's dream. It is during the dream that Alice argues with a rabbit, cries a pool of tears, meets a vanishing Cheshire cat, experiences alarming changes in size, and plays croquet using flamingos as mallets (69, 30, 66, 54-55, 81). While awake, her adventures are limited to such pleasant, but unremarkable activities as reading books, taking naps, and drinking tea (19, 117).

Since the talking animals and rapid growth spurts are confined to dreamland (66, 54), the narrative is, in fact, entirely plausible. The problem, then, is not that Carroll's text is absurdly unrealistic, but that dreams occupy the majority of it. This dreamland absurdity dominates the narrative, relegating the waking world to the status of a framing device. In the Signet Classic edition, approximately 106 of 109 pages depict Alice's

¹ Despite the popular success of *Wonderland*, its critical reception was largely negative (Phillips 7).

dream, and afterward, the daydreams of her older sister occupy nearly 2 of the remaining 3 pages (9-118).

The “disappointment and irritation” of the *Illustrated Times* reviewer echoes the reaction typically attendant upon discovering that a narrative has been “only a dream” or “just a dream” (Phillips 7).² Readers tend to accept the premise that the fictional dream is, at best, a redundant, symbolic reflection of the fictional waking world or, at worst, part of a sort of narrative bait and switch. This assumption likely underlies the *Illustrated Times* reviewer’s critique. This common trivialization hinges on the premise that the dream is an inferior substitute for waking life, even if both the dream and the waking life are fictional.

Although Carroll depicts the world of the dream in a fanciful light, he does not trivialize it. Such expressions as “only a dream” or “just a dream” are conspicuously absent at the end of *Wonderland*. Alice does not express even a tinge of disappointment upon discovering that her adventures have all been a dream. She reflects positively on her experience in Wonderland, “thinking . . . as well she might, what a wonderful dream it had been” (117). In fact, she is “very tired of” her usual diversions and can find “nothing [of interest] to do” in the waking world (19). *Wonderland*’s sequel, *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* (1871), frames the literary dream in similarly positive terms and devotes the majority of its narrative to it; only 8 pages out of 112 concern Alice’s waking life (127-239). At the end of *Looking-Glass*, Alice only bemoans having left the Looking-Glass world and scolds her kitten for having awakened her: “You woke me out of oh! such a nice dream! [sic]” (237). Moreover, the dream is actually superior to waking reality insofar as it allows her to experience fantastic adventures that

² In the same way, Carroll’s poetic nature might lead some to disparage him as a mere “dreamer.”

she would never experience otherwise. In this way, both novels privilege the fanciful world of the dream to the experience of waking reality. This reversal is redolent of the Looking-Glass world itself, in which “living backwards” dictates that effects precede causes, Alice must run to remain stationary, and a mirror is requisite for reading the words on a page (174-75, 147, 136).

The only moment at which a trace of the phrase “only a dream” appears in these texts is during Alice’s conversation with Tweedledum in *Looking-Glass*. Upon encountering the slumbering Red King, whose noisy snoring has attracted their attention, Tweedledum tells Alice, “Why, you’re only a sort of thing in his dream!... You know very well you’re not real.” Alice’s counterargument is an appeal to affect, the non-conscious intensity commonly associated with feelings and emotions: “‘If I wasn’t real,’ Alice said—half-laughing through her tears ... ‘I shouldn’t be able to cry.’” In “a tone of great contempt,” Tweedledum asks her, “I hope you don’t suppose those are *real* tears?” Just as a disillusioned reader might disparage a narrative when it turns out to have been a dream, Tweedledum disparages the “thing in [a] dream” for masquerading as something “real.” The ridiculous Tweedledum functions as a mouthpiece for the argument that the literary dream he inhabits is inferior to fictional depictions of waking experience.

Ultimately, though, Tweedledum’s supposition that Alice’s tears are not “real” convinces her that he must be “talking nonsense” (167-68). These feelings are not less intense for her simply because they originate in a dream. In fact, the dreaming state seems to intensify affect; only in Wonderland does Alice cry a pool of tears (30). Actual dreams are also uniquely capable of intensifying affect, evoking a sense of immediacy that suspends the disbelief of the dreamer. This dialogue between Alice and Tweedledum

suggests that the “real” affective experience of the fictional dreamer, or perhaps that of the reader, may bestow the literary dream with a sense of reality that legitimizes it.

Conversely, Alice’s use of linguistic reasoning dissipates the dream of Wonderland. She awakens upon uttering the words “You’re nothing but a pack of cards!” Although her final growth spurt and her diminishing respect for the King and Queen of Hearts signal that she has begun to transition between slumber and wakefulness, it is this definitive statement that consigns the king, the queen, and their royal minions to the role of paper signifiers. By using language to mediate her experience of the dream, Alice reduces them to ordinary, non-speaking playing cards. As she performs this linguistic assertion of power, she physically strikes out at the cards, only to awaken and discover that she is battling a clump of dead leaves (116).

Dialectical interpretation dissipates Alice’s dream because it mediates its intensity. Once Alice has begun to awaken and regain her analytical power, the King and Queen of Hearts no longer inspire fear, and the dream can no longer move her to “*real* tears” (*Looking-Glass* 167). This contrasts sharply with the dreaming state, which suspends dialectical thought, thereby increasing the potential for affective intensity. Simply put, Alice cannot perform an interpretive analysis of her dream if she is engrossed in dreaming it. The absorption of dreaming precludes symbolic mediation. Extrapolating these concepts to literary dream analysis could have significant ramifications for literary criticism. In order to explore the arepresentational, affective force of the dream-fiction, it is essential to take into account the perspective of the sleeping dreamer rather than considering the dream solely from a waking perspective.

Moreover, issues of dream interpretation are especially germane to studies of nineteenth-century literary dreams. Even before the 1899 publication of Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had witnessed an increased interest in dreams. On the subject of scientific dream studies, Lancelot Whyte (1960) writes,

From the eighteenth century onward growing interest was shown not only in the normal rhythms of consciousness (sleep, dreams, reveries...), but also in unusual or pathological states (fainting, ecstasy, hypnosis, hallucinations, dissociation, drugged conditions...) and in processes underlying ordinary thought (imagination...).... (70)³

Additionally, Jonathan Glance (1991) suggests that the “scientific interest in the brain” and the “philosophical interest in the phenomena of the mind” also “encouraged speculation on the mysterious nature and meaning of dreams” (25). In *The Discovery of the Unconscious* (1970), Henri Ellenberger pinpoints the decades between 1880 and 1900 as a “decisive period” for dream research, but traces the generally heightened attention to dreams to the Romantics (303).

Exploring the affective potential of the dream in Romantic poetry and prose would undoubtedly prove productive, but this thesis will focus specifically on the Gothic dream-fiction, with the caveat that this may serve as a point of departure for a future study expanded to include more variations of the literary dream throughout the long

³ This is reflected in the literature of the time. The “reverie” appears in the form of a hypnagogic dream in Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield* (1850). Also, the “pathological states” of “hypnosis” and “drugged conditions” appear in relation to dreaming in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). Mina takes a “sleeping draught” and is overcome with “myriads of horrible fancies” (250), and later she falls into a dreamlike trance upon being hypnotized (271). In addition, anodyne is cited as responsible for the dream vision of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's “Kubla Khan: Or, a Vision in a Dream” (1797), and laudanum produces a dreamlike state in Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1821).

nineteenth century. The Gothic dream is an especially contested space in terms of allegory and affect; Gothic texts emphasize the inducement of horror, yet make extensive use of the premonitory dream, which is associated with symbolic dream interpretation. As E.J. Clery (1995) writes, “the supernatural takes effect through an appeal to the emotions” (70), and yet analyses of Gothic dreams tend to consist exclusively of affect-dampening, symbolic interpretation. This has become such a commonplace that William Patrick Day (1985) and Elizabeth MacAndrew (1979) even argue that the Gothic use of dreams proves the suitability of applying symbolic analysis to Gothic literature in general (Day 181; MacAndrew 1).

Symbolic approaches dominate the scholarly analyses of literary dreams of the long nineteenth century. For instance, in “‘The Terrors of a Guilty Sleep’: Freud’s Wolf Man and Dreams of Castration in *Melmoth the Wanderer*,” Linda Jones (2000), examines the scene in which young Maurice awakens from a nightmare, finds his father in the act of strangling his children to prevent them from starving to death, and says, “I dreamed a wolf was ... tearing out our throats.... Are you the wolf?” (329). Although Jones’s application of Freud’s Wolf-Man analysis complements the role of the wolf in Charles Robert Maturin’s text, the Freudian focus on symbolism overrides the affective experience of the scene. Cates Baldrige (1988) foregrounds representation in a similar fashion, arguing that the dreams of Lockwood in *Wuthering Heights* are “crucial in defining [Lockwood’s] own relationship vis-à-vis the tensions in the novel between social conformity and individualistic rebellion” and that Lockwood himself is “‘our representative’ in the text” (275).

Yet Gothic dreams have great potential for affective intensity. In fact, artwork of the period takes advantage of the intensity of the nightmare. Henry Fuseli's oil painting *The Nightmare* (1781), which became famous after being exhibited at the Royal Academy of London in 1782, highlights the vulnerability of a sleeping woman susceptible to the mythological incubus and a physically present night-mare. Similarly, in the etching and aquatint *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters* (1799), Spanish artist Francisco de Goya y Lucientes depicts himself sleeping over his desk while bats, owls, and two large cats poise to attack. The caption reads, "Fantasy abandoned by reason produces impossible monsters. United with her, she is the mother of the arts and the origin of their marvels" (Boime 269). This suggests that one function of the reason is the subordination of the fancy. During the dream, the imagination becomes monstrous by overpowering the dreamer's ability to control the fantasy through reason.

Representational analysis, such as Freudian interpretations and other approaches that focus heavily on dialectical explanations, can certainly be intriguing and insightful. But they tend to overlook and even dampen the unique capacity of the dream to intensify affect. For this reason, relying solely on linguistic, symbolic interpretations would be the Carrollian equivalent of discovering a magic looking-glass and examining the reflection on its surface instead of stepping through it. In this exploration of the literary dream, I intend to take into account the perspective of the dreamer, for whom affective intensity precludes dialectical analysis. Taking a cue from the "grotesque" dreamlands of Alice (Phillips 7), this thesis will emulate the backwards land of *Looking-Glass* by considering Gothic literary dreams published both earlier and later than Carroll's novels.

The first chapter, “Through the Lens of *The Antiquary*: Conceptualizing the Nineteenth-Century Dream,” lays the groundwork for the thesis by conceptualizing the dream in nineteenth-century terms. In the second chapter, “The Affective Force of the Dream: The Auto-da-fé in *Melmoth the Wanderer*,” I consider the ramifications of these nineteenth-century dream theories in terms of affective force. Then, informed by these historical and theoretical sources, I continue my examination of the Gothic literary dream in the subsequent two chapters, “The Beneficent Supernatural in Early Gothic Dreams” and “Dreaming Up Monsters: The Later Gothic Nightmare.” By taking into consideration the perspective of the dreamer, I intend to move beyond the reflective lens of symbolic interpretation, which centers on the capacity of the dream to mirror elements of exterior, waking realities. In this manner, I will explore the intensity of the Gothic dream in nineteenth-century British literature with the purposes of clarifying the role of its affective force and possibly elevating the literary dream from its trivialized status.

Chapter One

Through the Lens of *The Antiquary*:

Conceptualizing the Nineteenth-Century Dream

“Of dreams, you foolish lad!—why, what should I think of them but as the deceptions of imagination when reason drops the reins? ... Lord! Lord! How this world is given to folly!” ... The antiquary burst into a fit of laughing. “Excuse me, my young friend, but it is thus we silly mortals deceive ourselves.”

So responds Mr. Oldbuck, the good-natured title character of Sir Walter Scott’s *The Antiquary* (1816), when asked for his opinion of dreams.⁴ The subject of oneirocriticism arises when his young friend, Mr. Lovel, has an apparently meaningful dream.⁵ The description of this playfully Gothic dream and the discussion that it incites provide insight into nineteenth-century approaches to dream interpretation and analysis. While the narrator introduces a sense of ambiguity to the origin of the dream, Oldbuck espouses scientific dream theories, and Lovel adopts an unscientific but popular oneirocritical stance (130-31).

The contested dream occurs while Lovel is sleeping in the Green Room, the purportedly haunted chamber of Oldbuck’s home (99). According to legend, this chamber is the abode of the ghost of Aldobrand, who is Oldbuck’s great-great-great-grandfather

⁴ The narrative takes place “near the end of the eighteenth century” (13), which likely falls within the period of the long nineteenth century, 1789-1914. Also, despite E. M. Forster’s famous critique of *Antiquary* in *Aspects of the Novel*, I use this text for its extensive consideration of Lovel’s dream. In fact, Andrew Lang’s *Book of Dreams and Ghosts* (1899) and Robert Macnish’s *Philosophy of Sleep* (1834) use examples from *Antiquary* to illustrate their points (Lang 13; Macnish 110). Although the publication of *Antiquary* predates some of these conjectures about dreams, they stem from the same currents of thought. Likewise, some of the texts to which I refer precede the period of the long nineteenth century, but remained influential during that time.

⁵ “Oneirocriticism” refers to “the art or practice of interpreting dreams” (“Oneirocriticism, n.”).

and the house's original proprietor (93). But this vision of Aldobrand is preceded by a nonsensical dream in which a series of metamorphoses transform Lovel and several of his acquaintances into various animals. There is a distinct shift when the first dream ends, and the second begins, as Lovel mistakenly believes that he has awakened.⁶ While he looks on, the tapestry above his bed springs to life. The huntsmen, the dogs, and the deer in the woven hunting scene become fearfully animated. Gradually, one of the huntsmen transforms into a man matching the description of Aldobrand and points with otherworldly import to a phrase in an unknown language (99). Upon awakening, Lovel ascertains that the words are German, translates them into English, and discovers that the phrase exhorts perseverance (131).

Revelatory Oneirocriticism

In contrast to the nonsensical dream with which it is juxtaposed, this vision likely strikes both the dreamer and the reader as especially significant.⁷ Of the two dreams, only the second communicates a distinct message, and it features the dramatic appearance of a ghost who literally points to a moral exhorting perseverance (99). Moreover, the message is relevant to Lovel's current situation, as he has been deliberating over whether to persevere in an endeavor of great personal importance. The translation of this phrase convinces him that the dream must really convey a message from a benevolent spirit.

Lovel asks Oldbuck,

⁶ At first, the narrator equivocates: "If there should be so much old-fashioned faith left... as to suppose that what follows was an impression conveyed rather by the eye than by the imagination, I do not impugn their doctrine. He was then, or imagined himself, broad awake" (99). But Lovel later describes this vision as a dream, and he awakens at the end of it, so he must have been asleep: "Lovel started, and became completely awake" (101).

⁷ The pattern of highlighting a potentially significant dream by juxtaposing it with an incoherent one recurs in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) when Lockwood sleeps in a potentially haunted bedroom (20-21).

Why should I have thought of those words which I cannot remember to have heard before, which are in a language unknown to me, and which yet conveyed, when translated, a lesson which I could so plainly apply to my own circumstances? (131)

The events at the end of the novel support this revelatory interpretation, as Lovel is rewarded for his perseverance in pursuing the hand of Miss Wardour. Instead of leaving town and renouncing his intention to marry her, he persists in executing his plan to gain her father's approval. To this end, he researches his unknown parentage in the hope of proving himself a worthy suitor. Ultimately, because he remains in town to investigate this query, he discovers not only that his birth is legitimate, but that he is the next earl of Glenallen. In addition to receiving Miss Wardour's hand in marriage, Lovel gains a title, inherits a fortune, and is able to meet his infirm father before he dies (386).

Although the text never provides a definitive answer to whether the vision of Aldobrand constitutes a monitory dream, these factors would likely validate many nineteenth-century readers' suspicions that it does. The revelatory dream was not only a literary device, but also an accepted means of enlightenment for many curious dreamers of this period. In "The Meaning of Dream Books" (1999), Maureen Perkins describes revelatory dream interpretation as common in nineteenth-century Great Britain (104). Catherine Bernard also notes the numerous published accounts of people claiming to have experienced prophetic dreams in her article, "Dickens and Victorian Dream Theory" (1981) (198). Nineteenth-century believers in the revelatory significance of dreams speculated that although some dreams might be nonsensical, others could transmit revelatory messages (Glance 4).

Collections of prophetic dreams such as Mrs. Blair's *Dreams and Dreaming* (1843) and Catherine Crowe's *The Night Side of Nature* (1848) were very popular during the long nineteenth century (Bernard 198). The Society for Psychical Research also published numerous letters detailing these experiences in *Phantasms of the Living* (1886). Magazines such as *Chambers's Journal*, *Blackwoods*, *London Magazine*, and *Gentleman's Magazine* published similar anecdotes as well as opinion pieces supporting the possible existence of revelatory dreams (Perkins 107; Glance 5). In one of these opinion pieces, James Hogg, the author of *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), questions the scientific certainty that dream content is meaningless.⁸ His article in the May 1827 edition of the *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* calls attention to the inconclusive nature of the scientific studies of the time. In the article, Hogg declares that the "expert" on dreaming could not even adequately define "sleep," let alone begin to comprehend the "eternal part of it wherein the soul holds intercourse with the external world" (Glance 4-5).

Opinion diverged regarding this "external" power with which "the soul holds intercourse" during revelatory dreams (Glance 5). Suspected sources ranged from supernatural creatures and ghosts to the divine. In *Essay on Superstition* (1830), W. Newnham remarks that even "ghosts and fairies ... claimed the privilege of nightly visitation" in popular opinion (36). Adherents of secular spiritualism believed that nighttime visions could bring the dreamer into contact with the dead (Bernard 197). For the secular spiritualist, it would not be outside the realm of possibility for the ghost of

⁸ The dream is an important factor of James Hogg's *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. In the novel, it is unclear whether Gil-Martin is actually a demon or a dreamt-up figment of Robert's imagination.

Aldobrand to visit Lovel's dream in order to offer important guidance (Scott 99).⁹ Skeptics considered this type of ghostly vision akin to "table rappings, séances, and house haunting" (Bernard 197). Alternately, in *The Night Side of Nature* (1848), Catherine Crowe asserts that while dreaming, it is possible for the sleeper to communicate not only with the dead, but also with the divine. According to Crowe, this phenomenon could occur during naturally occurring dreams as well as in mesmeric sleep (Bernard 198).¹⁰

Religious spiritualists considered revelatory dreams solely the domain of the divine. Mrs. Blair, the editor of *Dreams and Dreaming* (1843), describes the revelatory dream as a moral directive sent from God "for the comforting of his tired people" (Bernard 198). This concept follows the oneirocritical tradition of the Bible. Some biblical accounts of dreams suggest that God communicates directly with the dreamer, as in Solomon's dream in 1 Kings 3:5 or Abimelech's monitory dream in Genesis 20:3. More often, an angel may act as an intermediary between them, as in Jacob's dream in Genesis 31:11 or Joseph's prophetic dream in Matthew 1:20.¹¹ But most often, biblical dreams require the interpretive analysis of a prophetic figure. For example, in Genesis 41:15-17, the pharaoh seeks Joseph's assistance when no one else is able to interpret his dream. In Genesis 40:8, Jacob associates the symbolic dream interpretation specifically with divine revelation: "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (*BibleGateway.com*).

⁹ Somewhat similarly, dead friends and family members appear to communicate important messages to their living loved ones through the medium of the dream in Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron* (1777) and in Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) (Reeve 7, 23; Radcliffe 130-32).

¹⁰ Mesmeric sleep involves inducing a hypnotic state. The *OED Online* states that although a 1784 scientific commission failed to substantiate Mesmer's claims, mesmeric techniques "had great popular appeal and were variously developed by other practitioners in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" ("Mesmerism, n."). Bram Stoker employs the practice of hypnotism in *Dracula* (1897), as Dr. Seward hypnotizes Mina Harker (271).

¹¹ Horace Walpole draws on this biblical tradition in *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), in which Saint Nicholas appears to Ricardo in a dream (164).

This hermeneutic approach took a different form for most nineteenth-century dreamers, though. Despite the lofty purpose to which Blair ascribes revelatory dreams (Bernard 198), those interested in oneirocriticism typically turned to a disparaged but common form of street literature. “In Europe, dream books were as old as publishing itself,” writes Perkins. But over the course of the nineteenth century, they experienced a rise in popularity, becoming “in Britain at least, the dominant form of chapbook” (Perkins 104). These dream books employ universal symbols to decode dreams. According to one dream book, “a virgin dreaming she has put on new garments, shews an alteration in her condition by way of marriage,” and according to another, “if a woman dreams she is with child, it shews sorrow and sadness.” This type of dream interpretation would also frequently accompany prophetic almanacs and fortune-telling guides. For instance, *Mother Shipton’s Fortune Teller* (1861) includes “A Charm for Dreaming” intended to invoke prophetic dreams (Perkins 106).

The dream book occupied a lowly status in nineteenth-century literary culture. Even the publishers of this lucrative commodity distanced themselves from the claims of their books. By attributing their dream interpretations to ancient writings by unknown authors in foreign lands, writers and publishers of dream books would add an air of mysterious authority to their texts while shrewdly evading responsibility for them (Perkins 104). In the opening pages of *The True Fortune Teller* (1850), a dream book printed in Sir Walter Scott’s hometown of Edinburgh, the publishers issue a disclaimer “TO THE READER”:

The foregoing pages are published principally to show the superstitions which engrossed the mind of the population of Scotland during a past age, and which are

happily disappearing before the progress of an enlightened civilisation. It is hoped, therefore, that the reader will not attach the slightest importance to the solutions of the dreams as rendered above, as dreams are generally the result of a disordered stomach, or an excited imagination. (Perkins 105)

Fortunately for the publishers, these disclaimers and scientific trivializations of dreams did not diminish the demand for the dream book. As Andrew Lang comments in *The Book of Dreams and Ghosts* (1899), “Mankind has gone on believing in . . . dreams revealing the unknown present, the unknown past, and the unknown future” (29).

As a consequence of its association with “ghosts and fairies”; “table rappings, séances, and house haunting”; and tawdry street literature (Newnham 36; Bernard 197; Perkins 105), the popularity of oneirocriticism did not usually extend to the circles of the well educated. The typical readership of the dream book was uneducated, lower-class, and female (Perkins 104). In Wilkie Collins’s *The Woman in White* (1860), Miss Halcombe underscores the sharp contrast between the nineteenth-century man of science and the stereotypical consumer of dream books and fortune-telling guides: “Whatever women may be, I thought that men, in the nineteenth century, were above superstition” (61). It is unsurprising, then, that Lovel experiences intense embarrassment when Oldbuck convinces him that his revelatory interpretation is misguided. A well-educated, rational man, Lovel “[blushes] deeply” over his initial estimation of the dream. He even tells Oldbuck, “I ought to sink in your esteem for attaching a moment’s consequence to such a frivolity” (131). Thus, in spite of the widespread belief in revelatory dreams and the popularity of dream books, the most enlightened attitude toward oneirocriticism tended toward rational skepticism.

Impressions & Associations

When Lovel asks Oldbuck for his opinion of dreams, the latter adopts the stance of a nineteenth-century man of science. By attributing the dream to Lovel's waking impressions and the fanciful associations of the dreaming mind, Oldbuck adopts the sort of etiological approach that dominated the scientific dream studies of the nineteenth century.¹² According to Oldbuck, the vision of Aldobrand likely originates in the ghost stories that had entertained Lovel earlier that evening. He surmises that Lovel's "busy fancy" had been "stirred" by the legend of the haunted chamber, especially since the young man had been sleeping in that very chamber on the night that he dreamed of its alleged ghost. The antiquary also dispels the mystery surrounding the "scrap of German" to which Aldobrand gestures so dramatically in the dream. The phrase is actually Oldbuck's ancestral motto, and it had been the subject of a conversation that Lovel had likely overheard the previous afternoon. Oldbuck theorizes that the young man's ear must have "mechanically received and retained the sounds" of the motto. He reasons that these factors, combined with Lovel's uncertainty about whether he should persevere in his endeavor, likely introduced the exhortation to perseverance into the dream. The rational, scientific explanation that Oldbuck provides persuades Lovel not to attach revelatory significance to what initially strikes him as a very meaningful dream (131).

This method of crediting the dream to past waking experience recurs throughout the dream studies of the nineteenth century. Like the title character of Scott's novel, Walter Dendy argues that the influence of waking thoughts on dreams provides a rational

¹² I refer to these scientific theories and investigations of dreams as "etiological" because they focus on "assigning ... a cause or reason" to dreaming and to certain types of dreams (Aetiological/Etiological, adj.).

explanation for the reports of supposedly prophetic visions.¹³ In *On the Phenomena of Dreams, and Other Transient Illusions* (1832), he uses as an example the widespread belief that Cromwell had a prophetic dream predicting his eventual rise to power. Dendy contends that the source of this dream was not otherworldly but internal. He argues that Cromwell's dream only reiterated his own ambitious thoughts: "This constant dwelling on the subject must have imparted a like character to the dream of his slumbers" (78). Likewise, Oldbuck attributes the moral of Lovel's dream to the young man's "own willful will," since Lovel had been yearning for a sign that he should not renounce his undertaking. Contrary to the oneirocritical trend of the time, Oldbuck advises the young man not to "look out of doors for motives" of his dreams (Scott 131).

In *Essay on Superstition* (1830), W. Newnham pinpoints as an origin of dreams the "recollected impressions of the preceding day, or of some antecedent period":

It will often happen, that the dream may be traced to some thought or action which has occupied the attention during the day, and which will be reproduced at night in dreams, grotesquely associated with other persons and things.... (179)

This coincides with the influence to which Oldbuck ascribes the legend of Aldobrand, the chamber in which Lovel had been sleeping, the German phrase that he probably overheard, and the young man's own thoughts about perseverance, all of which seem to become "grotesquely associated" with the images of the tapestry hanging above Lovel's bed through the course of his dreams (Scott 131; Newnham 179).¹⁴ Even Newnham's

¹³ A respected medical authority, Dendy contributed to numerous medical journals, served as a member of the College of Surgeons, and was chosen to be a fellow and, eventually, the president of the Medical Society of London (Boase 340).

¹⁴ In Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), the painting of the Madonna, which is hanging over the title character's bed, factors into his supernaturally-induced dream. Somewhat similarly, in Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield*, the painting of Rosa, which is hanging above David Copperfield's bed, factors into his dream; but his dream does not issue from a supernatural source.

description of this type of dream resembles Lovel's experience. Newnham maintains, "If the sleep be light, with an air of *vraisemblance*," then the sleeper may "really doubt if it be a dream or a truth" (179). Much like the dreamer of Newnham's text, Lovel believes that he has already awakened when he begins to dream of Aldobrand, attaching an air of waking reality to the vision that ensues (99).

Robert Macnish's *The Philosophy of Sleep* (1834) rationalizes the dream in a similar fashion.¹⁵ Macnish asserts, "I believe that dreams are uniformly the resuscitation or re-embodiment [sic] of thoughts which have formerly, in some shape or other, occupied the mind." He further explains that if these thoughts "break loose from their connecting chain, and become jumbled together incoherently, as is often the case [in dreams]," then even the most quotidian thoughts from one's waking reality can "give rise to absurd combinations" (49). An analogous explanation appears in John Abercrombie's *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers* (1839).¹⁶ Abercrombie maintains that "recent events and recent mental emotions" overlap into dreams, but that unlike in waking life, these impressions "follow one another according to associations over which we have no control" during dreams (198). Consequently, both the meaninglessness of the first dream and the apparent significance of the vision of Aldobrand might stem from the sleeping Lovel's inability to rationally order his thoughts (99). His dreaming mind creates the "absurd combinations" and "associations" that emerge in these dreams; or in the

¹⁵ According to *The Scottish Nation* (1863), Macnish was a "popular writer" and a renowned surgeon, known as "The Modern Pythagorean." His treatise, *The Philosophy of Sleep*, was "well received" (Anderson 59).

¹⁶ A respected Scottish physician, Abercrombie studied at the University of Edinburgh and published in medical journals. His philosophical publications also "achieved wide popularity" ("Abercrombie" 43).

words of Oldbuck, “reason drops the reins” in the dreaming state (Macnish 49; Abercrombie 198; Scott 130-31).

These works share striking commonalities with an earlier text entitled *Observations on Man* (1749). In *Observations*, David Hartley states that “Dreams are, in part, deducible from the Impressions and Ideas of the preceding Day” (384). These “Impressions and Ideas of the preceding Day” become “recollected impressions” for Newnham, the “constant dwelling on [a] subject” for Dendy, “[resuscitated] ... thoughts” for Macnish, and the influence of “recent events and recent mental emotions” for Abercrombie (Hartley 384; Newnham 179; Dendy 78; Macnish 49; Abercrombie 198). Hartley also attributes the “great Wildness and Inconsistency” of dreams to the sleeper’s inability to exert rational control over the “association” of these impressions and ideas (385). This calls to mind Abercrombie’s reference to the “associations over which we have no control,” Newnham’s characterization of the dreamer’s thoughts as “grotesquely associated,” and to a certain extent, the “connecting chain” of “jumbled” thoughts that Macnish describes (Abercrombie 198; Newnham 179; Macnish 49).

The similarities between these texts suggest that although the rising interest in dreams likely spurred an increase in scientific publications on the subject, many of these scientific theories rework and expand on ideas already in circulation. Not only would it be impractical to attempt to prove an influence between specific writers and specific scientific texts on dreams; it would be unnecessary.¹⁷ The greater the similarities between these dream studies, the more likely it is that these ideas must have been in circulation in one form or another and that they must have influenced the writing and reading of literary

¹⁷ Nonetheless, for an admirable example of this, see Catherine Bernard’s painstakingly detailed account of the dream-related texts in Charles Dickens’s library and the evidence that he read them in “Dickens and Victorian Dream Theory” (1981).

dreams during the long nineteenth century. Regardless of their publication dates or their minor differences in terminology, these scientific texts provide insight into the main currents of thought regarding the conceptualization of actual dreams, which likely would have influenced the literary dreams of the long nineteenth century.

The Disorder of Dreams

The text of *Antiquary* suggests that the “great Wildness” of Lovel’s dream may originate partially in the young man’s physiological state (Hartley 385; Scott 99). On the evening that he dreams of Aldobrand, he is in a state of “feverish agitation,” which according to the narrator, “may have assisted him in forming the vision” (99). This coincides with the scientific theories of the period. In fact, Macnish highlights fever as a trigger for particularly intense dreams, writing, “The visions, indeed, which occur in a state of fever are highly distressing” (66).¹⁸ More generally, Newnham contends that “dreams of disease” tend to “present a great variety” (160-61). By identifying physiological disorder as a direct cause of the intensity of such dreams, these texts position this intensity in a physical-affective realm, suggesting a sense of arepresentational immediacy.

In *The Book of Dreams and Ghosts* (1899), Andrew Lang maintains that even the slight disorder manifested by a minor irregularity in the surroundings of the sleeper can change the intensity of a dream. “As a rule dreams throw everything into a dramatic form,” Lang writes, “Some one [sic] knocks at our door, and the dream bases a little

¹⁸ Fever dreams play a role in numerous nineteenth-century novels. For instance, Charles Dickens employs the fever dream in *Bleak House* (1853) and *Great Expectations* (1861). The fever dream also plays a role in the Russian novels *Crime and Punishment* (1866) and *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880) by Fyodor Dostoevsky. However, these novels do not foreground the issue of dream interpretation to the extent that *Antiquary* does.

drama on the noise” (12). The physical component of dreaming surpasses the mere condition of being asleep, as the sleeper’s physical state plays a significant role in both the content and the intensity of the dream. According to Newnham, “Any cause which has powerfully excited their brain, whether this may have been exercise or disease,” can produce a dream (171). Abercrombie maintains that the onset or the intensification of a dream can result from the “[excitement]” caused by “some bodily feeling of uneasiness, perhaps an oppression at the stomach, at the time when the dream occurred” (Abercrombie 198-99). More specifically, Macnish blames indigestion for some unpleasant dreams, recommending that his readers abstain from eating two or three hours before bedtime (274).¹⁹

This association of the dream with symptoms of minor and major physiological disorder is significant because for nineteenth-century natural philosophers, dreams are not merely intensified by disorder; the dream is itself a form of disorder. “Dreaming is one of [the mind’s] diseases,” Newnham asserts, surmising that the dream is a consequence of the “perverting influence of the fall” of mankind (165). Apart from spiritual disorder, these dream studies characterize the dreaming state as incongruous with restful sleep. Dendy writes, “The dream, I believe, never occurs in sound or perfect sleep” (19). Similarly, Macnish declares that in “intense sleep,” there “can be no dream” (40). Dendy expands on this idea, maintaining that “such derangement of the manifestations of mind . . . as we term a dream” ensues only as a result of the “disturbed condition of the brain.” Dreams are not a normal byproduct of sleeping, but instead a “slight and transient delirium” (Dendy 55-56). Macnish concurs that dreaming does not

¹⁹ Ebenezer Scrooge blames his dreams on indigestion in Charles Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol* (1843).

occur in restful sleep, as dreams “disappear altogether” once “sleep becomes more profound” and “the brain is left to thorough repose.” The dream is not a natural occurrence that accompanies the unconscious sleeping state, but rather an undesirable deviation from restful sleep. Macnish highlights the liminal aspect of the dreaming state, claiming that the transitional, liminal period between wakefulness and slumber can cause dreams. He theorizes that the “gradual process of intellectual obliteration” involved in falling asleep generates “a sort of confused dream—a mild delirium which always precedes sleep” (24).

Whether the cause is indigestion, fever, or merely overexcitement, this disordered state leads to the overpowering of reason by the imagination. Conceptualizing the dream along these lines, Oldbuck attributes Lovel’s dream to his “busy fancy” and characterizes dreams as the “deceptions of imagination when reason drops the reigns” (Scott 131, 130). Affirming that the imagination is unencumbered by reason during the dream, Hartley states that dreams consist of “nothing but the Imaginations, Fancies, or Reveries of a sleeping Man” (384). In Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (1651), an earlier text that influences these nineteenth-century writers, a chapter entitled “Of Imagination” refers to “dreams” as both “the imaginations of them that sleep” and “the silence of sense” (1.384-89). Reiterating Hobbes’s ideas, Newnham remarks that “the sleeping senses” are “incapable of exerting their regular influence in controlling the wanderings of the intellectual faculties” during the course of a dream (165-66). For Dendy, the “faculty of judgment” becomes completely “inert” in dreams (22). Recalling the “associations over which we have no control” (Abercrombie 198), Newnham writes that “erroneous perceptions are occasioned” in dreams because “reason and judgment [are] suspended.”

This suspension of reason produces “trains of association . . . generally of the wildest character” (Newnham 167).

The “deceptions of imagination” that overtake the dream are so intense that they evoke the threat of insanity for these writers (Scott 131). For instance, Macnish claims that there is “a strong analogy between dreaming and insanity,” as “a dream may be considered as a transient paroxysm of delirium” (45). Such theories also liken the “absence of truth” and the “want of cohesion” in confusing dreams to a sort of temporary insanity (Newnham 163). Macnish notes that somnambulism “bears a closer analogy than a common dream to madness,” since the sleepwalker similarly passes through the waking world under the delusion induced by his or her dream (148).

One mark of the insanity inherent in the dreaming state is the sense of immediacy that suppresses dialectical thought: According to Abercrombie, “The [false] impressions which arise in the mind are believed to have a real and present existence” (198). As a result of the “quiescent condition of the reasoning powers,” “the mind is wholly subject to the sceptre of other faculties,” so that “whatever emotions or images they invoke, [dreams] seem to be real” (Macnish 83). As Newnham observes, the dream “may appear to be almost rational and consecutive” to the dreamer, although upon awakening, one will recognize in it “a want of cohesion in the causes and consequences,” “an absence of truth,” and a “deviation from correct thinking” (163). This idea of the dream as a deviation from reason is reminiscent of Oldbuck’s trivialization of dreams as “deceptions of imagination when reason drops the reins” (131).

The suspension of disbelief that Abercrombie, Macnish, and Newnham describe precludes the dreamer from mediating his or her experience through rational analysis.

This sense of immediacy, accompanied by an unrestrained imagination, precludes the linear ordering of time. As Macnish remarks, there is “an apparent expansion of time in dreams” (60). Later in his text, he continues on this theme, revealing the multiple associations of which the dreaming mind is capable:

The illusion of dreams is much more complete than that of the most exquisite plays. We pass, in a second of time, from one country to another; and persons who lived in the most different ages of the world are brought together in strange and incongruous confusion.... Nothing, in short, however monstrous, incredible, or impossible, seems absurd. (84)²⁰

The experience of dreaming does not allow the sleeper to rationally analyze his or her dream while he or she is asleep. This suspension of disbelief, akin to that demanded of readers of fiction, produces a sense of intensity for the dreamer. Lang remarks on this phenomenon:

In dreams, time and space are annihilated, and two severed lovers may be made happy. In dreams, amidst a grotesque confusion of things remembered and things forgot... we behold the absent; we converse with the dead, and we may even (let us say by chance coincidence) forecast the future. (3)²¹

In dreams, time becomes nonlinear, dialectics are ruptured, and incongruities go unsuppressed.

Through this liminal, adialectical space of the dream, texts can foreground the primacy of affect. The primacy of affect is apparent in the fact that while dreaming, fear

²⁰ This recalls the *Illustrated Times* reviewer’s assertion that Lewis Carroll’s *Wonderland* (1865) is absurd (Phillips 7). The reviewer does not take into consideration the perspective of the dreamer, for whom the dream would not seem absurd.

²¹ These descriptions call to mind Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan: Or, a Vision in a Dream” (1797), which originates in a dream of the author.

has a powerful physical effect on Lockwood's body: "As is usual in frightful dreams," Lovel's tongue "refused its office, and clung, palsied to the roof of his mouth" (Scott 100). This effect is an element of "*incubus*," the state that characterizes the nightmare for both Dendy and Macnish (Dendy 22; Macnish 73).²² According to Macnish, a dream becomes a nightmare when "the individual feels as if his powers of volition were totally paralyzed," rendering him unable "to move a limb in his own behalf, or utter a cry expressive of his agony" (Macnish 73).

Additionally, when Lovel witnesses a "strange scene" while dreaming, the narrator notes that he feels "devoid of wonder, (which seldom intrudes itself upon the sleeping fancy), but with an anxious sensation of awful fear." Moreover, Lovel's "anxious and fearful expectation" seems "instantly to summon up before [his] mind's eye the object of [his] fear" (Scott 100). This idea that affects can evoke the images with which the mind associates them appears in multiple writings on dreams. For instance, in the first volume of *Zoonomia* (1796), Erasmus Darwin asserts, "When you dream under the influence of fear, all the robbers, fires, and precipices, that you formerly have seen or heard of, arise before you with terrible vivacity" (45). Abercrombie writes that thoughts in dreams are often connected not by logic, but "by means of some *feeling* which had been in a greater or less degree allied to each of them, though in other respects they were entirely unconnected" (198, emphasis added).

²² The term *incubus* originates in the preternatural figure believed to visit dreams. The OED defines it alternately as "a feeling of oppression during sleep, as of some heavy weight on the chest and stomach; the nightmare" and as the "evil spirit or demon [that descends] upon persons in their sleep, and especially to seek carnal intercourse with women" ("Incubus," n.).

The Order of Sleep

As Macnish reassures the reader, dreams “disappear altogether” in profound sleep (24). In a section on the “General Management of Sleep,” he offers detailed advice on how to reach a more perfect state of sleep in order to receive health benefits. His advice extends to minutiae such as the appropriate sizes of the bed and the bedroom; the arrangement of curtains, window shutters, and surrounding furniture; the type of mattress, pillow, blanket, and nightdress; the adjustment of lighting, temperature, humidity level, and air circulation; the position of the body while sleeping; controlling the sleeping habits of children; eating before bedtime; and the most beneficial bedtimes as well as the appropriate duration of sleep (267-82).

On the timing and duration of sleep, Macnish asserts that rising early is not only healthful, but also virtuous. Conversely, diverging from this schedule by remaining awake late at night or sleeping during the day is harmful. But he does not identify the resulting loss of sleep as the harmful aspect, suggesting that the harm derives solely from allocating sleep to the daytime and wakefulness to the nighttime:

Those, therefore, who habitually delay going to bed till twelve, or one, or two, are acting in direct opposition to the laws of health, in so far as they are compelled to pass in sleep a portion of the ensuing day, which ought to be appropriated to wakefulness and exertion. Late hours are in every respect hurtful. (278)

These myriad restrictions conjure a scene in which sleepers mechanically adhere to a strict, unchanging regime that eschews irregularities. Through this dispassionate system of order, Macnish endeavors to disempower the imagination and dissipate the intensity of the dream.

At the basis of this systematization of life is the dialectical division whereby Macnish assigns sleeping to the nighttime and wakefulness to the daytime. He reasons from the premise that this division is natural and not a societal convention. But as A. Roger Ekirch discusses in “Sleep We Have Lost: Pre-Industrial Slumber in the British Isles” (2001), this type of “consolidated sleep” had not always been the standard. In fact, before the modern era, most Western Europeans would awaken for a period of time after what they termed their “first sleep,” and then they would return to sleep. Ekirch suggests that there could be benefits to this type of “segmented sleep,” whereas it might be possible that “consolidated sleep, such as we today experience,” is “unnatural” (344).

Moreover, according to Ekirch, one of the activities in which these pre-modern sleepers sometimes partook between their first and second portions of sleep was reflecting on the dreams that they had just experienced. In this way, the segmented sleeping pattern would have influenced both the experience and the conception of the dream. “Not only were these visions unusually vivid, but their images would have intruded far less on conscious thought had sleepers not stirred until dawn,” writes Ekirch. He argues convincingly that “segmented sleep” would have integrated the dream more into waking life. For the pre-industrial sleeper, the dream would have seemed less like a disorder and more like a part of everyday life (344). Assigning the dream exclusively to the nighttime, in combination with the diminished memorability of its contents, likely conferred onto the dream an aura of mystery. It is possible that the transition from segmented sleep to consolidated sleep may have contributed to the eventual nineteenth-century association of dreaming with disorder. As a consequence, it would seem likely

that Macnish's insistence on enforcing the sharp, dialectical divisions of his system of order would only reaffirm the perceived threat of the dream.

Later, Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) suggests that dreams exert a sort of affective power, and yet it emphasizes symbolic dream interpretation. Freud writes that the analyst must "disentangle [a dream's] meaning" not from the "manifest content" that the dreamer encounters during the experience of the dream, but rather from the "latent dream-thoughts." There is always an intermediary involved in Freudian interpretation because the dream-content is "presented in hieroglyphics, whose symbols must be translated, one by one, into the language of the dream-thoughts" by the analyst (221).²³ In this representational aspect, Freudian interpretation resembles the symbolism of revelatory oneirocriticism prevalent throughout the long nineteenth century. Freud's signifying dream simply issues from the ego instead of from a preternatural figure. Yet Freud also establishes his theories partially on the scientific literature already in publication (*Works* 1-95), positioning his text in the scientific tradition of imposing rational, dialectical order onto the imaginative power of the dream. Thus, although Freud underscores the importance of dreams, his concept of the "overdetermination" of symbols that ascribe meaning to dreams opposes and dampens the non-rational intensity of affect (*Interpretation* 221). Even though Freud downplays the affects of dreams (373), he notes that upon waking, the "affects in dreams" are, in a sense, more "real" than the dream-content, since they "cannot be disposed of in the contemptuous fashion in which we are wont to shake off the dream-content" (344).

²³ I do not discuss Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) in great detail because the literary dreams on which the thesis focuses predate its initial publication as well as the first English translation of it (1913).

Conclusion

These efforts to rationalize the dream only confirm its non-rational, affective force. The emphasis on restoring order to confusing dreams through interpretive analysis, whether in the form of dream books or later, Oedipal theory; by applying a symptomatic, etiological rationale to the emergence and intensity of dreams; and even by suppressing dreams altogether highlight the threat of disorder associated with the dream. In *Antiquary*, Scott exploits both the non-rational force of the dream and the interpretive issues surrounding it to heighten interest in the text. Instead of resolving the meaning of Lovel's playfully Gothic dream, Scott adds ambiguity to whether one should interpret it through revelatory oneirocriticism or dismiss it as an unremarkable flight of fancy.

Although the revelatory dream accurately predicts that Lovel will be rewarded for his perseverance, the gravity of the legend of Aldobrand is undermined by the fact that the ghost's greatest supernatural exploits range from disturbing the sleep of a house guest while strangely attired to revealing the location of an old legal document for which there does not seem to have been a great need (386, 91-93). Lovel seems convinced by Oldbuck's scientific explanation of the dream, and yet the text treats the antiquary's purported intellectual prowess with a decidedly playful tone (131, 41-46). The absence of an unassailable resolution suspends the reader's ability to perform representational analysis, rendering the narrative itself somewhat more dreamlike.

In the wake of this undecidability, what neither of these interpretations can account for is the affective impact of the dream on Lovel. While the young man transitions from the sleeping state to wakefulness, his final impressions of the dream are accompanied by and afterward, associated with the sounds of affecting music: "As the

vision [of Aldobrand] shut his volume, a strain of delightful music seemed to fill the apartment.” Upon fully awakening and realizing that the music is wafting into his chamber from outside his window, the “visionary character” of the melody “lost much of its charms” because “it was now nothing more than an air on the harpsichord, tolerably well performed—such is the caprice of imagination” (101). While he is dreaming, the music strikes him with greater affective intensity than it does after he has awakened.

It is noteworthy that even before Lovel is able to translate the mysterious phrase in the vision of Aldobrand, both the dream and the music that accompanies it exert a powerful affective impact:

While the verses were yet singing, Lovel had returned to his bed; the train of ideas which they awakened was romantic and pleasing, such as his soul delighted in, and ... he abandoned himself to the pleasing languor inspired by the music. (102)

Ultimately, despite Oldbuck’s persuasive scientific arguments, the positive affective response that this dream evokes may play a role in his eventual decision to remain in town and persevere in his endeavor (130). But to further explore the role of affect in the Gothic dream-fictions of the long nineteenth century, this thesis must refer to theories of affect.

Chapter Two

The Affective Force of the Dream:

The Auto-da-fé in *Melmoth the Wanderer*

“I am convinced that a real victim of an *auto da fe* (so called) never suffered more during his horrible procession to flames temporal and eternal, than I did during that dream,” declares Alonzo in Charles Robert Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820).²⁴ This is a remarkable statement, especially considering that when Alonzo has the dream, he is sleeping in one of the dungeon-like cells of the Spanish Inquisition and may be in danger of becoming a real auto-da-fé victim himself. In the nightmare, which comprises the space of one full page of text, Alonzo has been condemned to death as “an apostate monk and a *diabolical* heretic.” Through a sort of self-differentiation, he watches himself while he is marched into a grand amphitheatre. “Amid the ringing of bells, the preaching of the Jesuits, and the shouts of the multitude,” he is chained to a chair facing the crowd. But for a moment, as he looks on, the person in the chair becomes Juan, his brother, who at this point in the waking narrative is dead. Juan begs for mercy, clinging to him and shrieking, “Save me, save me.” But the ceremony continues, and through a passage of protracted suffering and extraordinary detail, the flames engulf Alonzo:

My eyes ... melted in their sockets;—I opened my mouth, it drank fire,—I closed it, the fire was within,—and still the bells rung on, and the crowd shouted, and the

²⁴ An “auto-da-fé” is “a religious ceremony demonstrating commitment to Catholicism held by the Spanish or Portuguese Inquisition prior to the punishment of prisoners, such as ... heretics.” But the term became associated with the punishment, coming to mean “the execution of a sentence of the Inquisition; esp. the public burning of a heretic” or simply “a public humiliation, condemnation, or punishment, esp. by a mob” (“Auto-da-fé, n.”).

king and queen, and all the nobility and priesthood, looked on, and we burned, and burned! (182)

Alonzo is awakened by the sound of his own screams, only to find before him Melmoth the Wanderer, a demonic figure who has been visiting his cell late at night. At this point in the novel, Melmoth's supernatural capacity for bypassing the guards and entering Alonzo's locked cell has already begun to attract the attention of the authorities. Having inexplicably entered the cell and now standing before the newly awakened Alonzo, Melmoth takes advantage of the terror that the auto-da-fé dream has inspired in the inmate, offering to free him in exchange for his soul (183, 409). Until this moment, Alonzo has withstood the trials of the Inquisition and the fearful presence of Melmoth with unwavering courage. In fact, when he recalls his imprisonment earlier in the narrative, he remarks on his initial fortitude: "Great emergencies certainly inspire us with the feelings they demand.... I believe so it fared with me,—the storm had risen, and I braced myself to meet it" (174-75). However, the intensity of the nightmare overcomes his capacity to endure further suffering. Upon awakening, he collapses at the feet of his tempter: "With an impulse I could not resist,—an impulse borrowed from the horrors of my dream, I flung myself at his feet, and called on him to 'save me'" (183).

The foremost effect of Alonzo's dream is this impulse. This contrasts sharply with the prolonged, analytical deliberation that follows Lovel's vision in Scott's *Antiquary*. Although Alonzo's nightmare resembles a premonitory dream insofar as it pertains to a potential future, it neither issues from a benevolent spirit nor conveys a clear message. Moreover, unlike the stereotypical literary dream, the vision of the auto-da-fé does not merely reflect the surrounding narrative, but rather seeps into it with startling affective

force. Despite the predominance of the representational approach in nineteenth-century oneirocriticism and twenty-first-century dream scholarship, the impact of this dream rests not in the interpretation of signs, but in its intensity. Informed by theories of affect, then, Alonzo's nightmare will serve as a point of departure for exploring the affective potential of nineteenth-century British dream-fictions, with a focus on those in the Gothic mode.

Dreaming Intensity

What many would trivialize as “only a dream” renders involuntary an action that Alonzo would normally consider unthinkable. On an impulse “borrowed from the horrors of [a] dream,” a man who has striven to adhere to his moral code in the face of coercion, oppression, and even torture suddenly implores an unfeeling, demonic figure to save him (183, 76, 105, 111). The irresistibility of this horror-induced impulse suggests that it precedes conscious awareness or decision-making, positioning it in the realm of affect. In “Feeling, Emotion, Affect” (2005), Eric Shouse describes affect as an experience of “intensity” that is “always prior to and/or outside of conscious awareness” (par. 15). Although the terms “affect,” “feelings,” and “emotion” are often used interchangeably, the non-conscious quality of affect differentiates it from feelings, which are “personal and biographical,” and from emotion, which is “the projection/display of a feeling” (pars. 3, 4). Whereas emotion can play a performative role in social interactions, the social encounters are themselves embedded in pre-personal, “non-conscious experience[s]” of affect, or “intensity” (par. 5).

Just as the sensation of horror precludes Alonzo from weighing the consequences before flinging himself at Melmoth's feet, the non-conscious immediacy of affect

precludes dialectical reasoning. Gilles Deleuze (1978) characterizes affect as a “mode of thought insofar as it is non-representational” (“Spinoza” 2). Following Platonic logic, representational interpretation displaces reality onto the referent or at least shifts it to another sign. Plato’s allegory of the cave illustrates the mediating effect of representation by positing a cave in which the inhabitants can only experience objects or sounds through their shadows or echoes (186-88). Or as Deleuze writes, “All signs are signs of signs” (*Plateaus* 112). In contrast, affective intensity does not pass through a process of signifying deferral. As Brian Massumi notes in *Parables for the Virtual* (2002), affect operates as “an unmediated experience” rather than as a decodable signifier (2). According to Massumi, even the mediation of matter-of-fact language diminishes affect. “Matter-of-factness dampens intensity,” he states, citing an empirical study that monitored children’s physiological responses to varying versions of a short film about a melting snowman. The most intense response coincided with the silent version of the film, likely because it did not disrupt their affective experience. Conversely, the children responded the least to the version in which a voice-over narrated the scenes as they occurred, ostensibly because the simple narration actually “interfered with the images’ effect” (86).

Dreams are uniquely capable of evoking this non-conscious intensity. The very experience of dreaming is contingent upon inhabiting the “unconscious state or condition” of sleep (“Sleep, n.”). This state suppresses dialectical analysis; the dreamer cannot perform an interpretive analysis of the dream while he is dreaming it. While asleep, the dreamer undergoes an experience of intensity that is not mediated by representational analysis. Besides the typical dream, though, experiences such as

daydreams, hypnagogic dreams, lucid dreams, hallucinations, hypnotic trances, and dreamlike waking realities are similarly predicated on privileging immediacy over representation.²⁵ Numerous types of dreams and dreamlike states suspend analytical reasoning to a greater or lesser degree, thereby impeding the dampening effect of mediation. Moreover, these dreams and dreamlike states share a perceived emphasis on the imagination, likely the chief faculty associated with dreaming in the long nineteenth century. For instance, to daydream is “to transport (oneself) imaginatively” (“Day-dream, v.”). And as the first chapter of this thesis details, the scientific texts of this period frame the dream in terms of the “sleeping senses” and the “deceptions of the imagination when reason drops the reigns” (Newnham 165; Scott 131). Nineteenth-century dream studies present these “deceptions” as synonymous with the dream’s sense of immediacy and along with it, the dreamer’s suspension of disbelief (Scott 131).

This suspension of disbelief plays a role in the intensity of dreams. While Alonzo is dreaming, he never questions his ability to view himself from afar; the sudden appearance of his brother, who is dead in the waking reality of the novel; the presence of actual, visible demons; or the coalescence of temporal and eternal flames that the presence of these demons suggests. Instead of attempting to rationalize these details, Alonzo is simply affected by their intensities. In this way, the dream foregrounds the primacy of affect. Along similar lines, the narrator of Scott’s *Antiquary* asserts that when a dreamer is feeling fearful, the affect will “summon up before [his] mind’s eye the object of [his] fear” (100), and Erasmus Darwin (1796) observes that “when you dream under the influence of fear, all the robbers, fires, and precipices . . . arise before you with terrible

²⁵ Although this thesis takes into consideration these dreamlike states, the term “dream” will usually refer to the typical dream, which for twenty-first-century scholars, accompanies sleep.

vivacity” (45). This is remarkably consistent with Sarah Ahmed’s recent findings in the field of affect. Ahmed (2004) maintains that “when there is no external object” to explain an affect such as pain, then “people tend to construct imaginary objects or weapons to take up [its] empty place.” An example of this phenomenon is the expression “I feel like I have been stabbed by a knife” (27).

In addition, affective intensity has a physiological component, as in the involuntary physical response to music (Gilbert par. 9). The irresistible impulse that overcomes Alonzo’s willpower is akin to this type of response (Maturin 183). According to Jeremy Gilbert (2004), the involuntary movement that accompanies music highlights the “force” of “non-significatory affective power” (par. 9). It is noteworthy that nineteenth-century dream studies posit the physical and affective aspects of dreams in similarly related terms, since as I discuss in the previous chapter, these texts relate the physical state of the dreamer to the intensity of the dream. One example of this is the identification of the nightmare on the basis of a sort of paralyzing fear that these scientific studies term “*incubus*” (Dendy 22; Macnish 73).²⁶ *Incubus* occurs when the negative affect evoked by a nightmare diminishes the capacity of the dreamer to move. The dream becomes a nightmare when “the individual feels as if his powers of volition were totally paralyzed” (Macnish 73).

Dreaming Potential

One could draw a connection between the paralytic *incubus* that reportedly accompanies the nightmare and the diminution in Alonzo’s capacities following his

²⁶ Originating in the preternatural figure believed to visit dreams, the incubus is defined alternately as “a feeling of oppression during sleep, as of some heavy weight on the chest and stomach; the nightmare” and as the “evil spirit or demon [that descends] upon persons in their sleep...” (“Incubus,” n.).

nightmare of the auto-da-fé. Deleuze references the capacity for action as he theorizes affect through an inflection of the philosophy of Baruch Spinoza:

Spinoza will engender all the passions, in their details, on the basis of these two fundamental affects: joy as an increase in the power of acting, sadness as a diminution or destruction of the power of acting. (“Spinoza” 8)

An affective “encounter,” which Spinoza terms an “*occursus*,” can act as either a positive force or a negative force. Whereas good encounters are empowering, a “bad encounter” diminishes and destroys, “[meaning] that the body which is mixed with mine destroys my constituent relation, or tends to destroy one of my subordinate relations” (6).

When Alonzo undergoes an *occursus* during his nightmare, it takes place through the transmission of affect. Affect transmission occurs when the intensity of one “real or virtual” body influences the intensity of another; “one intensity is folded into another” (Shouse par. 14). When Alonzo’s brother, Juan, becomes the prisoner awaiting punishment in the dream, the suffering of this virtual body has an affective impact on Alonzo. Moreover, when Juan pleads for mercy, the person whom he is addressing is Alonzo: “The next moment the figure was that of my brother Juan, who clung to me, shrieking, ‘Save me, save me.’” The affect transmission that occurs during this dreamt experience can only heighten Alonzo’s anguish.

During the nightmare, Alonzo also transmits affect to himself through a sort of self-differentiability. He not only undergoes the terrors of the auto-da-fé, but simultaneously witnesses himself undergoing them. His description of this nightmare reveals the intensity that this evokes. “This horrible tracing of yourself in a dream,” he says, “This haunting of yourself by your own spectre, while you still live, is perhaps a

course almost equal to your crimes visiting you in ... eternity" (182). In *Feeling in Theory* (2001), Rei Terada explores a sense of self-differentiation that influences emotion. In contrast to "affect," which she accepts to be "unconscious and pre-reflexive," she contends that "auto-affection" and "full-blown emotions" respond to "the representationality of mental representations as such" (18). According to this logic, Alonzo would feel emotion by representing that emotion to himself. But in the dream, auto-affection takes the form of literal self-differentiation. Alonzo experiences the dream as two distinct bodies, and while already suffering, he transmits additional negative intensity back to himself.

Unsurprisingly, the auto-da-fé dream becomes a negative *occursus* for Alonzo, reducing his capacity to remain optimistic (182). According to Deleuze, sadness drives the belief that "everything is wretched" because negative affect diminishes the capacity to engage in positive affective encounters ("Spinoza" 11). Pleading to be saved from the horrors of the Inquisition may be the only action of which Alonzo is capable when he awakens from the nightmare. In this respect, Deleuze emphasizes the Spinozan concept of ethics as capability. "[Spinoza] never asks us what we must do," writes Deleuze, "He always asks what we are capable of, what's in our power, ethics is a problem of power" (10).

One need not be at the mercy of every chance encounter, though. According to Deleuze, it is possible to move beyond this point by gaining an understanding of the causes of various affects. These "notions" are not "abstract ideas," but "literally rules of life" that allow one to gain possession of his own "power of acting" ("Spinoza" 13). Alonzo demonstrates this capacity when he first discovers that he has been imprisoned in

a cell of the Inquisition. He reassures himself that he has “nothing to fear from the Inquisition” by reasoning that his only crime—attempting to escape from the convent where he had been unjustly coerced into taking vows—does not technically fall under the jurisdiction of the Inquisition (175). This approach coincides with the philosophy of Spinoza, who according to Antonio Damasio (2003), encourages “overcoming a detrimental affect ... by overpowering it with a stronger positive affect, one triggered by reason” (11-12).

In *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari expand on this power, or “potential” of a “body.” They write,

We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it.... (257)

These varying capacities comprise the “power (*puissance*) of acting,” also termed the “range of potential” (“Spinoza” 3; “Notes” xvii). Other descriptors for potential are “the force of existing” (“Spinoza” 3), the “capacity for existence,” the “capacity to affect or be affected,” and the “capacity to multiply connections that may be realized by a given ‘body’” (“Notes” xvii). The *occursus* that takes place through Alonzo’s dream has a negative effect on his potential, although ultimately, he does not enter into an agreement with Melmoth (183). The immediate effect of the nightmare on his potential is actualized through the desperate, self-destructive act of turning to a cruel, demonic figure whose “preternatural glare” and inexplicable knowledge of “events and personages beyond his

possible memory” has already inspired “an indefinable mixture of curiosity and terror” in Alonzo (176-77).²⁷

This *occursus* not only diminishes Alonzo’s potential, but threatens to change his overall make-up as well. Deleuze and Guattari term the latter type of alteration a “change in *assemblage*” (*Plateaus* 438). The *assemblage*, which comprises “the unconscious in person,” can undergo a change upon the crossing of a certain threshold (36). For instance, an alcoholic might “change *assemblage*” at a certain threshold and become capable of resisting alcohol (438). For Alonzo, the change of *assemblage* that would result from accepting Melmoth’s offer would be dire. At the end of the novel, Melmoth reveals that the incommunicable condition that he has been offering to “wretches in their fearful hour of extremity” is “the promise of deliverance and immunity” from their current problems on the “condition of their exchanging situations with [him]” (409). Although Melmoth exerts preternatural abilities and has an extended life span, his compact with “the enemy of souls” has resulted in his “[separation] from life and humanity by a gulph impassable” (408, 245). In fact, Melmoth’s status as a “disinherited child of nature” diminishes his capacity for affect transmission. When one character attempts to form an emotional connection with him, she “endeavors [in vain] to read a human feeling in those eyes of stone” (245). Exchanging situations with Melmoth would entail an almost complete diminishment of potential, a perilous threshold that Alonzo would not have approached were it not for the affective force of his nightmare.

²⁷ A similar scene, but in relation to a positive, joyful affect and an increase in capacity, appears in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* (1866): “How it happened [Raskolnikov] did not know. All at once something seemed to seize him and fling him at her feet. He wept and threw his arms around her knees” (520).

Schizophrenizing the Dream

“The crowd shouted, and the king and queen, and all the nobility and priesthood, looked on, and we burned, and burned!” says Alonzo of the end of his nightmare.

Although he is the one who has been condemned to die, the multitude of spectators seems to burn along with him (182). This passage recalls Deleuze and Guattari’s characterization of the unconscious as “fundamentally a crowd.” They argue that the self is “polyvocal” rather than stable, unchanging, and single-minded (*Plateaus* 29).

Polyvocality, in the form of intensifying “multiplicities of multiplicities,” creates a “single assemblage” (34). In *Anti-Oedipus* (2009), Deleuze and Guattari describe these multiplicities as a form of *schizophrenization*. Favoring this *schizophrenized, polyvocal* unconscious, they argue against the representational analysis that is typified by the fixed oedipal signifiers of Freudian dream interpretation. They posit, “Wouldn’t it be better to schizophrenize ... the domain of the unconscious, so as to shatter the iron collar of Oedipus...?” (53).

In many ways the dream, as conceptualized by nineteenth-century texts, lends itself to this sort of *schizophrenization*. Although supernatural literary dreams tend to be revelatory, either requiring symbolic interpretation or imposing the dialectical mediation of an utterance, they can also establish the dreaming state as a *polyvocal* realm of the unconscious.²⁸ As I mention in the previous chapter, ghosts, deities, fairies, demons, and other entities can influence and even enter into such dreams.²⁹ These visitations can

²⁸ In terms of considering the dream an unconscious realm, Henri Ellenberger’s *The Discovery of the Unconscious* (1970) and Lancelot Whyte’s *The Unconscious Before Freud* (1960) affirm that the dream was considered a realm of the unconscious even before the publication of Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899).

²⁹ Many dreamers of the long nineteenth century considered it possible to have supernatural dreams, as I discuss in the first chapter, and this certainly plays a role in the literature of the time. In *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), the late eighteenth-century text by Horace Walpole, supernatural figures visit

expand on multiplicities, vary intensities, and induce *occursus*. When Alonzo recounts his nightmare, he suggests that Melmoth or a supernatural figure like him might have been responsible for it: “The genii, or the demons of the place seemed busy in the dreams that haunted me” (182).

Pre-Freudian dream studies of the long nineteenth century characterize the dream in terms that evoke the concept of *schizophrenization*. According to these texts, the dream is a state of disorder and disordering in which imagination overpowers dialectical thought, as I mention in the first chapter. This coincides with the idea of *schizophrenization*, as Deleuze and Guattari write that the “multiplicity ... was created precisely in order ... to escape dialectics” (*Plateaus* 32). Dream studies of the long nineteenth century also associate the dream with insanity, calling to mind the very term *schizophrenization*. Macnish writes, “A dream may be considered as a ... delirium” (45). Some causes of the “delirium” of dreaming emphasize the influence of the imagination; “an excited imagination” and the “deceptions of imagination when reason drops the reigns” are two of them (Macnish 45; Perkins 105; Scott 130). Similarly, Alonzo remarks on the associations of thought made by the imagination while one is dreaming: “Our thoughts in dreams wander” (182).

“One of the essential characteristics of the dream of multiplicity is that each element ceaselessly varies and alters its distance in relation to the others,” write Deleuze and Guattari (*Plateaus* 30). Along these lines, nineteenth-century dream studies emphasize the non-linear, adialectical, and otherwise varied aspects of dreams. Some of

dreams to convey direct, even detailed messages; of the two dreams in Clara Reeve’s *The Old English Baron* (1777), one is symbolic, and one more straightforward; Ann Radcliffe’s *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) and *The Italian* (1797) as well as Walter Scott’s *The Antiquary* (1816) imply supernatural influences while leaving ambiguity; and Matthew Lewis’s *The Monk* (1796) features a couple of dreams induced by a demon as a means of manipulation.

these include the “illusion of dreams,” the “apparent expansion of time” (Macnish 60), how “time and space are annihilated,” how “two severed lovers may be made happy,” how “we behold the absent” and how “we converse with the dead” in dreams (Lang 3). Moreover, the flights of fancy of the dreamer have the potential to construct multiple associations of ideas, which are typified by their “Wildness and Inconsistency” and their “deviation” from “correct” thinking (Hartley 385; Newnham 163).

Through these dreamt deviations from linear, dialectical reason, Alonzo’s auto-da-fé dream seems to evoke somewhat *rhizomatic* associations: Alonzo is the terrified prisoner, the crowd, and his brother’s executioner; and he is not himself, but he is himself, and his brother is him, and the fire becomes him and the crowd (182).³⁰ Deleuze and Guattari describe the *rhizome* as a root-like system of multiplicities, in contrast to an *arborescent* system, which operates by the binary logic of dialectics and representations (*Plateaus* 8). During dreams, flights of fancy can become Deleuzian *lines of flight*, transporting the dreamer out of the rigidly imposed, hierarchical, *arborescent* context of totalizing dialectical principles and into dynamic, constantly changing, interconnecting associations.

Conclusion

The dream is a contested space in terms of representation and affect. Although dreams seem invariably to call for interpretation, the unique capacity of the dream for affective intensity warrants exploration. Symbolic interpretation not only overlooks, but further, obscures affect. If matter-of-fact analysis dampens intensity, and dialectical

³⁰ The rhizome “brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states,” as it is “an acentered, nonhierarchical, nonsignifying system” (*Plateaus* 21).

interpretation diminishes the sense of immediacy implicit in the dreaming state, then these representational approaches must fail to contend with the dream on its own terms. Such hermeneutics overlook the primacy of affect in the experience of dreaming and *reterritorialize* the dream by reducing it to the role of the fixed signifier. Although representational interpretation can be useful, this chapter affirms the advantages of taking into consideration the affective intensity that the dreamer undergoes. As Alonzo's dream of the auto-da-fé reveals, taking into consideration affective experience can create new *lines of flight* through the text. Moreover, the pre-Freudian, nineteenth-century scientific conceptualization of the dream as the realm of a disordered and disordering imagination, combined with the potential for multiplicity in the form of visiting ghosts, angels, and demons in the preternatural literary dream, suggests that one can approach nineteenth-century Gothic dream-fictions in terms of the *schizophrenized* unconscious. This chapter will inform the rest of the thesis, as I further explore the changing role of affective force in the development of Gothic dreams throughout British literature of the long nineteenth century.

Chapter Three

The Beneficent Supernatural

In Early Gothic Dreams

Dreaming the Supernatural

“Idle fancies shall be shaped like a sick man’s dream, so that neither foot nor head can be assigned a single shape,” reads the opening epigraph of the High Gothic text *The Castle of Otranto* by Horace Walpole (1764).³¹ The use of this reference to Horace’s *Ars Poetica* is intriguing, as Walpole’s supernatural tale would likely strike Enlightenment readers as a work of “idle fancies” (63). One might expect Walpole’s audience to deliver an indictment similar to the quoted lines of the epigraph. In the preface to the first edition, Walpole anticipates this response by including a false publication history that conceals his authorship. Presenting *Otranto* as an artifact by an unknown writer, Walpole contends that it “can only be laid before the public at present as a matter of entertainment.”³² He adds diffidently that “even as such, some apology for it is necessary” in light of its fanciful use of “miracles, visions, necromancy, dreams, and other preternatural events.” Yet in spite of Walpole’s reticence, his mere “matter of entertainment” would prove immensely popular, the success of which would prompt him to openly accept authorial credit for the novel (60). Accordingly, in the preface to the

³¹ This quote from Horace’s *Ars Poetica* appears in the second edition of *Otranto*, which was published in 1765. The publication dates for both the first and second editions precede 1789, the year commonly recognized as the beginning of the long nineteenth century, but *Otranto* is relevant to this thesis, as it is considered the first Gothic novel and has a major impact on the connotations surrounding dreams in the nineteenth-century Gothic mode (11-13).

³² Walpole’s preface to the first edition is akin to the fake histories ascribed to nineteenth-century dream books as well as the publishers’ introductory disclaimer in *The True Fortune Teller* (1850).

second edition, he supplants apologies for apologetics, designates his work the first “Gothic story,” and reveals that its plot originated in a dream (65-70, 63, 261).

Walpole’s claim that the idea for *Otranto* was drawn from a dream factors into a disparaging letter written by George Williams, one of Walpole’s acquaintances, in 1765. The similarity between the remarks of this late eighteenth-century reader and the lines from *Ars Poetica* is striking. For instance, Williams views *Otranto* as the product of Walpole’s misused leisure time, recalling Horace’s condemnation of “idle fancies” (63). Williams’s letter posits, “How do you think [Walpole] has employed that leisure...?” The answer immediately follows:

In writing a novel, entitled *The Castle of Otranto*, and such a novel.... It consists of ghosts and enchantments; pictures walk out of their frames, and are good company for half an hour together; helmets drop from the moon; and cover half a family. He says it was a dream, and I fancy one when he had some feverish disposition in him. (260)

Just as Horace likens fanciful works to “a sick man’s dream” (63), Williams associates the fantastic work of Walpole’s leisure time with the content of an absurd dream. Specifically, he seems to consider the supernatural “ghosts and enchantments” particularly dreamlike (260).

Horace and Williams are not alone in conceptualizing unrealistic elements in terms of dreamed experience; even Walpole’s characters reference dreams in their responses to supernatural occurrences and unbelievable coincidences. For example, when Manfred’s dead grandfather, Ricardo, steps out of his portrait, Manfred cries out, “Do I dream?” (81). Later, when Princess Matilda notices the similarity between Theodore and

Alfonso, she exclaims, “Do I dream?” (108). In contrast to such events, the actual dreams of Walpole’s characters seem somewhat prosaic. Even though the revelatory dreams of Frederic and Ricardo provide information that is crucial to the plot, the reader only receives second-hand reports of them (132, 164). In a remarkable reversal, the waking reality of Walpole’s “Gothic story” is more dreamlike than its dreams (63).³³ Williams associates this fanciful, dreamlike reality with the aberration of sickness. But for Williams, what Horace refers to as a “sick man’s dream” is, more specifically, a fever dream (63, 260). As the first chapter of this thesis mentions, during the long nineteenth century the fever dream would evoke an association with the overpowering of the rational mind by the imagination. The content that ensues from such a dream is so absurd that, in Horace’s words, “neither foot nor head can be assigned a single shape” (63).

To this assertion, Walpole’s text enacts a playful counterargument (63). As *Otranto* progresses, several gigantic extensions of Alfonso—a helmet, a sword, a foot, and a hand—make dramatic appearances throughout the narrative. Although the giant sword is carried to the castle by one hundred men (133), the helmet, the foot, and the hand miraculously appear throughout the castle land (80, 152, 92-93). Ultimately, the disembodied apparatuses are connected to the “single shape” of the oversized ghost of Alfonso, the last rightful ruler of Otranto (63, 162). Alfonso reveals his true heir with so much dramatic, supernatural intensity that everyone submits to his decree. His word is even accepted by Manfred, who has spent the majority of the text committing egregious acts to protect his unlawful reign over Otranto (162). The changing physical *assemblage* of Alfonso thereby causes a major change not only in the *assemblage* of Otranto’s

³³ Walpole designates the text as a “Gothic story” in the second edition (63). *Otranto* is considered the model for subsequent Gothic stories (11-13).

monarchy, but also in the *assemblage* of the narrative itself. The outcome of the novel is not the effect of rational influences, but rather of supernatural intensity or, on the meta-textual level, of Walpole's decision to indulge the imagination in his Gothic story. Since nineteenth-century etiological studies tend to attribute dreams either to preternatural forces or to the imagination, this resolution reaffirms the dreamlike quality of *Otranto*. In the context of the epigraph's condemnation of dreamlike fancies, the powerful manifestation of Alfonso at the end of the novel suggests that even a fanciful, dreamlike tale can possess the potential to effect dramatic change.

Such dreamlike elements are not the result of literary oversight, as Horace or Williams might assume, but of Walpole's deliberate choice to indulge the imagination. In his preface to the second edition, Walpole explains that in writing *Otranto*, he had been "desirous of leaving the powers of fancy at liberty to expatiate through the boundless realms of invention" (65). In 1767, he expounds,

I did not write the book for the present age, which seeks only *cold reason*... I let my imagination run free; visions and passions spurred me on. I did it in spite of the rules, the critics, and the philosophers.

In *Otranto*, the imagination is not limited by "cold," dialectical reason. Walpole associates this imaginative freedom with image-dominated "visions" and the affective intensity of "passions" (262). He contends that this focus generates "more interesting situations," which reveal the ways in which his characters "think, speak, and act, as it might be supposed mere men and women would do in extraordinary positions" (65). In short, Walpole creates dreamlike spaces as a literary technique to test the affective potential of his characters.

This question of potential centers on Manfred, who at the beginning of the novel, is the ruler of Otranto. The narrator emphasizes that Manfred's temper is "naturally humane," although "the circumstances of his fortune had given an asperity to his temper." Likewise, Manfred's virtue is "always ready to operate," but only "when his passion did not obscure his reason" (87). Unfortunately, the incredible and supernatural circumstances endemic to this dreamlike environment continually augment Manfred's passions, driving him to extremes and diminishing his capacity to interact positively with those around him.

First, the novel opens with the tragic death of Manfred's son, Conrad, on the young man's wedding day (74). Manfred had been anxious for Conrad to marry Princess Isabella because he believes that their marriage might preserve his line as well as his illegitimate reign (164). As Manfred's sovereignty is the product of crimes committed by his grandfather, Ricardo, the "circumstances of his fortune" are very unstable (87). Ricardo's crimes include murdering Alfonso and falsifying documents to become the subsequent ruler of Otranto. As the reader later learns, Saint Nicholas appears to Ricardo in a preternatural, revelatory dream after the murderer's guilt compels him to found a church and two convents. In the dream, the saint accepts Ricardo's good deeds as penance, promising that his posterity will reign in Otranto, but only "until the rightful owner should be grown too large to inhabit the castle" and "as long as issue-male from Ricardo's loins should remain to enjoy it" (164).

Manfred's hope of overcoming this prophecy is dashed when an enormous helmet inexplicably falls from the sky and crushes Conrad, his only male heir (74). Manfred is naturally humane, but after this negative *occursus*, he endeavors alternately to rape his

late son's fiancée, Isabella, and to coerce her into marrying him, even though he is already married (81). Both the falling helmet responsible for Conrad's death and the prophetic dream that incenses Manfred to recklessness are dreamlike, supernatural forces (74, 164). Manfred's reactions to these provocations are extreme because his position of power permits him to commit egregious acts with virtual impunity. Besides harassing Isabella, his exploits include kidnapping her; breaking a public, oral contract with a monk; sentencing a man to death on the basis of a mere suspicion; and imprisoning whomever he chooses in his castle (115, 114, 108, 77).³⁴ In combination with the extraordinary forces of the supernatural, the power dynamics of Walpole's paradigmatic "Gothic story" intensify the issue of Manfred's potential (63). While the narrative posits what Manfred can be driven to do, the plot is driven forward by the answer.

Ironically, the supernatural forces that incite Manfred's violent passions through negative affective encounters are the only forces capable of rescuing his victims. The characters with the least capacity for self-defense receive vital aid from dreamlike, supernatural forces, some of which consist of actual dreams. For instance, when the ghost of Ricardo steps out of his portrait, he hinders Manfred's crazed pursuit of Isabella (81). Later, this princess receives further support when a revelatory dream informs her father, Frederic, of her perilous position and what he must do to save her (132-33). Yet another preternatural force comes to her rescue when Frederic is tempted to give her hand in marriage to Manfred; while Frederic is deliberating, the spectre of a holy hermit appears

³⁴ This motif of the captive in the castle becomes a standard Gothic device in nineteenth-century literature, highlighting extreme power disparities between Gothic antagonists and their victims. In varying iterations, this motif appears in Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) and *The Castle Spectre* (1797), Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) and *The Italian* (1797), William Godwin's *The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794), Charles Maturin's *Fatal Revenge* (1807), Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Zastrozzi* (1810), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), among other texts.

to him and urges him against consenting to such a marriage. This dreamlike *occursus* compels Frederic to completely reverse his stance on the topic (157).

In addition, the only form of punishment that Manfred receives also issues from the preternatural domain. It is through supernatural intervention that he loses his position of power and the lives of his children. This grave punishment is the result of an agreement that Saint Nicholas has made with Manfred's grandfather, Ricardo, during a revelatory dream. In a circular relationship of forces and counter-forces, the prophecy conveyed in this very dream eventually drives Manfred to the extremes for which he is punished—by the same supernatural forces that are at work in the dream (164). Even as the dreamlike forces of the narrative evoke the intensity of the powerful antagonist, they function as a counter-force to his actions. In either case, the dreamlike elements of the Gothic model create a situation that highlights the question of affective potential. Yet the intensity of Walpole's Gothic paradigm hinges upon the resemblance of the text to the world of the dream, and ironically, his waking narrative is too dreamlike to produce the sense of immediacy characteristic of actual dreams (63).

Awakening the Supernatural

We can conceive and allow of the appearance of a ghost; we can even dispense with an enchanted sword and helmet; but then they must keep within certain limits of credibility: A sword so large as to require an hundred men to lift it; a helmet that by its own weight forces a passage...; a picture that walks out of its frame; a skeleton ghost in a hermit's cowl—When your expectation is wound up

to the highest pitch, these circumstances ... destroy the work of imagination, and, instead of attention, excite laughter. (2)

Clara Reeve makes this criticism of *Otranto* in the preface to her own Gothic novel, *The Old English Baron* (1777).³⁵ Although she expresses great admiration for Walpole's text and presents her own as "a work upon the same plan," she considers the "degree of the marvelous" in *Otranto* to be excessive (2). She does not, like Walpole, desire to "let [the] imagination run free" (Walpole 262). Reeve's objective is to write a Gothic story in which these dreamlike elements are restricted to "the utmost verge of probability" (2).

Considering Reeve's desire to limit "the degree of the marvelous" (2), it may strike one as surprising that the revelatory dreams in *Old English Baron* are more intense than those in *Otranto*. The waking reality of Reeve's text is less dreamlike and less intense, but she relays the characters' dreamed experiences with a much greater sense of immediacy than does her model (7, 23). For instance, in *Otranto*, Frederic reports the message of his dream but does not describe the dream itself, and the account of Ricardo's dream only reaches the reader second-hand (Walpole 132, 164). Conversely, in *Old English Baron*, the reader actually witnesses Sir Philip Harclay's dream as it occurs and receives a full description of Edmund Twyford's dream, which the young man "perfectly remembered" (7, 23-24).

Both of Reeve's literary dreams employ rapid location changes and nonlinear timelines, calling to mind the multiplicity in which "each element ceaselessly varies and alters its distance in relation to the others" (*Plateaus* 30). For instance, the dreams that "[arise] to [Sir Philip's] imagination" are "strange and incoherent." They transport Sir

³⁵ In 1777, the text was published anonymously under the title *The Champion of Virtue*. Reeve accepted authorial credit for it in 1778, when it was republished under the more marketable title *The Old English Baron*.

Philip to the gate of the Lovel castle, where his deceased friend, Lord Arthur Lovel, reaches to embrace him. Then, Sir Philip moves rapidly “through many rooms”; into a “dark and frightful cave” in which he discovers a bloodied suit of armor; “into a wild heath” where combatants are preparing for battle; and finally, into “an unfrequented room” of his own house, in which he again finds Lord Arthur, who now appears “in all the bloom of youth, as when [Sir Philip] first knew him” (7).

These images are interspersed with enigmatic messages from Lord Arthur, such as the declaration that “the hopes of [his] house rest upon [Sir Philip]” and the command to “wait with patience on the decrees of heaven.” But as the meaning of these messages is unclear at this point in the novel, the text suspends the ability of the character as well as the reader to employ dialectical interpretation. Just as Lord Arthur tells Sir Philip in the dream, “It is not permitted to be revealed till the time is ripe for the event” (7). Eventually, it becomes apparent that the bloodied suit of armor signifies the wrongful death of Lord Arthur, that the image of the lord as a young man likely reflects the existence of his son, and that Sir Philip must restore the estate to its rightful heir through a plan that involves him becoming a combatant in a heath (59). But neither Sir Philip nor the reader can correctly interpret all of these clues and symbols, especially since the rightful heir has not even entered into the narrative at this point. The dream must have a primarily affective impact, while initiating the emergence of the supernatural in the text. As this initial instance of the supernatural originates in a dream, the text seems to emulate the pattern whereby Walpole introduced elements from his own dream into the waking narrative.

Conversely, the messages of Edmund Twyford's dream are much more straightforward. His dream reveals to him and to the reader that he is not really the son of a peasant, but the heir of the late Lord Arthur. Yet this dream resembles the dream of Sir Philip insofar as it employs vignettes of multiple times and places. By disrupting temporal linearity in this way, the dream resists the dialectical logic that organizes common perceptions of time. Edmund's dream begins in the haunted bedroom in which he is sleeping; then shifts to a funeral procession, which could correspond with one of the funerals that have occurred in the past or the memorial that takes place later in the narrative; and finally, ends with a celebration that will occur in the future. The location of the sleeper is crucial, as every scene of Edmund's dream is directly related to his relationship with the Lovels, in whose purportedly haunted apartment he is sleeping (23-24). Just as Edmund only dreams of Lord Arthur while he is sleeping in the lord's bedroom, Sir Philip only dreams of the lord while sleeping on his former estate.³⁶ As in my earlier discussion of the haunted chamber in Scott's *Antiquary*, this circumstance would heighten the suspicion of some nineteenth-century readers that supernatural forces are at work, but it might instill skepticism in others.

Reeve supplies the reader with reasons to treat Sir Philip's dream skeptically by prefacing it with a remarkably minute account of the man's evening. The narrator describes Sir Philip's dinner and bed, which is the best in the cottage but "inferior to his usual accommodations." Sir Philip sleeps "as well" in the peasants' home as he would in a palace, but the text does not specify how well he would sleep in a palace. His "strange

³⁶ Sir Philip arrives at Lord Arthur's palace in the hope of visiting him, only to discover that his friend is now deceased. As a peasant informs him, Lord Arthur's heir, Sir Walter Lovel, has sold the palace to the baron Lord Fitz-Owen (4-5). Sir Philip is not acquainted with the baron, but he remains on the palace land, since it is late in the evening, and spends the night in the cottage of the peasant with whom he has been conversing (6-7).

and incoherent dreams” could be an effect of a ghostly visitation, but they could also be the consequence of indigestion from the meal that the peasant served him. Indigestion would affect his sleep at any location. Sir Philip chooses to rationalize the dream as the result of his waking thoughts about Lord Arthur:

The images that impressed his sleeping fancy remained strongly on his mind waking; but his reason strove to disperse them; it was natural that the story he had heard should create these ideas, that they should wait on him in his sleep, and that every dream should bear some relation to his deceased friend.

The text associates the images of the dream with Sir Philip’s “sleeping fancy,” as the dreams “[arise] to his imagination.” Reason, on the other hand, threatens to efface the intensity of his dream by dispersing these images (7). This suggests that the intensity of the dreams could function as a sort of compensation for the diminished “degree of the [dreamlike] marvelous” in the waking reality of Reeve’s text (2).

By employing location as the prompt for these dreams to occur, Reeve creates a reason for considering the dreams with skepticism. Unlike Walpole’s characters, Sir Philip and Edmund are reticent to attribute their dreams to preternatural origins. These characters assume that their own thoughts about the previous inhabitants of their locations have influenced their dreams. Nevertheless, these dreams function as a preternatural counter-force against the evil schemes of the corrupt.³⁷ Sir Philip’s dream

³⁷ Like Walpole, Reeve underscores the struggle between the powerful and the disempowered. Her protagonist, Edmund, is a virtuous young man believed to be the son of a peasant. Through his noble merits, he wins the favor of the baron, who decides to raise him alongside his own sons (8). Over time, though, Edmund’s noble qualities “create envy and raise him enemies” (12). Motivated by jealousy, the baron’s oldest son, Sir Robert Fitz-Owen, and Sir Robert’s cousins, Mr. Richard Wenlock and Mr. John Markham, concoct cruel plots to vilify Edmund (12, 14-15, 19-20). In his endeavor to defend his honor, Edmund receives assistance from the realm of the supernatural. The revelatory dreams, in combination with other marvelous elements, expose the young man’s secret history. Like Theodore of *Otranto*, Reeve’s

provides insight into the manner in which he will assist Edmund, much like Frederic's dream, which reveals how he can save his daughter (Reeve 53; Walpole 132-33). And Edmund's dream, like that of Walpole's Ricardo, foretells that the rightful heir will gain control of the castle (Reeve 23; Walpole 164). Reeve's literary dreams, much like her waking narrative, initially seem unremarkable to the characters, yet reveal the influence of otherworldly forces as time passes.

Supernatural Affect

Emulating Reeve's diminished "degree of the marvelous" (2), Ann Radcliffe omits ghosts and enchantments from the waking reality of *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) and *The Italian* (1797). This greater semblance of reality enables the reader to suspend disbelief with greater ease. Because the reader is less likely to question the waking reality of Radcliffe's novels, the text assumes a heightened degree of immediacy; this diminishes the mediation of analytical doubt. As in Reeve's *Old English Baron*, there is a strong association between the dream and the surroundings of the dreamer in *Romance* and *Italian*. But Radcliffe intensifies this association, creating a plausible reason for believing that the characters' thoughts about their surroundings are responsible for their dreams. Although Radcliffe's literary dreams lack the indisputably supernatural air of the dreams in *Otranto*, they do evoke an air of the supernatural.

In *Romance*, Adeline has a premonitory dream concerning whether she should continue to reside in the house in which she is sleeping. Her sleep offers "no repose" but instead a "sort of waking dream"; nineteenth-century thought regarded dreams as

protagonist discovers that this secret history entitles him to inherit the very castle in which he has received cruel treatment (Walpole 164; Reeve 92).

incongruous with restful sleep, as I establish in the first chapter of this thesis. The actual setting of Adeline's dream is vague, and only some of it conveys a clear meaning. But as she describes the dream, which involves the man whom she believes to be her father and the house in which he has abandoned her, affective intensity is paramount. "I thought that I was in a lonely forest with my father," she says, "His looks were severe, and his gestures menacing." She thinks that she is in a forest with her father, but she is not certain. However, she does know that this nebulous forest scene is "lonely," that the expression of the man is "severe," and that his gestures are "menacing."

When he holds a mirror before her face, she views the image as if it were a different person, suggesting a sense of uncertainty about the unified self: "I looked in it and saw, (my blood now thrills as I repeat it) I saw myself wounded, and bleeding profusely." Then, she dreams that she is again inside the house, at which point a disembodied voice commands, "Depart this house, destruction hovers here" (51).³⁸ One might interpret this dream in terms of divine revelation, ghostly visitation, or psychological intuition; but regardless of which interpretation one might choose, the fact remains that Adeline's physical location galvanizes the dream. Later on in the novel, Adeline dreams of the murder of her true father, but not until she is sleeping in the castle where he was killed (130-32). This series of dreams "strongly [impresses] her fancy," although "why they should be supernatural, she could not tell" (130, 132).

³⁸ This dream is much like the premonitory dream in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847). Jane leaves Thronfield Hall after a dream cautions her to flee from the temptation there. Had she remained, she would have died in her bed, as Bertha Rochester later sets fire to the house during the night. Like *Romance*, *Jane Eyre* also involves a powerful, married man who is corrupted by his passion for a young woman, a female who is held captive in a large house, and a secret history that ultimately enriches the female protagonist.

Similarly, in Radcliffe's *Italian*, Vivaldi exhibits heightened awareness of his environment during a dream. While he is a prisoner of the Spanish Inquisition and finds himself falling asleep in his cell, his dream commences as if it were simply the product of his waking thoughts. "[Vivaldi] laid his head on his pillow of straw, and soon sunk into a slumber," the text reads: "The subject of his waking thoughts still haunted his imagination, and the stranger... appeared before him" (318). Although the strange monk has been "the subject of his waking thoughts," this fact does not seem to be the only reason for the dream. After dreaming that the strange monk is standing in his cell with a bloody poniard, Vivaldi awakens to this reality (318-23). Yet this poniard is actually the evidence of a crime that another character, Father Schedoni, has committed; since Vivaldi is not in danger, his dream is not strictly monitory.

Ellena, the young woman with whom Vivaldi is enamored, displays similar sensitivity to her surroundings while asleep. Ellena's affective response to a change in her physical environment even leads to her rescue. Late one night, Father Schedoni furtively enters her room with the intention of stabbing the sleeping girl in order to gain leverage with Marchesa di Vivaldi.³⁹ But as Schedoni approaches Ellena, who is lying "in deep and peaceful slumber," he sees her smile fade and becomes distracted. Although one might reason that the light causes this reaction, the text suggests that the presence of the evil monk alters the affective experience of her dream:

As [Schedoni's] light passed over her face, he perceived that the smile had vanished—the visions of her sleep were changed, for tears stole from beneath her eye-lids, and her features suffered a slight convulsion. (234)

³⁹ The narcissistic Marchesa is desperate to prevent her son from marrying Ellena, who is poor and whose ancestry is believed to be ignoble (233). Following the power dynamic established in *Otranto*, the text centers on what the passions of this powerful woman and her priest can drive them to do.

Neither the reader nor Schedoni has access to the contents of Ellena's dream, but the affect that it evokes is apparent.⁴⁰ The transmission of this affect prevents Schedoni from murdering her.⁴¹ Because he hesitates, he notices and recognizes the miniature that she is wearing around her neck. It contains a portrait of him as a much younger man, causing him to mistakenly conclude that she is his long-lost daughter. Laboring under this impression, Schedoni devotes the remainder of the novel to protecting Ellena instead of partaking in the Marchesa's scheme (235).

A similar scene appears in *Romance* when Monsieur La Motte attempts to murder Adeline. The Marquis blackmails La Motte, ordering him to stab the young woman with a poniard "in her sleep... at midnight" (267-68). But as Le Motte approaches, Adeline begins to sing in her sleep. Although neither Le Motte nor the reader knows the content of her dream, the "low and mournful accent in which she now uttered [the notes] expressed too well the tones of her mind." It is remarkable how much affective information La Motte apparently gleans from this sleeping girl. Not only does her face appear "lovely"; it also conveys innocence and grief. While he watches her, the light from his lamp shines over her face, and she awakens, screaming. She, in turn, surmises that she is in danger simply from the "wildness of his looks" and his "gloomy silence." But ultimately, La Motte, like Schedoni, decides to assist the female protagonist after a failed attempt at murdering her in her sleep (272).

⁴⁰ Similarly, in *Romance*, Madame La Motte learns of her husband's evil designs because he talks about them in his sleep (248-49). In Charles Robert Maturin's *Fatal Revenge, or The Family of Montorio* (1807), Montorio's wife also looks on as Montorio sleep-walks and sleep-talks through his dream. The reader does not witness the dream from his perspective, but his reaction to the horrific nightmare reveals intense affect (352-60).

⁴¹ This seems like a variation on a monitory dream like the one in William Godwin's *The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794). It alerts the title character of present danger and frightens him into awakening (268). In the novel, Mr. Tyrrel initially plays the role of the Manfred-like despot, but the question of potential centers on Mr. Falkland, who is driven to extremes by the desire to prevent Mr. Tyrrel from committing further atrocities (138).

With a dearth of supernatural sources of assistance, the most preternatural resource for Radcliffe's protagonists is affect. The main characters of *Romance* and *Italian* demonstrate a pseudo-magical proficiency for affectability and affect transmission. In *Italian*, Vivaldi becomes instantly enamored with Ellena on the basis of the sound of her voice and a glimpse of her face, both of which provide reliable information about her character and disposition (7). Similarly, Ellena senses a deep connection with a woman as a result of her voice and countenance, only to discover later that this woman is her mother (87-89, 378).

In *Romance*, a "countenance" can reveal "villainy" or can, "with instantaneous magic, [beam] peace" upon the viewer (206, 52). This novel emphasizes the adialectical aspect of affect by emphasizing the inability of language to convey intense affects. Adeline remarks at one point, "Words are but feeble testimonies" (16). In various ways, the text repeatedly references the inexpressibility of affect (98, 101, 208, 253, 275, 306, 313, 350, 359). The absence of affect can be tantamount to "profanity" in certain situations (324), and yet the inability to control one's passions leads to "madness" and villainy (259, 374).

Radcliffe substitutes affective intensity for supernatural power within the context of the Gothic power dynamic that Walpole's *Otranto* has established. Like Manfred in *Otranto*, the Marquis of *Romance* attempts alternately to seduce, rape, and murder the weak female protagonist (*Romance* 146, 172, 267). Both Adeline of *Romance* and Ellena of *Italian* recall Theodore in *Otranto*, as they discover information about their parentage that raises their socioeconomic positions and prospects (*Romance* 418; *Italian* 412). But unlike Theodore, Radcliffe's protagonists gain support through their potential for

affecting and being affected. This affective potential combats the corrupting passions of the powerful. While these protagonists are asleep, the dream intensifies their potential for affective sensitivity, even though the sleeping state also seems to render them especially susceptible to danger. For Radcliffe, this danger lies in the dreamer's physical surroundings and does not encroach on the interior world of the dream. But this is not the case in many of the later Gothic dream-fictions.

Chapter Four

Dreaming Up Monsters:

The Later Gothic Nightmare

Demonic Dreams

The dreamers of Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) seem to labor under the misguided notion that they are the characters of a very different novel. They expect their dreams to confer either a revelation from a beneficent source or, at the very least, a benign concoction of idle fancies. But *Monk* marks a drastic departure from the literary dreams of its Gothic predecessors. A dream *occursus* initiates the transformation of Ambrosio, a monk widely admired for his purity, into a monstrous sexual predator. He has this fateful dream on the night after a beautiful woman named Matilda, who has disguised herself as a fellow monk to gain access to the abbey, professes her love for him (50-51). This dream has a decisive influence on his imminent corruption because through the course of it, he "[riots] in joys" that "till then" had been completely "unknown to him." This revelatory dream is not divine, but astonishingly worldly for the monk. The principal characteristic of it is Ambrosio's affective response; the dream leaves him "heated and unrefreshed." During the dream, his "inflamed imagination" overcomes his capacity for reason or self-control, presenting to him "none but the most voluptuous objects." The space of the dream is ideal for affecting the imagination, since nineteenth-century dream studies associate the imagination with the dreaming state, as I establish in the first chapter. Although the dream may stem from an outside influence, Ambrosio's "inflamed imagination" remains complicit in its malevolent power (51).

Since Matilda's disguise has prevented Ambrosio from fully viewing her face, the dream combines the idea of Matilda with the image of the Madonna in the painting above his bed (51). Later, after he has awakened, Matilda's cowl drops to reveal her face, and he is amazed to behold "the exact resemblance of his admired Madona [sic]" (62). This resemblance affects him with great intensity, rendering him even more receptive to Matilda's seductive charms and leading him to cross a certain threshold. By the end of the chapter, the pure monk has undergone a change of *assemblage*, "[clasping] her rapturously in his arms" and "[forgetting] his vows, his sanctity, and his fame" (70). Only later does he discover that a monstrous demon has been orchestrating his corruption, commissioning the painting, arranging for it to be hung in his room, and planting Matilda in the abbey (350).

After the corrupted monk, "intoxicated with pleasure," has indulged his passions with Matilda, he eventually grows weary of her. At this point, the seductress shifts his focus to Antonia, a young virgin currently residing in the abbey (178). As a consequence of his increasingly corrupted state, Ambrosio attempts to rape Antonia while she is asleep. Recalling Manfred's position of status in *Otranto*, Ambrosio holds a position of religious authority in his area. By underscoring the extent to which passions can corrupt this powerful man, Lewis emulates the power dynamics and the issue of potential from Walpole's Gothic paradigm. Lewis's text emphasizes the vulnerability of the sleeping Antonia, as the monk is aided by a demonic charm that will prevent her from awakening. The "ravisher" enters the chamber "where slept the innocent girl, unconscious how dangerous a visitor was drawing near her couch" (240). But Ambrosio is interrupted by Antonia's mother, Elvira, who has just had a "frightful dream" in which Antonia

appeared to her, crying for help from “the verge of a precipice.” Like Ambrosio’s revelatory dream, the affective power of this nightmare precludes Elvira from calmly reasoning that her daughter is most likely safe within the walls of an abbey. Because the dream is “frightful,” Elvira immediately rushes to Antonia’s chamber (241).

When Elvira finds Ambrosio leaning lecherously over her sleeping daughter, she exclaims, “It is no dream... Monster of hypocrisy!” The blurring of the dream and the waking reality suggests a transgression of the dream into reality.⁴² Elvira recognizes that her “dream” is revelatory; she has not dreamt up this “monster.” Unfortunately, interrupting Ambrosio only leads to greater tragedy. The frantic monk murders her to prevent any disclosure of his true nature (241); and later, he rapes and murders Antonia in a more violent manner than he had originally intended (304-06). Although Ambrosio ultimately violates Antonia while she is awake, the sleeping state still factors into the assault. In fact, the young woman is only “in [his] power” as a result of ingesting a drug that has induced a deathlike slumber. Once people believe her to be dead, Ambrosio imprisons her in the labyrinthine depths of the abbey (264).⁴³

At the denouement, the reader discovers that the demon who has been orchestrating Ambrosio’s corruption is responsible not only for triggering the erotic dream about Matilda, but also for generating Elvira’s “frightful” premonitory dream (350, 241). This performs a perverse variation of the conventional Gothic dream, the

⁴² This blurring between the world of the dream and the waking reality recalls the dreamlike atmosphere of Walpole’s *Otranto* as well as Vivaldi’s dream about the strange monk in his cell in Radcliffe’s *Italian*.

⁴³ Radcliffe’s *Italian* bears striking resemblances to *Monk*. Ellena’s captivity within the convent in Radcliffe’s *Italian* resembles Antonia’s imprisonment in an abbey (Lewis 304; Radcliffe 83). Both Antonia and Ellena sense a deep connection with long-lost family members as well. Ellena feels immediate kinship with her mother (88), as Antonia initially does with Ambrosio (208). Tragically, neither Antonia’s affectability nor her secret history can save her because Ambrosio misunderstands her expression of love for him. Only after Ambrosio rapes and murders Antonia does the demon reveal that his victim was his long-lost sister (350).

source of which tends to be not only reliable, but purely good. The dream functions as a beneficial resource for the virtuous, disempowered protagonists of *Otranto*, *Old English Baron*, *Romance*, and *Italian*. But as demonic devices of manipulation, these two dreams in *Monk* privilege passion over revelation or premonition. This executes a startling digression from the characters' dry, accurate reports of their revelatory dreams in Walpole's original Gothic story. In Lewis's novel, the vulnerability of the sleeper undermines the potential of the revelatory dream for good. These demonic dreams exploit the imagination and the affective intensity of the dream in order to manipulate the dreamer.

Scientific Creations

We must protest against the waking dreams of horror excited by the unnatural stimulants of this later school [of Gothic fiction]; and we feel ourselves as much harassed, after rising from the perusal of these three spirit-wearing volumes, as if we had been over-dosed with laudanum, or hag-ridden by the night-mare.

This indictment appears in an April 1818 review of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818). Published in the *British Critic*, this comparison of *Frankenstein* to "waking dreams of horror" is reminiscent of the characterization of Walpole's Gothic story as dreamlike (*British Critic* 432; Walpole 63, 260). The *British Critic* reviewer criticizes the "disjointed combinations and unnatural adventures" in *Frankenstein*. Similarly, the opening epigraph of *Castle of Otranto* states that in dreamlike works, "neither foot nor head can be assigned a single shape." Even the reference to "idle fancies" that appears in Horace Walpole's epigraph is mirrored, albeit

more darkly, in the *British Critic* review of Shelley's text (Walpole 63). According to the reviewer, *Frankenstein* is a "mass of absurdity" that reveals a "diseased and wandering imagination, which has stepped out of all legitimate bounds" (438). Considering the nineteenth-century association of the imagination with the dream, this allusion to a "wandering imagination" reaffirms the dreamlike, or perhaps nightmarish, impression that *Frankenstein* would likely have imparted to nineteenth-century readers.

This comparison of Shelley's text to the world of the dream also appears in John Wilson Croker's review of *Frankenstein*. Croker calls the text a "horrible and disgusting absurdity" (382). This may bring to mind the *Illustrated Times* review that dubbed Lewis Carroll's *Wonderland* "too ... absurd" (Phillips 7). Although both texts exhibit dreamlike characteristics, the more fearful aspects of Shelley's text render its absurdity not merely fanciful, but instead "horrible and disgusting" for Croker (382). Professing himself to be "in doubt whether the head or the heart of the author be the most diseased," Croker continues,

The dreams of insanity are embodied in the strong and striking language of the insane, and the author, notwithstanding the rationality of his preface, often leaves us in doubt whether he is not as mad as his hero.

This suggests that for Croker, the imagination overpowers the realm of the rational to such an extent that it is not enough to liken *Frankenstein* to a fever dream; he describes the novel in the terms of "dreams of insanity" (382). Although both of these reviews are unfavorable, their references to dreams and nightmares suggest a sense of fearful power in the world of the dream.

Sir Walter Scott's more favorable review, published in an 1818 edition of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, argues that the dreamlike elements of *Frankenstein* attain legitimization through their capacity to reveal the affective potential of realistic characters. According to Scott, these elements are employed "not for the purpose of pampering the imagination with wonders," but instead "to shew the probable effect which the supposed miracles would produce on those who witnessed them." He explains that for this reason, "even amid the wildest freaks of imagination," the excitement elicited by the marvelous is "secondary to that which we extract from observing how mortals like ourselves would be affected" (2).

This concept also emerges in the 1818 preface to *Frankenstein*, in which Percy Bysshe Shelley argues that "the event on which the interest of the story depends is exempt from the disadvantages of a mere tale of spectres or enchantment." He continues,

It was recommended by the novelty of the situations which it developes [sic]; and, however impossible as a physical fact, affords a point of view to the imagination for the delineating of human passions more comprehensive and commanding than any which the ordinary relations of existing events can yield. (5)

Both he and Scott justify the imaginative use of the supernatural by appealing to the examination of affective potential that it induces. These writers echo Walpole's contention that the extreme situations characteristic of Gothic literature highlight the ways in which characters "think, speak, and act, as it might be supposed mere men and women would do in extraordinary positions" (Walpole 65).

Exhibiting yet greater resemblance to Walpole, Mary Shelley not only expounds on the origins of her work in an introductory section of a later edition, but also attributes

the idea for her tale to the imaginative realm of the dream. In her introduction to the 1831 edition, she describes the origin of her tale as a “waking dream” that overtook her while she was lying in bed (172). Evoking Walpole’s desire to leave “the powers of fancy at liberty” (Walpole 65), she reports that during this waking dream, her “imagination... possessed and guided [her].” In fact, she calls the preliminary draft of *Frankenstein* “a transcript of the grim terrors of [her] waking dream” (Shelley 172).

Analogously, Victor Frankenstein’s monstrous creation originates in the world of the dream. While a student, Frankenstein begins referring to his scientific ambitions as “dreams” and “visions” (22). Then, as he becomes engrossed in his experiment, the process of creating the monster is marked by a dreamlike “trance,” a state that is conspicuously absent from the aborted attempt to create a female companion for the monster (32, 114-15). This trance is accompanied by a “slow fever” (33), suggesting a similarity between Frankenstein’s disastrous dream and the incoherent “sick man’s dream” to which Walpole’s epigraph refers (Walpole 63). Moreover, Shelley’s text frames the fatal animation of the monster as a nocturnal event, occurring on “a dreary night” around “one in the morning” (34). Even the abandoned task of creating a second monster takes place at night, as “the sun had set, and the moon was just rising” (114).

It is fitting that a sense of awakening accompanies the successful completion of the first monster. The dream dissipates, as Frankenstein remarks: “Now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart” (34). This recalls the experience of Lovel in Scott’s *Antiquary*; the melody sounds less beautiful to him once he has fully awakened because he is no longer affected by the sense of immediacy that emerges in the state of dreaming (102). Once Frankenstein’s

“dream [vanishes],” then he once again perceives his surroundings through the mediation of dialectics and hierarchies (34). Before the creature has committed any wrongs, he is already condemned by what Deleuze terms the “superpower of the signifier” (*Plateaus* 112). Massumi’s characterization of the “faculty of judgment” in representational dialectics as a “policeman” seems somewhat appropriate as well, as Frankenstein begins to perceive his creation merely as a deviation from the socially acceptable (“Foreword” xi). The changes in the physical *assemblage* of the monster and the mental *assemblage* of Frankenstein, both of which take place as a result of a sort of *occursus*, accompany the sensation of awakening.

Exhausted after the thrilling scene of creation and unwilling to remain near its product, Frankenstein rushes to bed, attempting to “compose [his] mind to sleep.” But he “[passes] the night wretchedly.” Again referring to his scientific undertaking as a sort of dream, he notes that the “dreams that had been [his] food and pleasant rest for so long a space, were now become a hell to [him]; and the change so rapid, the overthrow so complete!” As a result, when he seeks repose after animating the monster, he suffers from the “wildest dreams.” During these dreams, Frankenstein embraces his fiancée, Elizabeth, who appears to be “in the bloom of health.” But as he kisses her, she undergoes a transformation, and he finds “the corpse of [his] dead mother in [his] arms” instead (34). In a variation on the Gothic monitory dream, Frankenstein awakens from his nightmare to behold a sinister-looking figure.⁴⁴ It is “the wretch—the miserable monster whom [he] had created.” Holding up the bed curtain and staring eerily at his creator, the monster

⁴⁴ There are numerous possible interpretations of this dream, one of which is that the dream is premonitory. But even though Elizabeth does meet an untimely end, this dream does not accurately predict it, since the dream depicts Elizabeth transforming into Frankenstein’s mother.

reaches toward Frankenstein. Interpreting this gesture as menacing, Frankenstein flees from his creation (35).

By framing the monstrous product of Frankenstein's scientific imagination in the terms of a dream, the text evokes nineteenth-century scientific analyses of dreams. The nineteenth-century reader would not be surprised to learn that a dream—especially one influenced by fever—might invent such a monstrosity (33). Although it would not be accurate to state that “neither foot nor head can be assigned a single shape” in the manifestation of this “sick man's dream,” the state of the creature is certainly abnormal (Walpole 63). He stands at approximately “eight feet in height” (32), and he possesses yellow, watery eyes; “straight black lips”; a “shriveled complexion”; and yellow skin that “scarcely covers the work of muscles and arteries beneath” (34). Frankenstein's experiment brings this dreamt-up figment of his feverish imagination to life.

The power of science in *Frankenstein* is akin to the power of the supernatural in Walpole's *Otranto*, Reeve's *Old English Baron*, and Lewis's *Castle Spectre*. In fact, by drawing the supernatural elements of her Gothic tale out of a dream and infusing them into the waking reality of her text, Shelley emulates Walpole's original Gothic experiment. In this reanimation of her own dream, Shelley's experiment in the Gothic mode is somewhat similar to the scientific project of her title character. Yet the dream world that Shelley creates differs greatly from that of Walpole. In *Frankenstein*, the space of the dream does not derive its power from an otherworldly beneficence, as it does in *Otranto*, *Old English Baron*, and *Castle Spectre*. Instead, the role of this dreamt-up monster coincides with the scientific view that the contents of dreams derive from an overactive imagination.

This motif of the dreamt-up monster of science is also central to Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886). A scientist like Frankenstein, Dr. Jekyll concocts a drug in order to transform into Mr. Hyde. Gradually, though, the metamorphosis begins to occur without the use of the drug (55). This recurring devolution into Hyde is induced, "above all," by the commencement of sleep. Jekyll writes, "If I slept, or even dozed for a moment in my chair, it was always as Hyde that I awakened" (60). Then, once Hyde gains control, the "virtue" and "conscience" of Jekyll "[slumber]," as they are replaced by "a fancy brimming with images of terror" (52-53, 60). Like the onset of sleep, this "other self" takes control of Jekyll's body and imposes the "images" of the fancy onto his mind (60). Jekyll experiences these exploits of his alter-ego as he would the events of a dream, "[sharing] in the pleasures and adventures" without recourse to the censorship of his waking, rational self (55). In order to escape the tyranny of this waking self, Jekyll explores the unexamined, dreamlike existence of Hyde, only to discover "the horror of [his] other self" (60). This narrative suggests a failed endeavor to explore a *rhizomatic* existence; instead of escaping from the dialectic of good and evil, Stevenson becomes further entrenched in its binary logic. As Hyde, a dreamt-up scientific creation, enters into waking reality, the concept of a change in *assemblage* becomes horrifyingly physical. The most terrifying aspect about Stevenson's text is not that it associates falling asleep with the danger of being invaded by a monster and ultimately, being transformed into one; it is that the monster is a version of Stevenson that has emerged from the depths of his unconscious and invaded waking reality with the dreamlike force of the *schizophrenized* unconscious.

Supernatural Creatures

“Oh, the terrible struggle that I have had against sleep... the pain of the fear of sleep, with such unknown horrors as it has for me!” writes Lucy Westenra in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897). Lucy recognizes the perils of falling asleep. Her description of this ordeal as a “long nightmare” is fitting, since Stoker’s vampires target sleeping victims (122, 49). Upon falling asleep, Lucy becomes susceptible to the power of Count Dracula, who induces her somnambulism in order to gain access to her, victimizing her and then transforming her into one of the “Un-Dead” (88, 162, 180). With the same objectives, Dracula also visits the bedroom of Mina Harker during the night (227). As these dreamlike figures exert their influence in waking reality, the concepts of *occursus* and *assemblage* are similarly inflected. While the change in *assemblage* would entail a physical transformation into an Un-Dead creature, the *occursus* relates to an affective encounter with one of these dreamlike vampires.

This pattern of victimization and transformation is akin to the metamorphoses undergone by Jekyll of *Jekyll and Hyde* as well as Ambrosio of *Monk*. However, in *Dracula*, the monster is not created through the scientific imagination, and the waking reality is not abounding with enchantments and demons. The supernatural monster is the only abnormality of Stevenson’s waking narrative, and the Un-Dead creatures, which the characters must eliminate, comprise the single dreamlike element of *Dracula*. The method of attack employed in their invasion into the waking reality of the characters evokes the motif of the vulnerable sleeper. More specifically, it suggests the vulnerability of the female sleepers in Lewis’s *Monk* and in Ann Radcliffe’s *Romance* and *Italian*.

Analogously, the female vampires draw near Jonathan Harker only after he begins to fall asleep. Dracula anticipates this possible danger, cautioning his young, useful clerk not to fall asleep in certain areas of the castle. According to Dracula, the old castle causes “those who sleep unwisely” to have “bad dreams.” In spite of Dracula’s directive, Jonathan succumbs to exhaustion late one night, lying on a sofa in an area of the castle said to cause “bad dreams” (38). Upon beginning to doze, Jonathan finds himself surrounded by three strangely seductive women who yearn to drink his blood through “kisses” (41-43). The blonde woman, who inspires a “dreamy fear” in him, prepares to bite his neck but is interrupted by the furious Count Dracula (42). With Jonathan surreptitiously looking on, Dracula promises to grant the women access to Jonathan later, placating their present bloodlust with a bundle that seems to contain a baby. Taking the bundle, the female vampires make their exit in a decidedly dreamlike fashion, appearing to “fade into the rays of the moonlight and pass out through the window” (43-44). Since these bizarre events only transpire after he succumbs to drowsiness, Jonathan is not certain whether to consider the experience a dream. “I suppose I must have fallen asleep,” he writes, “I hope so, but I fear, for all that followed was startlingly real” (41).

This difficulty with discerning waking reality from dreamed experience echoes the responses of Walpole’s characters to the dreamlike elements of *Otranto* (Walpole 81, 108). In *Dracula*, both Jonathan and his wife, Mina, express this uncertainty when faced with the existence of the Un-Dead. For instance, Mina notes, “I feel like one in a dream... Can it be possible, or even a part of it?” (162). Jonathan makes a similar comment about his experience in Castle Dracula. “I do not know if it was all real or the dreaming of a madman,” he prevaricates, “You know I have had brain fever, and that is

to be mad” (99-100). This association of the supernatural with “a sick man’s dream” recalls the opening epigraph of *Otranto* and Williams’s speculation that a fever dream must have influenced Walpole’s work (Walpole 63, 260).

But unlike the giant apparition and the skeletal spectre of Walpole’s text, the preternatural creatures of *Dracula* are not beneficent visions, but instead hellish monsters. Jonathan associates their existence not only with the imaginative power of a typical dream or the radical incoherence a fever dream, but with the complete loss of reason implicit in madness (99-100). This fear is associated with the overpowering of reason by the imagination, which the idea of the dream would evoke in the nineteenth century, as I mention in the first and second chapters. For Jonathan, the triumph of the imagination over reason carries a threat that lies beyond the invocation of the absurd, the ridiculous, or the fanciful. “Imagination must not run riot with me,” he writes, “If it does, I am lost” (30). This peril is linked to the “nocturnal existence” that the Count imposes on Jonathan at Castle Dracula. Just as the world of the dream privileges the imagination over reason, this “nocturnal existence” fills Jonathan with “all sorts of horrible imaginings” (38). Jonathan struggles to maintain the rational awareness associated with wakefulness, and he hopes that by recording events matter-of-factly, he can prevent his imagination from overcoming his reason. He writes in his journal, “Let me be prosaic so far as facts can be; it will help me to bear up” (30).

In Jonathan’s struggle to understand whether the female vampires are the figments of a “startlingly real” dream, he reasons from the premise that he must have been either asleep or awake, just as one must be either living or dead (41). Yet the text suggests that a third possibility lies beyond these dialectics. In the same way that the Un-

Dead blur the distinction between life and death, the text characterizes sleep as an ambiguous state. As I discuss in the first chapter, the world of the dream is liminal, considered in the nineteenth century to be a medial realm not only between waking life and perfect sleep, but also between the living and the dead. Along these lines, the “bad dreams” that Dracula describes as the consequence of sleeping “unwisely” are real. The female vampires exist independently of Jonathan’s dream, and yet their real visitation hinges on the fact that Jonathan has begun to drowse (38). By dozing in an area of the castle that Dracula has deemed unsafe, Jonathan becomes susceptible to the powers of these “weird sisters” (51).

Central to these powers is the vampire’s inhabitation of the dream. Exploiting this nebulous, liminal space, the vampire, who is neither alive nor dead, gains power; while the victim, who is neither awake nor in a state of perfect sleep while dreaming, becomes vulnerable (122). Jonathan feels mesmerized by the provocative female vampires, despite his abiding love for Mina; Lucy sleep-walks outside to rendezvous with her tormenter; and Mina feels paralyzed when Dracula visits her bedroom at night (42, 88, 227). This experience of “incubus” is a characteristic of the nightmare, as I note in the first chapter. This power dynamic emulates the struggle between the powerful and the disempowered, which is fundamental to Walpole’s Gothic paradigm. The imprisonment of the disempowered victim within the castle highlights this similarity. As Dracula’s prisoner, Jonathan is “absolutely in his power” (45). The only exit is through one of the windows overlooking an abyss, and Dracula’s abilities include scaling the walls of the castle and controlling the ferocious wolves outside (38-39, 52).

These conditions are distinctly nightmarish. The monster exhibits incredible, supernatural powers; life within Castle Dracula is invariably nocturnal; falling asleep is a fearful proposition; and the imagination constantly threatens to overtake reason. Moreover, just as the nightmare hinges on both the physical state of sleeping and the psyche of the dreamer, the vampires of *Dracula* captivate their victims through forces that are physical as well as psychological. The sleeper enters into an enchanted state from which escape is uncertain, much like Jonathan's imprisonment in Castle Dracula. In this way, the role of the sleeper is similar to that of the captive of the castle, recalling Jonathan's horrified observation: "Doors, doors, doors everywhere, and all locked and bolted... The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner!" (31-32).⁴⁵ It is unsurprising that Dracula's victim should complain of "the pain of the fear of sleep, with such unknown horrors as it has" (122).

⁴⁵ This also recalls Sartre's association of the horrible with the universe of the dream: "The horrible can appear only in the kind of world whose existants [sic] are magical... This is rather well shown in the universe of the dream where doors, locks, walls, and arms are not recourses against the menaces of the thief or the wild animal... In short, to perceive any object whatsoever as horrible is to perceive it on the basis of a world which reveals itself as already being horrible" (*Emotions* 89).

Conclusion

Beyond the Looking-Glass

I've dreamt in my life dreams that have stayed with me ever after, and changed my ideas; they've gone through and through me, like wine through water, and altered the colour of my mind. And this is one—I'm going to tell it—but take care not to smile at any part of it.

When Catherine speaks these words to Nelly in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), she prefaces them by asserting, "I'll give you a feeling of how I feel" (62).⁴⁶ Even though scholarship tends to treat the revelatory dreams of Gothic literature as primarily symbolic devices, this text suggests a close association between affect transmission and the dream, even when it is recounted instead of directly experienced.

Anticipating that her listener might utter the common trivialization that such an experience is "only a dream," Catherine cautions her "not to smile at any part of it." The force of affect in Catherine's dreams is not trivial. In fact, instead of dissipating into a half-remembered haze upon her awakening, these dreams "have stayed with [her]" and through a change in her *assemblage* even "altered the colour of [her] mind." Her most recent dream has influenced her affective potential, reducing her capacity for lightheartedness, as she mentions: "I've no power to be merry to-night" (62). When she goes on to describe her dream about being in heaven, its most striking characteristic does not relate to choirs of angels, symbolic prophecy, or explicit revelation, but instead to affective intensity. During the dream, Catherine feels overcome by the sensation that

⁴⁶ Deleuze writes, "When Emily Brontë traces the bond between Heathcliff and Catherine, she invents a violent affect, like a kinship between two wolves, which above all should not be mistaken for love" ("Percept" 175).

“heaven did not seem to be [her] home” and “broke [her] heart weeping to come back to earth.” Consequently, she is flung out of heaven, coming to rest “on the top of Wuthering Heights, where [she] woke sobbing for joy” (63).

This passage models the affective force that the literary dream is capable of exerting on the characters of the Gothic novel. The dream produces an *occursus*, alters Catherine’s potential, initiates a change in *assemblage*, and even transmits affect when it is recounted. Gothic novels employ this intensity in multiple variations. For example, the atmosphere of a waking dream introduces the supernatural into Walpole’s *Otranto*. Instead of representing elements of waking reality, these dreamlike forces enter the waking narrative, in which they highlight the issue of potential by posing what Manfred can be driven to do, while the plot is driven forward by the answer. Whereas the literary dream of Aldobrand produces a positive *occursus* by elevating Lovel’s spirits in Scott’s *Antiquary*, the dream of the auto-da-fé results in a negative *occursus* in *Melmoth*, triggering an impulse that would normally appall the dreamer (Scott 101; Maturin 182-83).

The dreamt *occursus* exemplifies the initial affective state that Deleuze describes in “Spinoza.” Forming “notions” of the causes of certain affects can grant control over their “power of acting” (“Spinoza” 13). By understanding what causes negative affects, one is empowered to either avoid these causes or to prepare to combat them, but the dreamer is powerless against the dreaming imagination’s production of images, thoughts, and desires. The paradigm of the vulnerable sleeper emerges with particular intensity in Radcliffe’s *Romance and Italian*, Stoker’s *Dracula*, and Stevenson’s *Jekyll and Hyde*. In *Monk*, Lewis exploits this vulnerability by distorting the apparent beneficence of the

source of the supernatural dream; a premonitory dream leads a woman to her death instead of saving her, and a variation on the revelatory dream corrupts a man renowned for his purity (241, 51).

Literary dreams and dreamlike elements produce affective encounters by producing *polyvocality* as well as a sense of immediacy. In Gothic dreams, “multiplicities of multiplicities” interact after emerging from sources ranging from ghosts, fairies, angels, and demons to waking thoughts, physical irregularities, and diseases (*Plateaus* 34). In this way, the dream evokes Deleuze’s characterization of the unconscious as “fundamentally a crowd” as well as his description of it as a “factory” as opposed to a Freudian “theater” of representations (*Plateaus* 29; *Anti-Oedipus* 49). The imagination plays a crucial role in this sense of multiplicity. And as the critical and popular receptions of *Otranto* and *Frankenstein* highlight, nineteenth-century readers would have associated the imagination not only with generating connections between ideas in the dreaming mind, but also with generating the dreams and dreamlike qualities in Gothic texts.

This imaginative *polyvocality* coalesces with a sense of indeterminacy that develops and varies in the dreams of Gothic literature. For instance, the dreamt *occursus* is inflected with the scientific theories ascribing the intensity of the dream to the dreamer’s surroundings. The supernatural atmosphere affects the dreamers, but it does so because they are surrounded by certain physical stimuli. As a result, the young protagonist of Reeve’s *Old English Baron* dreams of his parents while sleeping in the apartment that they inhabited while alive, and Adeline of Radcliffe’s *Romance* dreams of her father while sleeping in the castle where he died (Reeve 23-24; Radcliffe 51). In fact,

Radcliffe's protagonists display a pseudo-supernatural potential for affect transmission, which is heightened by the dreaming state.

Indeterminacy also emerges in the issue of determining the source of the dream. For instance, in her effort to infuse the Gothic novel with believability, Reeve adds ambiguity, at least initially, to the cause of Sir Philip's dream (7). This is more apparent in *Antiquary*, in which Scott provides multiple reasons for believing that Lovel's dream is revelatory and for believing that it is not. Similarly, in Maturin's *Melmoth* and Lewis's *Monk*, it seems that a dream can be both triggered by a demonic force, positioning it in the category of the supernatural, and directed by the imagination, which would seem to negate its supernatural origins.

This indeterminacy relates to the idea of disorder inherent in the nineteenth-century conception of the dream. In fact, according to nineteenth-century thought, the dream is not only disordered, but disordering. Its imaginative associations have the potential to become adialectical through their *rhizomatic* multiplicities. Accordingly, Gothic texts employ dreams and dreamlike elements as destabilizing forces. Sometimes the origin of this force appears beneficent, as in Radcliffe's novels, in which the affective force of the dream assists the virtuous, disempowered protagonists. Similarly, in Reeve's *Old English Baron*, the supernatural forces enter into waking reality through the initiation of a dream with the purpose of transferring power to the rightful heir of Lord Arthur.

Conversely, as the later Gothic texts embrace the disorder of the dreaming state, affective force becomes more physical. Changes in *assemblage* alter the physical body in a visible way. In Stoker's *Dracula*, the change in *assemblage* occurs through the transformation of a human into a vampire. This change produces different desires and

even alters the physical needs of the character's body. In a similar manner, a fateful change in *assemblage* transforms Jekyll into Hyde in Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde*. These later Gothic dreams hinge on the threat of disorder that is suggested by the encroachment of the dream into the waking narrative, as in Lewis's *Monk*, Stoker's *Dracula*, and Maturin's *Melmoth*.

Yet when the dream exerts force in the waking world, there is also a danger that the binary, totalizing hierarchies will *reterritorialize* the dream. Deleuze's description of *detrterritorialization* can be applied to its counterpart in this context. As he writes, "Multiplicities are defined by the outside: by the abstract line, the line of flight or *detrterritorialization*" (*Plateaus* 9). Waking reality defines the dream from the outside; only to the waking world does the dream enter into binaries. For instance, the dreamlike elements of Walpole's *Otranto* are *reterritorialized* by the waking narrative of the text. These forces destabilize the reign of Manfred, promoting imaginative disorder. But by the end of the novel, they simply establish a new hierarchy, depositing the rightful king in his place.

Similarly, when the monster of Shelley's *Frankenstein* emerges from the scientific imagination of Frankenstein and becomes animate, Frankenstein conceives of him according to the dialectical logic of the waking world, suddenly viewing him as a "miserable monster." The creature, then, operates according to a monstrous logic, yet this may not have occurred if Frankenstein had continued to conceive of his creation according to the logic of the dream (35). Additionally, in Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde*, Jekyll initially dreams up Hyde as a means of transcending an oppressive binary of good

and evil (55). The imagined Hyde of the world of the dream may be able to transcend this dialectic, but when he enters into the waking world, he merely embraces the latter (60).

The fraught relationship between waking reality and the *rhizomatic* world of the dream is vividly depicted during Lockwood's nightmare in Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*.⁴⁷ The "intense horror of nightmare" overcomes Lockwood when he reaches through the glass of his bedroom window, and his hand is grasped by the "fingers of a little, ice-cold hand" (Brontë 20-21). The shattered glass that frames this encounter functions as an intense iteration of the glass through which Alice enters the world of the dream in Carroll's *Looking-Glass* (131). But instead of gliding contentedly through the glass as Alice does, the young, ghostly Catherine of *Wuthering Heights* must wail to be "let... in" from the realm of the dream while the terrified Lockwood scrapes her hand cruelly against the shattered glass in his efforts to keep her out (Brontë 20-21). The fractured glass through which this struggle ensues certainly contrasts sharply with the non-magical, reflective glass emblematic of symbolic dream interpretation. The conflict between Lockwood and this dreamt-up phantom transcends the mirroring relationship assumed to exist between waking reality and dreamland. The affective intensity of this dream has a powerful impact on the waking narrative, compelling Lockwood to share it with Heathcliff, who is also powerfully affected.

It is this struggle between waking reality and the *rhizomatic*, affective world of the dream that drives these Gothic novels. Out of this conflict emerge the supernatural, the power dynamics, and the terror of the Gothic nightmare—although this only becomes

⁴⁷ It is not apparent whether this dream is the product of a ghostly visitation or an overactive imagination, or whether it is a dream at all. Like Lovel's potentially revelatory dream in *Antiquary* (1816), this vision of Catherine follows a dream that is much less coherent. By contrast, Lockwood's interaction with Catherine is likely to seem more significant both to Lockwood and to the reader (Scott 99; Brontë 20-21).

apparent if one moves beyond the looking-glass reflections of representational interpretation. Ultimately, the affective intensity of the Gothic dream is central to the dynamic of nineteenth-century British literature, perhaps revealing why “only a dream” is not only a way of trivializing meaningless flights of fancy, but also the maxim repeated by a particularly terrified dreamer upon awakening from a nightmare.

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