Table of Contents

Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era

About This Volume

This volume of *Romantic Circles Praxis Series* includes an editor's introduction by Robert Miles and essays by Fred Botting, Diane Long Hoeveler, Sophie Thomas, Dale Townshend, and Angela Wright.

This collection of essays explores the relationship between Romantic Gothicism and the rise of the visual technologies centred on commercial exploitation of the magic lantern. Although grounded in the technological innovations of the Romantic and early Victorian periods – and reactions to them – the essays in the collection anticipate modern attitudes towards visuality, developing the link between the rise of literary Gothic and subsequent visual technologies.

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The essays and other files were marked up in HTML by Kate Singer at the University of Maryland. The volume cover and contents page were also designed and marked up by Kate Singer. Lisa Rhody assisted in the production of this volume.

About the Romantic Circles Praxis Series

The **Romantic Circles Praxis Series** is devoted to using computer technologies for the contemporary critical investigation of the languages, cultures, histories, and theories of Romanticism. Tracking the circulation of Romanticism within these interrelated domains of knowledge, **RCPS** recognizes as its conceptual terrain a world where Romanticism has, on the one hand, dissolved as a period and an idea into a plurality of discourses and, on the other, retained a vigorous, recognizable hold on the intellectual and theoretical discussions of today. **RCPS** is committed to mapping out this terrain with the best and mo st exciting critical writing of contemporary Romanticist scholarship.

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Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era

Introduction: Gothic Romance as Visual Technology

Robert Miles, University of Victoria, BC

Miles argues that the Gothic Romance may be understood as a form of visual technology to be placed alongside the forerunners of modern cinema, such as the phantasmagoria and diorama. He further argues that the affinity lies less in the technological continuity represented by the magic lantern and film projector, and more in the privileging of the reader as a visually-pleasured spectator.This essay appears in _Gothic Technologies_, a volume of _Romantic Circles Praxis Series_, prepared exclusively for Romantic Circles (http://www.rc.umd.edu/), University of Maryland.

> Picture a room, no window
> A door that leads outside
> A man lying on a carpet on the floor
> Picture his three grown boys behind him
> Bouncing words off of a screen
> Of a television big as all outdoors
>
> —Randy Newman, "My Country", Bad Love (1999)

1. With his customary economy and wit Randy Newman sketches a familiar anxiety of modern life: that late capitalism has replaced community with isolated clumps of incommunicados, formally known as families, who sit together cemented by nothing more than their addiction to television and an unwillingness to resist entropy. The television is at once an intermediary and a sump for misdirected language (words bounce off it, back to others, or just nowhere). The door of the windowless room is paralleled by the screen as big as all outdoors, in which the door onto the world and the screen double each other, blurring the distinction between the real and the simulated. The tone is only a mood swing away from the familiar territory of suburban Gothic: "Watching other people living/ Seeing other people play/ Having other people's voices fill our minds/ Thank you Jesus." The vicarious principle verges on technological possession (hearing voices) in which entertainment and the divine become schizophrenically mixed. The Gothic's master trope of live burial, or broken communication, is brought into comic view: "Feelings might go unexpressed/ I think that's probably for the best/ Dig too deep who knows what you will find." "Freddie Kruger " seems a likely answer.

2. I have started with Newman's song because it helps sketch an historic arc that has come to concern Romantic studies (Wood 7). The arc can be traced through a question. Is there any continuity between the overlap of individualism, consumerism, and the beginnings of a technology-driven entertainment industry based on visual pleasure, which marks the Romantic period, and the familiar techno-visual dystopia mordantly anatomised by Newman? If so, what relationship does this arc bear to the literary-cultural formation we call "Romanticism"?

3. The present volume of *Romantic Circles Praxis* seeks to contribute to this debate by focussing on Gothic writing and visual technology. There are several intersecting reasons for why such an inquiry should begin with the Gothic. Whether as popular theatre, Minerva romances or supernatural ballads, Gothic was popular—and soon mass—entertainment. Despite differences in genre the Gothic tended to be overtly "visual", whether literally so, in the popular theatre, where dramatists such as Matthew Lewis adapted emerging spectral technologies with electrifying effect, or figuratively, in prose and

poetry, through stylistic appeals to the visual imagination. Two of the most famous high-cultural put downs of the rising mass entertainment industry turn exactly on the visual character of the Gothic: Wordsworth's withering comments on the stupefying effects of sickly German tragedies (Gothic theatre), and Coleridge's elaborate metaphor of romance reading as a visual technology (a camera obscura) for implanting one person's reveries into the mind of another.

4. The links between the Gothic and the rise of visual technology are at once deep and seemingly fortuitous. For example, take the case of Count Cagliostro, enlightened Free Mason, healer, alchemist, master of Egyptian mysteries and friend of mankind, or Sicilian mountebank, pimp, and dangerous adherent of Adam Weishaupt's revolutionary Illuminati, depending on one's point of view. Cagliostro himself liked to put on a good show, with his mediums, crystal balls, and spectral lighting, and as such he formed the model for Schiller's "Sicilian" from the seminal Gothic novel, *The Ghost-Seer*, whose acts of visual legerdemain are exposed by the even more devious Armenian. Cagliostro was eventually to attract the attention of the Roman Inquisition who were sufficiently startled by the gravity of the Great Cophta's revolutionary threat to arrest him, torture him, and extract his confession, before burying him alive in the turret of a remote mountain fortress, despite his European-wide celebrity. Cagliostro's Gothic sufferings at the hands of the Inquisition prompted two of the genre's most accomplished romances from the late 1790s, Radcliffe's *The Italian* (Miles, 2000, xvi-xviii) and

   Godwin's *St Leon*.[1] During the last of his three London visits, Cagliostro was befriended by the Alsatian artist Phillipe Jacques de Loutherbourg, another Freemason and alchemical enthusiast. A trained engineer, Loutherbourg was also a set designer of great brilliance and innovation, specializing in sound, lighting effects, and the use of automata. Iain McCalman describes his influence on yet another influential Gothicist, William Beckford:

   > Shows using ghostly special effects were, in 1787, to be given the name of "phantasmagoria," but de Loutherbourg actually pioneered the form six years earlier when a rich young aesthete, William Beckford, asked him to pour "the wildness of your fervid imagination" into creating an occult eastern spectacle at his country house. De Loutherbourg's "necromantic" light effects, "preternatural sounds," voluptuous scents, and clockwork machinery had so intoxicated young Beckford that he'd immediately begun writing his famous Oriental romance, *Vathek*. He didn't know it, but his imagination had been seized by the forerunner of the modern cinema (162).

   There are two, linked questions here. To what extent can the magic-lantern and its associated technologies (now generally designated through the short hand, "phantasmagoria") be justly characterised as the forerunner of the modern cinema? And to what extent can the Gothic's numerous filiations with the phantasmagoria be characterised as a deep-structural affinity with the century's emerging visual technologies?

5. Possible answers to the second question are the concern of the articles collected in this issue. Answers to the first we leave to the media historians qualified to deal with it. Or rather, we leave the vexed matter of technological continuity, of whether there are meaningful affinities between the kinds of projections made possible by eighteenth-century "devices of wonder" (best catalogued and described by Stafford and Terpak) and their modern counterparts. The articles in this issue are concerned with a different sort of question. To what extent are the kinds of anxieties aroused by the spectral technologies of the cinema and the phantasmagoria (irrespective of affinities between them, real or not) themselves the product of something prior to, or at any rate, separable from, the technology? Following Michel Foucault one might describe this "something" as an epistemic shift. Read in this light, filiations between the Gothic and the phantasmagoria no longer seem fortuitous, as both may be said to be grounded in the same "shift."

6. One might describe this shift as a process of "hollowing-out." Where the divine once was, the secular now is, and the sign of the secular is the commodity fetish. There is now a long line of Gothic criticism working within this tradition, best embodied in Jerrold E. Hogle's "the ghost of the counterfeit," a phrase as slippery as it is rich. Hogle first used the phrase in relation to Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (25). As a "post" text (post-Reformation, post-revolution, post-Enlightenment and thus post-modern), Walpole's supernatural confection was a work of deep imposture. The acts of unquestioned belief depicted as ghosts and supernatural machinery merely call attention to themselves as "counterfeits," rather than as true signs rendered current and legitimate by faith. Alfonso is at once a counterfeit ghost (the product of priestly deceit) and a ghostly reminder that in the modern world all signs circulate with equal freedom and (in)authenticity. In Walpole's "post" world, we are all counterfeits now. Hogle's argument is recalled by Andrea Henderson's thesis connecting the circulation of commercialised Gothic imagery to the shift from use to exchange value, an emptying out identified by Baudrilliard as the "order of simulation," the epistemological condition of the modern world (492). The strange transmutation of the sign of the sacred (the supernatural) from the disciplined preserve of faith to a commodity item and staple of the entertainment industry, was also the substance of E.J. Clery's argument in *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction*.

7. A complementary line of enquiry was initiated by Terry Castle in her 1987 essay, "The Spectralization of the Other in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*." Castle begins with Philippe Ariès who argues that death was a commonplace of pre-Enlightenment societies. Ariès does not mean that beginning with the Enlightenment there was, somehow, less death, but that it was treated differently. Whereas in traditional societies the rituals of mourning involved the presence of the dead, in modern ones the dead disappear, absorbed by service industries that invisibly sweep away discomfiting mortal coils. In the former, religion and ritual helped survivors accept death as a vestibule to something else. In modern secular societies the dead disappear, but the fact remains, unaccommodated. The paradoxical upshot is that unaccommodated death leads to spectral materialism. For the late eighteenth-century imagination, materialism is uncanny. Once dead bodies are hollowed out, as mere matter, without a transcendental destiny—signifiers without signifieds—they rise again, as phantasmagoria. Coleridge explains, or rather exemplifies, the phenomenon in *Biographical Literaria*. Materialism (as evinced in Lockean associationism) "removes all reality and immediateness of perception, and places us in a dream-world of phantoms and spectres, the inexplicable swarm and equivocal generation of motions in our own brain" (*BL* I: 137). Hence Castle's argument. In the post-Enlightenment world, the dead live again, as a spectral presence, a re-supernaturalisation of everyday life that points, not to a resurgence of religious faith, but to its absence. Without a belief in an afterlife to house the dead, the dead persist, psychologized, as continuously mourned memories that recur with an intensity potent enough to overturn the order of the real. For Castle, Gothic is the genre that comes into being as an expression of modern, spectral materialism. Hence the tendency of novels, such as Radcliffe's, to feature dead who persist in the minds of the protagonists, as spectralized others, as well as the tendency of living others to become spectral.

8. Even more influential has been Castle's extension of her interest in spectralization to the realm of technology. Beginning with "Phantasmagoria: Spectral Technology and the Metaphorics of Modern Reverie", Castle produced a series of articles on an overlooked aspect of the rise of visual reproduction, its tendency to relocate the supernatural from the external world of inexplicable phenomena to the inner realm of the mind. Gaspard-Etienne Robertson was the impresario who coined the phrase "fantasmagorie" , having drawn together the technical inventions of others, including de Loutherbourg, into a Radcliffean extravaganza in which the dead would live again, projected mid-air by magic lanterns through a haze of smoke in the tombs of the Capuchin, itself a fit emblem of the commercial hollowing-out of the sacred (1995: 144, 148). But as Castle notes, no sooner was "fantasmagorie" coined as a word for the commercial show than it was adapted to describe the modern condition of mental life bereft of stabilising notions of the real. Without such notions we are placed, says Coleridge,

"in a dream-world of phantoms and spectres." Modern life had become phantasmagorical, or, as Castle was later to put it in her collected essays, "uncanny." Spectral technology broke down the barrier between mind and machine. If spectral technology was like the mind, the mind, in turn, was like spectral technology. As Fred Botting explains, the "overlapping of fantasy and reality, the confounding of inner and external worlds, the lack of distinction between mind and materiality, are …the defining features of the uncanny."

9. In pursuing the "hollowing-out" argument we appear to have arrived at a place antithetical to the one from which we started. I began with Jerrold Hogle's "the ghost of the counterfeit" , a reading of the rise of the Gothic as the product of the modern shift towards the condition of " simulation", which was independent of technology, and have ended up with a process of specularization driven by it. However, as Baudrillard's own work makes clear, this is not so much a contradiction as evidence of a dialectical process in which the severing effects of commodity fetishism are reinforced by the visual technology the capitalist process itself gives rise to. The important point is that for its recent critics—and certainly for the critics represented in the present issue—Gothic is at the centre of this dialectic.

10. Hence Angela Wright's focus on the Gothic novel as a form repeatedly attacked, and stigmatised, as a "mechanical" art or "technology." For the progressively minded, literature was an "engine" of instruction. In his preface to *Political Justice* William Godwin declares that "Few engines can be more powerful, and at the same time more salutary in that tendency, than literature" (I, 20). Anna Laetitia Barbauld was equally upbeat: "It was said by Fletcher of Saltoun, "Let me make the ballads of a nation, and I care not who makes the laws." Might it not be said with as much propriety, Let me make the novels of a country, and let who will make the system?" (quoted Grenby, 13). For Godwin and Barbauld, novels possess a mysterious power. For both, novels are a form of cultural technology, instrumental in altering the system, or engineering change. Conservative critics, such as T. J. Mathias, took a similar view: "LITERATURE, *well or ill conducted*, IS THE GREAT ENGINE *by which*, I am fully persuaded, ALL CIVILIZED STATES *must ultimately be supported or overthrown*." But for Mathias, the novel was, axiomatically, "ill conducted" literature. The complaints lodged against the novel are now well known. Novels were improbable (they left readers with an undisciplined sense of the world as it is) and unrealistic (they encouraged readers to contemplate life above their station, thus breeding incendiary discontent). These familiar complaints obscure an essential point, one teased out by Wright. Critics attacked the novel because they perceived it to be a dangerous technology, a menace especially prominent in the Gothic romance, the dominant shape of the 1790s. Romance bred eidetic reveries in the mind of the reader, as if projected there by a camera obscura, an experience of visual pleasure increasingly proscribed as " mechanical."

11. In *The Monk* Matthew Lewis allegorizes the novel's stigma as a dangerous technology and in the process teases out why "reverie-machines" were feared. Matilda has a magic mirror bordered with "strange and unknown characters" (270) and with it she conjures an image of Antonia, bathing, in order to seduce Ambrosio. As Matilda explains, after an incantation "'the Person appears in it, on whom the Observer's thoughts are bent…'" (270). Antonia appears in the mirror, undressing:

> Though unconscious of being observed, an in-bred sense of modesty induced her to veil her charms; and She stood hesitating upon the brink, in the attitude of the Venus de Medicis. At this moment a tame Linnet flew towards her, nestled its head between her breasts, and nibbled them in wanton play. The smiling Antonia strove in vain to shake off the Bird, and at length raised her hands to drive it from its delightful harbour. Ambrosio could bear no more: his desires were worked up to a phrenzy (271).

Lewis employs the standard iconography of secretly-observed modesty to represent Antonia as an instinctively coy Venus de Medici. The "Venus" was a notorious image in eighteenth-century

aesthetics, one highlighting the problematic boundary between pornography and art. In *The Monk* Lewis habitually alludes to the Venus when representing how his male characters – and readers – see Antonia (9). As such, one might say that the magic mirror signifies the veil of textuality that mediates Ambrosio's lust (Jones). When Ambrosio thinks of Antonia, she is always already figured as a Venus de Medici, because that is how eighteenth-century culture structures objects of male desire. But if the mirror signifies textuality, it functions as a magic camera obscura. As a technology the camera obscura is a close avatar of television, or film. The [camera obscura in Outlook Tower](), Edinburgh, provides an example. One stands in a darkened room with a white circular dais in the middle, onto which is projected a full-colour image of the outside world, focused through a series of lenses channelled through a movable periscope. The main difference between cinema and the camera obscura (apart from the technical means) is that the latter provides the viewer with unedited, real time, action. Matilda's magic mirror apparently does the same. Ambrosio observes his naked sister, in real time. However, the image is "edited," or at any rate composed, as a *mise en scène*. She is not lifted "out of life," but out of, or through, stock imagery. The representation of Antonia's representation—the glass in which she appears—signifies the potency of books to seduce and deprave the unwary "reader," a power figured by Lewis as a form of visual technology. In effect Lewis represents the novel form as if it really were a camera obscura furnished with Coleridge's feared magic power of projecting one man's reveries into the mind of another. The magic mirror may thus be regarded as an allegory of the contemporary critical anxiety directed towards illicit reading, a fear Lewis further satirised through his scandalous suggestion that mothers should stop their daughters conning the Bible and so prevent its lubricious scenes being projected onto the mind's inner tablet, where they might flicker into corrupting life.

12. With the foregoing in mind we can recast the familiar criticism of the novel in the following way. The Gothic romance was the occasion of moral panic because it was widely regarded as an engine (a "magic mirror") for the production of visual reverie. For ambitious writers, such as Wordsworth and Coleridge, it became imperative that they distance themselves from Gothic romance, "German" drama, or "gaudy and inane" verse, with their mechanical, eye-driven, arts. As Dale Townshend demonstrates, a turning away from the "despotism of the eye" becomes a major focus of Wordsworth's poetics, where such despotism was closely linked, in Wordsworth's mind, to the mad assortment of visual technologies thronging the London market, such as panoramas, dioramas, raree shows and phantasmagorias.

13. Coleridge provides another illustration of this anti-technological animus:

> In the days of Chaucer and Gower our language might…be compared to a wilderness of vocal reeds, from which the favorites only of Pan or Apollo could construct even the rude Syrinx; and from this the *constructors* alone could elicit strains of music. But now, partly by the labours of successive poets, and in part by the more artificial state of society and social intercourse, language, mechanized as it were into a barrel-organ, supplies at once both instrument and tune. Thus even the deaf may play, so as to delight the many…Hence of all trades, literature at present demands the least talent or information; and, of all modes of literature, the manufacturing of poems. The difference indeed between these and the works of genius, is not less than between an egg and an egg-shell; yet at a distance they both look alike (*BL*, I: 38-39).

Poems have been hollowed out by the ease of modern, mechanical reproduction, are nowadays mere shells. As Coleridge says elsewhere, such poems are "counterfeits" (I: 42). They may look the same as true poems, but they lack substance. The eye fails to serve as a means of distinguishing the real from the forged, the shell from the true egg, the carapace from the substance. As Coleridge's metaphor implies, authenticity is a matter of intangible virtues. Without authenticity, we are back in a world of phantasmagoric materialism.

14. Wordsworth's and Coleridge's assessment of the radical difference between works of true genius and those of the mechanic arts, between poems of transcendental greatness, on one side, and a host of overtly commercial "products," on the other, from dioramas to Gothic romances, has been reproduced by critics of Romanticism virtually ever since. But matters look very different if we view them through Jonathan Crary's *Techniques of the Observer*. Crary argues that during the long eighteenth century, "[p]roblems of vision then, as now, were fundamentally questions about the body and the operation of social power" (3). He examines "how, beginning early in the nineteenth century, a new set of relations between the body on one hand and forms of institutional and discursive power on the other redefined the status of an observing subject" (3). The Romantic era witnesses a shift that "was inseparable from a massive reorganisation of knowledge and social practices that modified in myriad ways of productive, cognitive, and desiring capacities of the human subject" (3). Crary's Foucauldian reading focuses on the epistemic shift that occurred as paradigms of knowledge and perception were re-organised, from a model based on the camera obscura, to one situated in the physiology of the eye. In the camera obscura paradigm of the Enlightenment, the observer's "sensory and physiological apparatus" does not modify perception. Experimenters discovered that it made no difference whether one inserted an anatomised eye-ball into the camera obscura, or a mechanical lens, from which it followed that physiology did not impact on how humans see. If the eye-ball did not impact on sight, the seeing had to be done elsewhere. Richard Rorty makes the point: "It is as if the *tabula rasa* were perpetually under the gaze of the unblinking Eye of the Mind...it becomes obvious that the imprinting is of less interest than the observation of the imprint—all the knowing gets done, so to speak, by the Eye which observes the imprinted tablet, rather than by the tablet itself" (55). Crary comments that although "the dominance of the camera obscura paradigm does in fact imply a privilege given to vision, it is a vision that is *a priori* in the service of a nonsensory faculty of understanding that alone gives a true conception of the world" (57).

15. Paradoxically, the camera-obscura model of vision was wedded to the principle of tangibility. We verify what we see by cross-referencing visual data against the other senses. According to Crary's argument, in the nineteenth century the older Enlightenment ideas of observation verified by touch were unable to deal with a new order of "mobile signs and commodities whose identity" was "exclusively optical" (62). Crary sees the rage for dioramas and stereoscopes as symptoms of the new, nineteenth-century model of vision: "The loss of touch as a conceptual component of vision meant the unloosening of the eye from the network of referentiality incarnated in tactility and its subjective relation to perceived space" (19). For Crary, the new model, in which perception was located squarely in the physiological characteristics of the eye, was a stage towards our modern culture of spectatorship and consumption (a condition we might gloss through Coleridge's description, quoted earlier, of materialism as a phantasmagoria or "dream-world of phantoms and spectres, the inexplicable swarm and equivocal generation of motions in our own brain" (*BL* I: 137). According to Crary's argument, Wordsworth's anti-visual, anti-commercial animus had a self-defeating consequence, for by stressing the importance of the individual to revolve back within himself, in order to glimpse presence, he was helping to disseminate the discursive construction of the isolated observer (an isolated eye, detached from touch) that was to become the model of the modern consumer of "spectacle". Crary points to a twofold movement that constitutes his paradigmatic shift, which he locates around the 1820s and 30s. On the one hand, the linking between internal/external, subject/object, breaks down. On the other, it is discursively reconstituted through the body, to a new science of the physiology of looking.

16. Wordsworth was unintentionally complicit with this process. By stressing inner vision he helps break the link between internal/external (the camera obscura's paradigm of vision mediated by a neutral lens), but by so doing he creates the ground for phantasmagorical modernity. For modernization a "more adaptable, autonomous, and productive observer was needed in both discourse and practice…" (149). For many during this period, modernity, meaning the promiscuous circulation of signs (commodity culture, panoramas, billboards, illustrated newspapers) was itself a "phantasmagoria", where the world

itself appeared the product of disoriented imagination (Castle 1995: 154-59). At this stage Castle's and Crary's argument begin to dovetail. Crary's modern observer—subjective and productive—fits nicely with Castle's thesis that the common meaning of phantasmagoria was quickly transformed from a word for a kind of "high-tech" light show to the imagination itself. Imagining visualization was no longer a matter of modelling the mind as a camera obscura, but representing it, rather, as it a productive source. Wordsworth outwardly opposed the manifestations of this shift. But through his inward turn he discursively reproduced the very disconnection on which the phantasmagoria was predicated. If Wordsworth's imagination is a projective lamp, it is discursively homologous with the one lighting up modernity's magic lantern.

17. According to Crary, then, if Gothic romance is a visual technology, it is, at the time of its apogee—around 1800—already in the process of becoming obsolete, because founded on Enlightenment models of "observation". Moreover, his analysis presents us with the following counter-intuitive position. The commercial romance, with its illustrations, scenic descriptions, and hair-raising tableaux—Matilda with a poniard to her exposed breast, glinting in the moonlight; Schedoni hanging poised over his sleeping "daughter", his dagger at the ready; the monster stretched on the table, blinking his yellow eye—is to be understood as less involved in the discursive construction of the modern subject, as a sovereign consumer of spectacle, than Wordsworth's poetics. The Gothic romance is attached to the older, "camera obscura paradigm" of passive consumption (much as Coleridge depicts it), whereas Wordsworth helps disseminate the prestige of the inwardly revolved subject who is the self-generating source of what he, or she, perceives, where presence is "presence" precisely because it cannot be verified by touch.

18. The position is both counter-intuitive and—I think—incorrect. To understand how the Gothic romance is a cultural form of visual technology we must first acknowledge the degree to which it is founded on Lord Kames's ideal presence, the dominant model of eighteenth-century aesthetic response (see Miles, 1999: 19-20). Kames imagines a perceptual axis, with real presence at one end, and reflection at the other. Real presence is perception itself, the act of seeing. Reflection is when we introspect about the process of perception. Ideal presence occurs somewhere in between these two poles. An act of memory, when we are lost in a reverie of the past, and seem to relive old events with an eidetic vividness, would be an example of ideal presence, as would the inward turn taken when viewing a painting, where we find ourselves mentally living in the imaginative world it depicts. Ideal presence is also operative in the appreciation of novels and poems. Indeed, it is ideal presence that accounts for the "reading trance", in which the world depicted through the word appears to unfold before our eyes. To lose oneself in a book is to find oneself in ideal presence. When we introspect about our memories, or focus on the words on the page, or otherwise interrupt our willing suspension of disbelief, the spell breaks, and real presence once more intrudes.

19. Kames did not invent ideal presence so much as codify a set of associative assumptions, deeply embedded in Enlightenment thinking, which derived ultimately from the works of John Locke. Locke characterised the brain, the camera in which sensations are apprised, "as the mind's presence room" (Crary, 42). The act of reviewing those sensations—as a relived "playback"—produced "ideal presence." But there is a signal difference between the state of affairs described by Rorty, whereby the "unblinking eye of the mind" reviews the goings-on of the camera, or presence room, and the aesthetic response posited by Kames. Rorty describes Locke's philosophical imagining of mind, of how knowing gets done, whereas Kames depicts the mental processes underpinning reading pleasure. In the Lockean model, the "mind's eye" may be compared to the individual in the camera obscura observing projections flickering across the screen or tabula rasa. In Kames's model, one is, so to speak, the screen itself, onto which a world is projected. If one were to translate the difference into Freudian terms, one would say that Rorty's "mind's eye" was much the same as the detached ego, whereas Kames is largely thinking of the visualising capacity of the "tabula rasa," which he images, as being less like a passive

screen, and more like the plastic powers of the primary processes, characterized by Freud as pre-verbal, eidetic, hallucinatory, overdetermined, and pleasurable. This was precisely the objection Coleridge lodged against the Gothic romance—that someone else's reveries were being implanted in one's passive mind, finding swarming purchase. As we earlier saw, Coleridge complained that the Lockean system of replayed associations turned the world into a phantasmagoria, in which sense data floated free from objects, and images from substance; a streamy associative flow of pleasurable images, as Coleridge elsewhere puts it (1957: 1770). Reading a novel was not a detached matter of standing aloof within a "camera" of perception—"the mind's presence room"—taking stock of the process. It was an inward revolution towards dream, unconsciousness and pleasure, in which images flickered across one's tabula rasa, at once the product of someone else's imagination, and yet self-generated.

20. Gothic romances were, one might say, ideal-presence machines. As such they participated in the "sovereignty of the eye" that Crary cites as the distinguishing characteristic of modern spectatorship. The act of reading romances did not duplicate the neutral role of seeing predicated by the pre-Modern paradigm (whether through the human cornea or bevelled glass); nor does the mind's inner eye stand impassively aloof observing the mind's presence room in the act of re-perception, as if in a private camera obscura, or cinema. Rather the eye inflects the tabula rasa (the inner screen of ideal presence), and vice versa. For Wordsworth the eye is "despotic" because it links outer form to inner desire, a chain only inner vision can break, the "eye" that is not an eye. As such Wordsworth sought to introduce a decisive cleavage between advanced poetics and the popular consumption of modern, visual technology, between inner vision, in touch with incorporeal presence, and an emptied-out phantasmagoria. Crary's Foucauldian approach effaces this difference by drawing links between two epistemically-related versions of self-generated vision. Wordsworth's inner vision and the inner vision of Romance's reading trance both turn on the self-generative eye. According to this view, Gothic romance does not anticipate cinema because of an alleged mimicry of the magic lantern in the means by which it projects its fantasies. Gothic romance anticipates cinema, rather, by enthroning the reverie-making capacity of the mind's eye as the dominant determinant in aesthetic consumption, a discursive act replicated by Wordsworth's elevation of disembodied vision.

21. At this stage of the argument, Crary's hypothesis is still to be fully tested. One can say, already, that it makes better sense of the rivalry between Romance and Romanticism, prose fiction and poetry, than that provided by the story pressed by Wordsworth and Coleridge, and many others ever since. Gothic romance, it used to be said, was aesthetically retrograde, because it appealed to an eighteenth-century model of consumption (the passivity inherent in Kames' "ideal presence," with the tabula rasa as mirror), one left behind by the dynamic lamp of transcendental sight. Drawing on Crary, we can now say that the Romance struggled to maintain its prestige, not because of its archaic quality, but because of its modernity, its enthronement of the self-generating eye, which drew the fire of reactionary—or, at any rate, alarmed—forces. As a result, the Romance found it easier to press ahead as the probable novel, which promised to discipline, and regulate, fantasy (and thus the phantasmagorical).

22. At the start of my introduction I said the papers in this issue of *Praxis* addressed the following question: to what extent can the Gothic's numerous filiations with the phantasmagoria be characterised as a deep-structural affinity with emerging visual technologies? As I earlier explain, "phantasmagoria" has come to take on a specialised meaning, post Castle. Castle herself argues that the phantasmagoria should have become a kind of master trope in nineteenth-century romantic writing [cited by Hoeveler]. If it did not fulfil itself in Romantic writing, it certainly has in Gothic criticism, where it has become a master trope for discussing the uncanny doublings of the material and the human, where each takes on the unsettling characteristic of the other, when least it should. The first essay in the volume, Fred Botting's "Reading Machines", explores the unsettling history of the interchange between the mechanical and the human in Gothic writing. For Botting, the uncanny locus of this interchange is technology. The word's Greek root takes us back to the human scale, to "art", even as its modern sense

involves the dizzying prestidigations of mechanical reproduction. The modern uncanny, that is to say, the Gothic, turns on the perception of the human in the mechanical, and the mechanical in the human. Sophie Thomas's "Making Visible: The Diorama, the Double, and the (Gothic) Subject" extends Botting's focus into the realm of Romantic-era visual technology. The Diorama succeeded the Phantasmagoria and Panorama as the period's most popular, "high-tech" spectacle. As Thomas shows, the Gothic endured as a subject-matter, albeit refocused from Radcliffe's terrors to the architectural or natural sublime. But like Botting Thomas argues that the Diorama's real power to disturb derives, not from the terrors depicted, but from its uncanny technology: "Perhaps in this the Diorama doesn't simply respond to, or capitalize on, the popularity of Gothic forms, but creates a space with a view (so to speak) to mastering or capturing the abject remainders of the counterfeit's ghostly productions." In "Smoke and Mirrors: Internalizing The Magic Lantern Show in *Villette*," Diane Hoeveler examines yet another shunt in the constant interchange between visual technologies and the novel during the period. Radcliffe inspires the subject-matter of Robertson's "fantasmagorie", which is, in its turn, internalized in Charlotte Brontë's *Vilette*. As already mentioned, in "Haunted Br itain in the 1790s," Angela Wright probes the special animus critics invested in the term "mechanical", with regards to the Gothic (even as they themselves reproduced the Gothic's mechanical formulas) while Dale Townshend concludes the volume, in "Gothic Visions, Romantic Acoustics," by teasing out aspects of Wordsworth's development of an auditory aesthetic, as a means of overcoming the despotism of the eye.

23. The essays that follow are in reverse chronological order. We begin with Botting, whose approach looks to the present, and work back through the early Victorian period, via the essays of Thomas and Hoeveler, to the Romantic investigations of Wright and Townshend. The first three contributions cross-refer to the concerns triangulated by the work of Hogle, Castle and Crary, and as such help frame the last two. The organising premise of this field is that the rise of visual technology during the Romantic era impacted on modern subjectivity in ways that are still very much with us. Randy Newman's comic dystopia of a nation of stupefied television addicts certainly has direct connections with the fears expressed by Wordsworth and Coleridge. One could say that such fears are the least of it. The papers in this volume set out to articulate what something more might mean as registered in the troubled relationship between Romantic Gothicism and technology.

Notes

[1] St. Leon's story roughly maps onto the Cagliostro myth: a wandering immortal forced to move on by the suspicions created by the philanthropic exercise of his arcane arts until arrested by the Inquisition.

Back

Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era

Reading Machines

Fred Botting, Lancaster University

Reading Machines examines the metaphor of machinery in the Gothic genre and in criticisms of that genre from Walpole's Otranto to nineteenth-century automata, phantasmagoria and early cinema. It links the machine metaphor to notions of reading and the Freudian uncanny. This essay appears in _Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era_, a volume of _Romantic Circles Praxis Series_, prepared exclusively for Romantic Circles (http://www.rc.umd.edu/), University of Maryland.

Gothic Machinery

1. Gothic fiction begins in an age of mechanism and deploys an array of machines. But rather than simply informing a reaction to increasing mechanisation, the process inaugurates an in-human pattern that underlies and shocks the progress of modernity: machines beget machines.

2. Horace Walpole makes no secret of the machinery driving the plot of the first Gothic story: terror, he notes in the first preface, is the "principal engine" of the story; the "machinery," he comments later, "is invention" (4-5). The work is operated by devices and techniques designed to arouse emotional reactions rather than rational evaluation. These devices—portraits sighing, gigantic statues crashing to earth—are the motors of a plot that subordinates character to action. The machinery of fiction is tied to invocations of supernatural agency: the sighing of Alphonso's portrait allows Isabella to escape her immediate peril—the rapacious clutches of Manfred; supernatural intervention triggers another Gothic device, flight and pursuit.

3. Early reviews of *The Castle of Otranto* note the mechanisms at work: "those who can digest the absurdities of Gothic fiction and bear with the machinery of ghosts and goblins, may hope, at least, for considerable entertainment from the performance before us" (cit. McNutt 163). It is "unnatural Machinery," in the sense of Samuel Richardson's opposition between imported, improbable romances and the realistic virtues of the novel (51-2). Clara Reeve's critical reassessment of Walpole's extravagances leads her to restrict the use of supernatural devices. In this respect she follows Fielding's advice "to introduce supernatural agents as seldom as possible" and then in the only appropriately modern form, as ghosts (Fielding I: 316). But Reeve also deploys a more modern mechanical metaphor in her criticism of Walpole: his fiction causes readers' expectations to be "wound up", like clockwork creations, "to the highest pitch" (5). Concerns about the effect of fiction on readers were repeatedly voiced by eighteenth-century critics and reviewers (Williams). The application of mechanical terms to account for these effects, however, manifests an enlightenment move from supernatural causes and superstitious credulity to rational and empirical considerations. Supernatural machinery cedes to physical and psychological mechanisms. In the move from a realm beyond nature to a world understood in scientific terms, the resulting human-centredness comes to be defined in relation to machines.

4. Machines, humming and clanking throughout Gothic fiction, are increasingly bound up in discussions of the genre and its effects. Judith Wilt's examination of the eighteenth-century "machinery" of literary contrivance and convention notes how, from Walpole, it "spreads from its locus in plot to encompass character and even sentiment" to include, in Radcliffe, even setting as a mechanism (123-5). Radcliffe further imbricates the relationship between narrative and reading machineries. Her technique of the

explained supernatural, which exhausts superstitious expectations through extended suspense, is seen to play narrative machinery against mental mechanisms. Coleridge, reviewing *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, argues that suspense is heightened by ever-elusive mysteries to keep a reader's curiosity "upon stretch from page to page":

> this art of escaping the guesses of the reader has been brought to perfection along with the reader's sagacity; just as the various inventions of locks, bolts, and private drawers, in order to secure, fasten, and hide, have always kept pace with the ingenuity of the pickpocket and housebreaker, whose profession it is to unlock, unfasten, and lay open what you have taken so much pains to conceal. (1794, 361)

The analogy opposing writer-locksmith to reader-thief situates narrative convention and technical invention on the same mechanical plane as readerly expectation and surprise.

5. The implications of the pattern suggested by the analogy of locksmith and thief are drawn out elsewhere in reviews of Radcliffe's fiction: formulas work by mechanical repetition and yet, through new contrivances, like the explained supernatural, can introduce excitement. As these techniques become familiar and conventional in their turn, devices must be altered or enhanced to remain effective. The mechanical repetition of formulaic devices seems doomed to wear out through excessive use, like the springs and levers of any clockwork toy. Readers become tired of predictable contrivances. Such, one reviewer hopes, will be the fate of the genre: its repetitive patterns will eventually divest it of interest (Anon). The model, Coleridge suggests, also applies to Radcliffe's fiction: in heightening curiosity and desire to a point at which a reader can only be disappointed by rational explanation, it seems to play narrative mechanism against habituated expectation, bursting superstitious credulity in the process: "the passion of terror," itself "excited by trick," "would degenerate into repetition, and would disappoint curiosity" (1798, 166).

6. Tied to the mechanisms of narrative—in terror, excitement, curiosity and undiscriminating passion— the reader, too, was seen in mechanical terms. Coleridge's attack on the "beggarly daydreaming" of romance reading noted that "the whole *material* and imagery of the doze is supplied *ab extra* by a sort of *mental camera obscura* manufactured at the printing office, which *pro tempore* fixes, reflects and transmits the moving fantasms of one man's delirium, so as to people the barrenness of an hundred other brains afflicted with the same trance or suspension of all common sense and all definite purpose" (1975, 28). No cultivated discrimination, no synthetic imagination and no natural feeling are in evidence. The empty heads of readers are the passive sites of magic lantern projections: artificial and phantasmatic images flit across a barely conscious mental screen, mind reduced to a vessel of delusion or delirium. Fictional machinery, equated with the magic lantern or phantasmagoria so popular in public shows of the late eighteenth century, transmits its "moving fantasms" from barren brain to barren brain, a mechanical process of stimulation that turns readers into mechanical effects or machines themselves. The passivity of romance readers—wound up, excited, disappointed, only ever reacting to narrative effects—makes them little more than mechanical puppets jerked by the strings of fiction's repetitive and formulaic apparatus, subjected to terrors, shocks and thrills: automated stimulation evacuates rather than assures rational subjectivity.

7. The circulations and deployments of mechanical metaphors in and in relation to Gothic fictions are signs of its subjection to enlightenment imperatives. If the genre seems to foster superstitious credulity, it does so only mechanically and in the interests of a process of rationalisation. Walter Scott's retrospective assessments of romance compare Radcliffe's narrative techniques to springs whose workings are worn out by repeated pressure: the reading public, sated with horrors, becomes "indifferent to the strongest stimuli." "Supernatural machinery," appropriate to superstitious, unenlightened ages, finds itself unsuited to a rational period of "universal incredulity": "belief in

prodigies and supernatural events has gradually declined in proportion to the advancement of human knowledge" (1881, 272). Supernaturalism is replaced by rational understanding and any persistence of spectral or demonic figures is seen to be an effect of mental disorder, a "strange and temporary delusion" signalling the breakdown of normal mental functioning. Mechanical explanations, in the service of reason, debunk supernatural and superstitious beliefs, delusion now being caused by technical illusions.

8. In the process, concerns about supernatural occurrences are superseded by anxieties about human "machinations," that is, the power of writers to seduce, corrupt and delude. Scott notes how "delusions" were practiced by "Secret Tribunals" like the Rosicrucians and the Illuminati, their "machinations" providing inspiration for Schiller's romances (1824, 569). The immediate context for these anxieties, exacerbated by the popularity of Gothic fictions, then at their height, was the French Revolution, especially when it was understood, by Burke among others, as a "monstrous fiction" conjured up by radicals and revolutionaries viciously conspiring in secret societies (124). For T. J. Matthias, explicitly connecting the horrors of fiction and the terrors of revolution, literature was a "great engine" furnished with the ambivalent capacity of supporting or subverting good government (162). Conspiratorial anxieties form the basis of *Horrid Mysteries*: the translator's preface warns against the "machinations" of secret societies like the Illuminati while the plot of the novel, trying to demystify superstitious credulity and disclose devious scheming, turns on the terrifying and comic possibilities of theatrical effects, "natural magic" (the technical equivalent of natural history, perhaps) and electrical machines (xvii). While apparently magical effects can be generated and explained by reason, a terror remains in the spectre of conspiracy and persecution and, of course, the curious readerly pleasures of being deluded by sensational spectacle.

9. Gothic machinery, in rationalising and mechanising supernatural occurrences and readerly superstition, establishes a cycle of repetition, boredom, stimulation and disappointment that threatens enlightenment ideals of the rational and discriminating individual: its mechanisms evacuate morality, judgement, and even sense, by stimulating a seemingly insatiable appetite for excitement and sensation. Worn out, repeatedly over-stimulated and exhausted, new tricks and devices have to be invented to keep the reader wound up. The pattern that emerges sets the mechanism of popular culture in motion. In opposition, furnished with an organic and spiritual vocabulary, a distinctly modern aesthetic emerges to define itself against, in Wordsworth's terms, "frantic novels" threatening enduring appreciation of the literary greats (936). High cultural aesthetic judgement is reiterated in Coleridge's attack on romances, in Scott's criticism and in Macauley's denigration of the "absurdity" of Walpole's "machinery" (117).

10. The machine of popular culture kept ticking over, even if the first wave of formulaic and mechanical Gothic production had burnt itself and its readership out by the second decade of the nineteenth century. *Frankenstein*, notably, discards almost every eighteenth-century Gothic motif and device, to the point that it is debatable whether the novel can be called Gothic at all. Readings of revolutionary anxieties, secret societies and Romanticism combine with discussions of alchemical and electrical experiments to give its monstrous creation extensive modern resonances: the creature is made and remade by reading, to be monstered further in the mirror of others' reactions. A creation on the borders of fantasy and reality, it gives imaginative form to a variety of familial and social anxieties, a figure of mobs, political, scientific and industrial transformation (O'Flinn, Baldick). Against the "stupendous mechanism" of the Creator of world, the machinations of a would-be creator provide a captivating screen of monstrous metaphor (Shelley 9).

11. Even before Shelley hinted at any religious allegory, the theme of presumption had been set in motion on stage. As a formless and formable figure, the monster metaphor spreads across genres and media to leave a multitude of meanings in its wake. Popular dramatic success, in the many burlesques and melodramas playing on London and Parisian stages in the period, tied monstrosity to sensational

spectacle, striking costume and theatrical effects: never before had one playgoer witnessed so complicated or extraordinary machinery (Forry 11). Monsters and machines, shadowing the haunts of Romantic humanism and naturalism, are not so strange bedfellows. In cartoons, like "The Political Frankenstein" of 1832, the creator animates a paper monster (the Reform Bill) with the help of chemical apparatuses (Forry 45). From print to stage to screen, the monster circulates in depictions of fearsome machinery and in new apparatuses of cultural production. Railway engines and systems, in cartoons and serialised fiction, become monstrous symbols of supernaturalised social transformation, a "fiery devil" relentlessly consuming everything in their path (Dickens, 354). In 1910, the Edison Kinetogram released a single reel film. Before that, Edison's toy company had manufactured automata that caused commentators to register not only a sense of the uncanny but also the name of Frankenstein (Wood 117, 124, 128). Photography in the nineteenth century, preserving life on dead surfaces, is seen as "a way of possessing material objects in a strangely decorporealised yet supernaturally vivid form" (Castle, 137). Vampires, like monsters and doubles, are also surrounded by technical devices: *Dracula* abounds with new instruments and scientific techniques (Wicke, Kittler 1997). Even economic practices, alienating humans in factories and systems of exchange, evince vampiric characteristics (Marx, 1973; 1976). Later, in German Expressionist cinema and in Hollywood, Gothic figures become staples in the shadowplay of the screen.

Uncanny machines

12. In magic lantern shows of the 1790s, the uncanny is realised: "dark rooms, where spectres from the dead they rise" (Castle 141). Phantasmagoric shows participated in a process which saw the internalisation of supernaturalism. Ghosts moved from being effects of mere optical trickery and illusion to being things of the mind: a "spectralisation" occurred, marking the "absorption of ghosts into the world of thought" (Castle 142). Through technical intervention ghosts could be explained as effects of internal processes. While ingenious deployments of new visual technologies seemed to offer rational explanations and models of mental activity to transform the understanding of the mind, a residue of supernaturalism and ghostliness haunted the technical devices themselves: able to present apparitions to disbelieving eyes, the wondrous but disconcerting, pleasurable and threatening effects of phantasmagoria testified to the technical capacity of altering one's sense of reality, contravening the maxim that seeing was believing.

13. Early cinema had its conjurors: George Meliès was described as "king of fantasmagoria" and "magician of the screen" (Wood 178). Cinema also became a medium where psychoanalysis converged with contemporary cultural production. Otto Rank notes how film manifests unconscious process (7); Hugo Munsterberg describes how "uncanny ghosts appear from nothing and into nothing" (15). Friedrich Kittler argues that cinema renders the unconscious visible and then supplants it: doubles become technical, rather than human phenomena (1997, 45). Terry Castle, in her discussion of phantasmagoria, accounts for the enduring strangeness of machines in terms of modernity's "spectralizing habit": "our compulsive need, since the mid-nineteenth century, to invent machines that mimic and reinforce the image-producing powers of consciousness" (137). The habit finds repeated "technological embodiment" in magic lanterns, photography, cinema, television. Castle's case is almost circular in its return upon the curious technical self-evidence of the uncanny: the mechanism invoked in the phrase "compulsive need," a mechanism of unconscious or even genetic origin, is that of the compulsion to repeat. The notion, tied to the death drive, was proposed by Sigmund Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, written at same the time as, and alluded to in, his essay on the uncanny. The precedence of consciousness—mimicked by machines—is also assumed by Castle. However, the imbrication of supernature, consciousness, technology and the uncanny in Castle's own argument suggests other directions of influence and makes causality difficult to locate. Perhaps new apparatuses do more than mimic consciousness: they engage in "retraining the human sensorium," as Walter Benjamin suggests in his discussion of cinematic shocks (1973, 117).

14. Banished from an increasingly empirical and rational world, supernatural figures like ghosts occupy the mind. Castle's contention has several effects: mind, understood in mechanical terms as a magic lantern, can be subjected to the imperatives, models and techniques of rational enquiry. Delusion and delirium, signs of temporary, technical disorder, explain away the existence of supernatural beings. Though rendered hallucinatory effects, ghosts, in their unreality as "internal mental processes," come to appear "more real than ever before—in that they now occupied (even preoccupied) the intimate space of the mind itself" (Castle 165). Haunted, "phantasmagorical," "supernaturalized" (123), mind does not remain a straightforwardly rational site. Moreover, the rational mind fails to contain irrationalities, which spill out, shape perceptual experience and colour phenomenal reality: "in the moment of romantic self-absorption, the other was indeed reduced to a phantom—a purely mental effect, or image, as it were, on the screen of consciousness itself" (Castle 125). Other humans become ghostly in a distinctly Gothic process that amounts to a "supernaturalization of everyday life" (Castle 123). The overlapping of fantasy and reality, the confounding of inner and external worlds, the lack of distinction between mind and materiality, are (im)precisely the defining features of the uncanny. The role of mechanisms in the production of uncanny disturbances, integral and yet ultimately subordinated to consciousness in Castle's account, have, it seems, both causal and supplementary effects. Even Freud discounts mechanisms, other than psychological ones of course, in his discussion of the uncanny. But the prominence given to phantasmagoria by Castle and to cinema by early psychoanalysts suggests a more entangled relationship.

15. Not only do projective apparatuses allow rationality to locate ghosts in the mind, mechanical models of mental operations make mind visible in a certain way, thereby enabling interiority to be externalised and, even, supplanted by mechanism. As supernaturalism is absorbed, to seep out again, mechanism, projected internally, draws out a different image of consciousness. And mechanisms become haunted, garnished with ghostliness. In the form of phantasmagorical, theatrical and cinematic tricks, and, ironically, to demonstrate rational realities, mechanical apparatuses conjure up, simulate, supernatural phenomena: "there is no difference between occult and technological media" (Kittler 1990, 229). Strangeness extends, by way of uncanny mechanisms, beyond individual minds: in Coleridge's metaphor of the camera obscura the "moving phantasms" of a single person's delirium spread in mechanical transmission to others. Machines, it seems, do more than mimic mind: their "mediation" of consciousness, phenomenal experience and reality generates new images and sensations, new models of mental process. These, in turn, affect experience, self-consciousness and the relation to the world, engendering a disturbance that is psychological and collective, individual and social, an uncanny crossing and confounding of distinctions that, in the upheavals of the late eighteenth century, became difficult to contain.

16. Uncanniness circulates with the onset of modernity: its disturbance, at the level of experience and self-definition, serves as a social and psychological register of political and economic transformations. Self, always a political and social entity, is redefined, along with the natural world, by enlightenment systems of knowledge: rational, individual, moral, this modern being was remade in accordance with the freedoms of bourgeois and industrial modes of production (free to sell his or her labour and free to buy this or that commodity), the freedoms of democratic representation (opinion, association, election) and the freedoms of aesthetic creation and consumption. In this context, the significance of the double and its incarnation in literary and material form (in the shape of clockwork automata) is telling. Mechanical imitations of natural and human forms and functions did not always excite terror and horror. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Mladen Dolar notes, mechanical dolls and automata were displayed for the entertainment of kings and courts, mere toys and puppets of a craftsman's ingenuity designed for idle amusement. The shift from monarchical authority to enlightened human knowledge changed the way automata were perceived: mechanism embodies (in the manner if La Mettrie's Man-machine) a systematic understanding of human workings, a subjection to the inviolable principles of rational knowledge. Bodies, divested of spirit, are now able to be utilized

economically in the industrial revolution: a technological reduction is put into effect, and with it arise fears of a de-spiritualisation of humanity.

17. Manifesting the doubleness that threatens individual uniqueness, automata mimic and supplement human functions and appearance, disturbingly disclosing a "mechanical side" to men and women (Dolar 46-7). At the same time, humans glimpse themselves in the machine, the same and yet different, duplicatable and dispensable, replicatable and replaceable. Dividing appearance from inner reality and function from value, machines begin to erase the very differences held up as definitively human: "machines and automata have no secrets, their springs and levers are accessible to all" (Dolar 53). The horror that attended encounters with ghostly or artificial doubles is linked by Slavoj Zizek to the emergence of Kantian or modern subjectivity: "encountering one"s double or being followed and persecuted by him is the ultimate experience of terror, something which shatters the very core of the subject's identity" (315). Automata, like doubles, hollow out the subject, make its workings visible and its inner, private secrets subject to knowledge, power and manipulation. The move from mere entertainment to threat is explicit in Jacques de Vaucanson's work: the inventor of the clockwork duck that simulated excretion responded to the hostility of the silk workers whose livelihood was threatened by his construction of an automatic loom by making another machine, this time operated by a donkey. The contrast between amusing duck and hateful donkey is striking: "the first was designed for man's entertainment; the second was meant to show man that he was dispensable" (Wood 38). The uncanny registers a displacement of human capacities, marking a shift into a new system in which previous notions no longer cohere with the rational imperatives reorganising reality. The fantasy that articulates an individual sense of self with a corresponding humanised reality breaks apart. Ideological and economic frames fail to hold.

Metaphor Machines

18. The uncanny manifests a movement, a displacement or relocation which foregrounds indistinction and disjunction, a destabilisation of boundaries within and between psychic and material realities. The strangeness evoked by highly visible mechanisms, like automata or phantasmagoria, or by a shift in larger systems of economic and social organisation, often occludes the less evident operations of another popular machine: writing. The first Gothic story, with its blend of ancient and modern romance, is designed precisely as a movement between two worlds: where romance leaves "the powers of fancy at liberty to expatiate through boundless realms of invention, and thence creating more interesting situations," modern novels conduct "the mortal agents in his drama according to the rules of probability." The aim, Walpole asserts in his second preface to *Otranto*, is "to make them think, speak and act, as it might be supposed mere men and women would do in extraordinary positions." Where "the actions, sentiments, conversations of the heroes and heroines of ancient days were as unnatural as the machines employed to put them in motion," the blend of the two forms of romance constructs a new machine which allows probability and invention (7-8). Walpole's fiction is designed to transport its protagonists from a recognisable and familiar environment to an extraordinary place while character remains the same. Yet the very different situations in which protagonists are placed will require responses that, though remaining in character, as it were, are also very different. Walpole assumes a consistency, privileging character over context, when he goes on to claim that even in encounters with miracles or "the most stupendous phenomena" people "never lose sight of their human character" (8). Humanity, Walpole assumes, is located very much within, independent of setting or situation. The mechanisms of his fiction, however, tend in the opposite direction. Eighteenth-century critics complained that fiction "transported" readers out of real life and "human paths" (Williams 151).

19. Walpole's characters, for all their supposed realness and humanness, are transformed in the move from one realm to another: emptied of content and substance, they are subject only to the mechanisms of plot and form. Charged with an impossible task of remaining realistic in unreal settings, character is split,

its integrity opened to the vacillations of external context. Furthermore, character, in Walpole's plan, becomes a cipher for another figure taking shape in the eighteenth century: the reader. What he expects his characters to do—remain the same while undergoing improbable experiences—mirrors the split engendered by the reading process itself, a split hinging on identification: from one situation, seated with book in hand, the reader is moved to another more fantastic setting, transported metaphorically in recognising or identifying with hero or heroine and feeling accordingly. To be the same and be different simultaneously, to experience oneself as someone else or someone else as oneself, form aspects of readerly pleasure. Identification demands a peculiar doubleness; it has something of the uncanny about it:

> This relation is accentuated by mental processes leaping from one of the characters to another—by what we could call telepathy—, so that the one possesses knowledge, feelings and experience in common with the other. Or it is marked by the fact that the subject identifies himself with someone else, so that he is in doubt as to which his self is, or substitutes the extraneous self for his own. In other words there is a doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self. (Freud 234)

All fiction, to judge from Freud's argument, is underpinned by some degree of strangeness: for fiction to work it demands movement from one figure to another, a crossing from self to other in which both are doubled and divided. Identification, of course, discovers identity in places and figures other to the self. Transport and identification, moreover, are effects of metaphor. Metaphor, as the paternal signifier, inaugurally splits the human subject between undifferentiated biological being and self-identification in language, furnishing identity at the expense of the real. "What we usually call it," comments Lacan on metaphor "is identification": it works topologically so that the subject is "sustained by its positional articulation" (218; 226). In the uncanny, what comes to the fore is both a circulation of disturbing displacements, identifications and mechanical metaphors and the curious mechanisms of metaphor itself.

20. Freud's efforts to exclude automata notwithstanding, the uncanny remains entwined with machines and presentational apparatuses. E. T. A. Hoffman's "The Sandman," on which Freud's essay focuses, indicates the prominence of literature as well as automatic enamoration and delirium. Freud is too hasty, as Hélène Cixous suggests from a feminist position, to dismiss Ernst Jentsch's understanding of the uncanny in terms of "intellectual uncertainty," and, along with it, diminish the disturbances posed by the lifelike female automaton, Olympia. The psychoanalyst, moreover, finds it hard to exclude literary examples of the uncanny and repeatedly returns to signification, meaning and metaphor. In reading, the past returns in the present, the dead come alive, cold letters animated by vital imagining. It is a two-way process. The reverse is also the case: the reader can be animated or activated into imaginative life by inanimate words and fictional mechanisms to respond automatically to the touch of the text.

21. Bound up with language and mechanisms (machines and mental processes), the uncanny is, in many ways, a technological phenomenon whose effects are accentuated by the shifts and disturbances of technical innovation. Its domain extends beyond the return of infantile beliefs alone: it circulates in the telling of stories, the reading of books, and the seeing of images. Gothic fictions cannot be simply put down as merely mechanistic, formulaic and low cultural aberrations, despite the critical reiteration of mechanical metaphors to describe the effects of romances on undiscriminating readers whose minds work mechanically. The burgeoning of metaphors that entangle minds, machines and mysteries fails to be held in check by the variety of media which generate uncanny effects. Everyday life is "supernaturalized" at the same time the supernatural is internalised (Castle 123). Gaby Wood, discussing the imbrication of automated production, clockwork dolls, visual apparatuses and Gothic figures in the nineteenth century, notes how the uncanny "left its physical, concrete self behind" to

"become generalized, diffused throughout a new world of spectacle and magic" (160). Through fictional and media techniques, the uncanny spreads, located among collective and cultural spaces rather than individual interiors. Attracting associations with or projections of supernatural and uncanny phenomena, machines themselves assume the power to generate Gothic effects, spreading a sense of uncanniness still further afield.

22. As modernity finds itself increasingly dominated by various media, it, too, becomes suffused with an uncanny and phantasmagorical aura. Walter Benjamin, whose analysis of cinema links the medium firmly to the repetitive and mechanical rhythms and shocks of factory labour, regularly employs the term "phantasmagoria" in his discussions of modernity:

> Our investigation proposes to show how, as a consequence of this reifying representation of civilization, the new forms of behaviour and the new economically and technologically based creations that we owe to the nineteenth century enter the universe of a phantasmagoria. These creations undergo this "illumination" not only in a theoretical manner; by an ideological transposition, but also in the immediacy of their perceptible presence. They are manifest as phantasmagorias. Thus appear the arcades--first entry in the field of iron construction; thus appear the world exhibitions, whose link to the entertainment industry is significant. Also included in this order of phenomena is the experience of the flâneur, who abandons himself to the phantasmagorias of the marketplace. Corresponding to these phantasmagorias of the market, where people only appear as types, are the phantasmagorias of the interior; which are constituted by man's imperious need to leave the imprint of his private individual existence on the rooms he inhabits. (1999, 14)

In the World Exhibition of 1867 "the phantasmagoria of capitalist culture attains its most radiant unfolding," glorifying "the exchange value of the commodity" (1999, 8). Consumed by "phantasmagoria," distracted, entertained, spectators enjoy their alienation from others and themselves and sink into the mass "in an attitude that is pure reaction." The same occurs in relation to the glitter of the commodity or the intoxicating flows of the urban mass: "the crowd is the veil through which the familiar city beckons to the flâneur as phantasmagoria—now a landscape, now a room. Both become elements of the department store, which makes use of flânerie itself to sell its goods." The commodities that shine from the windows of the arcades and stores are also part of the phantasmagoria and the means whereby the private, domestic realm is permeated: in a world divided between work and leisure, where reality is dominated by the office, modernity's worker "needs the domestic interior to sustain him in his illusions" (1999, 8). "In the interior," Benjamin continues, "he brings together the far away and the long ago. His living room is a box in the theater of the world" (1999, 9). The illusions that mask economic realities with distractions, the theatre, the glitter of commodities, also suggest that this "phantasmagoria of the interior" relates to the inner world of the subject him or herself. Phantasmagoria are associated with the false consciousness underpinning bourgeois existence (1999, 11).

23. Modernity's other subject, intoxicated, commodified, repeatedly shocked, alienated, and living a thoroughly phantasmagorical existence, seems to be cut from a curiously Gothic cloth: s/he is not distinguished as a particularly rational and moral being, furnished with fibre and substance, but, like a heroine, somewhat superficial, hollow, and tingling with affect. Politically, ideologically, socially and economically, modern subjectivity takes shape in the course of the eighteenth century: the civic and humanist being promoted by enlightenment discourse—rational, virtuous, productive and responsible —emerges alongside a counterpart whose qualities, or lack of them, are delineated in popular fictions and constructions of the readers who consume them. Critical concerns about the dangerous effects of romances emphasise passion, appetite, indulgence, licentiousness and vice. Reason and morality seem

on the point of being eclipsed by a ravenous mob of readers, the new species of fiction spawning a new species of reader captivated by sensation, luxury, romance and adventure rather than instruction and aesthetic or intellectual elevation. Such a reader, like the characters of Gothic fiction, corresponds to economic shifts. Andrea Henderson argues that the move from use value to exchange value can be seen in the bifurcations of Gothic character: what was internal and private in respect of the coherence and merit of individual personality finds itself measured on an external scale, inner states and qualities being defined through interrelationships and formal comparisons. Identity becomes, in Humean terms, "an aggregate of characteristics, each of which was understood in commodity terms" (Henderson 227). Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* makes explicit the implications: honour loses out to its more formal and insubstantial "shadow," virtue, and social customs like politeness sound "more ridiculous to the ear than the voice of a puppet": "the world of the man of feeling of the 1770s is a world of 'shadowy' forms emptied of content; of hollow, powerless people who have, in essence, sacrificed their souls; a world of coins—the prototype of the gothic world" (Henderson 229-30). Social and economic forms— empty, shadowy, hollow—are mirrored by the vacuous characters and formulas of Gothic fiction, all puppets, automata, soulless mechanisms.

24. The evocation of feelings beyond rational and conscious control (making the hairs stand on the back of the neck; freezing or curdling the blood), constitutes a principal aim of Gothic fiction: such emotional expenditure is undertaken without higher aspirations. If the locks and springs of techniques of terror, formulaic and repetitive as they are, remain, as Scott and others emphasise, in danger of wearing out, so, too, does the reader's capacity for intense emotional reactions. Repetition leads to habituation and boredom; stimulation needs to be increased to engender any affect. While new media, machines, spectacles and sensations are generated, each process reinforces the automatism of emotional production and expenditure. The facility with which Gothic fiction and figures are adapted to various media, gothicising them along the way, is only part of the story. While Gothic images, themes and plots provide ready-made sensational resources highly suited to melodramatic media and the shadowplay of early film, the genre offers more than exciting subject matter: Gothic associations provide a means of reflecting on the technical and subjective effects of new media, its spectres, monsters, and undead providing figures for the processes and effects of presentational apparatuses, encoding emotional responses to the arrival of new technologies.

25. Printing presses create a monstrous reading public; ghosts attach themselves to phantasmagorical, photographic or cinematic projections. The uncanny wanders spectrally between readers, viewers, pages and screens, and the mechanisms of projection and the ghosts they engender occupy disturbed mental spaces as explanations of phenomena become hallucinatory and psychopathological. Moved inwards, ghosts disappear from the world, and mind find itself haunted; moved outwards, the haunting spreads disturbingly across external, real spaces. Motion and emotion (and next, e-motion?): feeling is stimulated and expended, an operation in which external mechanisms and internal processes combine. Interiority is drawn out, ex-pressed, squeezed from subjectivity by the shocks and surprises of narrative and cinematic mechanism: the reader or viewer is hollowed, evacuated of content and substance, exhausted of affect, emotional expenditure leaving only a puppet, automaton, doll. Emptied out, the space of subjectivity is ready to be filled anew.

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Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era

Making Visible: The Diorama, the Double and the (Gothic) Subject

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This essay begins with the advent of the London Diorama in the 1820s, and examines the nature—and the technological basis—of its visual appeal. It explores the use of gothic subjects (particularly gothic ruins) to create a complete aesthetic illusion, and demonstrates its dependence upon a number of inter-related themes and techniques (doubling, death, repetition) in the uncanny re-creation of the visibly real. This essay appears in _Gothic Technologies_, a volume of _Romantic Circles Praxis Series_, prepared exclusively for Romantic Circles (http://www.rc.umd.edu/), University of Maryland.

1. Of the pictures opening at the Diorama in Regent's Park in 1830, *The Times* made the following note:

   > The views at the Diorama are again changed, and France and Switzerland are once more placed before our eyes without our encountering the nausea of crossing the Channel, the roguery of continental innkeepers, and all the other innumerable and indescribable miseries of foreign travel. Thanks to the contrivances of modern ingenuity, the "long drawn aisles and fretted vaults" of the Cathedral at Rheims are now fixed snugly in the Regent's-park, and the rocks of Mont St. Gothard, torn from their old foundations, are reposing quietly in the same vicinity. All this is owing to the magic pencil of Messrs. Daguerre and Bouton, who, if they have not given us the realities of these magnificent objects, have at least given us imitations of them so wonderfully minute and vivid, as to appear more like the illusions of enchantment than the mere creations of art. (22 April 1830)

   The continued appeal of the London Diorama, after seven years in business, is neatly conveyed here: questions of convenience aside, the Diorama as a form of popular visual entertainment retained an impressive power to create and control the field of the visible, and to produce illusions so convincingly "real" that they appeared to be the result of magic rather than the "mere" work of art.

2. Not for nothing was the Diorama referred to as a "temple of optical delusion" (*The Times*, 30 August 1824). If the experience of the Diorama took on religious overtones, this was not only because of the awe-inducing nature of the spectacle itself, but also because many of the scenes involved specimens of religious architecture. Churches, cathedrals, cloisters—all offered apparently fitting sites for miraculous (visual) transformations, where the stillness of art could be brought to life through subtle changes of light. But more noteworthy still was the marked preference at the Diorama for "the elegant remains of Gothic architecture" (*The Times*, 21 March 1825). One of the pictures on display in 1827, "Ruins in a Fog," was described at some length in a contemporary guide-book, *A Picturesque Guide to the Regent's Park*:

   > [the scene was] a Gothic cloister in decay, situated at the extremity of a narrow valley; where all appeared sombre and desolate. All was enveloped in fog and in icy stillness. The fog gradually dispersed and was succeeded by beautiful sunlight. The fine Saxon arches and mouldering cloisters of this picture were greatly admired. (40)

Fig. 1 "The Effect of Fog and Snow Seen

3. Because such picturesque scenes were still fashionable in the early nineteenth century, little attention has been paid to this perhaps obvious choice of subject. The variegated and visually indeterminate nature of much Gothic architecture, ruined or otherwise, clearly lent itself to the special effects aimed at by the technological means of the Diorama. This paper, however, will probe more deeply the intriguing link, or secret affinity, between the Diorama and its Gothic spaces, extending this engagement to other features of the Gothic than architectural style, although there are important links to be explored there too. Certainly it is the case, as William Galperin has pointed out, that Daguerre favoured a subject that was not only materially, but also "*theoretically* in ruins—a subject that, as Erwin Panofsky describes it, 'enclose[d] an often wildly and always apparently boundless interior, and thus create[d] a space determinate and impenetrable from without but indeterminate and penetrable within'" (Galperin 64). Moreover, there are thematic and arguably psychoanalytic determinations attaching to the Diorama, in both means and matter, that make this subject choice peculiarly apt, particularly where its Gothic preoccupations (understood also in a literary and theoretical sense) disturb questions of aesthetic representation. Its oppositional mode of presentation involves elements of doubling and repetition, alongside a preoccupation with the uncanny grounds of illusion. The Diorama, as a revelatory visual technology that exploits the penetrable indeterminacy of Gothic interiority, apparently puts the visible clearly on display; but as this paper will show, its presentation of (in)visibility reveals the hidden as caught up in the spectral presence of the dead, and of death itself.

4. The key figure in the development of the Diorama was Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre, whose career, before his ground-breaking role in the invention of photography, involved set painting and stage design for the theatre, and panorama painting with Prévost, where his noted skill for producing naturalistic effects was put to good use (his scenery for productions at the Théâtre Ambigu-Comique and the Opéra was famous for its *trompe l'oeil* realism). Possibly the idea of the Diorama drew from an exhibition of diaphanoramas—transparent pictures—in Paris in 1821.[2] Daguerre's Diorama, for which he designed not only the concept but also his own building, opened in 1822 and within a year, plans were in place to open a Diorama in London, which led to the opening of the Diorama in Regent's Park in the autumn of 1823. Daguerre and his partner, Charles Bouton, exhibited a fresh set of pictures each year, which would open in London after a successful run in Paris.[3] Daguerre's brother-in-law, John Arrowsmith, patented the design for the Regent's Park Diorama in early 1823. The terms of the patent were ambitious and precise: the aim was to offer 'an improved mode of publicly exhibiting pictures or painted scenery of every description, and of distributing or directing the daylight upon or through them, so as to produce many beautiful effects of light and shade, which I denominate a "Diorama."'[4]

Fig. 2 Thomas Shepherd's Coloured plate of East side of Park Square, and Diorama, Regent's Park, London, 1829[5]

As the patent stipulated, the scenes were to be painted on translucent material in such a way that daylight from high windows and skylights invisible to the audience, intercepted and/or altered by "a number of coloured transparent and moveable blinds or curtains," could create the naturalistic illusion of three dimensional space. The manipulation of these blinds by an assortment of lines and pulleys introduced "many surprising changes in the appearance of the colours of the painting or scenery" (Arrowsmith 2)—thus transforming the image from a static object into a site of unexpected change, often of a temporal nature (such as from night-time to day light). The use of both reflected and mediated light gave rise to the impression that the scene was brilliantly illuminated entirely from within. The pictures were very large (roughly seventy by forty five feet) and were displayed in pairs,

with only one visible at a time. One of the more innovative aspects of the building design was a rotating "saloon"; the seating area for the audience was to pivot around a central well, revolving "through an angle of 73° between scenes" (5). A complete show would take about thirty minutes, with fifteen minutes per picture, but viewers could stay on and see the sequence repeated.

Fig. 3 "Diorama, Park Square, Regents Park: Plan of the Principal Story" 1823

Designed by A. [Auguste Charles] Pugin and built by J. Morgan[6]

5. The range of subjects depicted was relatively narrow, generally of either landscapes or architectural interiors (most shows consisted of one of each, one painted by Daguerre—usually the interior scene—and the other by Bouton). Unlike the panorama, which often displayed scenes of topical interest, the Diorama devoted itself more-or-less exclusively to "the public taste for romantic topography, the stuff of picturesque art and of sentimental antiquarianism" (Altick 166). Altick suggests these shows functioned as a spectacular counterpart to the albums of engraved scenes that were popular at the end of the Regency period. To a great extent, this is borne out by the pictures on display at the London Diorama in the 1820s and 30s: in 1823, the Valley of Sarnen and Canterbury Cathedral; in 1824, Brest and Chartres Cathedral; in 1825, Holyrood Chapel; in 1826, Roslyn Abbey and Rouen Cathedral; in 1827, Ruins in a Fog and St. Cloud, Paris; in 1828, the Valley of Unterseen and the Cloisters of St. Wandrille, and so on. This list of subjects, however, and the dynamic dimension of the Diorama, suggests an appeal of a different kind as well, though one that refers equally to lingering eighteenth-century aesthetic preoccupations—to the aesthetics of the sublime, and its correlative, the obscure horror assigned to Gothic subjects and scenes.

6. The latent possibilities of the Diorama as a *technology* (for in its choice of subjects, "latency" is continually dramatized, as I shall argue below) were exploited by a short-lived competitor Diorama, the "British Diorama" at the Royal Bazaar, Oxford Street. Its producers attempted to create more spectacular effects, assisted by gas, which lent itself more readily (and often rather too effectively) to the creation of firelight. In 1829, for example, a scene of "The Burning of York Minster" was displayed, of which a vivid description was offered by a contemporary viewer: "A faint reddish light betrays itself through some of the windows of the minster; by degrees it increases in vividness; until at length the flame from which it proceeds bursts fiercely forth, illuminating the adjacent towers, and mingled volumes of smoke, and masses of brilliant sparks, now rapidly ascend to the skies; a great portion of the roof of the building falls in; and the dreadful conflagration is at its height when the scene closes" (Altick 167). A month after this scene was first presented, the bazaar burnt to the ground when some ignited turpentine set fire to the transparency on show. Even in Daguerre's Diorama, which in its dependence on natural light was arguably closer to the preoccupations of conventional painting, fire was a constant hazard: not only was his Paris Diorama building twice destroyed by fire, but along with it, much of his store of pictures.

7. Helmut and Alison Gernsheim suggest that competition and waning interest eventually put the London Diorama, the "first and most famous in Britain," out of business in the early 1850s (Gernsheim 41). Nevertheless, in its final years, the Diorama exhibited some intriguingly experimental "pictures." Among these was the spectacle of midnight mass in Catholic churches. Initially, these interior views were made popular in England by Bouton, and involved the materialisation of a congregation, along with light and music (a popular choice was the Gloria from Haydn's Mass No. 1), out of apparent gloom and emptiness. Bouton's successor in London, Charles Rénoux, created a much-lauded exterior view of Notre-Dame in 1843, which recreated the changing effects of evening light—from sunset, to moonrise, and finally to the illumination of street lamps—and culminated in the emanation of song and prayer from the Cathedral, to reportedly transcendent effect.[7] Impressive as these pictures were, however, they were the last to be shown at the Regent's Park Diorama, which reopened as a Baptist

chapel in 1855.

II

8. The Diorama was only one of an extraordinary number of "oramic" displays to capture the popular imagination throughout the nineteenth century. The cosmorama, the pleorama, the myriorama (to name only three)—all in various ways sought to make the visible spectacular.[8] Its nearest relative and rival, in scope and popularity, was the panorama, although technologically, with its use of projected light and transparencies, the Diorama descended more directly from the magic lantern, the phantasmagoria, and from de Loutherbourg's Eidophusikon—which is apposite, given de Loutherbourg's own background in the theatre, and interest in the dramatic possibilities of light. The panorama was nevertheless an important stimulus to the development of the Diorama, and it is often supposed that the arrested movement and static atmospheric conditions of panoramic representations contributed directly to the invention of the Diorama.[9] The principal innovation, and novelty, of the panorama was that it presented a 360 degree view of its subject. It was the invention of an Irish painter, Robert Barker, who referred to it in his 1787 patent as "Nature à Coup d'Oeil"—nature at a glance, or view at a glance. It was to offer an "all embracing view," and simulate the experience of being "on the very spot." Viewers surveyed the scene around them from a central viewing platform, constructed in such a way as to conceal any visual borders or frames, not only around the circular interior walls (where the precise location of the painted surface was obscured by the illusion of depth-of-field) but also at the level of floor and ceiling (where for example the sky disappeared behind the upper canopy or roof of the viewing area). Interestingly, Arrowsmith's specifications for the Diorama explicitly related it to the panorama, noting that in the case of the Diorama, the space between the viewing area and the pictures would need to be enclosed all around by "light screens, forming a kind of vista,… so as effectually to conceal the margins or boundary of the pictures, and thereby produce in a certain degree the effect of panoramic pictures." (Arrowsmith 3).

9. Like the Diorama, the panorama required a purpose-built space, and Barker opened a permanent building for his exhibitions in 1793—a Rotunda in Leicester Square, which stayed open for 70 years. The most popular subjects were imposing landscapes (the Alps, for example), cities of particular cultural or historic note (often associated with the Grand Tour, such as Rome, Pompeii, Athens, and Constantinople), and important contemporary events (particularly wars, where battles and naval scenes fed nationalist interest).[10] Both the Diorama and the panorama shared the impulse to create a complete illusion, but there are key differences between them on this point. Topographical accuracy, so much the point of a panorama, was clearly, in the case of the Diorama, secondary to the creation of convincing atmospheric effects. The Diorama aimed to provide an aesthetic rather than an educational experience, hence the shift of emphasis from completeness of representation to fullness of illusion (Hyde 33). One might say that in the Diorama the intensity rather than the immensity of the illusion is stressed; and indeed, with the simulation of time-induced change, that space becomes uncannily *temporal* as well as —like Gothic ruins—*temporary* (the subject of, and subjected to, disappearance). But this is a point I shall return to below.

10. In the name of greater visible verisimilitude, panoramas often included three-dimensional objects as props in the foreground (though this often had the unintended effect of actually increasing the viewer's awareness of an unnatural lack of movement in the scene). Certain experiments with the Diorama also involved inserting objects in the space before the picture, perhaps most notably Daguerre's 1832 "Sal de miracle"—his "View of Mont Blanc taken from the Valley of Chamonix"—for which he apparently "imported a complete chalet with barn and outhouses and put on the stage a live goat eating hay in a

shed" (Gernsheim 28). This "performance" (for it emphasized the status of the Diorama as hybrid of painting and theatre) was accompanied by the sounds of goats' bells, the blowing of an Alp-horn, and local song; meanwhile, girls in peasant dress served the audience a country breakfast. To some extent, by so shamelessly mixing nature and art, Daguerre was mocking his own accomplishments, as well as confounding his audience. Some viewers professed actual uncertainty about whether or not the goat was real; others supposed, tongue-in-cheek, "that only the front half of the goat was real and that the rest formed part of the back-cloth" (30).

11. More importantly, however, this display of illusion raised the stakes of artistic propriety. While some viewers were delighted by such an extraordinary mixture of nature and art, others were uncertain about whether to praise or cast aspersions on Daguerre's additions "to the means which painting gave him, artificial and mechanical means, strangers to art, properly speaking" (30). Other Dioramas that adopted special effects produced by mechanical devices, came in for similar criticism, and were dismissed as a "pantomime trick to astonish and be pointed at by children, [rather] than to deceive or give pleasure to an artist" (*The Morning Chronicle*, 31 August 1824; Hyde 33). The Diorama was clearly held to have a certain aesthetic integrity that sensationalism undermined; or, to put it differently, attempts to complete or augment the illusion (this could extend as much to music and other sound effects as well as to the mechanical introduction of motion) tended to emphasize, and thus detract from it. As the Repository of Arts argued, the Diorama "ought to stand upon its own ground—to afford a more irresistible deception to the eye, and through the eye to the understanding, than any other arrangement in the art of painting, but beyond this it should not attempt to go" (Vol. 4 [1824] 41). Baudelaire, in his chapter on landscapes in his Salon of 1859, celebrates explicitly the deception at the basis of the Dioramas that makes them such an exemplary art-form: "their total and far-reaching magic perpetrates an illusion that serves a useful purpose… Because they are false, they are infinitely closer to reality; whereas the majority of our landscape artists are liars, because they have in effect neglected to lie" (Comment 62).

12. In the often fierce debate about the status of such visual entertainment in relation to the serious visual arts, the Diorama found itself positioned (as did the panorama, though arguably to a greater extent), at an uneasy meeting point of popular culture and the domain of (self-styled) connoisseurs of the arts. In the case of the Diorama, this is clearly a function of its status as a hybrid of painting and theatre, or as a strange combination perhaps of *tableau vivant* and still-life. In the case of the latter, the more evocative French term, *nature morte*, cuts closer to the heart of viewer unease: illusion in the Diorama is uncannily disturbing not only because of its particular configuration of art *versus* nature, but also because this configuration is explicitly underwritten, or doubled, by the more apparent problem of the living *versus* the dead. Not surprisingly, audience reception was often characterized by either total entrancement or repudiation, where incredulousness of response could be at the next moment supplanted by a sense of disgust, arising from the realization that everything on view is nothing other, in the words of one contemporary viewer, than 'mocking ghosts and untruths' (Gill 33).[11]

To put it somewhat differently, the Diorama dramatically triangulated the relationship between nature, art and death. From the very beginning, the reviews identified death as an important "presence" in the Diorama. A *Times* reviewer, writing on "The Valley of Sarnen" in Daguerre and Bouton's opening exhibition in London, emphasized the more disturbing underside of the scene on view: on the one hand, "the whole thing is nature itself…. You have, as far as the senses can be acted upon, all these things (realities) before you"; but meanwhile, on the other:

> …there is a stillness, which is the stillness of the grave. The idea produced is that of a region—of a world—desolated; of living nature at an end; of the last day past and over. (4 October 1823)

This was a feature most apparent in the early Dioramas, and one critics were keen to note. Of

Daguerre's view of Unterseen, for example, the *Athenaeum* remarked that "the absence of anything like animal life … gives a stillness to the scene that would almost make one suppose it a deserted village" (5 March 1828). If Daguerre went to the other extreme with his "Sal de miracle" in 1832, with its living supplements, it is noteworthy that he did not linger long over the experiment, and instead developed his "double effect" Dioramas, which enabled not just a modification but a thorough transformation of a scene, and purely by means of painting.

III

13. While a conception of one-ness or totality of vision characterized the panorama (the term, derived from the Greek, means to "see all"), doubling and doubleness appear, so to speak, to be at the very heart of the dioramic enterprise. It has been supposed that the inventor of the term also derived it from a Greek compound, of "dia" (through) and "orama" (scene). Alternatively, "di" has been thought to come from dis, twice, referring to the practice of displaying two pictures at once.[12] But "di" can in fact be both of these things, so that "two-ness" and "throughness" suggestively correlate.[13] Each dioramic scene, moreover, by shifting the image between multiple oppositions, was based increasingly upon a principle of doubling: before/after, day/night, winter/summer, light/dark, vacant/occupied, surface/depth, and so on. What goes around, comes around, in the manner of the revolving saloon itself, so that the "di" of the Diorama might rather evoke the diurnal round (from the Latin *dies*)—a hastening of being, through the day, the seasons, and toward an end that can be both passed through and undone. In this, it has a circular structure reminiscent of the panorama. But the achievement of the Diorama is to take us through the barrier of the perimeter wall, the barrier of the visible—darkly, perhaps, but also doubly.

14. The technology of the Diorama evolved to incorporate doubling more directly, in Daguerre's introduction of the "double effect." This involved painting both sides of the picture, which compounded, if not doubled, the effects that could be achieved through the deployment of colour and light. The first stage of the scene or effect was painted on the front in both opaque and transparent tints, the second on the verso with the aid of transmitted light, so that the transparent spaces could be either preserved or modified by transparent coloured paint; gradations of tone were achieved by variations in the opacity of the paint used, and the picture was coloured finally in an array of transparent tints. Effectively, two paintings of the very same scene were superimposed upon each other (Altick 170). Daguerre achieved, in this way, what he referred to as "the decomposition of form," on the grounds that "if a green and a red part of the painting are illuminated by red light, the red object will vanish while the green one will appear black, and *vice versa*" (Gernsheim 32). Thus was created the apparently magical appearance of objects or figures that were previously invisible; and this innovation made it possible to present the oppositional transformations noted above, such as a shift from day to night, which were features of many of the scenes shown in London from 1835 on, including the much praised midnight mass scenes. Two of the earliest double-effect Dioramas were in fact those seen by Lady Morgan in 1836: Bouton's "Interior of the Church of Santa Croce" and "The Village of Alagna, Piedmont," which dramatically recreated the avalanche at Monta Rosa that descended upon the Swiss village in 1820.

15. Having been at the very site the day after the avalanche, Lady Morgan sees at the Diorama a different kind of double view, and compares the scene on display against the "real" scene mediated by memory. Her account of the Diorama in the *Athenaeum* (13 August 1836, 570-72) claims that the effectiveness of the illusion is heightened by first-hand knowledge of place. While for many in the audience the Diorama was merely a "show box," for her, the representation is more substantial and all the more impressive—the scene *is* somehow really real. This accounts to some extent for her essay's attention to the undermining of illusion that results from certain features of the viewing experience: that one is *not* there, and moreover not alone. On the one hand, Lady Morgan celebrates the Diorama as the epitome

of perfection and excellence in creating illusion in visual art: "the Dioramas of the present time have at last produced that miracle of optic illusion, to which the senses yield, and before which the imagination lies captive" (570). On the other hand, her "sketch" spends as much time on the shattering of illusion by the interruption of the banal and the ludicrous, as it does arguing for its art-historical significance. Indeed, the essay is often cited for its comical, if perhaps snobbish, reflections on the disruptive behaviour of fellow audience members.

16. The offences Lady Morgan recounts are primarily verbal, as though the impulse to running commentary presents an unwelcome (textual) supplement to the visual—involving not only a doubling but also a dissipation of focus. Some of this comes naturally enough from disoriented spectators entering the darkness of the saloon (at the climactic moment of the avalanche, one confused spectator allegedly boomed out, "in the words and accent of Irish hero of the Tarpean, 'Jesus, where am I going to'"; another growls "'I'll trouble you Miss, to remove your humbrella off my toe'" (571), and so on). More disturbing perhaps are the sustained commentaries, such as that of a lady narrating to her companion every sundry detail of her own trip to Italy, "beginning with the loss of her dressing-box at Tower Stairs, and ending with her *coup de soleil* at Naples." Or that of the devoted wife reading the details of the programme aloud to her deaf and blind husband, beginning each time with "'Now, dear, you are going to see…'" (571-2). William Galperin views the emphasis on distraction in Lady Morgan's account as indicative of resistance—not just on the part of the viewer, but on the part of the Diorama itself—to illusionism. The subject is as much displaced here as the image, so that "failure to be absorbed—to stand in imaginary, stable relation to the image—is accompanied by an absorption in that failure" (Galperin 70). These are intriguing difficulties that prefigure the containment of viewers, and the agency of the image, in cinematic spectatorship. But there is another angle which I'd like to pursue here, related to the uncannily overdetermined motivations that could be seen to inform, and transform, the place of the (in)visible in the scenes on view.

17. Lady Morgan's extended accounts of viewing both scenes, "The Village of Alagna" and "The Church of Santa Croce," convey the experience of space as well as elapsed time, but what is important about that evocation of three dimensionality is that it makes space for the unseen: the buried, the obliterated. In short, the dead. In the case of "Alagna," her description tells us, the show begins after night falls; day has been extinguished and the Alpine scenery, "more sublime and picturesque than terrible, is now seen reposing in the moonlight." At the height of this segment, while the village sleeps peacefully, the moon sets and a storm approaches, building slowly to the unleashing of the avalanche. This is dramatised largely by sound effects, followed by total darkness and a pause—and then slowly by daybreak. As the day "revives" the full extent of devastation is revealed: an incipient sense of resurrection is offset by the indication of things (homes, people) resolutely buried (again). This is, we understand, as frequent (or nearly) an event in the natural world as in its repetition at the Diorama, because of how the "tyranny of habit" operates in the lives of the village's inhabitants, mainly labourers in nearby mines: through "want of forethought" and "density of temperament," "no provision against the future (but certain) catastrophe is made…. and new generations expose themselves to those devastating phenomena, which from time to time overwhelmed the old, as far as the ruin extended" (571). Since "density of temperament" is ascribed in equal measure to the Diorama's audience, we see in Lady Morgan's account of the eternal return of this historical misfortune an element of the human condition—an aspect perhaps of the Freudian death-drive—not only displayed but endlessly replayed. Thus, in this oft-repeated spectacle of repetition, we observe in action a kind of "*fort-da*" game for adults.[14]

Fig. 4 Two coloured lithographs of the Alpine village, 1836, first as a night scene by transmitted light, followed by the daylight scene (reflected light), after the avalanche has buried the group of houses in

18. In the wake of the avalanche, the inhabitants of Alagna are said to have been "awakened to sleep—for ever!" The sole visible remnant of the village, bathed now in a subtle and tranquil morning light, is the lone spire of the chapel in a sea of heaving snow. The illusion is said to be so impressive in every detail that the mind is also restored to its initial cheerfulness: "…a thousand details—all appropriate, and in the truth of nature, restore the mind to its cheerful contemplation of the beautiful and sublime, which first struck it on entering the *magic circle* of the Diorama" (571, emphasis mine). The circular motif is carried forward into the next stage of the show, as the saloon turns on its axis—like ""*La ronde machine*" (as Rabelais calls the earth)"—to face the next picture, the church of Santa Croce in Florence, where again the illusion corresponds startlingly to Lady Morgan's extensive memories of the place. "How often," she notes, "has the writer of this sketch, at all hours and seasons, raised the dark heavy cloth curtain which hangs before its vast and ponderous portals"—surely there is an apposite theatrical touch here—"and took a look up its immense nave and side aisles, and beheld their noble Gothic arches and octagon columns, tinged with hues of all light […]—sometimes by the red hues of sunset, sometimes by the silver tinge of moonlight." If her memory of the place makes it sound like a Diorama, the Diorama clearly looks like the place: "The long perspective which breaks upon the spectator of the Santa Croce, in the Diorama, is as the place itself;—the noble and ancient edifice, one of the finest specimens of the ecclesiastical architecture of the thirteenth century, comes forth to the imagination in all the lustre and brightness of a sunshiny Italian noon—nothing escapes the bright and searching light which falls in a thousand coloured hues from the high narrow casements of stained glass, or penetrates with a long yellow glare from the uncurtained portals" (571).

19. From the lustre of noontime, this scene also turns full circle: what was once bright and distinct becomes less so, though the changes are "so gradually alternated as to be scarcely observed." Twilight descends, and to the shades of evening "succeeds the deepest obscurity of midnight." Suddenly, the scene is illuminated by chandeliers and candelabras, the empty chairs fill, and high mass is in full swing—complete with the whiff of incense and the pealing of the organ. Eventually, this climactic scene fades; the lights are extinguished and after a grey cold dawn, a flood of morning light restores the church to the state in which it was first seen. Resurrection and restitution are perhaps more strongly implied in this account, with its unambiguously religious context. But Lady Morgan's attention is drawn repeatedly to details that convey the presence of the dead. Initially, the "long yellow glare" falls "fully on the sarcophagus of Michael Angelo." Other tombs, statues, and effigies come into view: that of Petrus Michalius, and "the noble statue of Mourning Italy, which weeps over the tomb of Alfieri"; on the left, "that of the unfortunate Galileo." These monuments fade from prominence as the world turns, so to speak, but in the full flood of morning sunshine, it is these monuments, along with the nave and the aisles, that are "discovered" as they had been not only before, but all along: the presence of the dead, the monumental persistence of death, is reasserted by the light of day. Lady Morgan's essay illustrates, though perhaps without fully intending to, the importance of death to the Diorama argued above—its uncanny habit of always *turning up*.

20. With these examples of double-effect Dioramas in view, it is possible to revisit the relationship of the Diorama to the panorama, and to make a few further observations. I suggested above that the Diorama was characterised by intensity rather than immensity of illusion. The panorama, by contrast, creates an illusion that is to be *prolonged*: with the infinite stillness, perhaps, of death, the effect lasts without changing. The panorama is arguably uncanny in relation to space in another sense as well, at least in the cases in which the inside walls of the rotunda revealed a mechanical replication of the invisible vistas of home (as in Horner's London, for Londoners). By contrast, the Diorama suggests an uncanny relation to time, insofar as past, present, and future are not only controlled and replicated, but also repeated. In the Diorama, illusion is created and removed, and creation and removal are explicit features of the exhibition—are dramatized by the exhibition—rather than being merely its invisible

precondition, and inevitable fate. It could be said that while the panorama stages the visible, the Diorama, through the repetition of concealment and revelation, dramatises the invisible-within-the-visible, but with a curious effect: no corresponding demystification, but rather, the opposite, as its "magic" holds sway. The charm of the Diorama draws not only from the artistic excellence of its illusion making capabilities (contentious as that was), or from its apparent participation in the repetition compulsion (in association with the death drive), but also from its ability to put the spectre back into the spectacular.

IV

21. Gothic subjects were already a favourite for the transparencies that were fashionable as window decorations in the period, before the advent of the Diorama. John Imison's instructions for painting such transparencies point out their innate suitability:

> No subject is so admirably adapted to this species of effect as the gloomy Gothic ruin, whose antique towers and pointed turrets finely contrast their dark battlements with the pale yet brilliant moon. The effects of rays passing through the ruined windows, half choked with ivy, or of a fire amongst the clustering pillars and broken monuments of the choir, round which are figures of banditti; or others whose faces catch the reflecting light: these afford a peculiarity of effect not to be equalled in any other species of painting.
> (Imison II, 330)[16]

These same effects can, as we have seen, be created by views of cathedral interiors. In general, religious architecture is a potent subject, capitalizing as it does on both sublime and picturesque effects. Certain Diorama images, such as "The Ruins of Holyrood Chapel by Moonlight," could serve as illustrations to any number of late eighteenth-century Gothic novels, in their evocation of certain stock settings: monasteries, cloisters, churchyards.

22. The success of Daguerre's "Holyrood Chapel," exhibited in 1825, illustrates effectively the intrinsic appeal of Gothic spaces in the Diorama (Gernsheim claims that the chapel was "the most popular subject during the first decade of the Diorama"s existence" [25]). As the review in *The Mirror of Literature* (which came complete with a woodcut of the Diorama) helpfully points out, the church was originally Norman, dating from 1128, and was "Gothicised" in the fifteenth century (26 March 1825). The picture as a whole was hailed as "perhaps, the greatest triumph ever achieved in the pictorial art" (196), and the reviewer captures in detail the subtle atmospheric effects of night-time, from "the stars [that] actually scintillate in their spheres," to the moon that "gently glides with scarcely perceptible motion, now through the hazy, now through the clearer air." The reviewer for *The Times* also emphasized the effectiveness of the night scene, and particularly the use of moonlight (as "better calculated than any other to display the ingenious application of the scientific principles upon which the *Diorama* is constructed") (21 March 1825). As *The Mirror of Literature* claims, however, there is more at stake here than meets the eye: "if this be painting, however exquisite, it still is *something more…*" (196, emphasis mine). This "something more" is related to the manner in which the scene appears somehow *in possession* of itself: "for the elements have their motions, though the objects they illuminate are fixed, and the ether hath its transparency, the stars their chrystalline, and the lamp its vital flame, though the ruin and its terrene accompaniments have their opaque solidity."

Fig. 5 Woodcut of "Ruins of Holyrood Chapel," Edinburgh
by L. J. M. Daguerre, 1823[17]

23. In spite of the extraordinary sense of self-sufficiency that the building, as a weighty "oblong Gothic

pile" (*The Times*), conveys to viewers, much of the picture's force comes from the fragmentariness of the structure. Inadequacy affects the *Mirror* reviewer, who laments that "it is impossible to convey by words any adequate idea of the fascination and perfect illusion of this magical picture. The scene itself is picturesque in the highest conceivable idea of architectural representation; far more so, indeed, from its dilapidated state…, than can possibly consist with any entireness, however accompanied, of the most complicated and magnificent edifice" (195-6). The marvellous self-containment of the scene comes across not only, somewhat paradoxically, in its fragmentariness, but also in the kinds of details the pictures tended to include. Reviews often convey in their own attention to specific parts or objects (in the name of conveying a sense or image of the whole to a reader who may never see it), an element of fixation, as we shall see again below. Notably, in this scene (as in the discussion of "Santa Croce" above), the moonlight happens to fall upon an area of the chapel that contains several tombstones and monuments, notably, the burial place of Lord and Lady Rae.[18]

24. Daguerre's "Interior of Roslyn Chapel," shown the following year, contains a number of the same, potent ingredients. First of all, there is the inherent architectural interest of the chapel itself (the ruin, as *The Times* claims, is remarkable for being one of the most elegant specimens of Gothic architecture, "in its internal decorations, which our kingdom contains" [21 February, 1826]). Secondly, there is the overall excellence of the painting, the subtle effects of light, and the perfection of the illusion, which the Times reviewer suggests will be impossible to surpass. There is detailed attention to apparently minor elements of the scene, which nevertheless stand out, not least because of the "striking accuracy" of the representation: "a basket, some broken stones, the fragments of the floor, a scaffold and some ropes, with the abrupt and scattered lights that fall upon them" (ibid). There are, once again, family traditions of death and burial associated with the chapel, and more particularly, a legend with an intriguing supernatural dimension. The superstition, recounted by Walter Scott in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, held that on the eve of the death of a Lord of Roslin, the chapel would appear full of red flames, as though on fire, but show no signs of damage afterwards. In fact, this illusion was created by the rays of the setting sun, passing through the windows—Diorama-like—when the sun was low in the sky.[19]

Fig. 6 Roslin Chapel
Engraving after a painting by L. J. M. Daguerre,
The Mirror of Literature, 1826, Vol. 7, 129[20]

25. Two further Dioramas from this period, both mentioned briefly in the introduction above, made effective use of similar subjects. The first presented an imaginary design rather than a "real" place or object. This was "Ruins in a Fog" (1827), which showed a decaying Gothic gallery enshrouded by thick fog (Daguerre's oil painting of this scene, which probably differed from the Diorama image, is reproduced above). The second, "The Interior of the Cloisters of St. Wandrille, in Normandy," was painted by Bouton. It offered another ruin scene, this time of a Gothic convent, partially lit up by the sun, and partially conveyed with "the appearance of cavernous chilness [sic]" (*The Mirror of Literature*, 19 April 1828). This group of Dioramas on display from 1825-28, with their use of ruined Gothic structures, evoke the more literary and thematic aspects of the Gothic revival in the eighteenth century, and in this are somewhat distinct from the dioramic representations of intact Gothic cathedrals such as Chartres and Canterbury (1823-4).[21] The Diorama, however, in both its subject matter and its mechanisms, offers a place to consider a literary Gothic sensibility alongside features of Gothic architecture and art. In some of the Dioramas discussed above, there is at least a latent link between architecture and experience, between physical structure and mental states associated with Gothic fiction, such as terror, uncertainty, and (psychological) extremity. Not only does the "phenomenological instability," as Galperin puts it, of dioramic representation, echo the indeterminacy of the gothic church

(Galperin 64), the Diorama could be said to allow these two apparently distinct dimensions of Gothic to converge.

26. A number of features of Gothic are strikingly relevant to the Diorama as a technology. First of all, Gothic texts rely heavily on contrast, on stark oppositions including juxtaposed states of extremity. As Linda Bayer-Berenbaum argues in *The Gothic Imagination*, this has the effect of *magnifying* reality. "Between the greatest extremes," she proposes, "lies the greatest breadth" (22). And this is precisely the territory that the Diorama explores, but in visual terms—the terrain of the unperceived, made visible in the wake of those extremes, both at, and in between, their limits. Bayer-Berenbaum is not thinking of visual technology, or even of the visual, in her account, but what she says about the Gothic and technology in general is also apposite here. Gothicism is, she notes, the "art of the incredible" particularly in relation to technology, which has brought about "a general expansion and intensification of consciousness consistent with the gothic sensibility," along with an expansion of the "real" (14). The importance placed on shock or surprise (and, at an extreme, terror), because it allegedly gives rise to refined perception through heightened sensitivity, recalls the experience of viewers not only of the Diorama but also of other visual spectacles in Georgian England, prized for their capacity to elicit or create the "shock of the real."[22] Partly, this involves showing the familiar in a new light, where its proportions are different or monstrously unregulated; but it is also a revelation of what is immanent or latent in the world around us (as well as in ourselves, as much recent work on the Gothic shows).

27. This experience of (imaginative or sensible) "enlargement," characteristic of Gothic, often fixes on forms that are ruined, decaying or incomplete because they are unrestricted, disordered, and thus more dynamic—chaotic, even, and prone to motion and change. This is as much the reason why structures such as Holyrood Chapel made such compelling subjects for the Diorama, as it is that such structures have thematic value (often of a psychological nature) in literature. The restless energy that characterizes Gothic texts is also a feature of intact Gothic buildings (in their emphasis on limitless and uncontainment, it could be said that the basic premises of Gothic architecture already and in any case include the incomplete), and Bayer-Berenbaum's account of Gothic art in relation to Gothic literature is also instructive. In the case of the twelfth-century Chartres Cathedral, or any example of High Gothic cathedral architecture such as Sainte-Chapelle (1242-47), Cologne, or Amiens, a wide range of design strategies (conveyed in sweeping, rising lines, in "soaring verticality") effect a dematerialization of solid form. The point of this, in these examples, is an explicitly spiritual experience, but it clearly implicates the visual, or the optical, in its experiments with proportion, diminution, and so on. The weightiness of Romanesque forms is effectively disembodied, and this was also facilitated by the effect of stained glass windows, which, as Bayer-Berenbaum notes, "create a sense of illusion through the colours and patterns they cast upon the stone" (55). In this way, the Gothic cathedral may be seen as not just a subject but also a *prototype* for the Diorama: or, even, its double.

28. The turning of the sign's past referent into an empty relic, however nostalgic, which then has to be duplicated to be marketed, means that the grounds of signification must eventually become mechanical "production," where discourse is based on the possibility, albeit one that conceals itself, of "producing an infinite series of potentially identical beings (object-signs) by means of technics," "the serial repetition of the same object" (299; Baudrillard 55).

Walpole's attraction to the Gothic, as Hogle reminds us, was precisely to "the relics of 'centuries that cannot disappoint one,' because 'the dead' have become so disembodied, so merely *imaged*…, that there is 'no reason to quarrel with their emptiness'" (298, emphasis mine; Walpole 10:192). Hogle's "ghost of the counterfeit" (a kind of spectral doubling-up) comes about by means of a progression, by which Gothic fictions are seen to have been first governed by ghosts, then by simulacra, and finally by "simulations of what is already counterfeit in the past" (302). All this links the Gothic to the

simulations of the Diorama, which could be viewed as an architecture of this very progression—not only in its visual imaging, with its particularly "transparent" form of illusion production, but also because of its repetitive enactment and indeed temporal collapse of this progress (or doubling) of the Gothic sign. Perhaps in this the Diorama doesn't simply respond to, or capitalize on, the popularity of Gothic forms, but creates a space with a view (so to speak) to mastering or capturing the abject remainders of the counterfeit's ghostly productions.

29. Bernard Comment argues, in *The Panorama*, that the invention of the panorama responded to a strong nineteenth-century need for dominance, and that the visual illusion it provided satisfied a double dream: of totality and of possession. Even more pointedly, the shift implicit in the technology of the panorama, a shift from "representation to illusion," introduces "a new logic" with its own consequences. In the case of the panorama, Comment suggests that one of these is the rise of a collective imagination that is readily colonised by propaganda and commerce (Comment 19). Insofar as the Diorama shares in this shift from "representation to illusion," and is driven by the desire to make the real visible, so to speak, one might see how Comment's case could be extended—not only to the attraction of but also to the resistance generated by the Diorama. Visual realism is, as Hegel teaches us, but a symptom of the loss of reality, and moreover realism (in which we can include the strategies of illusionism) and melancholy can be seen to share certain features: the urge to see or show things "as they are" does not reveal an intimate link to the object, but rather, "an alienation that pits the object against consciousness" (Maleuvre, 178, 182). Finally, though, if the panorama is implicated in the panoptic fantasy of an all-seeing vision, then the logic of the Diorama (though similarly preoccupied by the enticements of illusion) must be expressed differently. Its uncanny doubleness, its relationship to death, its element of phantasmagoric spectrality, and the connections between these and the impulses of Gothic: all suggest an engagement with illusion that involves seeing (through) the deceptions of the visible in general, and the fantasy of possession in particular. The audience at the Diorama is not merely, as Crary would argue, a mechanical component of the scene (Crary 112-13)—a cog in the wheel of Rabelais's *ronde machine*—but able, disconcertingly, to see itself turning, in the seeing of turning that is on display.

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Notes

[1] Oil on canvas, L. J. M. Daguerre, in Collection of Gerard Levy and Françoise Lepage, Paris. Reproduced in *Panoramania!* by Ralph Hyde (London: Trefoil Publications / Barbican Art Gallery 1988), catalogue item No.99 on p.119 with colour illustration on p. 168.
Back

[2] This suggestion has been made by Arthur Gill, and also by Richard Altick who includes, in *The Shows of London*, a brief description of this pictorial entertainment (Gill 31; Altick 163).
Back

[3] Details of this partnership, and indeed of everything related to Daguerre's career and to the Diorama in both Great Britain and Paris, can be found on R. D. Wood's extensive website, "The Midley History of Photography" (http://www.midley.co.uk/), which brings together much of Wood's research and published articles on the Diorama, the daguerreotype, and the early history of photography. Wood's researches show, for example, that contrary to what has often been assumed, the London Diorama was not simply an extension of Daguerre's Paris enterprise but a result of the efforts of a group of British entrepreneurs, who obtained a contract to exhibit Daguerre and Bouton's dioramas in London, and subsequently in other cities in the UK,

such as Liverpool, Manchester and Edinburgh. The identity of these "English gentlemen" is unknown, but one was apparently "author of one of the most popular works of the day." Some of the general information and images used here have been drawn from Wood's site, and I would like to thank him for his permission to make reference to them, as well as for helpful advice on this portion of the paper.
Back

[4] The full text of the patent, both in facsimile and transcription, can be viewed on Wood's website at http://www.midley.co.uk/.
Back

[5] From H. & A. Gernsheim, *L. J. M. Daguerre*. Reproduced on R. D. Wood's website at http://www.midley.co.uk/.
Back

[6] From R. D. Wood, "The Diorama in Great Britain in the 1820s." For further diagrams of the building showing key features of its design, see Wood's on-line version of this essay at http://www.midley.co.uk/. Wood's source for this diagram is John Britton and A. Pugin, *Illustrations of the Public Buildings of London. With historical and descriptive accounts of each edifice*, vol. 1, plate opposite p. 70, published by J. Taylor: London, 1825.
Back

[7] See a description in *London*, ed. Charles Knight, Vol. VI, 1844, and reprinted in Gernsheim, 38-9. The speaker, clearly moved by the accumulated effects on display, proclaims that when "the solemn service of the Catholic Church begins—beautiful, inexpressibly beautiful—one forgets creeds at such a time, and thinks only of prayer: we long to join them."
Back

[8] The cosmorama consisted of rather small landscape scenes displayed conventionally in a gallery, but viewed in relief, through an arrangement of magnifying mirrors. The pleorama was a form of moving panorama shown in Breslau in 1831, in which viewers sat in a boat that rocked as though tossed by waves, while moving canvases on each side recreated the changing views of the Bay of Naples, which was thus traversed in the space of an hour (see Comment, 63). The myriorama, or "many thousand views" was, by contrast, a more personal visual device, consisting of numerous cards depicting fragments or segments of landscapes that could be arranged in infinitely different combinations.
Back

[9] Innovations to the panorama itself, such as the moving panorama, also went some way to compensate for the inherent stillness of the panoramic image.
Back

[10] A good example of this latter was Barker's inaugural Leicester Square panorama of *View of the Fleet at Spithead*, which simulated the sense of being at sea by disguising the viewing platform as the afterdeck of a frigate (see Comment, 24).
Back

[11] In this vein, a brief note in the *Athenaeum* about "The Village of Alagna" treats its apparently supernatural qualities more positively, recommending the scene as "a work of witchcraft, if it be a picture" (2 April 1836).
Back

[12] See for example, John Timbs's remarks on the name in his detailed account of "Diorama and Cosmorama," in his *Curiosities of London* of 1855. The relevant extract is accessible on Derek Wood's Diorama website, at http://www.midley.co.uk/.

Back

[13] As the *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* states, "di" can be "the form of dia used before a vowel," where the preposition *dia* is "used in wds of Gk origin, and in Eng. formations modelled on them, w. the senses 'through', as *diaphanous*, 'across', as *diameter*, 'transversely' as *diaheliotropic*, 'apart' as *diaeresis*. "The preposition *di* is used 'in wds of Gk origin or in Eng. formations modelled on them, w. the sense 'twice, doubly', as *dilemma*, *diphthong*, *dicotyledon*."

Back

[14] Another way to think about repetition here would be to consider what Didier Maleuvre says of duplication, of reproducibility in general, in his chapter on "The Interior and its Doubles" in *Museum Memories*: "That which I cannot seize in its particularity, I will reproduce so many times that I can do without the particularity itself, the singular In-Itself. …What it cannot seize in itself, bourgeois consciousness multiplies so as to diffuse its singularity" (Maleuvre 158).

Back

[15] From H. & A. Gernsheim, *L. J. M. Daguerre*. Reproduced on R. D. Wood's website (http://www.midley.co.uk/).

Back

[16] H. and A. Gernsheim, who helpfully cite this passage (20), also suggest E. Orme's *An Essay on Transparent Prints and on Transparencies in General* (London, 1807).

Back

[17] From H. & A. Gernsheim, *L. J. M. Daguerre*. Reproduced on R. D. Wood's website (http://www.midley.co.uk/).

Back

[18] More details of this kind can be found in a pamphlet description of this Diorama in the British Library (shelfmark 1359 d 6), including a dozen or more names of royal and aristocratic lineage, whose remains are to be found in the chapel.

Back

[19] Angelo Maggi's "Poetic Stones: Roslin Chapel in Gandy's Sketchbook and Daguerre's Diorama" contains an account of this legend (as does the *Times* review), but also a detailed account of the extraordinary architectural features of the chapel itself. Maggi argues that Daguerre, who never saw the chapel himself, drew extensively from Gandy's detailed sketches as well as from his "Tomb of Merlin" for his Diorama picture.

Back

[20] Reproduced on R. D. Wood's website (http://www.midley.co.uk/).

Back

[21] There is an interesting link here, in the involvement of the French émigré architect Augustus Charles Pugin in the design and construction of the London Diorama. Pugin's son, Augustus Welby, was of course a key figure in the Gothic revival of the later nineteenth century.

[22] I refer here to the title of Gillen D'Arcy Wood's study, *The Shock of the Real: Romanticism and Visual Culture, 1760-1860* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001).

[23] Michael Lewis, in *The Gothic Revival*, argues that the gothic revival of the 18th century began as a primarily literary movement, which drew its impulses from poetry and drama, and translated them into architecture—often of a flimsy kind, such as the picturesque garden folly.

[24] See also his essay in Fred Botting, ed. *Essays and Studies 2001: The Gothic*.

Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era

Smoke and Mirrors: Internalizing the Magic
Lantern Show in *Villette*

Diane Long Hoeveler, Marquette University

It is the interiorizing aspect of the camera obscura/magic lantern show that I will examine in Brontë's novel _Villette_. The isolated heroine Lucy Snowe can be seen as one of modernity's first artificially isolated, privatized subjects, detaching the act of seeing from the physical body in order to decorporealize vision. This essay appears in _Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era _, a volume of _Romantic Circles Praxis Series_, prepared exclusively for Romantic Circles (http://www.rc.umd.edu/), University of Maryland.

I. SMOKE

Perception, or the action by which we perceive, is not a vision…but is solely an inspection by the mind….
It is possible that I do not even have eyes with which to see anything….
I will now shut my eyes, I shall stop my ears, I shall disregard my senses.

—René Descartes, *Second Meditation*, II, 21-24

1. When someone screams "Fire!" (325) during a theatrical performance in Charlotte Brontë's final novel, *Villette* (1853), her contemporary reading audience would have had their worst fears confirmed. Attendance at a theatrical event in mid-nineteenth-century Europe could be a potentially fatal adventure, one undertaken only after fully and carefully assessing the risks involved. Brontë herself, of course, was so sensitive to visual spectacle that she wept at her first sight of the North Sea. Notoriously near-sighted, she was throughout her life drawn to theatrical extravaganzas, no matter how much risk was involved. We know, for instance, that she apparently saw the following plays on the following dates: *The Barber of Seville* sometime in 1848 (Peters 225); *Othello* and *MacBeth* sometime between 1849-50 (Gordon 210-211); Legouver's *Adrienne Lecouvreur* starring Rachel on June 7, 1851; Corneille's *Les Trois Horaces* also starring Rachel on June 21, 1851 (Gaskell 556n); and *Twelfth Night* on April 25, 1853 (Gaskell 437). And certainly it has long been common knowledge that Brontë modeled her portrait of Villette's *Vashti* on Rachel (Gordon 238; Gerin 481-82; Fraser 405) so that when Brontë's interest in the theater is discussed, it has generally been concerned with her depiction of Vashti as a gothic tragic heroine (cf. Hoeveler, 1998; 232). The material realities of theatrical performances that come into full and very alarming view with that sudden scream of "Fire" have not, as yet, been discussed.

2. In fact, the growth of European theatrical entertainments was fairly sudden. A competitive sphere in which theaters competed with each other for the ever increasing market of artisans with disposable income quickly developed due to the realities of a market economy. In addition, theater managers who wanted to remain competitive had to keep pace in their use of pyrotechnics and other devices that would continue to "shock and awe" their audiences. As Backsheider has noted, the growth of the minor theaters as a mass form of popular entertainment required "the bombardment of the senses and the use of techniques that fixed manipulative tableaux in the audiences' memories." Intense activity on stage alternated with *tableaux vivants*, and the designers of these extravaganzas intended to create what was known as *Stimmung*, "moments when a landscape seems charged with alien meaning, or what we would recognize as romantic epiphany" (Backsheider 169).

3. As attendance at theaters increased throughout the nineteenth century, the technologies involved in stagecraft had to improve, and advancements in lighting, stage machinery, setting, and sound effects were all of major importance in the spectacularization of theatrical fare. In 1815 Covent Garden opened for the first night of its new season, proudly announcing that "The Exterior, with the Grand Hall and Staircase will be illuminated by Gas." The Olympic Theater followed suit the next month, and in 1817 Drury Lane and the Lyceum both installed gas lighting (Rees 9). It was not long before the gradual development of "gas tables" or "gas floats" allowed theatrical managers to control the intensity of light in separate areas of the stage during a performance.

4. Limelight was first used in 1837 at Covent Garden by heating a block of quicklime so that it would create a bright spotlight effect on the stage. Such developments extended Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg's early work with colored lights for his Eidophusikon (1781), a miniature theater on Panton Street, off Leicester Square. As Ranger notes, information no longer exists that would allow us to know exactly how he created his lighting effects, but we do have descriptions by his contemporary, the artist W. H. Pyne (1769-1843), who left a detailed description of one of the scenes exhibited at the Eidophusikon, "dawn breaking over London" (Ranger 70). Serving as the design coordinator of Drury Lane from 1773-1781 and under the management of David Garrick, Loutherbourg was responsible for, as he put it, "all which concerns the decorations and machines dependent upon them, the way of lighting them and their manipulation" (qtd Ranger 86). We also know that Loutherbourg mounted a batten of lamps above the proscenium that threw all its light on the scene while in front of the lamps he placed stained glass chips of yellow, red, green, purple and blue, all of which rotated, changing and mixing as the altering atmospheric changes required (Altick 123). When Pyne went to review the Eidophusikon[1] for one of his newspaper articles, he praised what he called the "the picturesque of sound" that Loutherbourg had developed for the facility. Lightning, thunder, rushing water waves, and the groans of devilish spirits trapped on the burning lake of hell were his particular specialties (qtd Altick 124), according to Pyne. This same sort of synaesthesia is evident when we consider how light and optical effects were combined in the stage directions for Henry M. Milner's *Alonzo the Brave, or The Spectre Bride*, a 1826 theatrical production based on Matthew Lewis's epononymous ballad in *The Monk*: "The figures cast back their mantles and display the forms of Skeletons! … a strong red light fills the back of the cavern" (qtd Rees 150). Very quickly, however, fire followed gas, and fires in theaters became an occupational hazard for theater personnel as well as audience members. Fires completely destroyed the Royal Circus in 1805, the Royal Brunswick theater in 1828, and the Lyceum Theater in 1830 (Moody, 35; 37; 41). But perhaps one of the most famous and notorious cases was the death of Clara Webster, a ballerina who was burned to death while performing in full view of the audience at Drury Lane in 1844 (Rees 156).

II. MIRRORS

The relationship of emulation enables things to imitate one another from one end of the universe to the other…by duplicating itself in a mirror the world abolishes the distance proper to it; in this way it overcomes the place allotted to each thing. But which of these images coursing through space are the original images? Which is the reality and which is the projection?

—Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 19

5. In December, 1781, ten years after first arriving in London to work for David Garrick, Loutherbourg was invited to pay a visit to Fonthill Abbey, the estate of William Beckford. Loutherbourg had been hired to transform Beckford's mansion into "a labyrinthine and necromantic environment for a three-day Christmas performance-masquerade" (Ziter 19), a transformation that was so effective and dramatic that Beckford himself described the event as "the realization of romance in all its fervours, in

all its extravagance…I wrote *Vathek* immediately upon my return to London at the close of this romantic villegiatura" (qtd Altick 122n). Although no detailed description of this "villegiatura" survives, Boyd Alexander has proposed that Loutherbourg's chief contribution to the entertainments was taken from the Pandemonimum scene in his Eidophusokon program (83-84), described by viewers who saw it later in London:

> Here, in the fore-ground of a vista, stretching an immeasurable length between mountains, ignited from their bases to their lofty summits, with many-colored flame, a chaotic mass rose in dark majesty, which gradually assumed form until it stood, the interior of a vast temple of gorgeous architecture, bright as molten brass, seemingly composed of unconsuming and unquenchable fire. (qtd Altick 123)

6. The exteriorization of Miltonic tropes found its way into *Vathek* in perhaps no less dramatic ways, and if Loutherbourg inadvertently provided the visual stimulus for the creation of *Vathek*, he was also without doubt one of the most important pioneers in the development of optical entertainments, as his 1781 Eidophusikon produced a new and exciting visual experience for the London theater-going public. A miniaturized optical extravaganza, the Eidophusikon reproduced settings from the entire Mediterranean world that were then shown in conjunction with lighting effects that went from sunrise to moon glow to fire and storm. Using rear-lit transparencies, colored plates, a variety of fabrics, and panoramic dioramas, the Eidophusikon created in its viewers a heightened level of visual excitement and sophistication and established a new standard that the British theater-going public came to expect (Ziter 19).

7. Twenty years later, in 1801, the famous physician-balloonist Etienne-Gaspard Robertson arrived in Britain from France to present his "Gothic extravaganzas" for the public, and he was welcomed as a sensation but not a particularly new one. Robertson's originality as a stage-crafter was not in his conception, but in his more technically sophisticated use of mechanically projected images, set off one after another and accompanied by eerie music and lighting effects. Honing his skills in the deserted cloister of the Capuchins in Paris, Robertson had transformed the space into a "theater of the macabre" (Stafford and Terpak 301). Relying on sheets stretched from one end of the cloister to the other, Robertson mounted his "fantascope," a large magic lantern that was able to slide back and forth on a double track and project images on the screen from behind. These images could increase or decrease in size, but their subject matter was the major focus of the show: "looming ten-foot-high, bisexual, horned and web-footed devils," "the head of Medusa, a bloody nun, the tomb of the recently executed French king Louis XVI,…and the ghost of the abbess Heloise" (Castle 144-50; Stafford and Terpak 301). When he wasn't displaying the "Dance of the Witches" or "The Ballet of the Mummies," Robertson was creating other images that were then projected on clouds of smoke and accompanied by eerie music played on a glass harmonica, said to have been invented by Benjamin Franklin (Stafford and Terpak 303).

8. As Stafford and Terpak have noted, however, the art of projected images actually dates back to the seventeenth century (297), while Crary situates the origins of the magic lantern show in the discovery of the camera obscura in 1671 as developed by the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680). According to Crary, "Kircher devised techniques for flooding the inside of the camera with a visionary brilliance, using various artificial light sources, mirrors, projected images, and sometimes translucent gems in place of a lens to simulate divine illumination" (33). Ironically, what began as a counter-reformation Roman Catholic demonstration of "divine illumination" became over time an emblem of the more interior, private, Protestant belief in a personal God.

9. But the camera obscura's most dramatic use was its ability to produce flickering images within its narrow confines, for instance, either simulating branches moving in the wind or of people walking

along the street. As Crary notes, "movement and time could be seen and experienced, but never represented" (34), and hence the camera obscura "is inseparable from a certain metaphysic of interiority: it is a figure for both the observer who is nominally a free sovereign individual and a privatized subject confined in a quasi-domestic space, cut off from a public exterior world" (39). It is precisely this interiorizing aspect of the camera obscura/magic lantern show that I want to examine in Brontë's novel. The isolated heroine Lucy Snowe can be seen as one of modernity's first artificially isolated, privatized subjects, detaching the act of seeing from the physical body in order to decorporealize vision. What Crary calls the "monadic viewpoint of the individual" is "authenticated and legitimized by the camera obscura, but the observer's physical and sensory experience is supplanted by the relations between a mechanical apparatus and a pre-given world of objective truth" (39-40). But, as Crary observes, "the body then is a problem the camera could never solve except by marginalizing it into a phantom in order to establish a space of reason" (41). Analogously, it was precisely the physical body that Brontë elided in her final novel.

10. To return to the magic lantern, though, it is necessary to focus on its typical and fairly crude subject matter. It presented to viewers a series of shocking figures derived from such stock gothic representations as the bleeding nun, skeletons, or ghosts, all of them adapted by Robertson in France during the Revolution and then brought over by him to London to wide acclaim. Earlier, however, on December 16, 1792, the German physician Paul Philidor advertised a performance of his "Phantasmagorie" in the *Journal de Paris*. In a production that mocked the still-living revolutionaries Robespierre, Danton, and Marat—all of whom were depicted as having claws, horns, and tails, Phillidor's exhibition was a daring and dangerous activity in the midst of politically uncertain times. But if the magic lantern show had a political context, it also had a religious and scientific one as well. As Castle notes, the producers of these early phantasmagorias frequently presented themselves as intent on serving the public interest by exposing frauds or charlatans who preyed on those easily duped into believing their own misguided senses: "ancient superstition would be eradicated when everyone realized that so-called apparitions were in fact only optical illusions. The early magic-lantern shows developed as mock exercises in scientific demystification" (143).

11. In February 1802, a Belgian showman, Paul de Philipstal, staged his "phantasmagoria" in London at the Lyceum, and William Nicholson was in the audience to provide this eyewitness account:

> All the lights of the small theatre of the exhibition were removed, except one hanging lamp, which could be drawn up so that its flame should be perfectly enveloped in a cylindrical chimney, or opake [sic] shade. In this gloomy and wavering light the curtain was drawn up, and presented to the spectator a cave or place exhibiting skeletons, and other figures of terror, in relief, and painted on the sides or walls. After a short interval the lamp was drawn up, and the audience were in total darkness, succeeded by thunder and lightning; which last appearance was formed by the magic lanthorn upon a thin cloth or screen, let down after the disappearance of the light, and consequently unknown to most of the spectators. These appearances were followed by ghosts, skeletons, moving their eyes or mouths by the well known contrivance of two or more sliders. (Nicholson, qtd Rees 81)

12. In a strange homage to Ben Franklin, Philipstal displayed the floating head of Franklin "being converted into a skull," and then followed this shocking sight with a display of "various terrific figures, which instead of seeming to recede and then vanish, were (by enlargement) made suddenly to advance; to the surprise and astonishment of the audience, and then disappear by seeming to sink into the ground" (Castle 150). The magic lantern quickly became a staple of popular, artisan entertainments, so popular in fact that easy to assemble magic lantern kits for middle-class children were sold all over England (Castle 154). The magic lantern was not used in legitimate theatrical productions, however, until 1820, when Edmund Kean appeared as Lear at Drury Lane (Rees 84). As Emma Clery has

suggested, however, the magic lantern shows reveal how quickly the frightening can degenerate into parody given enough repetitions, which was exactly what occurred in fairly short order on the British stage (Clery 146).

13. Early nineteenth-century London also saw a dramatic increase in theatrical productions, largely resulting from the new and broader interpretations given to the Licensing Act of 1737. Originally, this act had created a theatrical monopoly for the two royal theaters (called patent theaters) in London—Drury Lane and Covent Garden—with a sort of loophole for the existence of the Haymarket, which was allowed to stage plays during the summer months. But in the early nineteenth century the theatrical legislation was reinterpreted to allow other and minor theaters to exist as long as they did not present dramas (which were defined as performances of spoken dialogue only). As Moody notes in her study of "illegitimate theater" in London, it was the political culture of the 1790s, the fall of the Bastille and England's war against Napoleon, that "provided the iconographic catalyst for the rise of an illegitimate drama. This theatre of physical peril, visual spectacle and ideological confrontation challenged both the generic premises and the cultural dominance of legitimate drama" (10). And as we have seen, technologies of visual spectacle developed to complement the "illegitimate" productions of melodrama, the gothic, pantomimes, burlettas, and various quadraped extravaganzas. The minor theaters for the most part confined themselves to melodramatic works, which by necessity included musical numbers, sung discourse (much in the tradition of operatic recitative), and military, nautical, and pantomimic fare. By 1843, with the revocation of the Licensing Act, there were twenty-one theaters in London alone, in addition to a number of optical entertainments such as panoramas carrying on the tradition of the Eidophusikon (Ziter, 20-21).

14. With this background in mind, I would like to examine a number of the stock gothic tropes, including the mysterious nun, the paintings of women, the theater scene, and the fête in *Villette* as examples of not simply one of the last gasps of high Victorian gothicism, but also of the internalization and critique of gothic theatrical technology. As Castle observes, the "phantasmagoria should [have] become a kind of master trope in nineteenth-century romantic writing," and certainly she applies the representation in provocative ways to the symbols and imagery in Thomas Carlyle's *French Revolution*. In a similar fashion, I intend to read Brontë's novel as a transmutation of the phantasmagoria to the novel form, a translation of a theatrical *topos* into the novelistic universe. Doing so allows us to see both the cultural persistence and permeability of gothic conventions, and at the same time it enables us to appreciate that Brontë must have been assuming a shared and broad theatrical knowledge in her reading audience. Critics have persistently faulted the novel for its "unreliable narrator" (Knies) and its "odd structure" (Martin); however, an understanding of how Brontë uses and critiques the highly visual theatrical machinery of her era actually works to clarify both the purpose and the structure of the novel. It has become conventional to describe the central conflict in the novel as one between "Reason" and "Imagination" in the personality of Lucy Snowe, the narrator. But a materialist interpretation of the work finds a much larger issue at stake.

15. M.H. Abrams's classic study *The Mirror and the Lamp* defined the historical and literary circumstances surrounding the shift in the early nineteenth century from the mimetic theory of perception to the projective. Ernest Tuveson has further observed that the mimetic theory culminates in Locke's *Essay*, which places an observer in the center of the mind. According to Locke, the mind functions as a mirror that can neither alter nor influence the images that are reflected upon it. The new theory of projective perception, symbolized by the lamp, made the perceptive faculties active, expressive, and creative. Nonetheless, both theories especially stressed the visual faculty; in fact, Tuveson observed that the eye gained ascendancy over analysis and understanding, or the rational intellect, in our involvement with the external world. Because all ideas are images or pictures in the mind, understanding became a form of visual perception (73). For Castle, "nineteenth-century empiricism frequently figured the mind as a kind of magic lantern, capable of projecting the image-traces of past sensation onto the internal 'screen'

or backcloth of the memory" (144). But the magic lantern was also associated in the public theatrical consciousness with magic and superstition, and while claiming on the surface that the mind was a machine that could be controlled, the other message that was being conveyed sub-rosa was that the mind was actually a "phantom-zone, given over, at least potentially, to spectral presences and haunting obsessions. A new kind of daemonic possession became possible" (144). But how does this bifurcation of attitudes toward the mind explain the fascination with the phantasmagoria, the sense that the visual itself is suspect, subject to manipulation and even cheaper forms of deception?

16. Relying on Foucault, Crary charts the progression of the interiorization of perception from the discovery of the camera obscura to its use as a metaphor by Descartes, Locke, Kant, Condillac, and Goethe, and he cites Foucault on the camera obscura as "a form of representation which made knowledge in general possible":

> The site of analysis is no longer representation but man in his finitude….It was found that knowledge has anatomo-physiological conditions, that it is formed gradually within the structures of the body, that it may have a privileged place within it, but that its forms cannot be dissociated from its peculiar functioning; in short, that there is a nature of human knowledge that determines its forms and that at the same time can be manifest to it in its own empirical contents. (Foucault, 319).

Foucault locates the eye firmly in the body. Earlier, Goethe also believed that it was crucial to connect the subjective component of perception with the physiological, a position that was elaborated on by the French philosopher Maine de Biran whose early nineteenth-century theory of the "*sens intime*" was an attempt to assert the primacy of interior experience (Crary 72). For both Goethe and Maine de Biran, subjective observation cannot be understood as a theater of representations, but instead as a product of increasing exteriorization: "the viewing body and its objects begin to constitute a single field on which inside and outside are confounded"; "the soul is necessarily incarnated [so] there is no psychology without biology" (Crary 73).

17. This bifurcation between the mind and the body was also famously played out in Charles Lamb's essay "On Garrick, and Acting; and the Plays of Shakespeare, considered with reference to their fitness for Stage Representation" (1811). What Wood has labeled the "classical iconophobia" of Coleridge and Hazlitt can be seen as well in Lamb, who condemned the theater as an inferior venue because of its reliance on the purely visual: "What we see upon a stage is body and bodily action; what we are conscious of in reading is almost exclusively the mind, and its movements" (qtd Wood 22). And, as Castle has noted, romanticism as a genre "owes much to the new belief in the reality of mental objects," while nineteenth-century philosophies like skepticism "may likewise arise out of a similar emotional shift toward the phantasmatic" (137). For Castle the impetus for such a transformation occurs because this society was moving away from a firm belief in an afterlife and an attendant and beneficent supernatural deity who controlled our lives. It is also possible to see that these changes could be due to the transformations that are made when an oral-based culture modernizes and increasingly privileges the written word. Then the visual spectacles of Louthenbourg and his cohorts on the London stage become manifestations of this new "spectralizing habit in modern times…our compulsive need to invent machines that mimic and reinforce the image-producing powers of consciousness. Only out of a deep preference for the phantoms of the mind have we felt impelled to find mechanical techniques for remaking the world itself in spectral form" (Castle 137).

III. PHANTASMAGORIC FEMALE BODIES

Phantasmagoria: A shifting series or succession of phantasms or imaginary figures, as seen in a dream or fevered condition, as called up by the imagination, or as created by literary description.

18. Women float in and out of view in Brontë's novel, and some of them appear to be living (and are not) and some of them appear to be dead (and are not). Some of them, in fact, are not even women. I would assert at the outset that there is a good deal of intense uneasiness about the role and nature of women in this novel. The ghostly nun who appears three times in the text suggests one of the most persistent tropes in the gothic repertoire, the sexually disgraced female victim. Or she is the mother who has been murdered, displaced, or unjustly separated from her children. Such a representation suggests a conservative ideological position on the part of Brontë, and certainly women in her novel are being positioned front and center in their maternal roles. I would contend that the gothic visual aesthetic presupposes a masculine subject who has been dazzled, not simply by an eroticization of the female body, but also by the woman's maternal function, and I am thinking here of Lewis's ambivalent presentation of Mathilda/Rosario in *The Monk* or Maturin's presentation of Isidora in *Melmoth the Wanderer*. In addition, the aesthetics of the sublime presupposes a female subject position disciplined through the presence of the male gaze (Miles 51)—or what I would call the bourgeois gaze. The mass audiences that flocked to such gothic dramas as Boaden's *Fountainville Forest* or Lewis's *The Castle Spectre* remembered the ghost scenes most vividly because those were the most visually dramatic, the most frightening, the most uncanny appearances of the dead/undead mother on the stage.

19. Brontë begins the novel with her heroine Lucy in complete control of the magic lantern show in her head. When Polly Home arrives at the Bretton household, Lucy looks at her luggage and asks, "Of what are these things the signs and tokens?" (7). She proceeds to watch and observe Polly in order to begin to understand this new object on her horizon. In fact, to this early Lucy human beings are purely objects of literal appearance. She never betrays her emotions; alas, she has been so successfully socialized that she has learned that the display of emotion in a woman is as unseemly as it is redundant. During the emotional farewell to Polly's father, which surely recalls Lucy's own loss of her parents and guardians and her own repressed fear of abandonment, Lucy prides herself on her learned characteristic behavior: "I, Lucy Snowe, was calm" (26). Brontë structures the work so that we see the gradual phantasmagoric effect on the frozen psyche that is Lucy. Throughout the first half of this novel Lucy continues in the stance of an objective observer and is content with inhabiting the "watch-tower of the nursery, whence I . . . made my observation" (92). Even after her involvement in the school play, Lucy retreats into a corner where "unobserved I could observe . . . all passed before me as a spectacle" (175). But Lucy would appear to be inhabiting a dream world of her own making.

20. Gradually, however, Lucy loses control of the very staid magic lantern show that she has made of her existence. The first clearly phantasmagoric scene occurs when Lucy is left alone in the school to tend a retarded child, a "cretin" whose physical situation eerily mirrors Lucy's emotional infantilism. Breaking down under the strain, Lucy experiences a vision of "ghastly, white beds" which become "specters" with "wide gaping eyeholes" (198). These floating white beds exist only in Lucy's mind as manifestations of a gothic phantasmagoric machinery, and surely Brontë here is trying to conjure up for her reading audience a visual image of hauntings and ghosts that were in prominence on the stage since the productions of Boaden and Lewis in the late 1790s.

21. What becomes the second and perhaps the most dramatic manifestation of the magic lantern show occurs when Lucy encounters what she thinks is a spectral nun. The first time the nun appears Lucy has retreated to read the innocent letter she has received from Graham Bretton, very self-consciously positioning herself in a gothic ambience reminiscent of Radcliffe's Ellena or Emily reading by a flickering candle. Setting the stage for this particular gothic tableaux, Lucy tells us to imagine her, "[t]he poor English teacher in the frosty garret, reading by a dim candle guttering in the wintry air, a letter simply good-natured--nothing more" (305). But this deflation of the gothic staple, the letter read by candlelight, is suddenly re-envisioned with the abrupt insertion of the phantom nun. To appreciate

the cues that Brontë is providing for her reader, who she hopes will recreate the magic lantern effect of the scene, I cite it in full:

> Are there wicked things, not human, which envy human bliss? Are there evil influences haunting the air, and poisoning it for man? What was near me?...Something in that vast solitary sounded strangely. Most surely and certainly I heard, as it seemed, a stealthy foot on that floor: a sort of gliding out from the direction of the black recess haunted by the malefactor cloaks. I turned: my light was dim; the room was long—but, as I live! I saw in the middle of that ghostly chamber a figure all black or white; the skirts straight, narrow, black; the head bandaged, veiled, white. Say what you will, reader—tell me I was nervous, or mad; affirm that I was unsettled by the excitement of that letter; declare that I dreamed: this I vow—I saw there—in that room—on that night—an image like—a NUN. (306)

So is Brontë describing a nun or something like a nun? And what would something like a nun be, a ghost of a nun? Female ghosts had actually become stock presences on the British stage by the early nineteenth century. When Matthew Lewis introduced a female ghost into his gothic drama *The Castle Spectre* (1797) he was roundly criticized, although James Boaden was actually the first gothic dramatist to use a floating female ghost in his production of *The Fountainville Forest* (1794). In addition, nuns or ghosts of nuns were also stock figures in the gothic repertoire (cf. Hoeveler, 2000; 169-72). Lewis's gothic drama *Raymond and Agnes* (1809) focused on the legend of the bleeding nun that he had incorporated into his earlier novel *TheMonk*, but the legend was actually a transmogrification of the earlier Germanic demon lover ballad. In Lewis's play Agnes is being held captive in Lindenburg Castle and, with the assistance of Raymond, makes her escape disguised as the Ghost of the Bleeding Nun, a legend that the family continued to evoke years after the original nun's death. The plot becomes complicated when the ghost herself actually does make an appearance, and the material uneasily coexists with the ephemeral in an uncanny dance of the undead with the living (a technique mimicked by Joanna Baillie in her gothic drama *Orra*). Both Lewis's play and Boaden's earlier *Fountainville Forest* relied on the same visual technique: a sheet of gauze producing a blue-grey haze and hanging between the audience and the ghost. As Ranger notes, the effect was achieved by using the green halves of the shades of the Argand lamps that were placed in the wings of the stage (76). Again, in the Brontë passage cited above we are clearly being invited to recall a theatrical ambience of magical effects: "influences haunting the air" or the flickering light, vague and ominous sounds, and finally the appearance of a nun, floating like an optical illusion on the "stage" of our reading mind. Notice also how this description of "an image" is qualified even further by the word "like." This is not a nun, but it is something like a nun, something like a nun conjured up on stage as part of a magic lantern show.

22. The particular nun who supposedly haunts the Pensionnat Beck is a woman who was, according to legend, buried alive in a vault under the Methuselah pear-tree "for some sin against her vow" (131). Later we learn that M. Paul's beloved Justine-Marie entered the convent when her marriage to Paul was prevented for financial reasons. In fact, we are told that she died and that Paul is the guardian of a girl named Justine-Marie who could very well be his natural daughter, born of his abortive affair with the first Justine-Marie, perhaps another wayward and sexual nun. When Dr. John attempts to question Lucy about the nun he asks, "'Was it a man? Was it an animal? *What* was it?'" (310; Brontë's emphasis). To the rational Dr. John the nun can only be a "spectral illusion" or an "optical illusion" (312; 321). That is, he refuses to acknowledge that existence can have any drama or theater in it.

23. The mad or bleeding nun,—a central trope of the female gothic tradition and one that Lucy is loath to renounce,—recurs here as a living manifestation of the magic lantern show. The lives of monks and nuns were also, however, the stuff of the hysterical, anti-Catholic England of Brontë's youth. Several communities of displaced monks and nuns were living in remote private houses in Lancashire and

Dorset and were alternately the subjects of pity and horror by their British neighbors after they were expelled from France during the Revolution. A contemporary British traveler to Italy, Samuel Rogers, witnessed an initiation ceremony at a convent in Rome, and he noted later that a young and beautiful Italian woman could find herself one day at the opera and the next shut up for life in a convent, with nothing to hear but the tolling bell to call her to endless prayers (qtd Ranger 61).

24. The second appearance of the phantom nun occurs after Lucy has decided to give up her infatuation with Graham and bury his letters under the Methuselah pear-tree. But before she can move to that higher level of repression or regression, Lucy confronts the nun once again in a highly stylized and theatrically visual scene:

> the moon, so dim hitherto, seemed to shine out somewhat brighter: a ray gleamed even white before me, and a shadow became distinct and marked. I looked more narrowly, to make out the cause of this well-defined contrast appearing a little suddenly in the obscure alley: whiter and blacker it grew on my eye: it took shape with instantaneous transformation. I stood about three yards from a tall, sable-robed, snowy-veiled woman. Five minutes passed. I neither fled nor shrieked. She was there still. I spoke. 'Who are you? and why do you come to me?' (370)

Again, this scene is lit by the sort of moon glow that was part and parcel of Robertson's theatrical effect. Notice also that Lucy is the one to speak first and that she assumes that she can discover a meaning (who? why?) in the visitations of the nun. She is compelled to read the nun as a text or a tradition that has meaning, whereas we learn by the end of the novel that the nun has no meaning apart from Lucy's compulsions to read her as a real personage with personal significance to her. Lucy appropriately describes the nun as having "no face—no features; all below her brow was masked with a white cloth; but she had eyes, and they viewed me" (370). The magic lantern show, in fact, is now firmly situated inside Lucy's head. The internalization of the gothic that occurs throughout Brontë's works is, I would claim, built on her knowledge of gothic stage technology, dramatic conventions, and phantasmagoric effects.

25. As Terry Castle has noted in regard to the emphasis on the spectralization of bodies in Radcliffe's novels, the late eighteenth century no longer distinguished the way earlier cultures did between "mental simulacra" and "real—if not material—objects of sense. At the end of the eighteenth century… phantasmatic objects had come to seem increasingly real: even more real at times than the material world from which they presumably derived" (134). The strange reappearance of the spectral nun who haunts Lucy actually conforms to what Castle describes as "a new spectralized mode of perception, in which one sees through the real person, as it were, towards a perfect and unchanging spiritual essence. Safely subsumed in this ghostly form, the other can be appropriated, held close, and cherished forever in the ecstatic confines of the imagination" (136).

26. The third and final appearance of the nun occurs as Lucy and M. Paul are walking together and he declares his intentions to pursue Lucy as the doubled female version of himself: "'we are alike,—there is affinity. Do you see it mademoiselle, when you look in the glass?'" (460). The conversation shifts next to the legend of the nun,—connected as it must be for M. Paul with his dead fiancé Justine-Marie. As Lucy and Paul muse on the nun's reality, Nature speaks as it always does at climactic moments in Brontë novels:

> Yes, there scarce stirred a breeze, and that heavy tree was convulsed, whilst the feathery shrubs stood still. For some minutes amongst the wood and leafage a rending and heaving went on. Dark as it was, it seemed to me that something more solid than either night-shadow, or branch-shadow, blackened out of the boles. At last the struggle ceased. What

birth succeeded this travail? What Dryad was born of these throes? We watched fixedly.
A sudden bell rang in the house—the prayer bell. Instantly into our alley there came . . .
an apparition, all black and white. With a sort of angry rush—close, close past out faces,
—swept swiftly the very NUN herself! Never had I seen her so clearly. She looked tall of
stature, and fierce of gesture. As she went, the wind rose sobbing; the rain poured wild
and cold; the whole night seemed to feel her. (461)

The references here to wind and rain are both highly recognizable recourses to conventions in
Robertson's gothic technology, and it is also important to note here that the forest was one of the stock
gothic settings developed as a visual extravaganza by Loutherbourg. In fact, one of his specialties was
the creation of lightning during a storm. Using a cut sky cloth behind which the lightning could travel,
Loutherbourg simulated the shock of lightning by shaking a thin sheet of copper suspended on a chain.
In order to create the sense of traveling through a forest at night, Loutherbourg also created a number
of different views of the forest, each of which was then superimposed on the earlier painted drop-cloth
and lit solely by the footlights (Ranger 30-31; cf. Allen). Similarly, for his gothic drama *Bertram*
(1816), Maturin created a collage of sound-effects as background: the roar of the sea, signals of distress
from a ship, and the regular rhythm of the tolling of a monastery bell, and it was the tolling of the bell
that was to become a stock gothic sound effect in dozens of theatrical productions throughout the
nineteenth century (Ranger 33).

27. But note also the sudden and dramatic appearance of the optical illusion herself. The bell rings and the
nun appears. One is tempted to observe that there is something vaguely Pavlovian about the
appearances of the nun. She is born like a force of nature; she springs full-grown from the branches of
a tree. She is more than human; she is inhuman. She is something; she is nothing. There is no nun, of
course, only an effeminate man cross-dressing as a nun in order to court Genevra, and this deflation
would appear to be Brontë's critique of the gothic brooding nun in the magic lantern show. She slyly
suggests that the fears and fantasies that the gothic has produced exist ultimately within the
imagination and nowhere else.

28. Other aspects of a phantasmagoria can be seen in Lucy's visits to the art gallery, where literal paintings
are thrown up for Lucy's view, much like the transparencies that were projected in Robertson's
sensational shows. In the first instance, the viewing of the painting of Cleopatra, Lucy confronts a
representation of the gothic anti-heroine, fleshly, seductive, wanton, and embarrassing:

It represented a woman, considerably larger, I thought, than the life. I calculated that this
lady, put into a scale of magnitude suitable for the reception of a commodity of bulk,
would infallibly turn from fourteen to sixteen stone. She was, indeed, extremely well fed:
very much butcher's meat—to say nothing of bread, vegetables, and liquids—must she
have consumed to attain that breadth and height, that wealth of muscle, that affluence of
flesh....She had no business to lounge away the noon on a sofa. She ought likewise to have
worn decent garments; a gown covering her properly, which was not the case. (250)

Lucy herself is repulsed by this representation of woman in the flesh and cools her eyes by making a
hasty retreat and viewing instead "little pictures of still life" (251). The still life is precisely what Lucy
is after for herself, but before she realizes that she is led by M. Paul over to a four-paneled visual
tableaux: "La vie d'une femme." Each one of these paintings presents a model young woman at a
crucial stage in her life. In the first, "Juene Fille," Lucy notes that the young girl is leaving the church,
missal in hand, "her eyes cast down, her mouth pursed up—the image of a most villainous little
precocious she-hypocrite." In the second picture, a bride prays before being led to the slaughter, and in
the third, the young mother, she contends with "a clayey and puffy baby with a face like an
unwholesome full moon." In the fourth and final picture a widow and her daughter survey a military

monument to their illustriously dead husband and father. Lucy tells us that the entire panorama presents women as "grim and gray as burglars, and cold and vapid as ghosts. What women to live with! insincere, ill-humoured, bloodless, brainless non-entities! As bad in their way as the indolent gipsy-giantess, the Cleopatra" (253). If women who conform to patriarchal standards are condemned, and women who rebel to seize power are also rejected as freaks, then where does that leave the women of *Villette*? Brontë here and elsewhere throughout her oeuvre practices a species of what Barthes has called "neither-norism." And clearly it is the shape and destiny of the female body that forms the locus of anxiety in Brontë's novelistic universe.

29. In an uncanny and almost predictive manner, Brontë appears to be anticipating the spectralization of the female body that now dominates contemporary media depictions of anorexic victims with ever shrinking frames. In some eerie way, Brontë has sensed this patriarchal double-bind by positioning the fleshly, huge body of Cleopatra (female power as nauseating visual display) against representations of shrinking, miniaturized female bodies safely confined to the acceptable and ever shrinking boxes of the home. Again, however, we are struck by the sheer visual hyperbole, the flashing of images on the mind of Lucy and the reader, recalling as they do the phantasmagoric magic lantern show, this time used as a critique of the patriarchy's stultifying construction of "woman." Lucy has effectively rejected both options held out to women by her society. She is repulsed by the flesh and blatant sexuality of Cleopatra as thoroughly as she is by the domestic idyll (sexuality safely contained and disciplined) of the "juene fille." Both options are alternately ghastly or ghostly to her. In a manner that recalls what Castle noted about the body in Radcliffe's novels, "what …shows so plainly—could we perhaps begin to acknowledge it—is the denatured state of our own awareness: our antipathy toward the body and its contingencies, our rejection of the present, our fixation on the past (or yearnings for an idealized future), our longing for simulacra and nostalgic fancy. We are all in love with what isn't there" (137).

30. But female bodies are, in fact, all over the text of *Villette*. In the next representation of woman thrown like a visual projection up on a stage, the performance of Vashti on stage as suffering woman incarnate, Lucy is confronted with yet another possibility, this time of a slightly veiled gothic anti-heroine. As she observes the performance of Vashti, Lucy muses:

> Pain, for her, has no result in good; tears water no harvest of wisdom: on sickness, on death itself, she looks with the eye of a rebel. Wicked, perhaps, she is, but also she is strong; and her strength has conquered Beauty, has overcome Grace, and bound both at her side, captives peerlessly fair, and docile as fair. Even in the uttermost frenzy of energy is each maenad movement royally, imperially, incedingly upborne. Her hair, flying loose in revel or war, is still an angel's hair, and glorious under a halo. Fallen, insurgent, banished, she remembers the heaven where she rebelled. Heaven's light, following her exile, pierces its confines, and discloses their forlorn remoteness. (322-23)

In the presence of this show of female power, this performance of epic female rebellion and suffering, anger and retribution, what does Lucy do? She looks at a man, her escort Dr. Graham, for his reaction: "In a few terse phrases he told me his opinion of, and feeling towards, the actress: He judged her as a woman, not an artist: it was a branding judgment" (325). The fact that someone shortly yells, "Fire!" and clears the theater does not deny the denigration and ambivalence that Brontë has displayed here toward female passion and suffering, the two well-springs that she has tapped in her own artistry.

IV. Revenants

This further is to be observed, concerning ideas lodged in the memory, and upon occasion revived by the mind, that they are not only (as the word revive imports) none of them new ones, but also that the mind takes notice of them as of a former impression, and renews its acquaintance with them, as with

—John Locke, "Of Retention," *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (II.x)

31. The next flickering image that occurs in the novel is the strange scene of Lucy, *uber*-Protestant, lured into Madame Walraven's gothic abode. The exchange of fruit between the two women is straight out of Little Red Riding Hood, while the identity of Madame as "Malevola," the wicked witch, recalls all those phallic mothers who have tried to consume young gothic heroines since the time of Radcliffe. It is in the gothic underworld of Malevola that Lucy hears from Pere Silas the tale of the first Justine-Marie, M. Paul's lost and lamented beloved, a bleeding nun who quite possibly died giving birth to their daughter, Justine-Marie Sauveur. But the most uncanny scene in this very gothic lair occurs when Lucy waits in the entryway for Madame to appear, and she does, apparently stepping through the picture of the dead nun:

> I was attracted by the outline of a picture on the wall. By-and-by the picture seemed to give way: to my bewilderment, it shook, it sunk, it rolled back into nothing; its vanishing left an opening, arched, leading into an arched passage, with a mystic winding stair; both passage and stair were of cold stone, uncarpeted and unpainted. Down this donjon stair descended a tap, tap, like a stick; soon, there fell on the steps a shadow, and last of all, I was aware of a substance....Well might this old square be named quarter of the Magi, well might the three towers, overlooking it, own for godfathers three mystic sages of a dead and dark art. Hoar enchantment here prevailed. (487)

The picture on the wall that suddenly rolls away, revealing the witch behind it, all of this highly visual presentation, I would contend, is straight out of the phantasmagoria. In fact, Brontë's novel uses two of the most prevalent scenic types in gothic drama: the medieval castle and the conventual church, the two most lasting models of "pure Gothic" architecture according to Richard Payne Knight (162). Both, however, could quickly be confused with Bastille-like prisons, which is exactly the slippery slope on which Brontë positions Lucy in *Villette*. One of the most famous castles on the gothic stage was the one designed by Thomas Greenwood the Elder for John Burgoyne's version of *Richard Coeur-de-Lion* (1786). This castle consisted of a number of different levels including a raised terrace, a moat, fortifications and a drawbridge, and a high tower topped with a parapet (Ranger, 44-45). Such a structure was actually meant to mimic the castle that George III was building for his family at Kew, but it is also very reminiscent of the sort of house that Madame Walraven inhabits.

32. The final and perhaps most important use of magic lantern conventions occurs during the midnight fête scene. Lucy's emotions are heightened by the drug that Madame administers as a sedative, but rather than produce the desired effect, the drug unleashes Lucy's long-buried emotions. After taking the drug, Lucy's "Imagination was roused from her rest, and she came forth impetuous and venturous....'Rise!' she said. 'Sluggard! this night I will have *my* will; nor shalt thou prevail. Look forth and view the night!' was her cry" (562; Brontë's emphasis). In other words, the magic lantern show in Lucy's head is finally in full operation, and she recapitulates all of the actions of the novel in all of their phantasmagoric intensity. Lucy is led almost magnetically to the park, and within the park she becomes engaged in trying to locate the huge stone basin filled with cool water, a pool in which the "moon supreme" was brilliantly reflected (562). Lucy states, "My vague aim, as I went, was to find the stone-basin, with its clear depth and green lining" (568). This pool, a "circular mirror of crystal . . . [with] the moon glassing therein her pearly font" becomes the final mirror in which Lucy attempts to see reflected the working of her own psyche. The pool functions quite literally as a mirror, but this symbol of mimetic perception is here combined with the moon, traditionally the symbol of the romantic and projective imagination.

33. The climax of the novel would appear to be Lucy's confrontation with M. Paul's ward, the young Justine-Marie. But just as Lucy's new emotionalism cannot be repressed, neither can it be trusted in the culminating and most dramatic epistemological moment of the novel: understanding the significance and identity of Justine-Marie, with whom both the spectral nun and M. Paul's deceased fiancé have been associated. Lucy now confronts in Justine-Marie an aspect of herself, long hidden: "I had seen this spectre only through a glass darkly; now was I to behold it face to face....my life stood still" (579-80). I cite the climactic passage in full:

> It is over. The moment and the nun are come. The crisis and the relevation are passed by. The flambeau glares still within a yard, held up in a park-keeper's hand; its long eager tongue of flame almost licks the figure of the Expected, there, where she stands full in my sight! What is she like? What does she wear? How does she look? Who is she? There are many masks in the Park to-night, and as the hour wears late, so strange a feeling of revelry and mystery begins to spread abroad that scarce would you discredit me, reader, were I to say that she is like the nun of the attic, that she wears black skirts and white head-clothes, that she looks the resurrection of the flesh, and that she is a risen ghost. All falsities, all figments! We will not deal in this gear. Let us be honest, and cut, as heretofore, from the homely web of truth. *Homely*, though, is an ill-chosen word. What I see is not precisely homely. A girl of Villette stands there . . . (589; her emphasis)

The clue here to the theatrical residue is the reference to "Flambeau glares" and "flames" licking around the figure of the nun-*manque*. Lucy wants to read Justine-Marie as the phantom nun. She wants to be able to tell us that Justine-Marie was dressed in a nun's habit because she thinks that she could then solve the riddle of her life, just as Brontë would like to be able to internalize and thereby control the gothic tropes that haunted her as well as her culture. But it is not to be. Justine-Marie is just a "bourgeoise belle" (580), and the triumph of realism has been reified before Lucy's very startled eyes. The dark glass that Lucy imagines herself looking into stands as a reflection of her theatricalized perceptions and is a contrast to the clear pool that reflects the moon. Lucy has been allowed to enter the temple of Truth and lift the veil, but she does not interpret correctly. Jealousy and "Fancy" mislead her. Ironically, she embraces a lie while vehemently declaring it to be her "good mistress" (583-84).

34. The delirium, the loss of consciousness, the inability to interpret visual stimuli correctly, and the terrifying consequences of having failed to interpret identities clearly—all are characteristics of being in the realm of the phantasmagoric. For the later romantic poets like Poe, Baudelaire, and Rimbaud, "the phantasmagoria was a favorite metaphor for the heightened sensitivities and often-tormented awareness of the romantic visionary. It conveyed exquisitely the notion of the *bouleversement de tous les sens*: that state of neurasthenic excitement in which images whirled chaotically before the inward eye, impressing on the seer an overwhelming sense of their vividness and spiritual truth" (Castle 159).

35. Charlotte Brontë places Lucy, her final creative accomplishment, in an ultimately ambiguous and unknowable universe. Lucy internalizes the magic lantern show because Brontë wanted to believe that all of life's experiences ultimately occur within the mind. The body is consistently elided in this text, or at least such a goal would appear to be Brontë's intention. As Castle observes, there is a "profound epistemological confusion" (159) in the century and it was represented by the uncanny way that mental images could correspond with spectral realities. Seeking to secularize and rationalize superstitions about ghosts and the afterlife, the phantasmagoria did not exorcise them, but actually "internalized and reinterpreted [ghosts] as hallucinatory thoughts….By relocating the world of ghosts in the closed space of the imagination, one ended up supernaturalizing the mind itself" (161). But I would claim that somewhere, in the dim theater of the brain, someone will always be screaming "fire" and Brontë will wish that she lived in the sort of world where she could save herself by simply imagining that she has run safely out the door.

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Notes

[1] Eido comes from the greek eidoion, meaning phantom, appartition, or image of an ideal; phus is derived from phusis, meaning nature, natural, but also appearance; and ikon comes from eikon, an image or likeness.
[Back](#)

Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era

Haunted Britain in the 1790s

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Wright argues that the rise in popularity of the Gothic romance in the 1790s led to an obsession with its pernicious effects in the periodical press. In its turn, this critical obsession with the Gothic in the 1790s became as imitative and as manufactured as the novels that it sought to critique.Â This essay appears in _Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era_, a volume of _Romantic Circles Praxis Series_, prepared exclusively for Romantic Circles (http://www.rc.umd.edu/), University of Maryland.

> The story is *made up* from that *sublime* production, the *Castle Spectre*, and from Mr Whaley's tragedy of the *Castle of Montval*, with several incidents *freely* borrowed from *Cervantes*; or, perhaps, at second-hand, from his Shakespearean dramatiser, the author of the *Mountaineers*. Had we any influence with Mr Astley, the Amphi-theatrical manager; we would recommend Mrs K to his employment, as a kind of *journeywoman manufacturer of ghosts, secret doors,* &c. &c
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> (Review of Anne Ker's *The Heiress di Montalde; or the Castle of Bezanto: A novel in two* volumes (London, 1799) in the *Antijacobin Review*, 7 (1800): 201-2)

1. The celebrated threat to "the discriminating powers of the mind" that William Wordsworth identified in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* arrived in the cargo of "frantic novels, sickly and stupid German tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse." Such material, for Wordsworth, was emblematic of "the magnitude of the general evil" that confronted Britain's literary republic (Wordsworth: 1805: vi.). On their own, these items do not seem to account for the hyperbolic "magnitude" of the perceived threat. Taken together, the adjectives that Wordsworth applies to these items are collectively urgent: "frantic" (linguistically reminiscent of France), "sickly" and "stupid" (connected specifically to German productions) and "deluges," all come to represent a literary contamination from the continent which was spreading throughout Britain's literary arena. For Wordsworth, the contamination had spread beyond the listed generic items and had become a "general evil" threatening literature.

2. Not only had this continental invasion infected the fiction, drama and poetry of Britain, but it had also engulfed the arena of literary criticism itself, as I will argue in this essay. Wordsworth's proposal of a new form of poetry to respond to the British nation's literary torpor provided a strong antidote to the perceived "evil." As a celebrated milestone in the development of British Romanticism, Wordsworth's prefatorial success lay in his proposal of a new artistic mechanism. Rather than merely commenting upon what he and many others perceived as Britain's passive embrace of continental imports, Wordsworth embarked upon his own revolutionary technology.[1]

3. It is here that we may wish to consider the implications of the title of this collectionâ€" "Gothic Technologies"â€"for the very imprecision of the word "technology" is suggestive. The eighteenth-century use of the word "technology" placed the emphasis on "art" as well as gesturing towards our own understanding of the word today. Whilst the *Oxford English Dictionary's* principal definition of "technology" is as "A discourse or treatise on an art or arts; the scientific study of the practical or industrial arts," it charts how as early as 1706 Phillips defined it as "a Description of Arts, especially the Mechanical," thus privileging artifice and mechanism in the Arts. By 1755, whilst Samuel Johnson

did not include the word "technology" in his *Dictionary*, he included the adjective "technical," commenting on its rarefied usage: "Belonging to arts; not in common or popular use."[2] In 1755, then, "technical" remained a rare and privileged term to be applied to mechanical arts. But as Fred Botting charts elsewhere in this collection, the deployment of Gothic tropes in the latter part of the eighteenth century became strongly associated with mechanism. "Mechanical" was no longer rarefied and privileged as a technology, but instead became emblematic of the Gothic genre and its critical apparatus, synonymous with the mass invasion of "frantic," "sickly," and "stupid" continental imports.

4. The implications of the changing definitions of "mechanical" and "technology" clustered around the Gothic, and it is worth considering how late eighteenth-century criticism of the Gothic before Wordsworth emphasised the mechanical aspects of the Gothic's supernatural apparatus. In the review of the Gothic novel *The Heiress of Montalde*, the epigraph for my essay, the *Antijacobin Review* playfully recommended its author Anne Ker to the theatrical manager Mr Astley as a "journeywoman manufacturer of ghosts," emphasising both the commercial and mechanistic aspects of her fiction. Such reviews were neither rare nor original in their remoulding of "mechanical" as a derogatory epithet to describe a genre that deployed a recognizable collection of supernatural tropes. In *Accidental Migrations* Edward Jacobs discusses the Gothic's reproduction of an "unusually stable set of conventions in an unprecedented number of texts" (Jacobs, 198). The "stable set of conventions" that Jacobs identifies was a source of anxiety for critics of the Gothic in the 1790s and 1800s.

5. Curiously, however, the essence of hostile reviews (that the Gothic was formulaic or "mechanistic") came to define the reviews themselves, as they too assumed the mechanistic aspects that they attacked. In other words, the late eighteenth-century reception of the Gothic became as much of an identifiable technology, itself reproducing the "stable set of conventions" that first appeared in the novels themselves. In its entrenchment against Gothic "technologies" criticism itself became imitative, manufactured and repetitive in the 1790s. It was perhaps the mechanical torpor into which criticism lapsed that provoked such a strong antithetical response from Wordsworth and others in the 1800s. In the following sections of my essay, I explore both the Gothic's perceived mechanical torpor in the 1790s, and the subsequent mirroring of the same in the 1800s.

The supernatural and the "dignus vindice nodus"

6. The French novelist Madame de Genlis's *The Knights of the Swan; or, the court of Charlemagne* was reviewed by the *London Review and Literary Journal* in May 1796. The review intervened in an increasingly important point of debate, that of the legitimate use of the supernatural, thus:

> With respect to the introduction of her *supernatural agent, the ghost,* [de Genlis] seems conscious that the critics will not be easily satisfied; and in a note subjoined to its first *palpable appearance,* seeks her justification in the opinions of that aera, and in the licence ever granted to romances and poets. How far this argument will avail as a reason for her thus calling on the tomb to *ope its ponderous and marble jaws,* must be left to the candour of the public, though we cannot help remarking, that the observation of Horace on the *dignus vindice nodus*, will not bear her out in the present difficulty. No event is brought about by this frightful spectre thus *revisiting the glimpses of the moon,* which might not have been accomplished by an ordinary agent; and we are sorry, when a writer of acknowledged abilities sacrifices to a popular and vulgar taste, at the expence of her more enlightened judgment.

> (Review of Madame de Genlis, *The Knights of the Swan; or, the court of Charlemagne: A Historical and Moral Tale*, trans. James Beresford, (London: Joseph Johnson, 1796) in *The*

The *London Review* touched a collective critical chord, as it emphasised the tension in Madame de Genlis's choice of supernatural rather than "ordinary" agents. For *The London Review* this unfortunate aesthetic selection was paralleled by her appeal to "popular and vulgar taste" in place of "enlightened judgement."[3] Appealing to an older and more venerable technology, the *London Review* invoked Horace's "dignus vindice nodus" from *The Art of Poetry*.[4] In *The Art of Poetry*, Horace uses the phrase "dignus vindice nodus" to denote a problem in play-acting, but it is the way in which he casts this in relation to literary legitimacy which is of relevance here. Speaking of the ideal drama, Horace says: "*nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus*." This can be translated as, "And let no god intervene, unless a knot come worthy of such a deliverer." The "worthiness" of a "knotty" or "problematic" literary device is of crucial significance to the debate surrounding the Gothic in the periodical press of the 1790s. When the *dignus vindice nodus* is resurrected in the 1790s in relation to the use of the supernatural, Horace's words should be translated to mean "you should not use this device unless you have a legitimate reason." "Legitimacy" fast became divorced from the Gothic's mechanistic reproduction of ghosts in the 1790s. The Gothic romance's luxurious and too-frequent indulgence of the supernatural was quite simply deemed to be an unworthy advocate of the supernatural because of its exhaustive deployment of it as a visual stimulant.

7. The critical consensus in 1790s Britain came to equate spectral appearances with "popular and vulgar taste." The reviewer in the *London Review* went on to argue that: "It is high time that this *extravagant* passion for *raising up useless spirits from underground* should be banished from our novels and from our spectacles" (Anon, 1796: 316). The choice of the word "extravagant" indicates the way in which these spectral appearances were viewed as superfluous and, as "useless spirits" suggests, unnecessary and beyond the bounds of British propriety. The repeated emphasis upon "*our* novels" and "*our* spectacles" is suggestive of the belated attempt to protect Britain's literary tastes from the perceived continental influences that Wordsworth also identifies. (emphasis added) In the *Monthly Review*, William Taylor supported this position on Madame de Genlis's novel, complaining that "the painting is frequently too indelicate and luxuriant for the sober taste of this country" (Taylor, 22, 1797: 93). For Taylor, Britain was a nation of sobriety and industry in contrast to the indelicacy and luxuriance of France.[5] The association of French sentiment with rhetorical embellishment, in opposition to British common sense and plain-speaking, continued in reviews of less well-established authors. For example, in reviewing the work of Catherine Lara, a prolific adaptor and translator working during the 1790s, the *Critical Review* complained that "French sentiment . . . is too fanatical and too artificial for plain English common sense" (Anon, 18, (December, 1796): 474-5).[6]

8. Britain's supernatural epidemic fast became associated with an array of epithets that linked it to France. "Extravagance," "fanaticism," "vulgarity" and "luxury" all became paradigmatic of an invasion of French sentiment into Britain by means of the supernatural. The worthiness of the supernatural in itself was not in question, but its relentless deployment throughout British fiction was. The contamination of English language and English literature by French language and French literature also carried within itself the potential for other, more political, imitational possibilities.

Haunted Britain

9. The Reverend Thomas Mathias's satirical poem *The Pursuits of Literature,* published in four separate dialogues between 1794 and 1797, was one of the first documents to sustain the comparison of the political revolution and military threat in France with the invasion of French literary tastes into Britain.[7] His complaint in the fourth dialogue that "Sooner to France Thames roll his current

strong/Than men love verse, high fancy, or the song" (ll. 227-228) lamented the denigration of the British republic of literature while connecting to the potential political threat of British military surrender. This coupling of the literary with the political potential for surrender was elaborated upon by Mathias throughout the four dialogues of *The Pursuits of Literature*.

10. Further on in the fourth dialogue, Mathias emphasised how the thirst for narrative, and more precisely Gothic narrative, had led to the simultaneous expulsion of learning and martial vigour from Britain. Here, with customary hyperbole, Mathias recast Britain itself as a Gothic spectre, with a "dead spirit" and a spent "vigour." Having devoted a large amount of textual space in the Preface of the fourth dialogue to the denigration of Matthew Lewis's Gothic creation *The Monk*, he then satirically explored how the British nation's thirst for visual thrills in the form of the supernatural had impoverished the country. Placing Horace Walpole's 1764 *Castle of Otranto* on trial for having spawned the British craving for the supernatural, the following lines pleaded:

> Speak then, the hour demands; Is learning fled?
> Spent all her vigour, all her spirit dead?
> Have Gallic arms and unrelenting war
> Borne all her trophies from Britannia far?
> Shall nought but ghosts and trinkets be display'd,
> Since Walpole play'd the virtuoso's trade,
> Bade sober truth revers'd for fiction pass,
> And mus'd o'er Gothic toys through Gothic glass?
> Since states, and words, and volumes, all are new,
> Armies have skeletons, and sermons too;
> (Mathias, IV, ll. 539-548)

11. "Gallic arms" and "unrelenting war" for Mathias had deprived Britain of true learning and literature, leaving Walpole's Gothic "trinkets" and "toys" in place of Britain's true literary trophies. Britain as a seat of true learning was recast as a museum of phantoms, with Walpole and his imitators poring over displays of ghosts, trinkets and Gothic toys through a display cabinet made of "Gothic glass."

12. What is particularly intriguing about Mathias's rendition of Britain as a Gothic display cabinet is the level of objectivity that is presumed here. While he couples "states" with "words" and "volumes" to emphasise an earlier point from the third dialogue (that "LITERATURE, well or ill-conducted, is THE GREAT ENGINE, by which all civilized states must ultimately be supported or overthrown" (Mathias, III, l.141) by contrast, the detachment implied by Walpole "musing" over Gothic toys through "Gothic glass" is remarkable. It implies a passive and uninvested consumption of these trinkets that is accompanied by a level of detached irony provided by the "Gothic glass." The allusion to Walpole's reversal of fiction and truth with his first counterfeit preface to *The Castle of Otranto*, his "toying" with a "virtuoso's trade" is suggestive of the illegitimacy in which Mathias viewed Walpole's literary incursion.[8] Walpole's more aristocratically-detached contemplation of Gothic paraphernalia is precisely what gave rise to the unprecedented amount of Gothic romances in the 1790s written by authors (such as Anne Ker) with far less pedigree and more financial motive. There was no worthiness behind Walpole's motivation, in Mathias's account, and his portrayal of Walpole's "musings" is suggestive of precisely this point.

13. While "states" and "volumes" may be newly fashionable, in Mathias's vision the bastions of Britain's physical and moral defences, armies and sermons, have endured an anonymous and prolonged death. The troublesome conjunction between Catholicism, Revolution and British literary delight in terrors and spectres was not unique to Mathias. Here, though, the links between despotic Catholicism, visuality and display were strengthened to re-emphasise how the "spirit" of learning had been

supplanted by a much more troublesome phantom. As the *Oxford English Dictionary* notes, the word "spirit" is commonly used in phrases denoting or implying diminution or cessation of the vital power, or the recovery of this. If Britain's literary spirit has expired, then all that remains in Mathias's vision is the ghostly skeleton of the Gothic. The "state" of learning is beyond recovery.[9]

14. Mathias's critical position on uncritical consumption was strengthened by the new regiment of satirical attack which was raised in the late 1790s. Satirical letters, which argued about a "system" of terror invading the rational realms of British print culture, began to crop up in periodicals across the political spectrum. "The Terrorist System of Novel Writing" (1797), "Terrorist Novel Writing" (1798) and "On the New Method of Inculcating Morality" (1798) all provided light-hearted recipes on how to concoct a Gothic fiction, emphasising the manufactured nature of the Gothic. On the imitative trend that gave rise to such satirical articles, E.J. Clery correctly argues that "The hothouse productivity of the 1790s meant that the initial reading of a Gothic novel was not unlikely to be the equivalent of reading half a dozen others" (Clery, 1995: 142). These satirical letters emphasised how the Gothic apparatus was not only unoriginal, but easily consumed, with both "Terrorist Novel Writing" and "On the New Method of Inculcating Morality" specifically using the word "recipe" to describe their *reducto ad absurdium* of the Gothic genre.[10] "Terrorist Novel Writing" concluded its light-hearted recipe of a castle, gallery, skeletons and assassins for a Gothic novel with the advice: "Mix [the elements] together, in the form of three volumes to be taken at any of the watering places, before going to bed" (cit. Clery and Miles 2000: 184).

15. The absence of education and instruction in Gothic romances was lamented in all three articles. In "Terrorist Novel Writing" the complainant reminded the journal that "A novel, if at all useful, ought to be a representation of human life and manners, with a view to direct the conduct in the most important duties of life, and to correct its follies"[11] (cit. Clery and Miles 2000: 184). "Anti-Ghost," the writer of "On the New Method of Inculcating Morality" echoed a similar lament: "So much for the *instruction* to be derived, if it *really* wanted in this enlightened age. But what is the *information* we learn?" (Anon. 1798). The active process of learning that literature was supposed to support was being replaced by an incuriously passive consumption of a Gothic novel where readers could pick over the Gothic trinkets and choose the right combination to please themselves. In marked contrast to Wordsworth's later urgent epithets of "frantic," "sickly, stupid" and "deluges," these more pedestrian satires of the Gothic were suggestive of leisure, indulgence, and bemusement with their subject matter.

Spectral Imitations

16. The fact that "Terrorist Novel Writing," "The Terrorist System of Novel Writing" and other satirical articles also became imitative in themselves, all using supposedly satirical recipes to denigrate the Gothic genre further, emphasised the universal nature of this process of consumption. The "hothouse productivity of the 1790s" that E.J. Clery discusses in relation to the Gothic extends beyond the realm of the novel to all literary endeavour, and inevitably, criticism itself was not untainted by uncritical consumption. Just as the Gothic came to be identified as a recognizable "technology" through its critical reception in the 1790s, so too did its critical recipes. By using the same generic convention—the recipe—to mock formulaic fiction that seemingly "blunted" the mind, reviewers also created a new generic technology that was as manufactured as its target.

17. Emily Jane Cohen has argued that the "Gothic is a genre that valorizes the image and the ornament" (Cohen 1995: 883). But the above excerpt from Mathias's fourth dialogue, where the entirety of literary Britain is rendered as one skeletal Gothic museum, goes beyond this. It suggests that other areas of literature have also been infected by the Gothic's celebration of the ornamental, its use of certain attractive toys, its uncritical selection of trinkets from the Gothic display cabinet.

18. Imitation was not solely confined to the Gothic genre; it spread to the criticism of it as well in the 1790s, and thereby rendered this criticism largely redundant. As the *Oxford English Dictionary* records, the adjective spectral refers not only to the quality of ghostliness, but also to the "resembling, or looking like spectre or spectres." Just as Freud's linguistic excavation of the different definitions of *heimlich* and *unheimlich* revealed in "The Uncanny," so too we find that there is a conflation between imitation and original in the *OED's* definitions of "spectral." This conflation informs how I define the spectralization of Britain in the 1790s. The series of imitations produced by Gothic novelists and critics alike led to each technology resembling the other with no particular original in mind.

19. The similarity in titles between "Terrorist Novel Writing" and "The Terrorist System of Novel Writing" is only the most obvious of a series of imitations that were taking place as part of Britain's defence against the imitative spectralization of Britain. In a humorous attempt to dissociate himself from the fashion for spectral apparitions, for example, the essayist for *Walker's Hibernian Magazine* signed himself "Anti-Ghost" (Anon, "Anti-Ghost," January, 1798), whilst elsewhere the editor of a short-lived satirical periodical called *The Ghost* refashioned himself as "Felix Phantom" (Anon, "Felix Phantom" 1796).[12] These examples illustrate how apt was Mathias's coining of "Gothic trinkets." The vogue for appropriating the supernatural paraphernalia of the romance in an attempt to prove the novel's unoriginality spectacularly misfired. "Anti-Gothic" criticism in itself became a tired commodity that relied on the visual cues provided in "recipes" for its satirical targets.

20. Due to a complex process of literary contamination, "anti-Gothic" criticism endlessly refracted the novels that it accused of being derivative and manufactured.[13] Whilst "The Terrorist System of Novel Writing" satirised the perceived "system" for writing a Gothic romance, it spawned another "system" that was as mechanical as its target. Reviewers and satirical writers came to gaze upon their works with the same impassivity, borrowing the very same set of trinkets from the display cabinet as the imitative practitioners of the Gothic.

21. One reviewer for the *Critical* summarised the critical awareness regarding the imitative contagion. When reviewing a novel called *Austenburn Castle* by an "unpatronized female" in 1796, the writer complained "Since Mrs Radcliffe's justly admired and successful romances, the press has teemed with stories of haunted castles and visionary terrors; the incidents of which are so little diversified, that criticism is at a loss to vary its remarks" (Anon, 16 (February, 1796). The unabated presence of spectres in Britain's novels in turn led to criticism itself being haunted by the spirit of the Gothic. The reviewer's awareness of the lack of critical variety spawned by the Gothic served only to increase the pathos of such critical ossification. Not only did the Gothic become unworthy of the supernatural, and hence illegitimate, but criticism itself was losing its originality, and hence its "dignus vindice nodus."

22. In "Ideal Presence and Gothic Romance," Robert Miles has indicated the variety of uses for anti-Catholic rhetoric in the late eighteenth century, arguing that "it was now marshalled against the promiscuous display of useful, desirable, or mysterious things. Against the regime of surfaces was set a supposed regime of essence" (Miles 1999: 17). Miles's qualification of the critical opposition with the word "supposed" is entirely apposite for the process of critical spectralization that I have just discussed. T.J. Mathias's satirical lamentation for the "death" of the spirit of learning in Britain and the expiry of its "vigour" in *The Pursuits of Literature* described a literary crisis that had spread beyond the confines of the Gothic genre.

23. As a final illustration of my argument, I would like to return to the review of the novelist Anne Ker's *Adeline St Julian* from the *Antijacobin Review*. Surprisingly, she defended herself against the *Antijacobin's* accusations of imitation in the Preface to her novel *Emmeline*, arguing that "it appears to me . . . that they are racking their imagination to find out a somebody that has wrote *somehow or somewhere* similar in *some respect,* to this wonderful, absurd, improbable, romantic *something* which I

have written." (Ker, 1801: v) The facility with which Ker nailed the suitably vague and repetitive critiques of her own alleged imitations demonstrated precisely how criticism of the Gothic became haunted by the spectre which it set out to exorcise.

24. The visually dramatic effects in 1790s Gothic fiction were appropriated by the critical responses that it provoked. The clear reliance upon other critics' lenses suggests that the reviewers spent too long musing "o'er Gothic toys through Gothic glass," rather than relying on their own critical acuity. Mathias's despairing question "Where is Invention?" in the fourth dialogue of *The Pursuits of Literature* stood out in splendid metrical isolation, echoing through the museum of phantoms that Britain had become.

25. It was only with the advent of Wordsworth's "systematic defence of the theory" behind the creation of *Lyrical Ballads* that the critique of passive consumption and "the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers" gathered critical fortitude. This was precisely because he offered the questionable remedy of "a selection of language really used by men," and rejected the mechanistic tendencies of the Gothic and its 1790s critics (Wordsworth: 1805, iv.). Wordsworth's faith in the power of "great and permanent" objects to act upon "certain and indestructible qualities of the human mind" acted as a strong corrective. Whereas earlier critics of the fickle consumption of Gothic visual trinkets had fallen prey to their targets, Wordsworth's proposal of an entirely new technology provided a strong and concrete alternative to the mechanistic aspects of the Gothic. In turn, his "technology" in the Preface would also be satirized, most famously by Byron in *Don Juan*. Nonetheless, Wordsworth's celebrated innovation in disowning the mechanisms embraced by both the Gothic and its critics in the 1790s and proposing a solid and oppositional departure in their place secured him a more enduring reputation in the history of British Romanticism. The "greatness," "permanence" and indestructibility that Wordsworth emphasised disrupted the 1790's enchantment with Gothic mechanism and artifice.

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Notes

[1] As Michael Gamer in particular has argued, however, Wordsworth's new critical enterprise involved him divorcing himself from the Gothic genre which he had previously, albeit unsuccessfully, explored by writing Gothic dramas. Gamer explores the contradictions in Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott and Wollstonecraft's criticism of the Gothic in "Gothic fictions and Romantic Writing in Britain." Here, he warns: "Such a reading, however, would demand we exercise selective memory and require we overlook that these same writers in these same years produced recognizably Gothic texts" (Gamer, 2002: 89).
[Back](#)

[2] Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English language: in which the words are deduced from their originals, and illustrated in different significations by examples from the best writers, to which are prefixed, a history of the language, and an English grammar.* 2 vols. (London: Knapton; T. and T. Longman, C. Hithch and L. Hawes; A. Millar, and R. and J. Dodsley, 1755), vol. II.
[Back](#)

[3] As Fred Botting argues elsewhere in this collection, "Gothic machinery, in rationalising and mechanising

supernatural occurrences and readerly superstition, establishes a cycle of repetition, boredom, stimulation and disappointment that threatens enlightenment ideals of the rational and discriminating individual."
Back

[4] I am grateful to my colleague Dr Richard Steadman-Jones from the Department of English Language and Linguistics at the University of Sheffield for assistance with this.
Back

[5] The coupling of extravagance with France continued elsewhere in literary battles. For example, when reviewing Edmund Burke's 1790 *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, the *Monthly Review* criticised what it viewed as Burke's descent into French rhetorical embellishments: "he no sooner crosses the Channel, than he throws off the brown bob, and plain broad-cloth of British argument, to array himself in the powdered bag, and embroidered silk, of French declamation" (*Monthly Review*, 3, (1790) 321).
Back

[6] Lara published two translated novels in 1796, the above and *Louis de Boncoeur. A Domestick Tale* (London: Ridgway, 1796). Although Arthur Aikin in the *Monthly Review* praised the latter for the "considerable merit" of its translation, the *Critical* concentrated on the extravagance of French sentiment in both translations, noting of the latter that "The language of genuine sensibility and affection is very distinct from this extravagance, which may produce affectation or provoke disgust, but will never touch the heart" *(Critical Review,* 18 December, 1796), p. 474.
Back

[7] T.J.Mathias, *The Pursuits of Literature: A Satirical Poem in Four Dialogues*, (London, 1798).
Back

[8] Cf. Chapter 3 of E.J. Clery's *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction: 1762-1800* for a detailed analysis of the "illegitimacy" issue in Walpole's two Prefaces (1995: 60-67). In "Ideal Presence and Gothic Romance" in *Gothic Studies* 1/1 Robert Miles also provides a detailed analysis of the implications of Walpole's two prefaces in relation to Kames's theory of "ideal presence" (1999: 21-23).
Back

[9] Cf. also Paul Keen's *The Crisis of Literature in the 1790s* for a full analysis of the mounting concern of the demise of the republic of letters in Britain.
Back

[10] On the imitative trend that gave rise to such satirical articles as the ones I am about to discuss, E.J. Clery correctly argues that "The hothouse productivity of the 1790s meant that the initial reading of a Gothic novel was not unlikely to be the equivalent of reading half a dozen others" (Clery, 1995: 142). Edward Jacobs also cites Mary Alcock's "A Receipt for Writing a Novel" in Roger Lonsdale's *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets* (Jacobs, 2000: 199).
Back

[11] Cf also Sue Chaplin's "Romance and Sedition in the 1790s: Radcliffe's *The Italian* and the Terrorist Text" in *Romanticism* 7 (2) 2001: 177-90. Chaplin's article also addresses "Terrorist Novel Writing" in relation to the law and unregulated consumption.
Back

[12] *The Ghost*, edited by Felix Phantom. Edinburgh: Mudie, 1796. The *Critical Review* commented on the

appearance of this periodical that, "Most of the papers are of a very flimsy texture, - the wit very thinly scattered, and the sentiments trite and common" *Critical Review*, 18, (December, 1796).
[Back](#)

[13] Cf. also Fred Botting's argument on the "Gothicization" of Thomas Mathias's *Pursuits* in "Power in the Darkness: Heterotopias, Literature and Gothic Labyrinths" in *Genre* 26, 2-3, Summer/Fall, 1993, pp. 253-282.
[Back](#)

Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era

Gothic Visions, Romantic Acoustics

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1. The nature of the relationship between Gothic romance and the rise of "high" Romantic aesthetics is something that has long perplexed the scholarly tradition.[1] And yet, what has not been sufficiently explored is the extent to which Romanticism, certainly in its earlier Wordsworthian and Coleridgean manifestations, distanced itself from the frantic imaginings of the Gothic romancer through effecting a shift from the eye to the ear, from sight to the auditory field as the privileged organ and field of aesthetic perception and appreciation. While some eighteenth-century theorists had been keen to elide all perceivable differences between the senses of vision and hearing—Charles Avison's influential *An Essay on Musical Expression of 1753*, for instance, had strenuously defended the parallels between the auditory field of music and painting's visual aesthetic—other prominent eighteenth-century thinkers, including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, were struck by their overwhelming differences.[2] These and other such accounts of the insuperable distinctions between the aesthetic subject's ability to see and to hear were firmly installed at the heart of early Romantic discourse: synaesthesia, the veritable confusion of the senses in later writers such as Keats notwithstanding, Romantic aesthetics was characterised by a concerted privileging of the voice over the intense visual technologies of contemporary Gothic romance. Although the lyrical imaginings of, say, Wordsworth are by no means lacking in a sense of the visual, much of what has subsequently been taken as Romanticism's most important aesthetic manifestos stake out their differences from the frequently avowed monstrosities of Gothic through a self-conscious rejection of its intensely visual aesthetic, establishing in its place sound and the ear which hears it as the privileged organ of imaginative communication.[3]

2. This movement away from sight is consistent with the broader tendencies identifiable in British Romantic aesthetics at large—as Gillen D'Arcy Wood's study *The Shock of the Real: Romanticism and Visual Culture, 1760-1860* (2001) has argued, the aesthetic practices of writers such as Coleridge, Wordsworth, Hazlitt, Keats were based upon a heart-felt rejection of the visual technologies of their day: "Romantic ideology was constructed not in opposition to the enlightenment rationalism of the eighteenth century, but as a reaction to the visual culture of modernity being born" (7). However, that the Romantic reaction against modern technologies of the visual extended to the contemporary appetite for Gothic romance is an avenue of investigation that D'Arcy Wood leaves largely unexplored. And yet, this particular aspect of the Gothic/Romantic relation assumes particular significance when one considers the extent to which the primary architects of Romantic aesthetics were writing about, and responding to, Gothic at a time when the form's already strongly visual qualities were assuming more poignant, even "urgent" manifestations: the proliferation of Gothic chapbooks, bluebooks and shilling-shockers from the mid 1790s onwards confronted the Romantic literati with nothing less than an assault upon their already nervously engaged sense of visual perception. Illustration, of course, was particular to chapbook and bluebook versions of Gothic, and in them, lurid engravings and woodcuts replaced the poetic and lyrical components of, say, Radcliffe's lengthy three-volume romances. As Frederick S. Frank observes, "It was the illustrator's task to select the most emetic, erotic, or sensationally supernatural episode in the chapbook, then pictorialize it to lure the Gothic consumer. If no such satisfactory horrific event could be located by the illustrator, the artist then fabricated his own" ("Gothic Gold" 297). Variously dispersed throughout the chapbook as frontispiece, title page or even intra-textual illustration, it was through these images that some of the most memorable scenes of Gothic romance achieved their most intense visual realisations.

3. Even beyond a direct concern with these visually illustrated versions of Gothic, it is easy to see that what was primarily at stake in most Romantic indictments of Gothic romance was the form's penchant for lurid, intensely visual aesthetic description. In his review of Lewis's notorious fiction in the *Critical Review* of February 1797, Coleridge took little care to disguise his repugnance for *The Monk*'s disturbing visuality. Situating its apparent "gaudiness" well beyond any sense of what might constitute the aesthetically appropriate, Lewis's romance was denounced by Coleridge as a malevolent network of "libidinous minuteness," an intricate web which, once activated, articulated for even its most suspecting of readers a range of "powerful stimulants" and "meretricious attractions." Disavowing its textual fabric of "voluptuous images" as "a provocative for the debauchee" (Norton 298), *The Monk*, for Coleridge, embodied the ghastly potential to lead its readers way beyond the safe confines of what Robert Miles has referred to as the hygienic self, that discursive constellation of ideas which regarded the human subject as being ever-vulnerable to a concerted corrosion, corruption or disfigurement by any perceivable manifestations of desire.[4] Here, the assumptions of the Associationist paradigm are paramount, and Coleridge himself discloses his reliance upon the Associationist principles of Hobbes, Locke, Hartley and others in his review of Lewis. Like books of even the most spotless moral intent, the intense visual prurience of *The Monk,* it was feared, could serve as the first link in a metonymic chain which, through the interminable links of association, would shuttle its readers into the dangerous terrain far beyond the limits of the hygienic self: "The most innocent expressions might become the first link in the chain of association, when a man's soul had been so poisoned; and we believe it not absolutely impossible that he might extract pollution from the word of purity, and, in a literal sense, *turn the grace of God into wantonness*" (Norton 299).

4. Albeit without particular reference to Lewis, Wordsworth's Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1802) had expressed similar misgivings in relation to the contemporary appetite for Gothic romance. Despite his self-professed claims in the Preface to illustrate and explain, through verse, the ways "in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement" (597), Wordsworth was rather particular about the precise forms that these more legitimate modes of excitement might take. In fact, given the subject's dangerous propensity for unlimited mental association, Wordsworth, like Coleridge, seems keen to disqualify most modes of visual stimulation from his examination of alternative notions of poetic stimulation: "the human mind," he insists, "is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants" (599). Given the contemporary taste for visual stimulation embodied in the popular cultural success of the Gothic romance during the 1790s, the promotion and defence of salutary, non-visual forms of aesthetic excitement have become for Wordsworth in 1802 nothing less than a matter of urgency. As he opined, the reader's sensitivity to excitement had been numbed, dulled and anaesthetised by a certain over-exposure to the outrageous visual stimuli of the Gothic: "The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakespear [*sic*] and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse.—When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble effort with which I have endeavoured to counteract it [. . .]" (599-600). For Wordsworth, then, appropriate notions of poetic excitement should reside in the striking up of a fine balance between stimulation and aesthetic pleasure, in the setting up of a careful equilibrium between sustainable forms of excitement, on the one hand, and a sense of bearable or palatable enjoyment on the other: "The end of Poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an over-balance of pleasure" (609). But as the Gothic so clearly attested, the effect of too visual an engagement was inevitably to take the artwork into a place well beyond the limits of pleasure as they had been laid down through the powers of Romantic consensus and collaboration.

5. In *Biographia Literaria* (1817), Coleridge rearticulated some of his earlier reservations concerning the dangers of Gothic romance's visual aesthetic in terms applicable to the risible material of the circulating library. In a footnote to the third chapter, Coleridge, through reference to the camera

obscura, characterised the reading of Gothic romance as a form of indolent day-dreaming, a mode of vacant phantasmagoric reverie that was as far removed from the labour-intensive engagements of respectable "reading" as conceivably possible:

> For as to the devotees of the circulating libraries, I dare not compliment their *pass-time*, or rather *kill-time*, with the name of *reading*. Call it rather a sort of beggarly day-dreaming, during which the mind of the dreamer furnishes for itself nothing but laziness and a little mawkish sensibility; while the whole *materiel* [*sic*] and imagery of the doze is supplied *ab extra* by a sort of mental *camera obscura* manufactured at the printing office, which *pro tempore* fixes, reflects and transmits the moving phantasms of one man's delirium, so as to people the barrenness of an hundred other brains afflicted with the same trance or suspension of all common sense and all definite purpose. (32)

As Terry Castle has argued, the camera obscura, one of the most popular modes of visual entertainment within late eighteenth-century culture, was centrally inscribed within the rise of Gothic fiction.[5] Radcliffe herself invokes the camera obscura during a characteristic description of the European landscape in volume three of her later romance *The Italian* (1797):

> Lofty palms and plantains threw their green and refreshing tint over the windows, and on the lawn that sloped to the edge of the precipice, a shadowy perspective, beyond which appeared the ample waters of the gulf, where the light sails of feluccas, and the spreading canvas of larger vessels, glided upon the scene and passed away, as in a camera obscura. (292)

For Coleridge, however, the reading of Gothic was indistinguishable from the other oxymoronic forms of "idle activity" which included gaming, swinging on a chair, snuff-taking, petty quarrelling, smoking, and the scrutinising of printed advertisements in public houses on rainy days (32). Variously cited as phantasm, delirium and dream, the technologies of contemporary popular entertainment were repeatedly denounced by the early Romantics for their visual intensity, be they in the form of Gothic romance or the spectacular visions of the camera obscura.

6. To a certain extent, these reservations seem well-founded: what has subsequently been identified as the so-called "masculine" strain within Gothic writing of the 1790s does indeed frequently consist of little more than a sustained foray into those realms of dangerous attraction constituted by the field of intense visual stimulation. In *The Monk*, for instance, Father Ambrosio's gazed initially takes the place of touching, and as the substitute for the penis which his clerical vows of celibacy have sought to disengage and render inactive, it serves, at least prior to his acts of fornication and incestuous rape, as the perverse means through which he penetrates another. Even Ambrosio's rape of his sister is couched in visual terms, the monk lustily "gazing on his devoted prey" (379), physically restraining her while "gazing upon her with gloting eyes" (382), and the terrified Antonia imploring him to avert his licentious gaze from her: "'Do not look on me thus! Your flaming eyes terrify me! Spare me, Father! Oh! spare me for God's sake!'" (381). To desire in *The Monk* is to gaze, and to gaze, to move inexorably along the line of metonymic associations that runs from the Madonna, through Matilda and her orb-like breast, to incestuous embrace, punishment and eventual death. The point to be made here, though, is that, in their various reactions to the Gothic's intensely visual mode, Wordsworth and Coleridge, in both theory and poetic practice, had already begun to articulate an aesthetic alternative. In the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth, having condemned the frantic forms of visual excitement embodied by the contemporary appetite for Gothic romance, set about the recuperation of safer, more desirable notions of excitement as the basis for his own poetic endeavour. Given Gothic's flooding of the literary marketplace during the 1790s, it is crucial that Wordsworth approach his undertaking with a firm sense of the differences between good and bad aesthetic excitement, salutary and non-salutary

forms of stimulation in mind, intending to counteract the effects of the latter through the provision of his safer, altogether more hygienic poetic alternative. His objectives in this respect are unequivocal:

> reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonourable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and did I not further add to this impression a belief, that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed, by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success. (600)

But it is ultimately to sound and to the aesthetic engagement of the ear that Wordsworth in the Preface turns, proposing that the primarily auditory effects of poetic rhythm and metre, if nothing else, might serve as a corrective to the visual stimulations of the Gothic romance: "Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion" (609). If vision in the Gothic had lead the form into the reaches of dangerous enjoyment well beyond the palatable limits of aesthetic pleasure, Wordsworth was of the opinion that poetic metre, the careful engagement and stimulation of auditory sensation, would restore to the aesthetic realm its compromised sense of safety and moral integrity.

7. This strategic mobilisation of sound as both sensory and aesthetic antidote to the passionate excesses of Gothic visibility is clearly illustrated in Wordsworth's later poem "On the Power of Sound," composed between 1828 and late 1829, and published in 1835. As an extended apostrophising of the power of sound and the organ of auditory perception which hears it, Wordsworth renders sound more metaphysical than spectral, not so much ghostly as supernatural, variously citing it as "a Spirit aerial" (1) or "Invisible Spirit" (17), the powers and functions of which are nothing short of "etherial" (1). As is the earlier poem "Power of Music" (1806, 1807), in which he commends the music of a blind fiddler on a busy Oxford Street for the sheer magnitude of its effects on passers-by, it is the extent to which sound is invisible, the extent to which it entirely eclipses, outruns and exceeds the field of visibility, that lends to it its supernatural qualities: as Wordsworth rhetorically enquires, "Point not these mysteries to an Art / Lodged above the starry pole; / Pure modulations flowing from the heart / Of divine Love, where Wisdom, Beauty, Truth / With Order dwell, in endless youth?" (108-112). Sound has stepped in to assume the place to which the eye, utterly circumscribed by the limitations of scope, light and perspective, cannot extend itself—as John Hollander puts it, "Sound pierces darkness, whereas light seems to have no effect upon silence. It is sounds, rather than illuminations, which seem to awaken us from sleep, and which can invade our dreams" (78). Consequently, in "On The Power of Sound," auditory perception serves for Wordsworth as the invisible vehicle of truth, a reminder of mortality that, as earth falls on a coffin lid, is far stronger in its auditory versions than in even the most vivid of Gothic visualisations:

> To life, to *life* give back thine ear:
> Ye who are longing to be rid
> Of Fable, though to truth subservient, hear
> The little sprinkling of cold earth that fell
> Echoed from the coffin lid;
> The Convict's summons in the steeple knell. (153-158)

The power of sound and the positive values attributed to auditory perception celebrated in this later poem might retrospectively serve as, variously, a defence or manifesto for the treatment of sound as

throughout Wordsworth's later poetry, from the thirteen-book version of *The Prelude* (1805), through to the lengthy *The Excursion* of 1814. As Geoffrey Hartman has argued, an account of the auditory field is crucial to a consideration of much of Wordsworth's poetry.[6] David P. Haney, too, identifies "an explicit priority of the aural to the visible" (183) in the later Wordsworth, while John Hollander has argued for the presence of an "inner ear" in the poetry, an auditory equivalent to the primarily visual aesthetics of the celebrated spots of time (46). Certainly, this would seem to be the case in the poem "Nutting," composed in 1798 and published in 1800, in which the persona describes an act of nut-gathering in a natural grove of hazels that has remained unseen, or utterly undefiled by the penetrating effects of vision. Within this scene of curtailed visibility—emphatically this is "A Virgin scene" (19) only because it has remained "unseen by any human eye" (30)—the experience of the speaker remains for the most part one of lucid auditory recall: "I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound, / In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay / Tribute to ease, and, of its joy secure / The heart luxuriates with indifferent things" (37-40). The Second Book of *The Prelude* at once echoes and reinforces these sentiments, presenting the young Wordsworth as being sublimely transported by the powers of auditory perception which have remained entirely "unprofaned" by the visual field of the image:

> For I would walk alone,
> In storm and tempest, or in starlight nights
> Beneath the quiet Heavens; and, at that time,
> Have felt whate'er there is of power in sound
> To breathe an elevated mood, by form
> Or image unprofaned; and I would stand,
> Beneath some rock, listening to sounds that are
> The ghostly language of the ancient earth,
> Or make their dim abode in distant winds. (II, 321- 329)

As such, sound serves as catalyst to the persona's powers of imaginative Vision, a mode of poetic engagement that, though nominally located within the sense of sight, metaphorically appropriates vision for a sublime sense of poetic genius. In Book Seven of *The Prelude*, the eye of visual perception has been rendered "weary" by the phantasmagoric flow of life in the city of London. Echoing the passivity of the viewer invoked in Coleridge's condemnation of Gothic's camera obscura, the ghastly flow of low pursuit in London passes before the eye of the weary spectator as a phantasmatic, even narcotic form of reverie:

> An undistinguishable world to men,
> The slaves unrespited of low pursuits,
> Living amid the same perceptual flow
> Of trivial objects, melted and reduced
> To one identity, by differences
> That have no law, no meaning, and no end [. . .]. (VII, 700-706)

D'Arcy Wood's reading of Book Seven has raised the intriguing suggestion that Wordsworth in passages such as this was expressing his wearied dissatisfaction with the spectacular images of the natural world offered by Robert Barker's panorama in Leicester Square, a clear manifestation of what, for Wood, is the far-reaching Romantic rejection of the visual technologies of early nineteenth-century modernity (99-120). At other moments in The Prelude, the celebration of the power of sound leads Wordsworth to an outright condemnation of sight as a form of sensory despotism, a sensory or perceptual form of tyranny against which a veritable synaesthesia ought to militate:

> The state to which I now allude was one
> In which the eye was master of the heart,

> When that which is in every state of life
> The most despotic of our senses gained
> Such strength in me as often held my mind
> In absolute dominion. (II, 171-176).

As David P. Haney has argued, Wordsworth provides at least two alternatives to the veritable "tyranny" (178) of visual perception in *The Prelude*, the one being sub-Platonic notions of the poetic imagination and its related powers of Vision,[7] the other the privileging of sound and the field of auditory perception. Either way, it is the perceived despotism and degeneracy of ordinary visual perception against which the later Wordsworth self-consciously positions himself. Certainly, if the later sonnet on "Illustrated Books and Newspapers" (1846) is anything to go by, the possibility remains that Gothic, particularly in its most luridly visual chapbook versions, constituted one particular source of the persona's general dissatisfaction with the interruption of the printed word by the illustrated image. His challenge to printed "Discourse" (1) is unequivocal: "Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!" (12), lest sound and the ear which hears it be entirely eclipsed by the cheap field of the visual: "Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and ear / Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower stage!" (13-14).

8. Of course, Romanticism's privileging of sound over the Gothic aesthetic of heightened visual engagement is most concretely realised in the figure of the Aeolian harp, that eighteenth-century household toy which served, in John Hollander's words, as "the basis of a profound and widespread trope for imaginative utterance, and a kind of mythological center for images of combining tone and noise, music and sound" (57). Although Wordsworth had invoked a similar figure in "The Vale of Esthwaite" and "The White Doe of Rylstone," it was in the poetry of Coleridge that the Aeolian harp was to assume some of its most enduring Romantic associations. In "The Eolian Harp. Composed at Clevedon, Somersetshire" (1795), for instance, the eponymous lute involuntarily offers forth

> a soft floating witchery of sound
> As twilight Elfins make, when they at eve
> Voyage on gentle dales from Faery Land,
> Where *Melodies* round honey-dropping flowers
> Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
> Nor pause nor perch, hov'ring on untam'd wing. (20-25)

For Coleridge, the Aeolian harp of the Conversation Poems (1795-1798) stands in the same favourable relation to the camera obscura invoked in the later *Biographia Literaria* (1817) as poetry does to Gothic romance, nature to culture, organic inspiration to the contrived technologies of mainstream popular entertainment. If Gothic romance is the camera obscura, the verse of Coleridge and his sympathisers is the auditory alternative that is the Aeolian harp. In "The Nightingale," Coleridge exploits the connections between the Aeolian harp and the nightingale, that other crucial metaphor for the Romantic imagination, through describing the bird's lyrical outpourings "As if one quick and sudden Gale had swept / An hundred airy harps!" (81-82). Here too, sound replaces vision as does Romantic aesthetics the frantic imaginings of the Gothic romancer. Together with the Aeolian harp, the nightingale in all its classical and natural associations serves to place sound at the centre of the poetic endeavours of both Coleridge and Keats. Yet what seems paradoxical about Coleridge's employment of sound in "The Eolian Harp" as an appropriate metaphor for the workings of the imagination is the sense of poetic passivity and inactivity that it encodes. If the camera obscura of Gothic romance had been rejected by Coleridge primarily on the grounds of the indolent reverie it induces, the poetic processes metaphorically enacted by the lute stray dangerously close to the idle passiveness of the Gothic spectator: "Full many a thought uncall'd and undetain'd, / And many idle flitting fantasies, / Traverse my indolent and passive brain / As wild and various, as the random gales / That swell or flutter on this subject Lute" (31-35). Similarly, in "Reflections on Having Left a Place of Retirement" (1796),

Coleridge apostrophises that quasi-sacred time "When the Soul seeks to hear; when all is hush'd / And the Heart Listens!" (25-26), his own auditory version of what, for Wordsworth in "Expostulation and Reply," was the "wise passiveness" of natural world's seemingly indolent observer (24). Nonetheless, sound, by virtue of its difference from visual perception alone, constitutes a positive alternative. Furthermore, the auditory field for Coleridge encompasses its very opposite, with deft alternations between silence and the perception of sound forming the basis for most of the Conversation Poems.[8] This is no more so than in "Frost at Midnight" of 1798, in which "the sole unquiet thing" (16) in this scene of "strange / and extreme silentness" (9-10) is the rhythmic breathing of the slumbering infant and the thin blue flame that flickers gently on the grate.

9. For every Gothic phantasm, the sound of Romantic verse, to each florid imagining of the camera obscura, the soothing, lyrical sounds of the nightingale and Aeolian harp: Wordsworth and Coleridge constitute their high poetic aesthetic through the repudiation of the Gothic's visual excesses. Gothic is to Romantic what vision is to sound, technological contrivance to natural and organic effusiveness, the fevered monstrosities of popular culture to higher poetic forms of creative expression. And yet, what seems to complicate this all too neat system of differences is the extent to which Ann Radcliffe, for one, had already begun to negotiate and employ some of the defining characteristics of Wordsworth and Coleridge's Romantic aesthetic even amidst her self-conscious foray into the realms of so-called male Gothic writing in her later fiction *The Italian: Or, The Confessional of the Black Penitents, A Romance* (1797). Though arguably the most important exponent of the Gothic mode during the 1790s, Radcliffe's responses to Lewis in *The Italian* not only consolidated her fictional aesthetic as it had been developing steadily throughout *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789), *A Sicilian Romance* (1790), *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), but also lead Gothic into a place remarkably closer in style, structure and ethos to the Romantic aesthetic and poetic practice than Wordsworth and Coleridge, at least, might have cared to acknowledge. It thus follows that, as James Watt in a different context has argued,[9] we ought to consider Gothic writing of the late eighteenth century not as a monolithic discourse at all, but rather qualify our account of the Gothic/Romantic relation with an awareness of the crucial aesthetic differences attendant upon the two gendered manifestations of the form. When Wordsworth and Coleridge seek in both aesthetic theory and practice to resist the intensity of Gothic's visual technologies, they stand in opposition primarily to Lewis and other fictions of the so-called "male" Gothic tradition. Female Gothic fictions in the tradition of Radcliffe, by contrast, seem already to have effected some of the definitive moves and gestures of the nascent Romantic aesthetic. Indeed, critical claims to the composition of *The Italian* in late 1796 aside,[10] the possibility always remains that Radcliffe, in setting out to provide a corrective response to Lewis in The Italian, was well versed in Coleridge's condemnation of the visuality of Lewis's fiction in February 1797 before—or at least while—she wrote. But even if, following the *Monthly Magazine* and *British Register*, the first edition of the text did indeed appear as early as December 1796, it is not inconceivable that Radcliffe undertook the corrections to the second edition of 1797 with Coleridge's distaste for the visual firmly in mind: as Robert Miles's edition of *The Italian* argues, Radcliffe's revisions to the second edition often involve the elevation of the aural over the visual (xxxviii).

10. The precise nature of the patent intertextual relations between Lewis and Radcliffe has generated a considerable amount of critical interest, from Ellen Moers's coining of the term "female Gothic" in *Literary Women* (1977), through the work of Kari J. Winter, Robert L. Platzner, Syndy M. Conger, Robert Miles, Rictor Norton and others.[11] However, as exhaustive as critical accounts of the Radcliffe/Lewis relation might seem, what has not been sufficiently documented are the ways in which the relation between them turns upon the differences between the eye and the ear, the crucial subjective functions that might be established and maintained through differences in the field of sensory perception. As argued above, though, the distinctions between vision and auditory perception also inform the aesthetic divide between Gothic and Romantic, prose romance and high poetic form, to the

extent that the broader distinctions between Gothic and Romantic replicate themselves within Gothic writing itself, rendering fictions of the Radcliffean school closer to the aims and objectives of the Romantic literati. In Keats's memorable phrasing, she was "Mother Radcliffe," for Scott she remained the first poetess of Romantic fiction, for Nathan Drake she was nothing less than the Shakespeare of Romance Writers: as Watt has argued, Radliffe was almost routinely exempted from the attacks to which most other Gothic romancers were vulnerable (110). Perhaps one of the reasons for Radcliffe's curious ability to withstand the tide of acerbic Romantic reaction lay in her canny replacement of the phantasmatic spectacles of the camera obscura with a decidedly Gothic version of Romanticism's nightingale, lute or Aeolian harp.

11. Given the problematic notion of desire and perverse visual reverie as it is exercised through the gaze of Father Ambrosio in *The Monk*, it is fitting that Radcliffe's response to Lewis in *The Italian* systematically sets about the disciplining of the gaze's unruly, perverse desires and offering up in the place of curtailed visibility an emphasis upon hearing or auditory sensory perception. As the subtitle of the romance indicates, Radcliffe employs the trope of the confessional as the organising structural principle throughout the romance. This in itself serves as a means of encoding a significant sensory shift from the eye to the gaze, from the visual to the realm of the auditory: as the Prologue so clearly demonstrates, the ear of the confessor hears what he is not allowed to see. The remainder of Radcliffe's narrative, itself purporting to be the Paduan student's transcription of a lengthy confession of assassination, cannot avoid importing into itself a similar privileging of the voice and the ear which hears it over the eye of visibility: the very form of this romance is the written account of a confession that was originally heard. Radcliffe's privileging of sound at the expense of the visual is further illustrated in Radcliffe's execution of two of the most important narrative incidents in *The Italian*—the monkish apparition's continuous haunting of Vivaldi, and the death of Father Schedoni and his accomplice-turned-rival Nicola di Zampari at the narrative's close. The monkish apparition in the fort appears only in order to disappear, thwarting Vivaldi's attempts at seeing and identifying him (20). In place of the denied visual, all that Vivaldi and his servant are left with is a weak sense of auditory perception. At other moments in the narrative, the haunting of the apparition is achieved solely through the powers of the voice—*en route* to the Villa Altieri, for example, a voice entirely lacking in any visually identifiable origin emanates as if from nowhere, at once betraying the uncanny presence of Vivaldi's ghostly companion as well as maintaining his invisibility:

> It was the voice of the monk, whose figure again passed before him. 'Go not to the villa Altieri,' it said solemnly, 'for death is in the house!'
> Before Vivaldi could recover from the dismay into which this abrupt assertion and sudden appearance had thrown him, the stranger was gone. He had escaped in the gloom of the place, and seemed to have retired into the obscurity, from which he had so suddenly emerged, for he was not seen to depart from under the archway. Vivaldi pursued him with his voice, conjuring him to appear, and demanding who was dead; but no voice replied. (41)

The eye of readerly engagement in Lewis has become the ear of attentive listening in Radcliffe. The eventual death-by-poisoning of Father Schedoni and Nicola di Zampari, the other crucial incident in Radcliffe's narrative, also institutes sound in the place left vacant by visual deprivation. Radcliffe's recourse to poison as a means of effecting the death of two of her narrative's main protagonists is, in itself, significant: unlike the spectacular, bloody dismemberment and death-by-immolation of Ambrosio in the closing sections of *The Monk,* the visual engagement of the reader during Schedoni's death-by-poisoning is minimal, if not entirely non-existent, with the ghastly sounds emanating from the body of the poisoned subject emphasised in its place: "At the instant of his fall, Schedoni uttered a sound so strange and horrible, so convulsed, yet so loud, so exulting, yet so unlike any human voice, that every person in the chamber, except those who were assisting Nicola, struck with irresistible terror,

endeavoured to make their way out of it" (402).

12. Most of the scenes in which Radcliffe reconfigures the subject's senses, both fictional and readerly, rely upon a direct allusion to some of the most visually vividly memorable scenes in *The Monk*—as Conger has argued, most of the important scenes in *The Italian* are to be read as "sustained *counterstatements*" (129) to equivalent scenes in Lewis's fiction. For instance, the most visually intense sequence in Lewis's narrative must surely be Ambrosio's lascivious gazing upon the slumbering body of his sister shortly prior to her abduction. In *The Italian*, however, it is Schedoni's guilt-ridden conscience that takes the place of the monk's visual eroticism, even as he, like Lewis's Ambrosio, draws aside Ellena's gaping nightgown in preparation for his final murderous stroke: "drawing aside the lawn from her bosom, he once more raised it to strike; when, after gazing for an instant, some new cause of horror seemed to seize all his frame, and he stood for some moments aghast and motionless like a statue" (234). The opening sections of the fiction, too, graphically recall the opening sequence of *The Monk*, in which Don Lorenzo and Christoval in the Church of the Capuchins, through their respective gazes, subject Antonia's lovely visage to an acute form of sexual scrutiny. Radcliffe's revision of this scene proceeds by means of a pointed intertextual reference to Lewis's original—it too is set in a Cathedral, and involves, at least in narrative terms, the initial encounter between two of the novel's main protagonists—yet subjects the gazing of Lewis's male subjects to a strict form of discipline—in Radcliffe's version, it is the voice of Ellena, and not her beauty which modestly remains forever concealed beneath her veil, that initially attracts Vivaldi: "The sweetness and fine expression of her voice attracted his attention to her figure, which had a distinguished air of delicacy and grace; but her face was concealed in her veil. So much indeed was he fascinated by the voice, that a most painful curiosity was excited as to her countenance, which he fancied must express all the sensibility of character that the modulation of her tones indicated" (5). Through the emphasis she places upon the timbre of the heroine's voice, Radcliffe preserves the modesty and decorum that have been flouted and compromised in the perverse, pornographic reveries of *The Monk*. Thus, while Lewis's Lorenzo and Christoval had gaze upon the unveiled Antonia completely unhindered, Radcliffe's Vivaldi, though also in part "determined to obtain, if possible, a view of Ellena's face" (5), shows a stronger sentiment of shame with regards to his indecent wish to gaze upon his love-object. Of course, it is in Vivaldi's heightened awareness of the impropriety of things visual that his moral worth resides, for unlike the perverse paths of visual reverie for which Ambrosio so indiscriminately opts, Radcliffe's hero is prudently committed to the disciplined vision of the hygienic self: later acknowledging the indecency of his initial wish to see Ellena, Vivaldi eventually capitulates to speaking with her (6). From this moment onwards, Radcliffe's fiction sets in place a hierarchically organised system of morality that demands, sequentially, the necessity of speaking before seeing, the virtues of interacting with the object of one's love interests through the voice prior to extending the relationship into the potentially more dangerous realms of the visual. This plays itself out in each one of Vivaldi's many visits of courtship to the Villa Altieri. Invariably, the powers of visual perception are frustrated, and the sound of Ellena's lute, her voice, or the memory of her singing offered up in their place. The romantic interaction between hero and heroine in *The Italian* is primarily undertaken through the voice and the ear that hears it. As the case of Ellena's experience in the Convent of San Stefano indicates, it is only within a community of celibate, heterosexual women—that is, a textual field and locale that has apparently been purged of all possible manifestations of erotic desire—that the gaze may circulate between individuals without any precautionary measures.

13. Thus, for all Radcliffe's pointed invocation of the camera obscura in the third volume of this romance, it is unsurprising that Coleridge in the *Critical Review* of June 1798, while denouncing the improbabilities of her account of the Inquisition, could generously concede that in *The Italian*, the author's penchant for intense visual description was far "less prolix." Here, Coleridge's opinions were well in keeping with those expressed in a number of contemporary reviews. *The Monthly Mirror*, for instance, observed how this fiction was far less visual than Radcliffe's earlier productions, noting how

"The reader of the Italian is not perpetually harassed with overcharged descriptions of the beauties of nature," while Arthur Aikin in the *Monthly Review* of March 1797 maintained that, though not entirely deficient in "that luxuriant painting of natural scenery in which Mrs. Radcliffe delights," The Italian was markedly "less *abundant* than former publications."[12] In sharp contrast to his condemnation of Lewis's prurient visual technologies of approximately sixteen months earlier, Coleridge could eventually claim that, "notwithstanding occasional objections, the *Italian* may justly be considered as an ingenious performance; and many persons will read it with great pleasure and satisfaction." Radcliffe's privileging of sound over sight had eventually succeeded in attaining for Gothic the *coup* of high Romantic approval.

14. And yet, for all its apparent affinities with a similar privileging of sound in the aesthetics of Wordsworth and Coleridge, what does seem to introduce a considerable tension between Radcliffe's Gothic mode in *The Italian* from the acoustics of Romantic verse is what appears to be Radcliffe's high levels of investment in the auditory field's marked lack of desire. For if there is one thing of which Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats seem convinced, it is the sheer readiness with which sound lends itself as a vehicle for the transmission of potentially dangerous impulses. Even Henry Home—better known as Lord Kames—in his *Elements of Criticism* (1761) had observed that sound, for all its worth, could also potentially serve as the compromising agent of moral and aesthetic degeneracy: "Music having at command a great variety of emotions, may like many objects of sight, be made to promote luxury and effeminacy, of which we have instances without number, especially in vocal music" (le Huray and Day 77). But as he rapidly conceded, "with respect to its pure and refined pleasures, music goes hand in hand with gardening and architecture, her sister arts, in humanising and polishing the mind, of which none can doubt who have felt the charms of music" (77), while a large portion of his discussion of music in *Elements of Criticism* is devoted to making the claim that, fortunately, the perceived beauties and pleasantries of music are entirely incommensurate with the dangerous sublimities of passion[13] . Certain dangerous possibilities, though, remained, and although Romantic verse discloses more an attraction to the desires of music and sound than a fear of their compromising potential, Romanticism's auditory field seems at this point a far cry from the altogether purged, desire-less sense of sound in Radcliffe's later romance. In "On the Power of Sound," for instance, Wordsworth, like Lord Kames, addresses the "Regent of Sound" in order rhetorically to observe "How oft along thy mazes [. . .] have dangerous Passions trod!" (81-82), conceding how sound is often prone to the effects of "a voluptuous influence / That taints the purer, better mind" (87-88). In Coleridge's "The Eolian Harp," too, the Lute, "carress'd" by the wind, is thoroughly sexualised "Like some coy Maid half-yielding to her Lover" and much like the damsel with the dulcimer or the woman wailing for her demon-lover in "Kubla Khan," this lute "pours such sweet upbraidings, as must needs / Tempt to repeat the wrong" (12-17). The nightingale in Coleridge's poem by the same name utters forth its nocturnal "wanton song" (86) or "love-chant" (48) as "many a glow-worm in the shade / Lights up her love-torch" (68-69), while in Keats's thoroughly sexualised version of sound in, say, "Ode to Psyche," Virgin choirs "make delicious moan / Upon the midnight hours" (30-31). For Radcliffe, by contrast, sound recommends itself as a salutary, desire-less alternative.

15. Behind the Gothic's patent preoccupations with sight and visibility, then, lies a rich though critically neglected history of sound and the auditory sense. Indeed, at least twenty years prior to Horace Walpole's literary experiment in *The Castle of Otranto*, Thomas Warton's "The Pleasures of Melancholy," written in 1745 but published anonymously in 1747, drew what would prove to be an insuperable range of connections between sound, the auditory field, and the some of the most enduring conventions of Gothic romance—the taper, the darkness, the choir, the chant, the orison, the voice, the Gothic vault:

> The taper'd choir, at the late hour of pray'r,

> Oft let me tread, while to th'according voice
> The many-sounding organ peals on high,
> The clear slow-dittied chaunt, or varied hymn,
> Till all my soul is bath'd in ecstasies,
> And lapp'd in Paradise. Or let me sit
> Far in sequester'd iles [*sic*] of the deep dome,
> There lonesome listen to the sacred sounds,
> Which, as they lengthen thro' the Gothic vaults,
> In hollow murmurs reach my ravish'd ear. (196-205)

Thomas Gray's "The Progress of Poesy: A Pindaric Ode" (1751-1754) also figures sound in what, again, would later prove to be some of Gothic romance's most abiding conventions, describing the ear as the winding labyrinth through which echoes and anguished cries creep: "where Maeander's amber waves / In lingering lab'rinths creep, / How do your tuneful echoes languish, Mute but to the voice of anguish?" (69-72). And even while he and Coleridge criticised the Gothic for its heightened sense of visibility, Wordsworth, for one, seemed paradoxically aware of the extent to which it was ultimately the power of sound that lay at the heart of the Gothic aesthetic. Penetrating, as in Gray's Ode, the "mouldy vaults of the dull Idiot's brain" (100), music in "On the Power of Sound" is alone capable of penetrating the Gothic darkness of the labyrinth-like ear:

> Intricate labyrinth, more dread for thought
> To enter than oracular cave;
> Strict passage, through which sighs are brought,
> And whispers, for the heart, their slave;
> And shrieks, that revel in abuse
> Of shivering flesh; and warbled air,
> Whose piercing sweetness can unloose
> The chains of frenzy, or entice a smile
> Into the ambush of despair [. . .]. (5-13)

In a more self-consciously Gothic context, the shift from the eye to the voice is swiftly effected in Anna Laetitia Aikin's short tale "Sir Bertrand: A Fragment," published in the collection *Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose* that was written with her brother John Aikin in 1773. The scene in the ruined "antique mansion" (3) is one of overwhelming darkness and profound visual obscurity. Replete with references to the "thick black clouds" (3) that obscure the nacreous moon, lights that faintly flicker and then instantly vanish, and the night which "was darker than ever" (3), the voice arises out of the gap rendered in Gothic within the field of dark visibility. As mysterious bells toll from the turret, Sir Bertrand is variously struck by "a loud shriek [which] pierced his ears" (4) and a "deep hollow groan" that resounds through the vault. Supplementing the gaze in those places to which visibility cannot extend itself, the mere prominence of sound and noise in late eighteenth-century Gothic fiction already seems to point to a certain blindspot within the visual field. Stepping in to remediate, correct and supplement the perceived weaknesses, dangers and inadequacies of the visual field, sound in Gothic is the ghost of failed and failing modern disciplinary technology—a spectre, though, often closer to the spirit of Romanticism than Wordsworth and Coleridge's vehement acts of Gothic exorcism would have us believe.

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Notes

[1] Resisting earlier tendencies to reduce the connections between Gothic and Romantic writing to easy notions of historical confluence, influence, cause and effect, more recent critical attention has sought to address the relationship between them in more sophisticated terms. For instance, that first-generation romantics, especially Wordsworth and Coleridge, exploited the conventions of Gothic writing even as they jettisoned them is a paradox that has been explored to great effect by Michael Gamer in *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation* (2000). While, in David Punter's estimation, later Romantic poets such as Keats readily appropriated the "white Gothic" of medieval nostalgia so ardently defended by antiquarians such as Richard Hurd (*Literature of Terror* 103), Fred Botting has argued that, with the rise of Romanticism, Gothic in the work Blake and Shelley took an internal, subjective turn, at once displacing the Gothic's earlier concerns with power, evil and oppression onto a number of contemporary political scenarios (*Gothic* 92). For Steven Bruhm in *Gothic Bodies*, Gothic represents the defiant return of the corporeal pain repressed by the transcendent yearnings of the Romantic imagination, while most recently for Punter and Byron in *The Gothic* (2004), Romanticism and the Gothic are perceived as being implicated in a two-way process of exchange, a line of mutual influencing, shaping and re-shaping that runs incessantly from the political implications of Blakean Gothic, through the psychological spectres of Coleridge, politically once again in the work of the young Shelley, and most ambivalently in the relations to the aristocratic past in Byron (13-19). For an account of the Gothic's role in the broader Romantic "invention" of the literary, see Fred Botting and Dale Townshend, "General Introduction" in *Gothic: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*, Volume I.
[Back](#)

[2] In Chapter 16 of his *Essai sur L'origine des langues*, for instance, Rousseau is keen to emphasise the many points of difference between vision and hearing, colour and sound, the eye and the ear. His tract seems directed against those aesthetic tracts which had argued for the striking points of similarity between the two perceptual fields: "There is no sort of absurdity that has not been put forward during discussions about the physical causes which relate to the Fine Arts. Parallels have been found between sound and light, and these have instantly been seized upon, without reference to experience or reason. The search for a system has bedevilled everything. When we are unable to paint with the ears we decide to sing with the eyes. I have seen that famous keyboard on which they claim to make music with colours. Failure to recognise that colours owe their effect to permanence and sounds to successiveness shows a total misunderstanding of the workings of nature" (le Huray and Day 100).
[Back](#)

[3] In Wordsworth's poetry, the celebrated spots of time are nothing if not the creative projections out of, and

into, an internal subjective screen. For an account of other aspects of Wordsworth's visual aesthetic, see, most notably, William Galperin's *The Return of the Visible in British Romanticism*, Harold Bloom's "Visionary Cinema of Romantic Poetry," Kenneth Johnston's "The Idiom of Vision," L.J. Swingle's "Wordsworth's 'Picture of the Mind'" and portions of Frank D. McConnell's *The Confessional Imagination*.
[Back](#)

4 As Miles argues, it is the Associative Paradigm that lies at the heart of the late eighteenth-century Gothic subject, effectively rendering the hygienic self vulnerable to the threat of desire in and through the interminable chains of metonymic links and associations to which it subscribes. Although, with the possible exception of Hartley, associational theory received little formal philosophical representation, it was nonetheless one of the implications of Hobbesian and Lockean empiricism, and frequently resorted to in the late eighteenth-century as a means of accounting for, and understanding, the organisation of human knowledge. As Miles points out, Associational theory was generally widely accepted as the basis for much eighteenth-century aesthetic theory, and beyond that, as a plausible model even for the functioning of human consciousness (*Gothic Writing* 52).
[Back](#)

5 See Castle's essay entitled "Phantasmagoria: Spectral Technology and the Metaphorics of Modern Reverie."
[Back](#)

6 See Geoffrey Hartman's seminal reading of Wordsworth's "soundscapes" in *Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814*. Consult, too, Mary Jacobus's article "Apostrophe and Lyric Voice in The Prelude," Jeffrey C. Robinson's "The Power of Sound: 'The Unremitting Voice of Nightly Streams'", John Hollander in "Wordsworth and the Music of Sound," David P. Haney's "'Rents and openings in the ideal world': Eye and Ear in Wordsworth" J. Douglas Kneale's *Monumental Writing: Aspects of Rhetoric in Wordsworth's Poetry*, and Michael Privateer's *Romantic Voices: Identity and Ideology in British Poetry, 1789-1850*.
[Back](#)

7 Kenneth R. Johnston, in fact, reads Romantic poetry in general as often involving a hasty passage from sight to the powers of imaginative Vision in the article "The Idiom of Vision." As such, however, Wordsworthian Vision for Johnston is never entirely without its relations to that which is simply visual or visible, and *vise versa*: "Wordsworth's vigilance against the tyranny of the bodily eye does not mean that the visual aspects of his visions can be separated from something in them conceived to be 'truly' visionary; such a separation was for him the ultimate tyranny, or trauma" (10).
[Back](#)

8 See Jill Rubenstein's article, "Sound and Silence in Coleridge's Conversation Poems."
[Back](#)

9 See James Watt's argument regarding the heterogeneity of Gothic in *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict, 1764-1832*.
[Back](#)

10 See Robert Miles's "Note on the Text" in his Penguin edition of *The Italian*, pages xxxvii-xxxviii.
[Back](#)

11 For an account of the relationship between Ann Radcliffe and Mathew Lewis, particularly as this pertains to the distinctions between male and female Gothic, see Kari J. Winter's article "Sexual/Textual Politics of Terror: Writing and Rewriting the Gothic Genre in the 1790s"; Robert C. Platzner in "'Gothic Versus

Romantic': A Rejoinder"; Robert Miles's essay "Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis"; Syndy M. Conger in "Sensibility Restored: Radcliffe's Answer to Lewis's The Monk"; and Rictor Norton in *Gothic Readings: The First Wave, 1764-1840*.
[Back](#)

[12] Again, see the broad range of contemporary reviews of *The Italian* included in the appendix to Robert Miles's Penguin edition of Radcliffe's text, pages 492-502.
[Back](#)

[13] As Lord Kames at one point in *Elements of Criticism* argues, music may never conceivably serve as the vehicle of undesirable passions: "Where the same person is both the actor and the singer, as in an opera, there is a separate reason why music should not be associated with the sentiments of any disagreeable passion, nor the description of any disagreeable object; which is, that such association is altogether unnatural: the pain, for example, that a man feels who is agitated with malice or unjust revenge, disqualifies him for relishing music or any thing that is pleasing; and therefore to represent such a man, contrary to nature, expressing his sentiments in a song, cannot be agreeable to any audience of taste" (ie Huray and Day 79).
[Back](#)