A

Abjection

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As an adjective, "abject" qualifies contemptible actions (such as cowardice), wretched emotional states (such as grief or poverty), and self-abasing attitudes (such as apologies). Derived from the Latin past participle of *abicere*, the word has come into use within Gothic studies primarily to discuss processes by which something or someone belonging to the domain of the degrading, miserable, or extremely submissive is cast off. Julia Kristeva's *Powers of Horror* (1982) first introduced abjection as a critical term. Picking up on the anthropological study of initiation rites discussed by Mary Douglas in her book *Purity and Danger* (1966), Kristeva addresses the acts of separation necessary for setting up and preserving social identity. Her debt to Sigmund Freud's *Totem and Taboo* (1913), in turn, consists of drawing attention to the psychic implications of such processes of differentiation, even though foregrounding that abjection involves both collective and individual identity formations. Pointedly, Kristeva refigures the murder of the father, so seminal to Freud's notion of the Oedipus scenario, by foregrounding instead the manner in which psychosocial identity is determined as much by an act of separation from the maternal body. While, according to Freud, mythic narratives bring back the murdered primordial father in the shape of an awe-inspiring agency of guilt, the repressed figure of maternal authority returns either as an embodiment of the Holy Mary's sublime femininity or as a monstrous body of procreation, out to devour us and transform us into the site for further grotesque breeding. By drawing attention to the manner in which a cultural fear regarding the uncontrollability of feminine reproduction has consistently served as a source of horror, abjection has proven a particularly resonant term for a study of Gothic culture.

The abject is not to be thought of as a static concept, pertaining to something monstrous or unclean per se. Instead, it speaks to a threshold situation, both horrifying and fascinating. It involves a tripartite process in the course of which forces that threaten stable identities come again to be contained. For one, abjection entails an exclusion of that which blurs the boundary between self and other, so that, by virtue of this separation, subject positions can again be clearly drawn. At the same time, it is also understood as a symptom drawing on a cultural fear of the feminine reproductive force, rendering the maternal body monstrous so that it can be cast off. Finally, abjection also involves the way in which a body that must be abjected – for the alleged health of the individual or the community – is declared to be alien and can thus, in good conscience, be expelled. It is useful to recall: only once Frankenstein's Creature is declared to be a

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monstrous body does it indeed become a stray who will return to haunt the world of its creator with ruthless vengeance. In the process of abjection, two attitudes thus come to be conjoined. One the one hand, the bodies to be abjected are declared horrific; on the other, the act of abjection is itself monstrous precisely because it targets a figure that, by undermining clear boundaries, must be cast off. In other words, only because those foreign bodies that are to be abjected are encoded as being a horrific threat to the self or the community can we overlook the fact that the agents of abjection, working under the auspices of a regeneration of stable identity borders, are equally violent.

A resonant representation of abjection as a process by which the individual and society come ceaselessly to redraw the boundaries between them (even while being forced to recognize the fragility of this enterprise) can be found in *Alien*[3] (David Fincher, 1992). At the beginning of the film, Captain Ripley wakes up to discover that the queen Alien, whom she thought she had successfully vanquished in the previous episode, cannot fully be cast away. The monstrous adversary has impregnated her so that she is herself now carrying a baby Alien inside her body. Typically of the ambivalence contained in the concept of abjection, Ripley finds herself on both sides of the battle. Even though she acts under the auspices of a symbolic system that designates those foreign to it to be abjectable, she is herself a liminal figure, positioned between the Aliens and the inhabitants of Earth. Indeed, the *Alien* trilogy is premised on a key aporia built into the concept of abjection. The pure and the impure can never be neatly severed because dangerous foreign bodies that trouble neat identity categories are written into the very fabric of all stable notions of identity. The precursor to *Alien*[3], *Aliens* (James Cameron, 1986), sees Ripley so drawn by the Alien mother that in the final showdown, even though she could have safely escaped, she chooses instead to return to her adversary's lair. Her fascination with this embodiment of horror places her in the crossfire of two equally dangerous figures of authority. The paternal scientist, who clandestinely wants to import members of this alien culture so that his research might benefit the war industry, is ironically on the side of the monstrous mother, whose reproductive facilities he seeks to appropriate. Indeed, the abject Alien mother, albeit unwittingly, blurs the boundary between a masculine war industry and feminine monstrous creation only to disclose their mutual implication. By resiliently giving battle to this monstrous progenitrix, although doing so against the covert intentions of her boss, Captain Ripley, in turn, herself uncovers the blurring between the very terms that set up the process of abjection. In the decisive moment we see her rising to the spaceship's deck, in one arm the phallic rifle she has put together and in the other the little girl for whom she fondly cares. Over her warrior body, paternal war machinery again comes to be crossed with maternal love, rendering visible how the act of abjection and its object can never be neatly separated.

Such inability to distinguish between subject and object explains why abjection should not, according to Kristeva (1982), be thought of in terms of narcissism, and why it entails a different libidinal economy than that of love. While abjection may result in a transference of affective energies, it involves an object whose status is unclear, too close to be assimilated into an object of desire. Instead, declared to be a radically excluded object, the abject body continues to challenge the authority that called for it to be cast off. Positioned on the edge of a reality that, were it to be fully acknowledged, would be utterly destructive, the abject, as Kristeva notes, "takes the ego back to its source on the abominable limits from which, in order to be, the ego has broken away." Abjection, she adds, is "an alchemy that transforms death drive into a start of life, a new significance" (1982: 15). This dual move is perhaps rendered nowhere as clearly in Gothic texts as in the fascinating horror a corpse inspires. To assert individual and collective survival entails casting off death by drawing its force to the body of a deceased that can then be symbolically expelled

with the help of codified burial rituals. Yet, implicitly inscribed in such renewal is an acknowledgment of what threatens individual and collective self-assertion. Abjection thrives on troubling the line that demarcates life from death because, while the life of the subject (as that of the community) is dependent on its ability to cast off death, life is also measured by the fact that it is constantly threatened by death.

Equally seminal for Gothic culture is the manner in which abjection finds an articulation in two forms of psychic transformation, namely the bodily symptom and sublimation. The former, Kristeva suggests, could be seen as a "non-assimilable alien, a monster," which "the listening devices of the unconscious do not hear, for its strayed subject is huddled outside the paths of desire." Monstrous bodies can fruitfully be seen as symptoms of an anxiety regarding the fragility of identity boundaries because they embody a blurring between human and inhuman rather than representing in symbolic language the anxiety such destabilization of categories entails. Sublimation, in turn, is "nothing else than the possibility of naming the pre-nominal, the pre-objectal, which are in fact only a trans-nominal, a trans-objectal." On the thematic level, Gothic texts celebrate symptoms of abjection in their depiction of vampires, which undo the border between life and death, as well as their interest in the double, who troubles the notion of a cohesive self (see DOUBLES; VAMPIRE FICTION). As aesthetic representations, however, Gothic texts have recourse to poetic language and thus also belong to sublimation. Kristeva suggests: "In the symptom, the abject permeates me, I become abject. Through sublimation, I keep it under control. The abject is edged with the sublime" (1982: 11).

In performing the unnameable that makes up the ground and vanishing point of all symbolic language, aesthetic texts allow us to have our cake of horror and eat it. By virtue of the affective force of the aesthetic text we can identify with an experience of abjection, yet we do so by proxy. The laws of narrative closure also mark a reinsertion of control and with it a redrawing of the boundary between affective identification with and self-conscious distancing from the experience of abjection the fictional text evokes. As a performance of the fragility upon which individual and collective identity is based, abjection is sustained by a counter-directional move. Even while the abject confronts us with fascinating if troubling situations where psychic stability threatens to dissolve and we risk falling back under the sway of a stifling all-encompassing maternal power, it calls for a combat that inevitably culminates in rejection. The final battle in *Aliens* has Ripley on the ship's deck both touching and fighting off the mother Alien, coming ever closer in her embrace until she is able to jettison her ferocious enemy into the bottomless darkness of the sky.

Gothic texts that celebrate abjection as much play with a breakdown of identity boundaries as they play to the authority of redrawing these, even if in full knowledge of the fragility such recuperation entails. The fascinating power of horror that Gothic sensibility taps into is one that insists on revealing the mutual implication of the monstrosity aligned with the maternal and the strict law of ejection connected with paternal symbolic laws. In the *Alien* trilogy, Ripley may be fighting in the name of a paternally structured war industry but she is drawn by the maternal excess that has already contaminated her, sustaining her fascination with the abject body she is in the process of casting off. In a similar manner, the position of the audience of Gothic texts is equally liminal. Kristeva notes, "the writer, fascinated by the abject, imagines its logic, projects himself into it, introjects it, and as a consequence perverts language – style and content." Particularly Gothic writing, one might say, thrives on what she calls a "crossing over of the dichotomous categories of Pure and Impure, Prohibition and Sin, Morality and Immorality" (1982: 16). Regarding their fascination with abjection, Gothic texts perform an impossible catharsis. Acknowledging that sublimation will inevitably revert back to

symptoms of abjection, they warn us that the cycle of abjection as a dialectic of confrontation and combat is endless precisely because the pure and the dangerous feed on and perpetuate each other. Gothic texts call upon us to stay attuned to the unnameable force that undercuts our sense of stable identity, inside and outside, foreign and familiar.

SEE ALSO: Blood; Doubles; Liminality; Monstrosity; Psychoanalysis; Vampire Fiction.

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Abyss, The

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In "This Abyss," a song by The Gothic Archies, the haunting voice of Stephin Merritt drones the lyrics, "This abyss, this lightless void / This abyss, of world destroyed . . . / This abyss, of night unbound / This abyss, without a sound." Drawing on a fashionable Goth aesthetic (see GOTH), this song attempts to convey a symbolic and psychological state of darkness through the spatial terms of an abyss, an endless chasm. "This abyss, of black increased / This abyss, without surcease," the song continues, gesturing toward the literary definition of the term: a bottomless or unfathomed depth or gulf, a bottomless pit. The *OED* also defines the abyss as having the figurative meaning of a catastrophic situation seen as likely to occur, or the term can be used to refer to intellectual, ethical, or moral depths.

The trope of the abyss has been diffused throughout the Gothic novel. The abyss became a literary feature to convey anxiety and depict remote and sublime landscapes in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century novels. This is not to say that the literary trope of the abyss has remained constant; it has been consistently reinterpreted, recreated, and rearranged. In Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* (1797), for instance, the abyss conveys the Gothic aspects of the setting and reflects the psychological distress of the characters (see RADCLIFFE, ANN). When the distraught Ellena is journeying through the wilderness to the monastery, she ascends "the cliffs of a mountain" and, on the brink of a precipice, she sees water "fretting and foaming" as it "fell with thundering strength to the abyss." As she continues along the dangerous path, the narrator struggles to find the words to describe her treacherous journey:

> The road, therefore, was carried high among the cliffs . . . and seemed as if suspended in air; while the gloom and vastness of the precipices, which towered above and sunk below it, together with the amazing force and uproar of the falling waters, combined to render the pass more terrific than the pencil could describe, or language can express.

Attempting to articulate the sublime – the bottomless chasm, the abyss – the narrator describes Ellena's "dreadful pleasure . . . heightened with awe," as she contemplates the great chasm: "The transition was as the passage through the vale of death to the bliss of eternity" (Radcliffe 1998: 63–4).

The abyss, as this scene suggests, inspires anxiety, terror, and awe. For the character experiences an ominous and irresistible force associated with the immense power and inexpressibility of the sublime (see SUBLIME, THE). In this, the abyss is a source of imminent danger, reflecting the possibility of being headed toward destruction. Characters are, moreover, often attracted to and repulsed from the abyss, embodying an ambiguity that is central to the Gothic. For the abyss compels us to destruction – it is a reminder of death – and yet it also draws one toward it, attracting one to peer down into the darkness.

The trope of the abyss is present throughout the American Gothic, often figuratively conveying a threatening physical and psychological wilderness. In a crucial moment in Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* (1798) (see BROWN, CHARLES BROCKDEN), for instance, the main character, Clara, describes a "dark dream" about her brother Theodore: he tempts her to the edge of an abyss, enticing her toward her own destruction:

> I at length imagined myself walking, in the evening twilight, to my brother's habitation. A pit, methought, had been dug in the path I had taken, of which I was not aware. As I carelessly pursued my walk, I thought I saw my brother, standing at some distance before me, beckoning and calling me to make haste. He stood on the opposite edge of the gulf. I mended my pace and one step more would have plunged me into this abyss, had not someone from behind caught suddenly my arm. (Brown 1994: 57–8)

Here, the abyss is linked to sexual transgression and incest (see INCEST). For in this dream, Theodore tempts Clara into an abyss, beckoning her over the chasm. Sexual desire and the abyss are clearly linked throughout the text, illustrating Clara's ambivalence concerning her brother: she loves him dearly, but fears his sexuality. Theodore's desire for his sister, symbolically presented in his beckoning, outstretched hand, entices and terrifies Clara. She cannot resist him, she is compelled to go to forward, but she is also repulsed by his incestuous, "unspeakable" desire.

The Gothic trope of the abyss is, then, sometimes used to represent transgression. In this, it gestures toward a terrible void of life or the symbolic fall into an indulgent passion or ruthless acts – physical or sexual violence – whereby an unethical world lays waste to potential victims. This aspect of the trope is present in the Gothic writing of Edgar Allan Poe (see POE, EDGAR ALLAN). In "The Imp of the Perverse" (1845), for instance, Poe's narrator describes a spirit that tempts him toward transgression and self-destruction. He explains how this force – this imp – leads him to murder a man so he will inherit his estate. Reflecting on his crimes, the narrator states:

> We stand upon the brink of a precipice. We peer into the abyss – we grow sick and dizzy. Our first impulse is to shrink from the danger. Unaccountably we remain . . . . And because our reason violently deters us from the brink, therefore, do we the more impetuously approach it. There is no passion in nature so demoniacally impatient, as that of him, who shuddering upon the edge of a precipice, thus meditates a plunge. To indulge for a moment, in any attempt at thought, is to be inevitably lost; for reflection but urges us to forbear, and therefore it is, I say, that we cannot. If there be no friendly arm to check us, or if we fail in a sudden effort to prostrate ourselves backward from the abyss, we plunge, and are destroyed.

Knowing he will never be caught, the narrator questions if he is capable of confession. He then fearfully runs through the streets and reveals his secret; he is quickly tried and sentenced to death.

SEE ALSO: Brown, Charles Brockden; Goth; Incest; Poe, Edgar Allan; Radcliffe, Ann; Sublime, The.

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Adultery

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Though often believed to be derived from the word "adult" as a practice of those who have attained chronological maturity, the term "adultery" is actually a combination of the Latin *ad* (toward) and *alter* (other). Taken together, adultery literally means "to make other," a fitting etymology for the place of adultery within the Gothic, a genre so fundamentally concerned with sexuality, corruption, transformation, and otherness. Within literature as a whole, adultery serves to illustrate the conflict between desire/libido and law/civilization, or, more broadly, the personal and the public. Gothic narratives involving adulterous liaisons extend these themes and materialize patriarchal anxieties around issues of power, surveillance, and an ambivalent polarity of pleasure/terror at the display of female sexuality (see SEX).

Treatment of adultery in the Gothic tends to be highly gendered, with male adultery forming the basis of the Byronic hero's dark and mysterious secret: an abandoned wife, an illicit love affair, or an illegitimate child, for instance. Female adultery tends to be more suspected than actual (with the notable exception of *The Scarlet Letter*). However, this belief in marital indiscretion leads many beleaguered, spiteful husbands in the Gothic to accuse, abuse, and even murder their wives over suspicion of adultery. Where comedic genres have long employed cuckoldry as a site of farcical humor, the Gothic centralizes male paranoia (sometimes with an explicit critique of the fragility of the male ego) as an irrational abhorrence that transforms rational men into Hyde-like monstrosities.

Perhaps the ur-text of adulterous secrecy in the Gothic is Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre*, published in 1847. In the novel, the eponymous Gothic heroine falls in love and becomes engaged to her mysterious employer, Mr. Rochester. Jane discovers, however, that Rochester already has a wife, Bertha – a mad woman whom he locks away in the attic. Jane abandons Rochester rather than consummate an adulterous affair, only to be reunited with him at the close of the novel after his wife commits suicide. Jean Rhys would reclaim the figure of Bertha in her feminist novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), in which Bertha's madness is caused by Rochester's rejection of her West Indian heritage.

Flight from adultery also serves as the basis for Louisa May Alcott's suspense novel *A Long Fatal Love Chase* (1868), which she wrote two years before her sentimental favorite *Little Women*. In *A Long Fatal Love Chase*, Alcott's Gothic heroine Rosamond is seduced and deceived by the aptly named Phillip Tempest, who already has a wife and child. After leaving him, Tempest begins a sadistic chase of Rosamond across Europe that ends tragically in both of their deaths.

The Scarlet Letter, written by Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1850, is another central text in the Gothic's treatment of adultery. Infidelity takes a more central place in this novel, set in a seventeenth-century Puritan village, as Hester Prynne is forced to wear an embroidered letter "A" to signify her sin. Her husband, the aptly named Roger Chillingsworth, torments both Prynne and her secret paramour, the minister Arthur Dimmesdale, eventually leading to the minister's death. The offspring of Hester and Dimmesdale's affair, Pearl, functions as an embodied extension of the scarlet letter, with Prynne even swathing the child in scarlet clothing with gold embroidery. Described as "impish" and at times "demonic" in the text, Pearl stands as a constant reminder of Hester and Dimmesdale's unsanctioned affair, and possesses the same mix of Romantic innocence and Victorian emptiness that would characterize the Gothic child in Henry James, and later Stephen King. *The Scarlet Letter*, however, also suggests the possibility of redemption from sin, as Hester's sin is eventually forgotten or forgiven, and her scarlet letter is taken to mean "able" rather than "adulterer" by the townspeople (see HAWTHORNE, NATHANIEL).

In American literature, African American authors used the conventions of the Gothic to narrativize the actual lived horrors of chattel

slavery and physical and sexual subjugation under white rule. Teresa Goddu notes in *Gothic America: Narrative, History, and Nation* (1997) that African American authors such as Fredrick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs used the Gothic mode to "haunt back" and reveal the horrors of slavery. In Harriet Jacobs' narrative *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), young slave girl Linda Brent must fend off the sexual advances of her master, Dr. Flint, and endure the wrath of Mrs. Flint, who punishes the girl for a perceived affair. As Jacobs illustrates, it is the horror of slavery that transforms proper women into vengeful monsters (see SLAVERY AND THE GOTHIC). More broadly, adulterous miscegenation (consensual and not) forms the basis of many a tragic secret within the genre as a whole, as the wealthy white slave owner must hide away his mixed-race children and the "tragic mulatto" character lives in constant fear of discovery. In *The Bondwoman's Narrative* (believed to have been written between 1853 and 1861), for instance, Hannah Crafts employs the tropes of the female Gothic as a mulatto woman, passing for white, is pursued and blackmailed by the aptly named Mr. Trappe, who threatens to reveal her secret (see FEMALE GOTHIC). It should be noted that scholars such as Catherine Keyser have argued that Crafts was heavily influenced by Brontë's *Jane Eyre* in writing *The Bondwoman's Narrative*. Indeed, questions of true parental lineage and racial purity haunt much of American literature, particularly in the work of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Southern Gothic writers such as William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor (see SOUTHERN GOTHIC).

In cinema, adultery frequently serves as a basis for the potboiler mystery and film noir genres; notable examples include *The Letter* (1940), *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Mildred Pierce* (1945), and *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946). In these films, it is common for the married "femme fatale," or deadly woman, to lure the weak-willed everyman into an increasingly labyrinthine plot to perform a heist or murder the seductress' husband. Contemporary examples extend film noir's correlation between female sexuality, loss of self-control, and death: notable examples include *Fatal Attraction* (1987), *The Hand That Rocks the Cradle* (1992), and *Obsessed* (2009). Further, films such as *Poison Ivy* (1992) and *Crush* (1993) take a Lolita-esque turn, as their female seductresses are emotionally disturbed young girls (see FILM). These films function as neoconservative cautionary tales to married men to remain within the bounds of matrimony and family, and equate female sexuality with overwrought hedonism and madness.

SEE ALSO: Female Gothic; Film; Hawthorne, Nathaniel; Sex; Slavery and the Gothic; Southern Gothic.

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African American Gothic

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Although the Gothic has been overlooked or downplayed by critics of African American

literature, and resisted by some of its writers wary of the genre's tendency to dematerialize the horrors of African American experience, it has nonetheless pervaded that canon from the early slave narratives through to contemporary writing. Although no sustained examination exists of African American investments in the Gothic to date, certain observations have been made. The Gothic's popular use of the "sins of the fathers" theme that engages with grievous historical transgressions and unspeakable trauma makes it an exceptionally suitable mode for taking up African American issues and debates. Deploying Gothic strategies has also enabled African American writers to contest the rationalist discourses that undergird racist ideology and to dialogue with the white American literary tradition that, according to Leslie Fiedler, is "bewilderingly and embarrassingly [...] gothic" (1960: 9) in its exposure of the hidden "blackness" of the American soul, especially in relation to that nation's two "special guilts" – "the slaughter of the Indians" and "the abominations of the slave trade" (Fiedler 1960: 130).

Toni Morrison theorizes the white American Gothic fascination with historical transgressions as an effort to inoculate the nation against repeating them. In such antebellum literary classics as Edgar Allan Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838), Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), and Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick; Or, The Whale* (1851), the Gothic has been brought to bear, in provocative and insightful ways, on the vexed question of race relations in America. In both Gothic and non-Gothic works, however, African Americans and Native Americans have been represented as abject Gothic Others. Joseph Holt Ingraham's *Lafitte* (1836) and Henry Clay Lewis' "A Struggle for Life" (1843), for example, feature bestialized, homicidal, and physically distorted black men who ultimately die violent, ritualistic deaths. These works also evidence the noteworthy nineteenth-century phenomenon whereby race-focused studies and debates – medical, scientific, political, and otherwise – adopted and adapted established Gothic rhetoric and motifs that subsequently spilled over into cultural productions.

African American Gothic, like its white American counterpart, is preoccupied with slavery and its formidable and multifaceted legacy, especially the issue of race relations. The works of both groups attest to the veracity of Richard Wright's statement that "in the oppression of the Negro a shadow [lies] athwart our national life dense and heavy" (1964: xxxiv). While admiring and marshaling the Gothic's tremendous evocative powers, however, African American authors tend to desupernaturalize that form and resist its Romantic effects. Their strategy of naturalizing the Gothic, according to critics, underscores the traumatic, terror-filled reality experienced by African Americans within a racist society. In his prefacing essay to *Native Son* (1940), Richard Wright claims that African American reality is so rife with horrors that no Hawthorne or Poe is required to invent new ones (1964: xxxiv). Literary critic Theodore L. Gross paraphrases Wright several decades later in his statement that "the nightmare world of Poe or Hawthorne has become the Monday morning of the Negro author" (1971: 184).

Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), a harrowing female slave narrative, is usually identified as marking the inception of the African American Gothic tradition. Like other accounts of its kind, *Incidents* draws on the female Gothic popularized by Britain's Ann Radcliffe and forges parallels between African American female slaves and white women confined to the British domestic sphere. Several critics have noted that the female Gothic and the female slave narrative similarly expose the terror, sexual politics, and various dark, repressed, and often unconscious truths about patriarchy, but they have especially underscored the latter form's resistance to Romantic conventions. Such exposure and resistance are evident in the recently discovered *The Bondwoman's Narrative* by Hannah Crafts. Edited by African American scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and published in 2002, this

fictionalized, Dickensian-style slave narrative dating from the 1850s exhibits an astonishing knowledge of contemporary sentimental and Gothic fiction and may be the first novel written by an African American woman. Its Gothic conventions include an original crime, a series of haunted houses, the theme of confinement, a persecuted woman, and a figurative vampire oppressor in the form of a blackmailing lawyer named Mr. Trappe.

Twentieth-century African American Gothic has been most recognizable as a regional form and often resists containment in literary productions. As works by such masters as William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor illustrate, the South often functions as the repository for America's irrational impulses. W. E. B. Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), a provocative and poetic sociological commentary on African American reality in the post-Reconstructionist South, consistently presents race relations through a Gothic lens. According to Du Bois, "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line" (1968: 13). Forty years after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, the "Nation has not yet found peace from its sins": "the swarthy spectre [of slavery] sits in its accustomed seat at the Nation's feast" (1968: 6). Thus does Du Bois reiterate, in more Gothic terms, Frances E. W. Harper's observation in her (1892) novel *Iola Leroy* that while "Slavery [...] is dead, [...] the spirit which animated it still lives" (1987: 217). Du Bois yokes this compelling concept of an un-dead slavery to the notion that the sins of the fathers persist in the form of an economic slavery as "the shadow-hand of the master's grand-nephew or cousin or creditor stretches out of the gray distance to collect the rack-rent remorselessly" (1968: 117). Du Bois' portrait of a purgatorial, benighted region handcuffed to history is strikingly Gothic in nature, as is the multivalent and prominent symbol of the veil that taps the joint themes of biblical Apocalypse/Revelation. The veil of race that shadows Du Bois' baby son and all African Americans in *Souls* serves as a barrier that grotesquely obscures their proper and full recognition within the broader, white-dominated American society.

Perhaps the most significant Gothic-inflected concept wielded by Du Bois is that of "double consciousness," a paradoxical curse/gift that affects all African Americans who experience the singular and intense sensation of "two-ness, – [being] an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (1968: 3). Subsequent authors of African American Gothic, among other writers, explore and adapt Du Bois' concept of double consciousness, which involves the plaguing "sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (1968: 3). Some connect it to the traditional Gothic concept of the repressed, often transgressive figure of the "double" or "shadow self" (see DOUBLES).

In many of its Gothic motifs and atmospherics, Jean Toomer's *Cane* (1923), a much celebrated production of the Harlem Renaissance, takes a page out of Du Bois' *Souls*. Gothic tropes punctuate several of the key vignettes in this avant-garde novel that poetically chronicles African American experience in the post-Reconstruction era. Set in a quintessential Southern town with a cotton factory and cane fields, "Blood Burning Moon," for example, recounts an ill-fated love triangle involving a black woman and two antagonistic suitors, one white (Bob Stone, son of the former plantation owner), the other black (Tom Burwell, a cane fieldworker). Marked by a sensitivity and attentiveness to the complexities of consciousness on both sides of the racial divide, "Blood Burning Moon" concludes with the white man dead and the black man brutally lynched by an irate white mob, his final articulation of agony channeling a multitude of ghostly brethren. Toomer cannily uses the Gothic to elevate this and other haunting sequences in *Cane* into a cosmic struggle underpinned by historic forces to which he suggests the characters are irrevocably bound.

In keeping with the tradition of the slave narrative, twentieth-century African American Gothic has been used primarily to articulate profound social horrors, in the process reconfiguring the popular American Gothic recipe wherein the myth of the national dream is disrupted by the nightmares of history. In Charles W. Chesnutt's portrait of southern society in *The Conjure Woman* (1899), the Gothic is shown to inhere not in Uncle Julius' supernatural conjure tales about antebellum plantation life but in their oblique, coded commentary on racism and the arrogant and dehumanizing world of the slave masters that, due to its pressures and resulting distress, drives slaves to conjuring for relief. A unique fusion of naturalism and the Gothic occurs in various mid-twentieth century novels that serves to underscore the brutal and degrading nature of African American social reality born of the pathology known as American racism. Richard Wright's *Native Son* (1940) and Ann Petry's *The Street* (1946), for example, conjure up Gothic atmospherics and a *Frankenstein*-based dynamic to convey how their respective protagonists – one male (Bigger Thomas), the other female (Lutie Johnson) – are ultimately and grotesquely transformed into homicidal outcasts. While Bigger experiences an increasing sense of imprisonment and entrapment in his social environment, Lutie experiences a sense of live burial in the face of the novel's eponymous street, which she inhabits in Harlem, and the dreaded prospect of homelessness.

The mid-twentieth century also witnessed the migration of the American race question to the silver screen, particularly in the production of social problem films dealing with the joint topics of the tragic mulatto/mulatta and racial passing wherein light-skinned African American characters attempt to pass as white. In stark contradistinction to works by such Harlem Renaissance writers as James Weldon Johnson, Nella Larsen, and Jessie Fauset that often celebrate racial ambiguity, antimiscegenation films like Elia Kazan's *Pinky* (1949) and Alfred Werker's *Lost Boundaries* (1949) employ horror-film motifs, atmospherics, and techniques such as the ideas of a repressed family history and a secret, monstrous/hybrid identity to expose ideological tensions relating to racial issues, including anxieties about racial "purity." Especially in the sequences tapping their protagonists' race-related fears, blackness is presented as a terrifying spectral force. In *Lost Boundaries*, for example, Howard, the son of a black family that has passed for many years as white, experiences a nightmare in which he watches horrified as each of his family members is transformed into an identifiably black person.

Recent examples of African American Gothic suggest that women writers seem particularly adept with this form, often successfully combining the female Gothic with the political Gothic, which exposes and exorcises crimes and repressions fostered by American institutions and ideologies. Gloria Naylor's *Linden Hills* (1985), for example, is a sinister, politically loaded novel set in a Dante-esque black suburban community. In this compelling yet disturbing tale of a mortician with a deadly secret, a truly Gothic figure who blurs the traditional female Gothic boundary between husband and prison-master, Naylor indicts the repressive, self-loathing propensities of middle-class African American society.

Nobel Prize-winning novelist Toni Morrison could lay claim to being the most accomplished African American Gothic writer of her generation. *The Bluest Eye* (1970), Morrison's first published work, brilliantly explores the dark side of W. E. B. Du Bois' signature concept of "double consciousness" through the grotesque and tragic story of Pecola Breedlove, a pubescent African American girl oppressed – physically, mentally, and emotionally – by what are depicted as grotesque gender and race ideals upheld by white America. All of Morrison's novels possess a significant Gothic component but *Beloved* (1987) has been singled out as her Gothic masterpiece. In its chilling declaration that "Not a house in the country ain't packed to its rafters with some dead Negro's grief" (Morrison 2004: 5), *Beloved* offers up a

singular revision of the powerful and popular haunted-house tradition in American Gothic. This more modest descendant of the classic Gothic's haunted, contested castle furnishes the setting for the invasion of pasts upon presents. The house known as 123 becomes the site where a horrifying act of infanticide by a slave mother and the crimes of a nation's fathers who sanctioned the "peculiar institution" and the Fugitive Slave Bill are jointly explored and, following a community-based ritual exorcism, symbolically laid to rest.

SEE ALSO: American Gothic; Doubles; Race; Slavery and the Gothic: Vampire Fiction.

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Aickman, Robert

NICK FREEMAN

Robert Aickman (1914–81), the grandson of the Victorian Gothic novelist Richard Marsh (see MARSH, RICHARD), described his fiction as "strange stories." In eight collections, from his collaboration with Elizabeth Jane Howard, *We Are For The Dark* (1951), to the posthumous *Night Voices* (1985), he became an influential presence in postwar British Gothic, linking the subtle ambiguities of Walter de la Mare or Elizabeth Bowen with later writers such as Ramsey Campbell (see CAMPBELL, RAMSEY) and M. John Harrison. While he could make striking use of "traditional" tropes – vampirism in "Pages from a Young Girl's Diary" (1973), ghostly visitors in "The Waiting Room" (*Dark Entries*, 1964) – Aickman preferred to mix psychological acuity (shown to good effect

in many of his first-person narrators), with keen sociological observation and a strong sense of the melancholy and elegiac, notably in "The Stains" (1980), written during his lengthy struggle with cancer.

As the anthologist responsible for the first eight volumes of Fontana's *Great Ghost Stories* (1964–72), Aickman argued that the ghost story, "an art form of altogether exceptional delicacy and subtlety," drew upon "the unconscious mind in the manner of poetry" and needed "neither logic nor moral" (Aickman 1966: 7). His selections tended to favor those works which shared the qualities of his own, hence the inclusion of Bowen's "The Demon Lover" (1945), and Oliver Onions' "The Beckoning Fair One" (1911) alongside his "The Trains" (*We Are For The Dark*) and "The Cicerones" (*Sub Rosa*, 1968). Aickman's protagonists are often subtly complicit in the violation of themselves, and haunted as much by their own experiences and desires as by external phantoms; his ghosts are, as John Clute observes, "a manifestation, a psychic portrait, of their failure to understand their own lives" (Clute 1997: 12). The virginal narrator of "The Swords" (*Cold Hand in Mine*, 1975) is a case in point. The nervous young salesman chances upon a ramshackle fairground where he watches a sideshow in which audience members thrust swords into a woman. When she emerges from her ordeal miraculously unharmed, the narrator becomes drawn into a sordid relationship with the fairground manager, who offers him a private meeting with the woman, one bizarre and disturbing in equal measure. In no sense a traditional ghost story (see GHOST STORIES) despite its inclusion in the fifth Fontana collection (1969), "The Swords" is at once a meditation on sexuality and male violence, a reflection of Aickman's lifelong interest in theatrical performance, and a thoroughly unsettling account of a horrific experience.

Aickman was keen to distinguish between "the mere horror story" on the one hand and the rationalized "scientific extravaganza" on the other (Aickman 1966: 7). He knew the "ghost hunter" Harry Price, spending a night in Borley Rectory with him in 1943, but he was unconvinced by Price's rationalist outlook, and his own fiction preferred more oblique engagements with the inexplicable, illogical, and grotesque. Stories such as "The View" (1951), a Jungian-inflected meditation on aging and sexual difference, or "The Wine-Dark Sea" (*Powers of Darkness*, 1966), in which the influence of Robert Graves shapes a feminist fable concerning exiled female divinity and the denunciation of "progress," teeter on the brink of allegory, while "Into the Wood" (1968), set in a sanatorium in a Swedish forest, also invites its cast of insomniac social exiles to be read in symbolic terms. Peter Straub comments that it is, in part, "an extended metaphor for the separation, even estrangement, between the artist and the conventional world" (Straub 1988: 10), but like Aickman's other explorations of alterity, it resists schematic equivalences.

D. H. Lawrence maintained that fiction needs "an apparent formlessness, definite form is mechanical." "We need more easy transition from mood to mood," he continued, for "a good deal of the meaning of life and of art lies in the apparently dull spaces, the pauses, the unimportant passages" (Lawrence 1967: 289). Aickman's stories apply a similar credo, forsaking the restrictions of plot to offer richly atmospheric accounts of a reality fraying at the edges. His leisurely and primarily realist style which, as Phil Baker says, "disregard[s] conventions of narrative economy and force" (quoted in Crawford 2003: 1), is perfectly suited to depicting events resistant to rational analysis, and privileges suggestion, allusion, and indeterminacy over clear explanations. In "The Hospice" (1975), a stranded traveler seeks sanctuary at an apparently welcoming private care home, only to notice that the ankle of one of his fellow diners has been manacled to a radiator. "The Inner Room" (1968) begins with a young girl playing with a dolls' house; it ends with the now-grown up girl visiting the living dolls in a dark wood reminiscent of Dante's. "The Same Dog" (1975) mingles déjà vu with

the Jungian doctrine of eternal recurrence, spicing the whole with an undercurrent of sexual symbolism. In "Ringing the Changes," first published in Cynthia Asquith's *Third Ghost Book* (1955) and perhaps Aickman's most anthologized story, a honeymoon couple stay at an inn on the Suffolk coast and encounter the ghosts of drowned villagers when the village bells chime midnight; again, the story forsakes "mere horror" to probe the psychological complexity of the couple's relationship. "A Roman Question" (1964) involves a bizarre ritual in a Birmingham boarding house that may (or may not) call up the spirit of a man posted "missing" in World War II, while "The Houses of the Russians" (1968), set in 1930s Finland, dramatizes an experience that may be a haunting or a time-slip. "Never Visit Venice" (1968) is a wry nod to Thomas Mann which finishes with its jaded protagonist heading out onto the lagoon in a gondola he shares with a cowled skeleton, and "The Unsettled Dust" (1968) has the inhabitants of a Bedfordshire stately home succumbing to the emotional sclerosis seen in Katherine Mansfield's "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" (1922). As these outlines suggest, Aickman was an ingenious and restless experimenter whose fifty or so stories maintain a remarkably consistent standard.

SEE ALSO: Campbell, Ramsey; Ghost stories; Marsh, Richard.

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Ainsworth, William Harrison

STEPHEN CARVER

William Harrison Ainsworth (1805–82) was a journalist, novelist, and poet. A Victorian with a Romantic soul, his historical novels had a violent, sexy mise-en-scène that transplanted the codes of the eighteenth-century Gothic into an English setting (see VICTORIAN GOTHIC). His most significant publications fall between *Rookwood* (1834) and *The Lancashire Witches* (1848). Although Ainsworth was a member of the early-Victorian literary elite, his reputation was mortally wounded by controversy, and his melodramatic style was often criticized and satirized by his peers.

The son of a Manchester solicitor, Ainsworth was contributing to magazines from the age of sixteen. He befriended Charles Lamb through the *London Magazine* and moved to London to study law in 1824. He was one of the original "Fraserians," and counted among his friends J. G. Lockhart, Henry Colburn, Leigh Hunt, Bulwer Lytton, Mary Shelley, John Macrone, John Forster, George Cruikshank, Thackeray, and Dickens. His co-authorship of the Gothic novel *Sir John Chiverton* (1826) brought him to the attention of his hero Sir Walter Scott (although Scott's journals refer to Ainsworth as an "imitator"), but it was *Rookwood* that made his name (Carver 2003: 102).

Rookwood was one of the most successful novels of the nineteenth century. It alchemically blends different genres, Ainsworth later explaining that:

> I resolved to attempt a story in the bygone style of Mrs. Radcliffe . . . substituting an old English squire, an old English manorial residence, and an old English highwayman, for the Italian marchese, the castle, and the brigand of the great mistress of Romance. (Ainsworth 1881: I, 3)

Striking gold, Ainsworth made the Georgian highwayman Dick Turpin a central character, inventing the "Ride to York" legend that endures

to this day (Ainsworth 1881: I, IV). Ainsworth also superseded Maturin and brought the Gothic to the mainland (see MATURIN, CHARLES ROBERT). *Rookwood* represents a bridge between the eighteenth-century Gothic and the contemporary urban nightmares of the penny dreadful and the literary novel, being stylistically and historically liminal, somewhere between Romantic and Victorian (see PENNY DREADFULS; ROMANTICISM).

A craze for criminal romance ensued, and Ainsworth returned to the Newgate Calendars in 1839, serializing *Jack Sheppard* in *Bentley's Miscellany*, which ran concurrently with *Oliver Twist*. As both stories were set in the London underworld and illustrated by Cruikshank, critical comparisons were common, much to Dickens' annoyance (see DICKENS, CHARLES). An editorial moral panic, the "Newgate controversy," followed, originally led by the *Examiner*, *Punch*, and the *Athenaeum*, centering around the Newgate novels of Lytton, Ainsworth, and Dickens, and their potential to corrupt young, working-class males. When the valet François Courvoisier murdered his master, Lord William Russell, allegedly after reading *Jack Sheppard*, the charge against Ainsworth seemed incontrovertible and his status as a good Victorian and a serious literary novelist never recovered. Dickens publicly and privately distanced himself from his friend, Thackeray criticized and lampooned, and Poe savaged Ainsworth in *Graham's Magazine*, later sending him up in "The Balloon-Hoax" (1844).

Down but not out, Ainsworth took over the editorship of *Bentley's Miscellany* from Dickens in 1839, and began two historical romances, *Guy Fawkes* and *The Tower of London*, transferring his Gothic sensibilities from the underworld to the kings and queens of England. A stream of popular romances followed; forty years on Ainsworth was still turning national landmarks into sublime spaces, and populating them with ill omens, fated monarchs, paupers of noble birth, star-crossed lovers, Gothic villains, hot gypsies, and plenty of ghosts. His last major work, however, was *The Lancashire Witches*.

The Lancashire Witches is the only of Ainsworth's forty-three novels to have remained consistently in print, often shelved alongside Dennis Wheatley and Montague Summers (both of whom it undoubtedly influenced). In their role of Gothic Other to patriarchal versions of femininity, Ainsworth's powerful Faustian protagonists know, like Eve, that they have a much better chance with Satan than with God. Although the primary plot offers a more moral interpretation, the possibility that it is good to be bad remains forever teasing and present. At times the author appears on the threshold of more serious comment on persecution but chooses, instead, magic realism. The narrative therefore works according to the logic of a fairy tale, which is really where witches belong, and much of the story takes place in an enchanted wood. This anachronistic synergy of history, folktale, romance, and melodrama is the last English novel that can truly be said to belong to the original Gothic tradition.

Ainsworth subsequently dropped from the literary mainstream, although the "Lancashire Novelist" was honored at a Lord Mayor's banquet in Manchester in 1881 as "an expression of the high esteem in which he is held by his Fellow townsmen and of his services to Literature." An accompanying article in *Punch* affectionately described him as "the greatest axe-and-neck-romancer of our time" (Carver 2003: 389, 402). Ainsworth died a few weeks later.

Although rejected by his contemporaries as a hack, and still often critically overlooked, Ainsworth contributed significantly to the development of the literary novel after Scott, and to the new urban Gothic of Dickens, Reynolds, and Stevenson (see REYNOLDS, G. W. M. (GEORGE WILLIAM MACARTHUR); STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS; URBAN GOTHIC). His approach to history, while flying in the face of Lukácsian theory, can still be seen in popular narratives such as *Rome*, *Titanic*, and *The Tudors.*

SEE ALSO: Dickens, Charles; Maturin, Charles Robert; Penny Dreadfuls; Poe, Edgar Allan;

Reynolds, G. W. M. (George William MacArthur); Stevenson, Robert Louis; Romanticism; Tales of Terror; Urban Gothic; Victorian Gothic.

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American Gothic

CHARLES L. CROW

The United States and the Gothic have common origins in the turmoil of European thought in the late eighteenth century. The cusp of the Enlightenment and Romanticism produced early English Gothic novels, the Declaration of Independence, and the United States Constitution. Deeply entwined with American thought from the beginning, the Gothic has produced a dark twin of the national narrative, a critique of the story the United States has been trying to tell about itself. It has offered a voice to the repressed and oppressed, to those left out or pushed into the shadows. The Gothic is a literature of borderlands, suited to a country defined by its frontier. It also has patrolled other shifting and unstable boundaries, and provides an index of American fears, anxieties, and self-doubt.

The sources of American Gothic go back much further, before the Revolution, to early colonial experience. When Puritans looked from the deck of the Mayflower upon the inhospitable coast of New England, they saw a wilderness filled with wild animals, savages, and devils. The story they told about themselves in this wild land, and that their leader William Bradford wrote in his history *Of Plymouth Plantation* (1651), was based on the Book of Exodus. The experience of these English Christians paralleled that of the Israelites, fleeing the Egyptians and seeking their Promised Land. Like them, the Puritans would have their faith tested in the wilderness. Such a test was experienced by Mary Rowlandson, wife of a minister, whose account (1682) of being captured by Indians during the uprising known as King Phillip's War was the first best-selling work of the English experience in New England. Narratives of Indian captivity, an innovation at the beginning of American literature in English, often containing proto-Gothic graphic descriptions of violence and the suffering of the captive, would remain a popular form for the next two hundred years. Eventually, Native American voices would begin to complicate this story.

In the New England master narrative, carried forward by later-seventeenth-century Puritan intellectuals such as Cotton Mather, the success of the colonists was resisted by Satan and his allies. In this nearly Manichean vision, Satan ruled the wilderness and continually attempted to infiltrate the settlements and create a secret cadre of his followers. Thus, when a few girls began to exhibit strange hysterical symptoms in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692, investigation into suspected witchcraft was begun, and a special court was appointed.

Accusations and indictments multiplied, and ultimately nineteen men and women were hanged and one man pressed to death with heavy stones (see WITCHCRAFT).

The Salem witch scare was traumatic for New England, and its implications for its narrative of place were debated even while the trials were in progress. The witchcraft outbreak was proof of New England's success, argued Cotton Mather (1692), since the righteousness of its people enraged Satan and motivated his jealous attacks against its communities. Yet, others doubted Mather's assurances and suspected that a great injustice had been done, implicating not only the Puritan leadership but also the community, which had somehow allowed itself to be brought to a collective mania in which fear and suspicion subverted reason and law. The legacy of Salem witchcraft would continue, not only in the writings of the town's most famous son, Nathaniel Hawthorne, but also in the popular imagination of the nation. Washington Irving's Ichabod Crane retells witch stories from Cotton Mather to frighten his listeners, and himself, in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (1820). Americans still evoke Salem when they speak of an atmosphere of suspicion and persecution as a "witch hunt," and modern writers as different as Arthur Miller and H. P. Lovecraft have evoked the old witch days (see LOVECRAFT, H. P. (HOWARD PHILLIPS)).

If the Salem witchcraft disrupted New England's narrative, other aspects of the American experience before the Revolution also had the power to shock and frighten. Hector St. Jean de Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* were written to answer the question "what is an American?" and celebrate the emerging society of the middle colonies as the most perfect in the world. Yet his optimism gave way to horror in South Carolina when he encountered a dying slave hung in an iron cage, his eyes pecked out by birds. Crèvecoeur, "suddenly arrested by the power of affright and terror" (1782: 164), bitterly concluded that "we certainly are not that class of beings which we vainly think ourselves to be" (1782: 159). In this encounter with slavery in its most monstrous form, a true Gothic moment, Crèvecoeur exposed the irreconcilability of America's original sin with its dream of perfection and innocence.

Thus, by the time the English colonies earned independence – despite Hawthorne's later, and probably ironic, assertion in the preface to *The Marble Faun* that America had "no dark and gloomy wrong" (1930: 590) – there was ample material for Gothic literature.

The first great American Gothic novelist, Charles Brockden Brown, originated most of the interrelated Gothic subjects that would be explored by his successors: madness, the terror of the wilderness, disease, political corruption, self-deception, and race. As for many American writers, Brown's view of the world as essentially ambiguous and deceptive led him to experiment with unreliable narrators and conflicting points of view. Brown's characters, as well as his readers, are often unable to distinguish truth from illusion or dream. The eponymous Wieland (1798) goes insane when deceived by ventriloquism and slaughters his family. The protagonist of the story "Somnambulism" (1805) may (or may not) have run through the forest while asleep and murdered his beloved while dreaming that he was trying to protect her. Edgar Huntly (again eponymous; 1799), in a pattern that would endure in American literature, is horrified by his emerging love of violence during a night of flight and combat in the woods (see BROWN, CHARLES BROCKDEN).

In *Arthur Mervyn* (1799), Brown introduced the metropolis (Philadelphia) as a Gothic subject, symbolically linking its corruption to an epidemic of yellow fever. Brown's younger contemporary, George Lippard, would continue the city Gothic in *The Quaker City: Or, The Monks of Monk Hall* (1844), the most popular American novel of its era, and the most sexually explicit. The hall of the title is a vast, rambling structure, like the novel itself, a playground of both the city's elite and its criminal class. Presiding over this foul den is a one-eyed monster called "Devil Bug," who, in

his sadism, energy, and obscene humor, anticipates by some two hundred years the character of Al Swearengen in the television series *Deadwood* (2004–6).

The cultural explosion called the "American Renaissance" (roughly from 1836, when Emerson's *Nature* was published, to the Civil War) was the late flowering of American Romanticism, and can be divided between Emerson and his followers, and Poe, Hawthorne, and Melville – the "dark Romantics," whom we would now label Gothic writers. James Fenimore Cooper also included Gothic elements in his work, as in his Leatherstocking wilderness series, and introduced seafaring as an American subject, which would be extended by both Poe and Melville.

The American Romantics, like their European counterparts, shared a vision of natural facts as symbols of spiritual facts, so that the world could be read as a text unfolding secrets about ultimate truths. The ways in which they read this text differed radically. Emerson saw nature as in essence good, and, in an inversion of the Puritan narrative, described the woods (in *Nature*) as a wholesome place where reason and faith were restored. The dark Romantics, in contrast, found "the power of blackness" (Melville's words in "Hawthorne and His Mosses," 1850 (1943: 192)) a profound reality, and in the woods, as Hawthorne demonstrated in "Young Goodman Brown" (1835), faith could still be lost. Poe's poetry might acknowledge a realm of perfect beauty and truth (as in "Israfel," 1831), but his work is usually located in the sublunar world we inhabit, a place of mortality and decay. While Emerson's world was sunlit and morally clear, that of the dark Romantics was fractured, multilayered, and ambiguous. Developing techniques of ambiguous narration pioneered by Charles Brockden Brown and John Neal, Poe's first-person narrators are often self-deluding psychopaths. For all of the dark Romantics, pursuit of perfection or ultimate truth, or perfect revenge, leads to destruction or madness. Thus, we meet such deluded enthusiasts as Poe's self-justifying murderers, Hawthorne's artists and scientists, and Melville's Captain Ahab and Pierre (see HAWTHORNE, NATHANIEL; MELVILLE, HERMAN; POE, EDGAR ALLAN).

During the middle years of the nineteenth century, one of the country's greatest writers, as we now know, was a woman living a cloistered and eccentric life in Amherst, Massachusetts. Emily Dickinson published little during her lifetime, and well into the twentieth century her writings were available only in altered versions that obscured her startling originality. Dickinson, like the dark Romantics and unlike Emerson, found the gap between human spirit and nature unbridgeable. She possessed a true Gothic imagination, exploring the haunted regions of the mind and confronting the reality of death and dying, even in one startling poem assuming the point of view of a dying person. She wrote of the ways society enforces its definitions of normalcy and of madness, anticipating later writers such as Gilman and Plath. Dickinson is both a late writer of the Romantic tradition and an early example of the exploration of small and private lives, especially in small and rural communities, that would characterize the age of realism after the Civil War.

It is only an apparent paradox that the years following the war were a period of major Gothic literature in the United States. Realism's investigations into ordinary life often will uncover uncanny secrets. Moreover, writers of realistic fiction in this period, such as M. E. W. Freeman and realism's champion, W. D. Howells, were accomplished writers of ghostly tales. Recent scholarship has stressed the compatibility of the ghost story with the feminist concerns of writers of women's regional realism, a long list that would include Alice Brown, Alice Carey, Freeman, Sarah Orne Jewett, Mary Noailles Murfee, and Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward, among others. The tradition would also include, at least peripherally, Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Madeline Yale Wynne, and continue into the twentieth with the ghostly tales of Gertrude Atherton, Ellen Glasgow, and Edith Wharton.

The great master of Gothic fiction in the last half of the century was the architect and

theoretician of realism Henry James. In *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), a novella that has generated a longer critical discussion than any other American work, James created an ambiguous disruption of the narrative of innocent childhood that was being created by the Victorian era (see JAMES, HENRY).

James and other realists lived in a time when Western culture, and America especially, was trying to reassert the rationality of the Enlightenment, to join science and "common sense" to a doctrine of social and moral progress. And yet it had not quite stopped believing in ghosts, even among scientists, as testified by the Society for Psychical Research, of which James' brother William was an important member (see PSYCHICAL INVESTIGATION). Everyone in this era seems to have attended at least one séance, in part because of the many bereavements of the Civil War (see SPIRITUALISM).

In the postbellum South, another narrative was being forged and disrupted. Writers of the "plantation school" produced a sentimental view of the life of the period before the war, and especially of its slave-owning aristocracy. The reaction against this moonlight and mint-julep dream was a major impetus of American literature of this period. Realism always has an antisentimental bias, and some of the most distinctive achievements of this period, such as Mark Twain's exploration of the "Matter of Hannibal," exhibit a creative tension between nostalgia and a savage debunking of the mythic South. Coming from widely differing backgrounds and with various agendas, Southern writers such as George Washington Cable, Grace King, Kate Chopin, Charles Chesnutt, and Alice Dunbar-Nelson produced realistic snapshots of Southern life, and often these realistic pictures veered into the Gothic, exposing the buried secrets of families, especially the families in the big plantation houses of the old South, which, if they survived into the postwar era, were often shabby shells inhabited by ghostly survivors of diminished families. The secrets of the old families became a staple of Southern Gothic, and very often involved the hidden genealogies of the mixed-race people who, in the literature of the plantation school, were usually invisible (see SOUTHERN GOTHIC).

The African American writers who emerged in the period, such as Charles Chesnutt and Alice Dunbar-Nelson, were of exactly this background, descendants of enslaved women and of white men who did not acknowledge their mulatto children. The secrets of white families were their inheritance and literary material, as were the escaped slave narratives and the folktales and music that coded the chronicles of black captivity. Realism and the Gothic are both in the roots of African American literature. Chesnutt wrote in the mode of Gothic realism in stories such as "The Sheriff's Children" (1899), where the uncanny grows steadily until the revelation of a black prisoner's identity as the son of the popular sheriff, a reversal that radically revises the previously upbeat tone of the story, which, in Chesnutt, is associated with white self-deception. He uses the black American tradition of magic in *The Conjure Woman* (1899), a cycle of frame stories employing Black English. Several of these stories contain suppressed genealogies: secrets of parentage that the black characters of the stories understand but that the reader must struggle to unlock. Similarly, in Alice Dunbar-Nelson's "Sister Josepha" (1899), the key fact of the title character's racial heritage is never stated, and can only be inferred from what is *not* quite said in an overheard conversation (see AFRICAN AMERICAN GOTHIC).

In the last years of the nineteenth century, the relationship of scientific thought to literature was given new insistence in the literary movement known as naturalism. With its insistence on the powerlessness of the individual when confronted with a universe of force, and its willingness to confront taboo subjects such as sexuality, addiction, and disease, naturalism easily blended with the Gothic. Stephen Crane's "The Monster" (1899) is a good example of the Gothic–naturalism hybrid, depicting, in the hysterical response of a community to a black man whose face has been burned away, society's construction of the monstrous from its

own prejudices and fears. Frank Norris' naturalistic werewolf story, *Vandover and the Brute* (1914), employs the forbidden subject of venereal disease, though the book was not published during Norris' brief lifetime (see WEREWOLVES). The Gothic–naturalism hybrid was common in the early twentieth century, as in Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome* (1911) and *Summer* (1917), and would provide one of the strands woven into early modernism.

In apparent (and only apparent) contraction of literary naturalism, American writers at the end of the nineteenth century also continued to refine the tradition of the weird tale developed by Poe. The weird tale produces a powerful uncanny effect through a plot reversal or twist, and often uses the supernatural, though this may be revealed to be the result of delusion or dream. Lafcadio Hearn was a practitioner of the weird tale, as was Ambrose Bierce, who in turn influenced Robert W. Chambers and, in the twentieth century, H. P. Lovecraft.

Entering a new century, American Gothic writers and their audiences shared many of the same subjects that had been developed in earlier generations. New England and the South, the two regions with the greatest burdens of history, continued as reservoirs of material. Though the frontier had disappeared and wilderness was dwindling, wild country existed in remote areas, and could be remembered as it had been, as a site for frightening journeys and encounters. The city remained as a subject, joined by the new phenomenon of the suburb. Race continued as a central issue, though increasingly articulated by members of long-silenced minority groups. To these subjects would be joined the European import of the vampire, which would grow in importance through the twentieth and into the twenty-first century. While traditional print media would continue as dominant and prestigious forms, new media would emerge to compete and interact with them: radio, television, graphic novels, and, especially, cinema. In the late twentieth century, certain patterns of the Gothic would be appropriated into a growing and often disturbing pattern of youth culture.

The South, still haunted by its past, produced some of the finest works of American literature, and American Gothic, of the twentieth century. Pre-eminently, William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha saga depicted decline, degeneration, and racial guilt in his representative Southern county. His fiction, including *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *Sanctuary* (1931), *Light in August* (1932), and *Absalom, Absalom*! (1936), the story cycle *Go Down Moses* (1942), and "A Rose for Emily" (1930), among others, all show a land cursed by the sin of slavery and the class structure based upon it. Faulkner created typically Gothic ambiguity through technical innovations in point of view (thus the four narrative voices of *The Sound and the Fury*) and modernist fracturing of chronology.

Faulkner was the dominant voice of a region that produced many writers of Gothic in the twentieth century: Truman Capote, Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Connor, Walker Percy, Eudora Welty, and Tennessee Williams, and, more recently, John Dufresne, Peter Matthiessen, Cormac McCarthy (in his early works), and Donna Tartt, among others. While many of these writers produced sympathetic African American characters, it was left to black authors to make the obvious point (anticipated by Chesnutt earlier) that the real haunted houses of the South were the cabins of the slaves, not the mansions of the masters. Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) is one of the great Gothic works of the second half of the century, and it brings to a summation much of the American dialog of race that preceded it (see FAULKNER, WILLIAM; SOUTHERN GOTHIC).

Another narrative awaiting its revision was that of the Native Americans, whom white writers had envisioned too often as savages and demons. Indian voices had at times emerged, and by the early twentieth century writers such as Alexander Posey were beginning to draw upon their own oral traditions in stories they spun. Following N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* (1969), there were many Indian voices, including Leslie Silko, Gerald Vizenor,

and Louise Erdrich. Erdrich's continuing series of novels about interrelated families in Minnesota and North Dakota, beginning with *Love Medicine* (1984), rivals Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha cycle for complexity and for the genealogical challenge it presents readers, and often blends Gothic techniques with Ojibway folklore.

New England in the early twentieth century, like the South, was a region in long decline, its population shrinking and its landscape dotted with abandoned farms. Edwin Arlington Robinson, who was a contemporary of naturalists such as Crane and Norris, wrote poetry about the lives of New Englanders defeated by loneliness and time. Thus, his poem "The Mill" (1920), a virtual Gothic–naturalist novel in twenty-four lines, records the suicide of a miller and his wife, whose artisanal livelihood has been destroyed by industrialization. Edith Wharton, though dividing most of her life between New York City, the Hudson River Valley, and France, wrote novellas and stories set in New England. A cycle of ghost stories, set most often in New England's bitter winter, pays homage through its characters' names and its imagery to Nathaniel Hawthorne. H. P. Lovecraft also draws on Hawthorne and the Matter of Salem as well as Poe and other sources in creating his "Cthulhu Mythos," in which New England is subject to a monstrous demonic plot, as described in a mysterious book, *The Necronomicon*. Lovecraft's considerable achievement has become something of a cult, and influenced later writers such as Stephen King. Shirley Jackson wrote both supernatural Gothic in *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959) and in the Gothic–naturalist tradition in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962). Her celebrated short story "The Lottery" (1948) draws obliquely on the Matter of Salem, and can be read, like Arthur Miller's play about Salem witchcraft, *The Crucible* (1953), as a comment on the anticommunist scapegoating of the 1940s and 1950s. Jackson's conceit of an ancient cult underlying the culture of a New England village, anticipated in some of Wharton's stories, is developed further by Thomas Tryon in *Harvest Home* (1973). The hugely popular and prolific Stephen King, in many ways the successor of Lovecraft, sets most of his fiction in New England (see JACKSON, SHIRLEY; KING, STEPHEN; LOVECRAFT, H. P. (HOWARD PHILLIPS); NEW ENGLAND GOTHIC; WHARTON, EDITH).

As true wilderness has nearly disappeared in the United States, Americans view the wild land and its rough frontier interface with civilization with varying proportions of fear, wonder, and nostalgia. Pockets of empty country can still be imagined as sites of terror, as in James Dickey's *Deliverance* (1970), a journey of adventure turned to nightmare. The lost frontier in the nineteenth century is revisited with profound Gothic effect in Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian* (1985) and in the recent television series *Deadwood*. McCarthy's judge and Al Swearingen from *Deadwood* are among the most compelling of recent Gothic villains (see MCCARTHY, CORMAC).

As wilderness was paved over with subdivisions and shopping malls, suburbia became the norm of American life. The largest American generation, the baby boomers, grew up there. Celebrated in television programs such as *Leave it to Beaver* (1957–63) and *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* (1952–66), the idealization of suburbia was a narrative waiting to be disrupted by the Gothic. We see this counternarrative in the *Poltergeist* movies (1982–8) as well as countless films featuring babysitters as the distressed Gothic maiden, or, reversed, as the stalker of innocent children (the distant kin of James' Miles and Flora), as well as television programs such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997–2003). Suburbia is also one of the favorite settings for the major Gothic writer Joyce Carol Oates. Her novel *Zombie* (1995), to choose one example from her vast output, is a narrative from the point of view of a suburban serial murderer (see *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER* (1997–2003); OATES, JOYCE CAROL).

Increasingly throughout the twentieth century, the narratives that Americans absorbed came from movies and electronic media. For decades Americans entertained and frightened

themselves with radio dramas that included Orson Welles' Mercury Theater dramatization of *The War of the Worlds*, which panicked much of the nation one night in 1938, and weekly programs with titles such as *The Shadow*, *The Whistler*, and *Inner Sanctum* that delightfully frightened generations of school children. The most important new narrative medium of the twentieth century, clearly, was film, which has influenced the way we all think and dream and now exists in creative symbiosis with traditional novels, graphic novels, television, and, recently, videogames. The noir tradition of film, coming out of German expressionism, has produced a long interaction between crime fiction, science fiction, and movies that has produced a number of movies that can be classed as Gothic, including, in recent years, *Chinatown* (Roman Polanski, 1974), *Sling Blade* (Billy Bob Thornton, 1996), and *Lone Star* (John Sayles, 1996) and, still more recently, *Winter's Bone* (Debra Granik, 2010) (see FILM; RADIO; TELEVISION).

The interaction between movies and fiction was essential to the vampire plague of the late twentieth century, an infestation that continues in our own time. Vampires constitute an immensely complex subject, as objects of fear and desire, and as coding for various issues of gender, race, disease, and political paranoia (see VAMPIRE FICTION). As a specifically American phenomenon, there had been a distinct New England vampire tradition, probably deriving from the region's long history of tuberculosis. Edith Wharton draws on this tradition in some of her New England Gothic stories. But the later irruption of vampires was propelled by the British Hammer Studio movies and by the equivalent Hollywood films. Seen first by Americans at local theaters and then by their children on black-and-white televisions in suburban living rooms, these films filled the creative nightmares of boys and girls who would grow up to write of monsters and vampires in the later years of the century (see HAMMER HOUSE).

Vampires in America usually fall into two camps: the descendants of Dracula and the products of civilization-ending plague. Vampires have flourished in the Gothic regions of New England and the South in the popular novels of Anne Rice and Stephen King (in '*Salem's Lot*, 1975), who both build on the conventions established by Bram Stoker: vampires are an ancient race who can reproduce by infecting human victims. This pattern, with variations, is also followed by Poppy Z. Brite and, recently, Elizabeth Kostova. Another camp grafts the vampire story to the tradition of postapocalypse narrative, a tradition begun in the United States by Jack London in his still underappreciated *The Scarlet Plague* (1912), whose title suggests a link backward to Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death" (1842) and extended by George Steward in *Earth Abides* (1949) and continued by Cormac McCarthy in *The Road* (2006). In this tradition, only a few humans survive a nuclear war or devastating plague. The vampire variant imagines a virus that turns most humans into vampires. This premise was developed by Richard Matheson in *I Am Legend* (1954) and recently by Justin Cronin in *The Passage* (2010), the first novel of a projected trilogy (see BRITE, POPPY Z.; MATHESON, RICHARD; VAMPIRE FICTION).

The Gothic, in various permutations (drawn from graphic novels, adolescent fiction, and music), has become absorbed into American youth culture – understandably, considering the Gothic's position as a literature of the outsider and the repressed. Adolescents have their own narratives to disrupt. Herded into high schools that relentlessly sort boys and girls according to standards of attractiveness, athletic success, and the elusive quality of "coolness," the losers or those resistant to this mandatory contest are often drawn to fantasies of escape, power, or vindication. Stephen King's first novel, *Carrie* (1974; filmed by Brian De Palma in 1976), captures both the environment and a lonely girl's response perfectly. The vampire has been a particularly attractive figure for adolescents in recent years, since the vampire offers sexual potency, glamour, and power. Stephenie Meyer's wildly popular *Twilight* series of novels (2005–8) and their film

adaptations satisfy this adolescent need, and suggest that the Gothic will remain in the national consciousness far into the present century.

SEE ALSO: African American Gothic; Bierce, Ambrose; Brite, Poppy Z.; Brown, Charles Brockden; *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997–2003); Comics and Graphic Novels; Degeneration; Faulkner, William; Female Gothic; Film; Hammer House; Hawthorne, Nathaniel; Jackson, Shirley; James, Henry; King, Stephen; Lovecraft, H. P. (Howard Phillips); Masks, Veils, and Disguises; Matheson, Richard; McCarthy, Cormac; Melville, Herman; New England Gothic; Oates, Joyce Carol; Poe, Edgar Allan; Psychical Investigation; Radio; Rice, Anne; Slavery and the Gothic; Southern Gothic; Spiritualism; Suburban Gothic; Television; Urban Gothic; Vampire Fiction; Werewolves; Wharton, Edith; Witchcraft.

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Amityville Horror, The

CONNY LIPPERT

On the night of November 13, 1974, 112 Ocean Avenue, Long Island, New York – a Dutch colonial property named "High Hopes" – became the scene of a grisly mass murder. Ronald Joseph "Butch" DeFeo Jr., then twenty-three years old, was convicted of killing his parents and four siblings, who had all been shot in the back with a high-powered rifle while they were sleeping in their beds. Butch, who had claimed to have discovered the bodies of his slain family members upon his return to the house, was initially brought in as a witness by the police. DeFeo's story, which involved suspicions about a mob-related execution of his family, initiated by a man called Louis Falini, was made somewhat believable by the sheer professionalism with which the murders were conducted, and the fact that it was regarded as unlikely that one perpetrator had killed all six victims. Soon, however, DeFeo's status changed from being a witness in protective custody to being a suspect. Empty cartridge boxes fitting the murder weapon had been found in his room and DeFeo changed his statement slightly, now

claiming that he had indeed been home – albeit held at gunpoint – when his family was executed (see FAMILY).

DeFeo soon became entangled in contradictions and inconsistencies in his rapidly crumbling story and eventually confessed to the murders. He later claimed that the police investigators had used violence to force his confession, and – while there might well have been some truth to that – his claim set in motion a long chain of changing statements and accusations that soon discredited anything DeFeo said. A forensic report (never officially acknowledged) indicating that Dawn DeFeo, Butch's younger sister, had had gunpowder residue on her nightdress indicated that she must have fired a gun at least once before she died. This prompted DeFeo to change his story yet again, now incriminating his sister. Another – and perhaps the most controversial and notorious of his statements – consisted of a long shot for an insanity plea. DeFeo now reported that he had heard voices urging him to commit the murders. He was declared sane and fit to stand trial, regardless of his allusions to demonic possession, but this particular tale gave birth to what was to become the "Amityville Horror."

Roughly a year after the Amityville murders were committed – on December 23, 1975 – George and Kathleen Lutz, together with their three children, Chris, Dannie, and Melissa "Missy" Lutz, moved into 112 Ocean Avenue. Their twenty-eight-day-long stay in the house and subsequent flight from it became one of the most controversial stories, or – depending on one's opinion – one of the best-documented cases of haunting, in recent US history. Sceptics claim that the Lutzes, together with DeFeo's attorney William Weber, came up with the story of supernatural occurrences in order to make money and exploit the house's sordid history (see THE SUPERNATURAL). Others believe that Jay Anson's book *The Amityville Horror* (1977) was truly an account of what had happened at 112 Ocean Avenue, pieced together from tape recordings the Lutzes had made shortly after having fled the place. George Lutz, who later admitted to the events described in the novel not being entirely accurate, has given numerous interviews, has helped to create websites about the occurrences, and has appeared on various television shows, answering questions about the myth that is Amityville. Although he has repeatedly had to defend himself and his family against allegations of pursuing commercial goals, Lutz has always maintained that he and Kathleen decided to go public with their experiences in order to help others with similar supernatural problems. The myriad lawsuits and fights about money that followed the publication of the story did not, however, act in the Lutzes' favor.

The events – as related and popularized by Anson's book and adapted by the subsequent movie – that supposedly drove the Lutzes out of their home began with their move into 112 Ocean Avenue only a few months after their marriage. They had been informed about the DeFeo murders by the realtor before making their decision and resolved that the house's past was not going to be a problem for them. Nevertheless, a friend extracted a promise from George to get the house blessed before moving in. Father Ralph Pecararo agreed to undertake the task, and, upon its completion, enquired about the use the family intended to make of one of the rooms on the second floor. Hearing that it was to become a sewing room for Kathy, he acted relieved and explained that, although he had had a bad feeling about that particular room, it would be alright as long as nobody slept in it.

The first few days of the Lutzes' stay in "High Hopes" passed in a relatively unspectacular manner, with the exception of mysterious cold spots all over the house, the family dog, Harry, acting a bit out of sorts, and George being unable to get warm anywhere in the building. Missy began talking to an imaginary friend who went by the name of Jodie. After a few more days in the house it became apparent that the whole family had undergone subtle changes in character and behavior. The parents were irritable, the boys were arguing more than usual, and Missy kept talking to her invisible friend, Jodie, who turned out to be a pig of

variable size who claimed to be an angel. In addition, the minor unexplained occurrences that had plagued the family from day one became more frequent and distinguishable in their manifestations. Mysterious odors, sounds, and touches as well as strange compulsions became a fixed aspect of their lives. George, for instance, would awake shortly after three o'clock each morning – supposedly the time of the DeFeo murders – with the inexplicable urge to check on the boathouse. These events became increasingly worse and soon included phenomena such as levitation, physical changes in Kathy, damage to the house, and a gelatinous substance appearing on various walls and surfaces. Eventually these events came to a disturbing climax and the whole family fled the house in terror, leaving behind all their belongings.

After the Lutzes left, various psychic investigators (see PSYCHICAL INVESTIGATION) examined 112 Ocean Avenue, some of them concluding that there was an evil presence residing in the house that made it practically uninhabitable. It therefore seems strange that a string of new owners, the first being Barbara and Jim Cromarty, reported the house to be absolutely free of extraordinary occurrences of any sort, apart from the hordes of curious onlookers. Initially unaware of the book and movie, and thus of the situation they would be getting themselves into, the Cromartys ended up having to change the house's address and appearance. After them, various other inhabitants of "High Hopes" had nothing unusual to report. Furthermore, every documented aspect of the supernatural events that had supposedly occurred in the house was being put under vicious scrutiny by skeptics aiming to debunk the Amityville Horror, and consequently whole books were written on how easy this task ultimately was (e.g., Stephen Kaplan's *The Amityville Horror Conspiracy*, 1995).

As a result of Ronald DeFeo Jr.'s contradictory and constantly evolving versions of what really happened on that night in 1974, the murders will probably remain a mystery. The string of books and movies that followed the initial publications have put layer upon layer of claims and allegations on top of the existing entanglement of fact and fiction. With Kathy and George Lutz both having passed away and with recent continuations of the Amityville franchise having increasingly watered their story down, the iconic glare of the house's front windows depicted on numerous book and DVD covers seems to be all that remains. Thus, the real Amityville horror – the DeFeo murders – will eternally be overshadowed by the "true story" of an American haunting.

SEE ALSO: Family; Psychical Investigation; Supernatural, The.

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Angel (1999–2004)

CAROLINE RUDDELL

Angel is an American fantasy-based television series created by Joss Whedon. The series is a "spin-off" of the popular *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and ran from 1999 to 2004, totaling five seasons (see *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER* (1997–2003); VAMPIRE FICTION). *Angel* is steeped in the Gothic in several ways: first, the series focuses on the supernatural in the form of vampires and demons; second, it makes use of the macabre and the conventions of horror (as well as those of film noir and the detective

story); and third, its representation of the city of Los Angeles as labyrinthine in nature connotes a distinctly Gothic aesthetic (see FILM; URBAN GOTHIC). In a more localized way, the long empty corridors, cracked walls, and peeling wallpaper of the dilapidated hotel that forms the base for the central characters' business of private investigation, can be seen as a stand-in for the more traditional Gothic castle or house.

The eponymous protagonist, Angel, is a vampire who has been cursed by Gypsies and therefore has a soul. He has a sense of guilt over his former actions as the evil vampire Angelus, and since acquiring his soul attempts to make up for his past deeds by "helping the helpless" in Los Angeles. Angel is initially a private investigator specializing in cases that involve the supernatural, which is how he attempts to help as many people as possible with problems that the usual law enforcement agencies cannot cope with. The series therefore deals with particularly Gothic themes of the supernatural and the macabre, and is further embedded in a Gothic sensibility through its preoccupation with Angel's troubled and split identity as both monster (vampire) and hero of the series. As Stacey Abbott notes, Angel is a figure of tragedy and despondency, haunted by his past as a vengeful and malicious killer (Abbott 2005: 1).

As Angel is a private investigator in earlier seasons the series draws on the conventions of the detective story, which Nevitt and Smith (2003) suggest has its origins in the Gothic tradition of the nineteenth century. The series also draws on certain film noir conventions, largely in the characterization of Angel in terms of troubled masculinity. Angel leaves Sunnydale, and his doomed relationship with Buffy, as he feels he cannot give Buffy a fulfilling life; in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* he temporarily loses his soul after having sex with Buffy and becomes villainous for a time thereafter. Angel is therefore unable to achieve true happiness by having a mature sexual relationship with Buffy; if he does, his soul will be lost once more. He is also uncertain of his place in the human world and seeks to find redemption, and potentially acceptance, in a society that is largely unaware of his existence as a vampire. As a series that embraces hybrid generic tendencies, *Angel* also draws on horror; as a vampire Angel has a fractured identity, both monster and human (see DOUBLES). In a Gothic tradition the monstrous here is polarized with Angel's more vulnerable human identity that is subject to both his internal struggle with his dark desires and the constant onslaught of demonic activity in Los Angeles, which he strives to defeat episodically.

Visually, there is a movement toward a more realist aesthetic in the series, toward the gritty urban and away from the fantasy world of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Upstone 2005: 102). The series is shot, particularly early on, using certain noir conventions such as lighting styles: dark shadows permeate the series, suggestive of the demon underworld infiltrating the sunny Californian environment within which the series is set, yet largely negates. Much of the focus is often on the darker side of Los Angeles, the shadow to the glossier Hollywood. As Benjamin Jacob notes, characters provide commentary on the problematic temperament of the city continually throughout the series (Jacob 2005: 75).

As is the case with many Gothic texts, the monstrous is positioned as a means to interrogate contemporary anxieties and issues; in *Angel* the macabre existence of the demon population can be read as a metaphor for the horror of contemporary urban living and the often unseen terrors of falling foul of the Hollywood machine. For example, out-of-work actresses are the targeted prey of one particularly malicious vampire in the episode "City O" in Season One, and in a wider sense there are many shots of poorly lit, rain-drenched alleys illustrating that not all in Los Angeles is reminiscent of the bright lights of Hollywood.

Later in the series Angel takes over as the head of Wolfram and Hart, a law firm that is renowned as the seat of all that is evil in the series. While Angel's aim is to improve the firm from within, a variety of monstrous figures

associated with Wolfram and Hart can be read as the evil nature of large-scale corporate business. Here, Gothic monstrosity is mapped onto corruption often associated with such business practice, and is firmly located in the problematic urban environment of advanced capitalism.

SEE ALSO: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997–2003); Doubles; Film; Urban Gothic; Vampire Fiction.

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Anglo-Caribbean Gothic

CAROL MARGARET DAVISON

Since the eighteenth century, traditional Gothic tropes and conventions have been brought to bear on anxieties relating to colonial and imperial encounters and realities (see IMPERIAL GOTHIC), both pleasurable and traumatic, and their far-reaching legacies. In the Anglo-Caribbean Gothic, these include various aspects of race relations (economic, ethical, sexual, political) (see RACE), the slave/plantation system (see SLAVERY AND THE GOTHIC), and little-understood African cultural practices retained in the Caribbean. A compelling and significant interfacing developed well into the nineteenth century that saw the radicalization of the Gothic alongside the Gothicization of racial discourse: while racialized characters and race questions were increasingly popular Gothic ingredients, race-focused studies and debates – medical, scientific, political, and otherwise – adopted and adapted established Gothic rhetoric and motifs.

Cataclysmic and controversial historical events also contributed to the figuration of the West Indies as a site of terror. These included numerous slave uprisings (e.g., Tacky's Rebellion, Jamaica, April–September 1760) and especially the Haitian Revolution of the 1790s, which culminated in widespread violence, mutilation, rape, and death. Gothic motifs also punctuate the historical accounts of these events, whose leaders, notably both male and female, were often shamanistic practitioners of Obeah and voodoo (or vaudou) – African medico-religious systems (sometimes syncretized with Western Christian religious belief systems) that fuelled slave resistance. Nanny, the Obeah leader of the Jamaican Maroons, was reported to have defied British weaponry

and an enslaved Obeah woman named Cubah led the resistance forces during Tacky's Rebellion, the most noteworthy slave revolt prior to the Haitian Revolution. Tacky's Rebellion also purportedly involved an Obeah-based ceremony whereby the blood of numerous butchered white overseers was mixed with rum and grave dirt and imbibed by the rebels. The Haitian rebellion was similarly ignited by a voodoo ceremony. Despite efforts to delegitimize voodoo by chronicling its adherents' ostensible acts of child sacrifice and cannibalism, and to demystify Obeah in historical accounts, fascination with their ability to rally and empower slaves nonetheless prevailed. The gravity of British concerns about Obeah is evidenced in the fact that prohibitive legislation followed the suppression of Tacky's Rebellion. An act was passed in the Jamaican Assembly in December of 1760 that made the practice of Obeah punishable by death. Notably, despite attempts to portray the Caribbean as a site of terror, British colonial authority was upheld by way of various forms of spectacular terror, including mutilation, corporal punishment, and executions performed on the bodies (both dead and alive) of rebel and runaway slaves.

In the pages of Anglo-Caribbean Gothic literature, Obeah is figured as a conduit for revolutionary passion and violence and serves as an equivalent to various magical sciences practiced by secret society adherents in traditional British Gothic fiction (see SECRET SOCIETIES). Likewise, Obeah, whose practitioners were said to be able to raise the dead, galvanized traditional Gothic fears associated with superstitious, pre-Enlightenment belief systems. By way of various cultural productions, particularly the theater, Obeah became a familiar icon of terror to Britons just prior to the abolition of the slave trade. Matthew G. Lewis, one of the early British Gothic masters, employed the Gothic to recount tales of Obeah poisonings and the vengeful acts of fugitive slaves in his posthumously published *Journal of a West India Proprietor, 1815–17* (1834) (see LEWIS, MATTHEW). In that work, Lewis assumes an ambivalent standpoint with regard to Obeah, a term he intriguingly employs as a verb in one instance in association with a dreaded runaway slave. While representing blacks as extremely superstitious, Lewis both undermines and supports the authenticity of Obeah, and underscores the cultural relativity of belief systems by comparing black Obeah to what he provocatively calls "white Obeah" (Christianity). Lewis' fictional portraits of blacks run the gamut of stereotypes. In his 1797 play *The Castle Spectre*, Hassan is a noble, deep-feeling character whose enslavement and loss of family and wife unman and embitter him, rendering him a vengeful misanthropist. Lewis' *The Isle of Devils* (a poem composed in 1816 during his last voyage to Jamaica), however, features a more Gothic creature in the figure of a supernatural, ebony demon who violates and impregnates a betrothed Portuguese virgin named Irza after she spies his beautiful, paradisal-looking island from onboard a vessel and is shipwrecked on it. In a final fit of agony as he watches her depart, he destroys himself and their child.

In her representation of Jamaica and Kingston's famous Blue Mountains as alien landscapes inhabited by deadly wildlife and insects and the dreaded haunt of rebel slaves, British author Charlotte Smith magnifies the terrors experienced by her besieged white heroine in *The Story of Henrietta* one of five tales that comprise her *Letters of a Solitary Wanderer* (1800). The joint specters of miscegenation and sexual violation book-end the narrative. The engaged Henrietta travels to Jamaica to visit her father and discovers numerous racially mixed siblings and is apprised of her father's intention to marry her off to one Mr. Sawkins, a man of inferior rank to whom he has mysteriously endowed his estate. Her epistolary narrative recounts her terrors, which culminate in an encounter with a threatening Obeah woman and her attempted rape by Amponah, a black slave she has known since childhood who secures her liberation from Sawkins only to assert his rights over his own body and hers. Smith's antislavery tract is ambivalent about the subject of slave emancipation and uses it to

underscore, albeit contentiously, the extent of women's oppression. Marriage, Smith suggests, is "the most dreadful of all slavery" (1800–2: II 77).

Obeah-related fears are paramount in Cynric Williams' two-volume Gothic novel *Hamel, the Obeah Man* (1827), which is haunted by the specter of "Hayti" and racial insurrection, a threat to Britain's economic dominance in the West Indies in the eighteenth century. Originally published anonymously, *Hamel* is, in part, a work of antiabolitionist propaganda that recounts the story of a white preacher named Roland who wields what the author suggests is the white Obeah of missionaries and abolitionists as he leads a slave rebellion based on French Revolutionary principles. Roland's desires for the daughter of a local planter, however, lead to his grotesque descent into violence and desperation. Hamel, the titular character, is an articulate black Obeah man initially caught up by Roland's message who later denounces revolutionary freedom. The novel concludes with Hamel's squashing of the rebellion he had organized and his retreat to the mythical African homeland of Guinea, the exposure of Roland's villainy, and the prophecy that slaves are not ready for autonomous government. Despite the novel's conclusion, Hamel's eloquent critique of the slave system resonates.

As in the African American literary tradition, Gothic tropes and conventions are employed in Anglo-Caribbean abolitionist novels and slave narratives. *The History of Mary Prince* (1831), the first account of a slave woman's life ever published in Britain, which helped to galvanize the antislavery movement, relates the brutality and terror of the slave system, whose victims pass their lives, as Prince's life experiences in Bermuda and Antigua illustrate, in continual fear. As the planter society represented the worst excesses of decadence and civil and national transgression, it is also frequently portrayed through a Gothic lens by Caribbean authors. In Herbert G. de Lisser's classic early Jamaican novel *The White Witch of Rosehall* (1929), the small aristocracy of plantation owners is described as living in "a world of the narrowest mental and moral horizons" (2007: 192). In this ideologically complicated novel about an uprising during the final days of Jamaican slavery, de Lisser, a Jamaican journalist and writer, recounts a consummate Gothic tale involving disinheritance, Obeah, the threat of miscegenation, alcohol addiction, moral degeneration, and a femme fatale in the form of plantation mistress Annie Palmer. Focusing on the three-week working visit of Robert Rutherford, heir to a Barbadian sugar estate, this cautionary tale about the evils of colonialism problematically employs Palmer as emblematic of that system. Portrayed as the novel's greatest terror, the Obeah-wielding Palmer is possibly of mixed blood and a native of Haiti, "the very stronghold of devil-craft" (de Lisser 2007: 129) in the Caribbean. The novel culminates with her brutal murder during a slave revolt, an event designed as a purgation ritual that is unsettlingly misogynistic (see MISOGYNY). *A High Wind in Jamaica*, a Gothic-inflected loss-of-innocence story also published in 1929, and written by a British author (Richard Hughes), also portrays that Caribbean island as the site of sexuality and violence. For this reason, several critics have argued that this is not a children's book. The initial description of Jamaica as "a kind of paradise for English children" (Hughes 1957: 5) is slowly and strategically stripped away by Hughes, who exposes some dark underlying realities about that country's brutal colonial history.

The Anglo-Caribbean Gothic's dialogue with the British Gothic tradition has been especially pre-eminent in the twentieth century. Perhaps due both to their canonical status and the narrative role (albeit marginal) played by the Caribbean in their pages, Victorian Gothic classics (see VICTORIAN GOTHIC) such as Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) have frequently been revised in Anglo-Caribbean Gothic works wherein the Caribbean moves from the narrative periphery to the center. Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), for example,

furnishes a compelling prequel to *Jane Eyre* in the form of Bertha Rochester's pre-Thornfield life history as Antoinette Cosway in Jamaica. Narrated from the perspective of the young Antoinette, who is essentially raised by a black female servant, Rhys' novel engages, with an eye to the intersections of class, race, and gender, with various complex questions relating to identity, hybridity, and politics.

V. S. Naipaul's *Guerillas* (1975) also rewrites both *Jane Eyre* and the violent, triangulated relationship of Catherine, Heathcliff, and Edgar Linton in *Wuthering Heights* in an unidentified Caribbean country facing potential revolution. Through the figures of Roche, a former South African activist who has experienced imprisonment and torture; the radical Jimmy Ahmed, a wannabe hero and Caribbean Heathcliff; and Jane, Roche's English girlfriend and Jimmy's lover, Naipaul positions the novel's colonial and postcolonial realities as mirrors – worlds irreparably damaged by colonial exploitation. *Guerillas* culminates in a meaningless, useless revolt involving the brutal and senseless murder of its female protagonist. Jamaica Kincaid's female Gothic work (see FEMALE GOTHIC), *The Autobiography of My Mother* (1996), likewise rewrites *Wuthering Heights* in its focus on the figure of Xuela, a female Heathcliff, who is haunted by her tragic motherlessness and the complex, grotesque, and brutal legacies of imperialism, especially the collusion between colonizer and colonized. These Brontë-related revisions have also occasionally been carried over into the cinematic domain. Jacques Tourneur's *I Walked With a Zombie* (1943) incorporates such Gothic elements as a mysterious estate, voodoo, and a zombie (see ZOMBIES) – a figure various critics have characterized as a Caribbean equivalent of Frankenstein's monster – into a loose adaptation of *Jane Eyre* in the West Indies. The island's political history recedes into the background in favor of a more titillating focus – namely, the dangerously erotic bodies of blacks and women, which are notably united during a compelling voodoo ritual wherein a black voodoo master assumes the role of a vampiric seducer.

Zombies, reanimated dead people who thrive on human flesh and brains and are generally controlled by a voodoo sorcerer, became staple cinematic figures alongside other monsters from the 1930s onward. *White Zombie* (1932), directed by Victor Halperin, is a dark romance set during the American occupation of Haiti (1915–34), a political arrangement figured as a new imperialism involving a revived slavery. A wealthy, love-obsessed plantation owner who craves sexual control of Madeline, a visiting American woman engaged to be married to a white bank clerk stationed in the country, turns for assistance to a voodoo master (played by Bela Lugosi) who owns a sugar-cane mill run entirely by zombie slaves. The film's zombie motif possesses multiple meanings, serving as a dark mirror of both the American occupation and colonial slave-based history, and signifying women's zombification within marital and domestic situations.

More contemporary works of Anglo-Caribbean fiction include Elizabeth Nunez's *Bruised Hibiscus* (2003) and *Prospero's Daughter* (2006). Set in Nunez's birthplace of Trinidad, the former is a tale of passion, repressed secrets, and homicide that focuses on two women from different racial and class backgrounds. Nunez astutely extends the motif of slavery to include worldviews and ideals in this work, which may be classified as female and/or feminist Gothic. *Prospero's Daughter* is a dark romance focusing on a colonial encounter involving a doctor, his daughter, and a Caribbean leper colony that rewrites Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) (see SHELLEY, MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT) and is especially attentive to imperial power dynamics.

SEE ALSO: Female Gothic; Imperial Gothic; Lewis, Matthew; Misogyny; Race; Secret Societies; Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft; Slavery and the Gothic; Victorian Gothic; Zombies.

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Anti-Semitism

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Critical consideration of anti-Semitism in Gothic literature in recent decades developed out of scholarship examining the Gothic's engagement with religious/theological issues. Several exemplary essays focus on the figure of the Jew in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) and other Victorian fin-de-siècle texts, and Davison (2004) presents a comprehensive overview of anti-Semitism in British Gothic literature and the terror fuelled by the "Jewish Question," issues and resolutions relating to the Jews, primarily in Europe, who long occupied an unequal legal and civil status to non-Jews. Several scholars have cogently argued that the atmospheric terror and rhetoric of Gothic literature is theological at its core, and that these works are essentially veiled cautionary-style sermons. The critical commonplace, largely uncontested, is that British Gothic literature is marked by a prevalent anti-Catholicism. In an attempt to assert the hegemony of Anglicanism/Protestantism, Catholicism, Britain's former national religion, is generally represented as corrupt, obscurantist, deviant, and grounded in superstition. In stark contrast, fanatical Protestant sects have been identified

as the principal target in American and Scottish Gothic literature (see AMERICAN GOTHIC; SCOTTISH GOTHIC). Despite this key difference, both traditions were established by Protestants/Anglicans who, in the views of numerous critics, displaced their fears about their own nature, condition, and fate onto various Others.

Representations of Jews and Judaism in British Gothic literature in a fashion warranting the label "anti-Semitic" date from the 1790s onwards, sometimes function in a coded fashion, and have been explicated on the grounds of three major issues: aesthetic/poetic, religious/spiritual, and political/ideological. In the first instance, they serve as compelling and exotic properties capable of a romantic treatment highly appealing to readers; in the second, they tap long-standing anxieties about Christian Britain's religious inheritance and the body/self/soul after death; and in the third, they serve as abject Others in the Gothic's figurative contests, return of the repressed episodes, and exclusionary purification rituals, who help to create, consolidate, and even contest an ideal British Protestant/Anglican national identity that is conceptualized as a union of Reason and Religion. Notably, religious belief was increasingly a matter of private judgment during the Enlightenment, which took place in Britain within, rather than against, Protestantism.

Just as Gothic literature's preoccupation with Catholicism was, in part, tethered to such sociohistoric events as the establishment of Anglicanism in 1534 and the Catholic Emancipation campaign that ran from the 1770s through to the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829, anti-Semitism in the Gothic is grounded in historical phenomena and developments. These include the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290 through to the Jewish Naturalization Act of 1753 and subsequent concerns about Anglo-Jewish conversion and assimilation commencing at the end of the eighteenth century when the attempts of British missionaries to convert the Jews had reached a fever pitch. Out of this history was derived a complex semiotics that was readily imported into British Gothic literature. The long-standing representation of the Jew as devil in the worldview of medieval Christian Europe, a cornerstone of religious anti-Semitism, was pressed into service in the Gothic genre in the eighteenth century and adapted in the wake of racial anti-Semitism, which conceptualized Jewishness as an incontrovertible racial identity. Most of the taboos at the core of the Gothic – such as incest, fratricide, miscegenation, and castration – involve blood in either a literal or a figurative sense (as in the concept of blood-money, or familial or "racial" blood-ties), and had long been associated with the Jew, the primary anti-Christian Other in the European worldview who was regarded as spiritually and economically perverse and socially disruptive. The Blood Libel – sensationalist blood-related allegations of ritual murder and human sacrifice that demonized Jews and Judaism – condensed these various anti-Christian associations. Jews were accused of such crimes as desecrating the Host and of murdering non-Jews, usually children, to obtain their blood for use in the Passover Seder and rituals to prolong life.

The Blood Libel, with its emergent vampire motif, was further reinforced by the Jewish engagement with moneylending, an enterprise for which Jews were maligned as social parasites (see VAMPIRE FICTION). This adapted libel was readily brought to bear in British Gothic literature on questions of national belonging and identity, sociopolitical propensities, and the Enlightenment's emancipatory project. In that venue, the Jew, who was regarded as a member of an ancient, exclusive, and uncanny – because "undead" – faith that remained intact in the modern world, raised various ancient and modern specters (see UNCANNY, THE). The established association between Jews and medical and scientific pursuits became even more threatening during the Enlightenment/French Revolution when such engagements were connected to politically progressive ideas and conspiratorial secret societies. Numerous nonfiction treatises written by respectable clerics and professionals, and the German

terror-novel, or *Schauerroman*, promoted the idea that secret societies and secret sciences were conspiracy-driven, politically subversive forces operating in Europe in the 1790s (see EUROPEAN GOTHIC; GERMAN GOTHIC).

Notably, British Gothic works representing Jews and Judaism are usually set during the sinister operation of the Spanish Inquisition that, as many readers were unaware, remained intact until 1834. Anxieties relating to the French Revolution and Terror were displaced onto this institution in the pages of Gothic literature. While the Inquisition's titular object was the salvation of souls and the realization of the religious unity of Spain, its true motive was an antipathy for progressive ideas and intense resentment of the social, political, and economic successes of the Marranos, Jews who had been forcibly converted to Christianity just a century earlier. In their depiction of treacherous (crypto-)Jews and the Spanish Inquisition during a period when British narratives of conversion and conversionist societies were advocating Jewish assimilation, Gothic novelists obliquely expressed their own deep-seated concerns about the prospects of Jewish religious conversion and Jewish secular assimilation in Britain. Thus, in keeping with the prevalent representation of the Spanish Inquisition in British literature until the nineteenth century as an anti-Protestant tribunal with rare mention of its principal Jewish and Moslem victims, British Gothic literature treating the same subjects was consistently anti-Catholic but not pro-Jewish.

The transnational figure of the Wandering Jew, whose legend was first disseminated after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain during the Inquisition, emblematizes the Jewish Question in many works of Gothic literature, his dreaded role as anticitizen bringing British national identity and the values that constitute it into sharp relief. In the pages of the British Gothic, where contests are frequently staged between pre-Enlightenment and Enlightenment belief systems, the Wandering Jew becomes a highly charged character positioned at an anxious crossroads between such seemingly incompatible ideas as magic and science, superstition and reason, religion and nationalism, and mercantilism and speculative capitalism. While he forms part of a pantheon of accursed wanderers popular in Romantic poetry in the early 1800s – especially in the works of Percy Bysshe Shelley – his religious identity is regularly downplayed by Romantic poets and overlooked by Romantic critics (see ROMANTICISM; SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE). In the new economy of British Gothic literature, which was produced during an era of racial anti-Semitism, the Wandering Jew was radically transformed. The traditional yoking of Jews and the Blood Libel, with its emergent vampire motif, assumed terrifying flesh in the Wandering Jew's representation as a politically subversive and/or abject magician-scientist. The Wandering Jew's unnatural longevity not only served to endorse the idea of the Jew as the ur-criminal worthy of Christian punishment and to uphold fundamental Christian religious certainties about the Crucifixion and the Millennium, it took on a supernatural, almost Faustian, aspect. He not only grows increasingly nefarious and vampiric by the fin de siècle; he comes to exemplify the idea of secret identity, being neither explicitly identified by name or religion (see FIN-DE-SIÈCLE GOTHIC).

The Wandering Jew makes his memorable cameo debut in Matthew Lewis' graphic porno-Gothic novel *The Monk* (1795) where he assumes an ambivalent role (see LEWIS, MATTHEW). Although he forms part of a lengthy subplot wherein superstitious beliefs are legitimated and rationalism is challenged, this millenarian figure also helps to promote a moral Reformation that, albeit indirectly, affirms Protestantism's place as Britain's ruling religion. In this Gothic allegory about Protestantism's religious paternity, Roman Catholicism is trounced as a Mammonistic pagan cult headed up by power-hungry deviants like the protagonist Ambrosio who readily succumbs to sexual temptation and rapidly develops into a homicidal rapist (see CULTS). An element overlooked by most critics is that a Jewish merchant is actually identified, in adherence to

medieval stereotypes, as assisting the devil in plotting Ambrosio's entrapment. Likewise, although the Wandering Jew's conversion testifies to Christian salvation and mercy, he is rendered in his full supernatural aspect: he embodies fury, despair, and malevolence, and horrifies his viewers with the blood-red cross inscribed on his forehead.

Although set during the Religious Wars, William Godwin's *St. Leon* (1799) takes the secular world as its focus (see GODWIN, WILLIAM). In this cautionary tale about the potential excesses of capitalism, Godwin's eponymous protagonist is, effectively, a Wandering crypto-Jew, an unchecked individualist/scientist who, vampire-like, threatens both his family and the nation. Godwin's anti-Semitism is blatant in his portrait of St. Leon, a figurative Wandering Jew, who is emblematic of the modern age that is likewise figured as "Jewish" in its worship of "craft, dissimulation, corruption, and commerce" (Godwin 2006: 74). In its preoccupation with Christian religious paternity, Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) follows in the tradition of Lewis' *The Monk* (see MATURIN, CHARLES ROBERT). Roman Catholics and Jews are positioned on a par, both being equally engaged in what are described as "work[s] of blood" (Maturin 1992: 255, 391).The novel's eponymous hero, Melmoth, may be, as one critic describes him, a kind of Wandering Jew combined with Byronic vampire (Praz 1965: 76), but his two explicitly identified Jewish doubles – Solomon and Adonijah – evoke the greatest dread: Solomon conjures up an Oedipal castration nightmare as a knife-wielding circumcising crypto-Jewish father who threatens to physically Judaize his son, while the elderly patriarch Adonijah seems horrifyingly undead in his subterranean apartment furnished with skulls and parchment scrolls inscribed with human blood. Maturin's putative target may be the brutality, idolatry, and avarice of the Catholic Church, but his Jewish characters are graphically memorable, wolfish scapegoats who remain irredeemably accursed for their betrayal and murder of Christ.

Bram Stoker's Count Dracula marks the apogee in the development of the vampiric Wandering Jew in British Gothic literature (see STOKER, BRAM). *Dracula* (1897) serves as the Gothic masterpiece that initiated the scholarly examination of anti-Semitism in the Gothic, an ironic fact given that Count Dracula is nowhere explicitly identified as Jewish. His haunt in the medieval Carfax estate that smells of "ole Jerusalem," coupled with his literalization of the Blood Libel, however, serve as the most prominent indicators of his religious identity. This crypto-Jew taps deep-seated fears about assimilated Jews who are no longer readily identifiable or face social/legal restrictions in British society, and renders manifest fin-de-siècle anxieties about various issues, including syphilis, homosexuality, proto-feminism, the advent of monopoly capitalism, and national/imperial decline. "Jewishness" functioned as the umbrella signifier, both in Stoker's *Dracula* and in scholarly works of his day like Max Nordau's antimodernism polemic *Degeneration* (1895), under which the diverse fears of national degeneration stood united (see DEGENERATION). Contemporary pseudoscientific studies had traced the inception of syphilis to the Jewish community, psychopathologized the Wandering Jew as a peripatetic neurotic, and deemed Jews prone to mental illness.

In the form of the mesmerizing Wandering Jew, an international, mammonistic, magician-scientist, and accursed criminal whose coreligionists had long been denounced as colonizers for progress, Britain actually projected its own demonic self-image as an increasingly imperialist, scientifically industrial, and aggressively missionary nation. Dracula's reverse imperialist invasion targeting British women's bodies reveals the novel's true national fears (see IMPERIAL GOTHIC). His ritual murder at novel's end by the crusading Anglo-American brotherhood renders Transylvania safe for tourism and Britain free of a Jewishness portrayed as sexually deviant and infectious.

Vampiric Jews – crypto and otherwise – assumed an even greater terror in their

migration to celluloid. In some instances, their Jewishness is thinly veiled. In his role as the Count in Tod Browning's 1931 film *Dracula*, Hungarian actor Bela Lugosi wears a medallion that strongly resembles a Star of David (see LUGOSI, BELA). The vampiric Wandering Jew assumed the starring role in 1940 in two Nazi propaganda films produced to incite violence and prepare Germans for the Final Solution. While Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi propaganda minister, billed Veit Harlan's *Jud Süss* as a realistic historic portrait, Fritz Hippler's venomous cinematic work *The Eternal Jew* (1940) was described by at least one critic as a documentary. Both expressed Nazi Germany's *völkisch* ideology and its principal fear of assimilated Crypto-Jews.

SEE ALSO: American Gothic; Blood; Cults; Degeneration; European Gothic; Fin-de-Siècle Gothic; German Gothic; Godwin, William; Imperial Gothic; Jewish Gothic; Lewis, Matthew; Lugosi, Bela; Maturin, Charles Robert; Romanticism; Scottish Gothic; Shelley, Percy Bysshe; Stoker, Bram; Uncanny, The; Vampire Fiction.

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Apparition

MACKENZIE BARTLETT

An apparition is a sudden visual manifestation of an ethereal and transient figure, most often someone who is deceased, but also sometimes

a living person, an animal, or an inanimate object. The term is frequently used synonymously with "ghost," "spirit," and "phantom," and has been studied in terms of hallucination (by psychologists), telepathy (by spiritualists), and divine providence (by theologians) (see SPIRITUALISM). Apparitional encounters are highly individualistic and subjective; as Voltaire notes in his definition of the term, "The phantom exists to him who has the perception of it" (Voltaire 1824: 2, 232).

In literature, apparitions predate what is traditionally identified as Gothic fiction. The vision – whether of angels, demons, or saints – occurs frequently in the Bible, a text which "teems and bristles with accounts of it from beginning to end," as Florence Marryat points out in her nineteenth-century defense of spiritualism (Marryat 1891: 16). Apparitions also populate the plays of Shakespeare, such as the pivotal scene in *Hamlet* when the dead king reveals his murder to his son, and in *Macbeth*, when the ghost of Banquo haunts the title character to remind him of his terrible deeds. In the mid-eighteenth century apparitions became married to Gothic fiction, where they performed a variety of functions: as heralds of ancient prophesies (the ghost of Alfonso in Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*), cursed subjects of undying love (the Bleeding Nun in Lewis' *The Monk*; Catherine Earnshaw's ghost in Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*), symbols of the psychological distress or the secret desires of the protagonist (Miss Jessel and Peter Quint in James' *The Turn of the Screw*; the woman in the wallpaper in Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper"; the unnamed visitor in Stevenson's "Markheim"), haunting reminders of crime and tyranny (the cat in Poe's "The Black Cat"; the two young girls in King's *The Shining*; the title character of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*), omens of death (the specters on the ghost ship in Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*; the inverted head of the Porroh man in Wells' "Pollock and the Porroh Man"), and eerie portents of things to come (the Ghost of Christmas Future in Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*; the shadows in the trees in Blackwood's "The Willows") (see BLACKWOOD, ALGERNON; DICKENS, CHARLES; JAMES, HENRY; KING, STEPHEN; LEWIS, MATTHEW; POE, EDGAR ALLAN; STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS; WALPOLE, HORACE; WELLS, H. G. (HERBERT GEORGE)). The ghost story, sometimes characterized as a subgenre of Gothic literature, was a ubiquitous feature of periodical publications in the nineteenth century, and many of the most popular authors of the period – including Elizabeth Gaskell, Rhoda Broughton, Rudyard Kipling, Richard Marsh, and M. R. James – produced apparitional tales (see JAMES, M. R. (MONTAGUE RHODES); KIPLING, RUDYARD; MARSH, RICHARD).

In modern literary and cultural history scholarship, apparitions are often read in terms of Freud's theory of the return of the repressed, or more broadly as manifestations of "a spectral self – a subjectivity that was conflicted, hemispheric and liable to hallucinations at any given moment," as Shane McCorristine has recently argued (McCorristine 2010: 3). The narrator of H. P. Lovecraft's short story "The Unnamable" voices the difficulty of articulating this haunted relationship between the self and apparition: "Molded by the dead brain of a hybrid nightmare, would not such a vaporous terror constitute in all loathsome truth the exquisitely, the shriekingly *unnamable*?" (Lovecraft 1996: 162). Apparitions possessing this "unnamable" quality therefore invite the experience of the uncanny by exposing the psyche to that which haunts it: death, the past, the unconscious self.

Though they have remained a common literary trope, apparitions have not been confined to the realm of fiction. Beginning in the early eighteenth century, "true" tales of ghost sightings arose partly in response to the materialist philosophies of the Enlightenment, offering a metaphysical counterargument to demonstrate the existence of the human soul. One important early model for apparition narratives was Daniel Defoe's "A True Relation of the Apparition of One Mrs Veal" (1706), which records the experiences of a woman who claimed to have been visited by the ghost of her

friend. There has been some debate, however, over whether Defoe actually wrote "Mrs Veal" (Starr 2003). As with many reports of ghost sightings that followed his essay, Defoe sets out to provide an authoritative record even as his embellished journalistic style also underscores his acute awareness of the marketability of his subject. In a period of scientific rationalism and religious skepticism, such spiritualist documents engaged in epistemological debates about the nature of death and the afterlife while simultaneously capitalizing on the public fascination with apparitions in literature, creating a link between supposedly empirical first-hand accounts of ghost sightings and fictionalized tales of the spirit world.

In Britain, apparitions became more commodified with the arrival of spiritualism as an organized movement in 1852, four years after the Fox sisters made a sensation in America with their reported ability to communicate with the dead. Soon séances were being conducted across the country in darkened rooms where ghosts would make their presence known through table rappings, disembodied voices, the playing of musical instruments, or through direct physical contact with audience members. However, in the 1870s, spiritualists developed an intensified interest in visual phenomena like second sight, spirit photography, and clairvoyance, and this created new pressure on mediums to generate a more spectacular form of spirit conjuring: namely, the full-form materialization of apparitions. The first such materialization in Britain occurred in 1873 when Florence Cook produced her "familiar" – the young ghost Katie King – at a séance, an achievement that made her one of the most famous mediums in the country (Owen 1989: 42–9). William Crookes and others enthusiastically employed various scientific methods to lend legitimacy to these materializations; however, many mediums (including Cook) were later humiliatingly debunked by their critics. Fueling public skepticism about spiritualism at the end of the nineteenth century, also, were the relentless parodies of spirit-conjurers published in satirical magazines like *Punch* and *The Idler*, as well as a host of new psychological theories that characterized apparitions as products of hallucinations, mental disorders, or "the *débris* of dreams," as James Sully suggested in 1881 (Sully 1881: 184). Though members of the Society for Psychical Research faithfully compiled reports on apparitions in studies like *Phantasms of the Living* (Gurney et al. 1886), by 1920 Lewis Spence could declare in the *Encyclopaedia of the Occult* that "at the present time apparitions are generally, though by no means universally, referred to hallucination" (Spence 2006: 32).

Nevertheless, apparitions continued to resonate in the twentieth century, bolstered in part by the devastation of the two world wars, but also by the popularity of spiritualist treatises such as Arthur Conan Doyle's *The History of Spiritualism* (1926). Indeed, the fact that apparitions have remained a staple of Gothic fiction, horror movies, and television to the present day suggests that we have not ceased to be thrilled by the dread specter of our histories, our fictions, and our selves.

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Architecture, Gothic

JAMES STEVENS CURL

"Gothic" is the unfortunate epithet given to an architectural style, properly called "Pointed," which evolved in Europe (starting in France) from the latter part of the twelfth until the sixteenth century, and continued in certain geographical areas well into the eighteenth century (see ARCHITECTURE, GOTHIC REVIVAL). Its geographical extent, from Ireland and Scandinavia to the Mediterranean and the Levant, and its longevity, made it a style (or series of styles, for it evolved in different ways in different countries and over time) that was enormously successful throughout Latin Christendom. As its correct name suggests, it is the architecture of the pointed arch, pointed rib vaults, piers with clusters of shafts, deep buttresses (some of the flying type), elaborate window tracery, pinnacles, spires and spirelets, crenellations, and a pronounced vertical emphasis. The term "Gothic" was originally pejorative, an invention of those who perceived Pointed architecture as barbarous and northern, and associated with those Germanic tribes that had invaded Italy and sacked Rome.

One of the problems with the semicircular arch, which was a characteristic of the Romanesque style, was that when compartments of a building, square or rectangular in plan, were covered with stone vaults with ribs, the diagonals (of wider span than the arches over the sides of the square or rectangle compartment), if semicircular, necessitated the narrower arches being raised on stilts to keep the tops of the arches aligned: the alternative was to place segmental arches over the diagonals and semicircular arches over the narrower spans. However, if the arches, instead of being semicircular, stilted, or segmental, were pointed, the apex of each point could be at similar heights, and a more elegant solution found to the problem of vaulting: the apex of each pointed arch, therefore, functioned rather like a hinge.

The pointed form, it has been suggested, was observed in Islamic architecture during the Crusades, and we know the pointed arch was used for Islamic buildings in the tenth and eleventh centuries, long before it appeared in Western Europe. However, interlacing arcades are found in Romanesque architecture, where semicircular arches overlap, and the result is not only a series of interlacing semicircular arches, but the formation of a series of pointed arches, so simple geometry may have played its part in suggesting the Pointed style. There has been much debate about where pointed rib vaults first appeared: they had been used in Burgundy, Lombardy, and Durham, but several candidates have been proposed, and innovation seems to have traveled remarkably quickly from place to place. Compared with columnar and trabeated architecture (as with Ancient Egyptian and Greek architecture), Gothic was arcuated, giving an impression of dynamic thrust and counterthrust. Half arches and half-barrel vaults had been used as buttresses in Romanesque architecture, so certain principles we associate with Gothic were already being exploited by earlier architects. Fully developed Gothic was a remarkably coherent system of arched forms in which forces were expressed and resisted, and nonstructural walls were subdivided with tracery to form huge glazed windows.

First Pointed (known as Early English in the British Isles) was a style used from the end of the twelfth century until the end of the

thirteenth, although most of its characteristics were present in the lower part of the east end of the Abbey-Church of St-Denis, near Paris (circa 1135–44), where something like fully fledged Gothic evolved. Windows were first of all vertical holes in walls with pointed tops (lancets), but later contained tracery of the plate type, then got larger, divided into lights by means of geometrical bar tracery: they also included circular windows of the wheel type. Added verticality was achieved by means of detached colonnettes or shafts of black or grey marble secured to piers at vertical intervals by stone bands. Common ornaments were nail-heads and the larger dog-tooth pyramidal type. Outward thrusts of vaults had to be counteracted by means of deep buttresses which divided façades into bays, and were capped by gablets or pinnacles. Roofs were steeply pitched. Once First Pointed evolved with geometrical tracery it became known as Middle Pointed.

The next phase was Second Pointed (also known as Decorated) work of the fourteenth century, which saw an ever-increasing invention in bar tracery of the Curvilinear, Flowing, and Reticulated types, where the possibilities of the ogee form were fully exploited in canopies, tracery, niches, and so on, culminating in the Flamboyant (flame-like) style from around 1375 on the Continent. The mouchette or dagger forms of lights in traceries windows, and the net-like patterns of the bars were characteristic of the style. The wheel window was transformed into the elaborate marigold or rose window, or into even more fanciful patterns of tracery. Second Pointed had diaperwork often covering whole wall surfaces, profuse crockets on pinnacles and canopies, and naturalistic floral and foliate ornament (e.g., the leaves of the Chapter House of Southwell Minster, Nottinghamshire). Nail-head and dog-tooth were superseded by ballflower and fleuron enrichment. Vaults acquired intermediate or lierne ribs, enabling much more complex patterns (some star-shaped) than those of the First Pointed style to be created on ceilings. Second Pointed continued on the Continent, where lace-like patterns of tracery evolved, and churches of great height were erected with highly complex vaulting, notably in Germany and Bohemia, especially during the last phase, where Flamboyant forms were widely used. This style, however, was short-lived in England, and began to be superseded by so-called Perpendicular (or Third Pointed or Rectilinear) from around 1332, although the two styles overlapped for some time.

Perpendicular was a great English invention, and was unknown elsewhere (though widely copied during the Gothic Revival): its key characteristics were mullions extending to the soffits of window-arches; extensive use of the bowtell molding; developed employment of the double ogee; rolls, bells, and cushions over octagonal subbases of bell form; four-centered arches with flattened upper arcs; square-framed arches with cusped blind spandrels; panel-like effects of panels carried over wall surfaces and in tracery (where the transoms are often ornamented with miniature battlements, and each panel has an arched top, often cusped); arches with flatter tops of the four-centered type; and vaults which evolved from the lierne type into the fan vaults which reached their most sophisticated realizations at King's College Chapel, Cambridge, and the Lady Chapel of Westminster Abbey (1503–19). Roofs got flatter and disappeared behind crenellations. Windows became huge, and sometimes filled entire walls between buttresses. Perpendicular was the longest-lived of all the Gothic styles in England, surviving for more than three centuries (the fan-vaulted hall staircase at Christ Church, Oxford, is circa 1640), and was the first of them to be revived in the eighteenth century.

The Gothic styles enjoyed a widespread and scholarly revival in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and led to a remarkable development of materials, craftsmanship, and inventiveness in design as well as an enormous program of restoration of medieval buildings without which many great works of architecture would not have survived. In particular, the rediscovery of medieval color (which permeated the architecture) transformed our

understanding of interiors, and informed nineteenth-century inventiveness and richness of décor.

SEE ALSO: Architecture, Gothic Revival.

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Architecture, Gothic Revival

JAMES STEVENS CURL

The Gothic (more correctly Pointed) style of architecture continued in use long after the medieval period, especially in areas where there was readily available freestone. It should be remembered that Classicism was not indigenous in Northern Europe, and had to be learned. The crucial event in substituting Classical architecture for Gothic was the Great Fire of London in 1666, after which the monopoly of the Worshipful Company of Masons was undermined, because many artisans not associated with that company had to be employed. These artisans worked under Christopher Wren's direction using the architectural language of Classicism from Europe, not the ancient language of the Pointed style, which, however, was kept alive outside London by masons working on repairs to churches or on new ecclesiastical buildings. Gothic certainly survived as a living tradition well into the eighteenth century: Gothic began to pass into history when masons lost ground to architects, architects pushed the Classical style, and when architects consciously worked in the Gothic style the results bore little resemblance to real medieval buildings. When the Gothic Revival proper got under way, the language had to be relearned by both architects and artisans, largely through painstaking scholarship such as that of Thomas Rickman (1776–1841), whose book of 1817 attempted to discriminate between the styles of English medieval architecture, and Matthew Holbeche Bloxam (1805–88), whose *Principles of Gothic Ecclesiastical Architecture* of 1829 was a remarkable achievement for such a young man.

Good examples of seventeenth-century Gothic include Front Quad, Oriel College (1620–42), Front Quad, University College (1657–66, probably designed by Richard Maude), and the Great Staircase, Christ Church College (circa 1640, by one Smith, an "artificer" of London), all in Oxford; the Hall, Trinity College (1604–5, designed by Ralph Symons of Westminster), the Library, St. John's College, Cambridge (1623–4, probably designed by Henry Man), and the Chapel, Peterhouse (consecrated 1632), all in Cambridge; the Cathedral Church of St. Columb, Londonderry, Ireland (consecrated 1633, by William Parratt of London); the Church of St. Saviour, Foremark, Derbyshire (consecrated 1662); the Chapel of St. Peter, Steane Park, Farthingoe, Northamptonshire (1620); and the south transept (circa 1600–7), nave (1662–4, by John Orum), and west tower (1677–8) of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Mary, Condover, Shropshire.

There are many such examples of a surviving Gothic tradition in England, and in some cases Gothic was consciously employed for political reasons: a good example is the Church of Holy Trinity, Staunton Harold, Leicestershire (1653–65, erected by Sir Thomas Shirley, Bt 1629–56 as a protest against the Puritanism of the Commonwealth). As late as 1730–3, the central tower of the Church of Holy Cross, Sherston, Wiltshire, was built to the designs of Thomas Sumsion (circa 1672–1744).

That living tradition of building in Gothic was transformed when architects produced designs in the Gothic style. The most important early example is the Church of St. Mary Aldermary in the City of London (1679–82), which is entirely Third Pointed or Perpendicular in style, a choice probably dictated by the reuse of substantial medieval remains after the Great Fire. It was supervised by Wren's office, the mason being Edward Strong Senior (1652–1724), who became a Freeman of The Masons' Company in 1680. Another significant seventeenth-century work in Gothic Revival is the Church of St. Mary, Warwick, rebuilt (1698–1704) to designs by Sir William Wilson (1641–1710) by Francis (1672–1738) and William (1661–1724) Smith after the Great Fire of Warwick in 1694. The earliest Georgian examples of the Gothic Revival were All Souls' College, Oxford (1716–35) and the two western towers (1734) of the Collegiate Church of St. Peter, Westminster (usually known as Westminster Abbey), designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor (1661–1736). These were followed by the Gothic Temple, Stowe, Buckinghamshire (1741–4) by James Gibbs (1682–1754); the influential work by Sanderson Miller (1716–80), including the Gothic Tower, Edgehill (1745–7), embellishments at Radway Grange (1744–6), both in Warwickshire, and the sham castle "ruins" at Hagley, Worcestershire (1747–8); and Arbury Hall, Warwickshire (circa 1750–90), built by Sir Roger Newdigate, Bt (1719–1806), with Sanderson Miller, Henry Keene (1726–76), and Henry Couchman (1738–1803) as consultants and executive draughtsmen. It was Arbury Hall, with Horace Walpole's (1717–97) Strawberry Hill, Twickenham (from the 1750s), and publications such as Batty Langley's (1696–1751) *Ancient Architecture Restored and Improved* . . . (1741–2, reissued as *Gothic Architecture* in 1747) that helped to make Georgian (sometimes called "Sham," "Carpenter's," or even "Cardboard") Gothick fashionable, even though Langley's sources drew on inventions like those of William Kent (circa 1685–1748), whose designs were probably used for Shobdon Church, Herefordshire, realized possibly by Henry Flitcroft (1697–1769), and there was virtually nothing of real Gothic in his book. The designs for Gothic garden buildings by Thomas Wright (1711–86) also seem to have had influence: examples at Tollymore Park, County Down, were built, but they do not look medieval, and are thin, insubstantial, but amusing garden follies. Medieval architecture was associated with the "Gothick" novels of people like Walpole, "Monk" Lewis (1775–1818), and others, and the "Graveyard Poets" Robert Blair (1699–1746), Thomas Gray (1716–71), and Edward Young (1683–1765): this literary background helped to make Gothic fashionable.

The conscious movement to revive Gothic began in the second half of the eighteenth century and developed throughout the nineteenth: it was, arguably, the most influential artistic phenomenon ever to spring from England, and from it grew the Domestic Revival, the Arts-and-Crafts and Aesthetic Movements, and many more developments in art and architecture. What might be termed the archeological phase of the Revival in which real medieval buildings provided the precedents for design was triggered partly by the French Wars which made the customary Grand Tour impossible, and led to a study of native historical architecture (much of which, of course, was Gothic) as part of a general revival of national pride. The most important recorders of medieval buildings and details were John Britton (1771–1857), Augustus Charles Pugin (1769–1832), and, of course, Bloxam and Rickman, but there were others, including Robert William Billings (1813–74), whose publications helped

to make Gothic familiar. Of huge importance were the books published and written by John Henry Parker (1806–84): not only did he bring out the works of numerous ecclesiologists, but his own *Glossary of Terms* (1836) and *Introduction to the Study of Gothic Architecture* (1849) were enormously influential. The religious revival that was prompted by fear of the French Revolution and its aftermath was also closely associated with the revival of Gothic, which began to take on associations with tradition, order, and nationhood, and the very considerable programs of restoration of medieval buildings throughout Europe (especially in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) were prompted partly by nationalism and partly as a reaction against the spirit of Neo-Classicism that had uncomfortable associations with the Revolutionaries. All this led to the production of beautifully illustrated books, accurate surveys of real medieval work, and archeological scholarship, increasing confidence so that experience gained in restoration work informed new designs in the Gothic style. The Cambridge Camden Society and the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture helped the evolution of ecclesiology, and led to the formation of the Ecclesiological Society which promoted studies not only of artifacts and architecture, but traditional religion.

With the writings of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812–52), starting with *Contrasts* (1836), Gothic became a moral crusade, and the only style fit for a Christian nation. After the burning (1834) of the Palace of Westminster (an event that caused Pugin to rejoice), Gothic came of age, for the terms of the architectural competition for its replacement specified that either Elizabethan or the Gothic style should be used, and the marvelous new Palace designed by Charles Barry (1795–1860) with details and furnishings largely by Pugin was built by the Thames at Westminster (completed 1860).

At first the Revival was manifest in numerous buildings in the Perpendicular style (the last style of genuine medieval Gothic in England), but its associations with the Tudors and its supposed "decadence" led designers backward in time to Second Pointed of the early fourteenth century, epitomized in Pugin's masterpiece, the Roman Catholic Church of St. Giles, Cheadle, Staffordshire (1841–6): glowing with color, and beautifully furnished, it showed how rich a Revival church could actually be. There followed numerous Gothic architects influenced by Pugin, of whom the most prolific were George Gilbert "Great" Scott (1811–78), who was to be knighted for his Albert Memorial, London (1852–72), a richly colored shrine in the Italian Gothic style; William Butterfield (1814–1900), whose All Saints, Margaret Street, London (1849–59) demonstrated the possibilities offered by hard brick, glazed tiles, and materials calculated to add color as well as stand up to the filthy atmosphere of towns; George Edmund Street (1824–81), whose churches, such as All Saints, Boyne Hill, Maidenhead, Berkshire (1854–65), often incorporated polychromy that was structural, and whose accomplished synthesis of Burgundian First Pointed with Italian and English Gothic at the Royal Courts of Justice, The Strand, London (1866–81) was one of the last great monuments of the Gothic Revival; and John Loughborough Pearson (1817–97), whose robust early French First Pointed at St. Peter's, Vauxhall (1859–65) was one of the most successful buildings influenced by a growing interest in Continental Gothic. The Revival, therefore, went "backwards" from Perpendicular, to English Second Pointed, then to Continental First Pointed, and, influenced by Street and John Ruskin (1819–1900), to Italian exemplars, before it turned forward (chronologically) again to English types.

Among the most inventive Gothic architects the figure of William Burges (1827–81) looms large: one of the least restrained of Gothic Revivalists, he was responsible for three ecclesiastical masterpieces – Christ the Consoler, Skelton-on-Ure (1870–6), St. Mary, Aldford-cum-Studley (1870–8), both in Yorkshire, and the Cathedral of St. Finbar, Cork, Ireland (1863–1904) – all of which were of the

"muscular" type of Gothic, influenced by tough Continental (especially Burgundian) exemplars, but no slavish copies. Burges also designed from 1866 inventive and colorful alterations at Cardiff Castle, carried out wonderful works at Castell Coch, Glamorgan (1872–91), and built his own Tower House, Kensington (1875–81), with all the furnishings also designed by him.

With the works of George Frederick Bodley (1827–1907), the Revival took on a new delicacy, turning away from Continental sources and giving the buildings a much more English appearance, even introducing Perpendicular touches, as in the Church of St. John the Baptist, Tue Brook, Liverpool (1868–71), the color-scheme of which was brilliantly restored in the 1970s by Stephen Ernest Dykes Bower (1903–94). From 1869 to 1898 Bodley was in partnership with Thomas Garner (1839–1906), and their first great church drew on the planning of buildings such as the Dominican Church in Ghent, Belgium: this was St. Augustine, Bolton Road, Pendlebury, South Lancashire (1870–4), which, with its huge interior space, unbroken by any chancel arch, pointed the way forward to an architecture suitable for Anglican worship. Bodley and Garner's exquisite Holy Angels, Hoar Cross, Staffordshire (1872–6), is, apart from the tower, entirely English Second Pointed. Although there had been "Rogue Goths" such as Enoch Bassett Keeling (1837–86), whose works included the debauched, eccentric, and outrageous Strand Musick Hall (1864, demolished 1903), thereby incurring the wrath of purists as too full of "Go"), the main thrust of the Revival from the time of Bodley's first works began to be toward a revival and development of English Gothic, and a new refinement wholly at odds with the clashing and frantically restless architecture of the "Rogues."

"Great" Scott was responsible for many restorations, some more sensitive than others, but he was also successful with larger secular buildings, including the magnificent Midland Grand Hotel in front of St. Pancras Station, London (1865–74), which mixes English and French First Pointed, Flemish motifs, and bits of Venetian Gothic, all piled together in a tour-de-force of polychrome eclecticism treated with immense assurance. Similar in style is his Kelham Hall, Nottinghamshire (1858–61). His work at Lichfield Cathedral, Staffordshire, is perhaps his best in terms of sensitive restoration, and very convincing, while the superb chancel-screen he designed for the same building (1859–63), made by Francis Alexander Skidmore (1816–96) of Coventry, reached the heights of Victorian design and craftsmanship.

George Gilbert "Middle" Scott (1839–97) was much influenced by Bodley and, with Garner, John Thomas Micklethwaite (1843–1906), and John Dando Sedding (1838–91), was responsible for altering the thrust of English ecclesiastical design from the 1870s by turning to English and late Gothic precedents instead of the thirteenth-century and Continental models that earlier had been de rigueur. Scott championed Perpendicular, and his masterpiece was the church, school, and vicarage of St. Agnes, Kennington Park, London (1874–91, now destroyed), designed for the English liturgy and Anglo-Catholic ritual, although his exquisite little St. Mary Magdalene, East Moors, Yorkshire (1879–82), should be mentioned. Temple Lushington Moore (1856–1920), a pupil of "Middle" Scott, supervised the erection of the last-mentioned building, and also worked at St. Agnes, but he himself was responsible for some very fine designs, including the sumptuous screen in St. Swithin's Church, Littleham, near Bideford, Devon (1891–3), and the churches of St. Mary, Sledmere, and St. Botolph, Carlton-in-Cleveland (1895–7), both in Yorkshire. Moore's Pusey House, Oxford (1911–14) is one of his best buildings.

There were other distinguished architects of the later Gothic Revival whose work has been ignored or underrated (partly through the not always benign influence of Nikolaus Bernhard Leon Pevsner, 1902–83). Giles Gilbert Scott's (1880–1960) glorious Liverpool Anglican Cathedral (1903–80) is beginning to be recognized as the marvel it is, a sublime monument

with breathtaking internal volumes quite unlike any other work of the Gothic Revival, and the building as a whole is a scenic prodigy, a testament to the originality and inventiveness of its architect, working in a great tradition. Most of the design drawings for the last parts of the cathedral to be built were by Roger Arthur Philip Pinckney (1900–90).

One of the most gifted pupils of Bodley and Garner, John Ninian Comper (1864–1960), designed some great works, including St. Cyprian's, Clarence Gate, London (from 1902), and his masterpiece, St. Mary's, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire (1904–31), in which English late Gothic was a major inspiration. Dykes Bower designed distinguished additions for the cathedral at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, from 1956, work on which continued under The Gothic Design Practice, headed by his former assistant, Warwick Pethers (born 1959), culminating in the mighty crossing-tower, an indisputably fine essay in late English Gothic, owing something to "Bell Harry" at Canterbury, and completed in the early years of the twenty-first century. Dykes Bower completed (1979) the chapel at Lancing College, Sussex, originally designed by Richard Cromwell Carpenter (1812–55): it has the largest rose-window to be built in England since the medieval examples in the transepts of Westminster Abbey (for which Dykes Bower was Surveyor to the Fabric for 22 years from 1951). More recently there have been signs of a revival of Gothick of the pre-ecclesiological type, notably with the Gothick Villa at Regent's Park (1988) by John Quinlan Terry (born 1937).

The importance of the Revival proper was that first of all it freed architects from the tyranny of symmetry, enabling fenestration to be placed where it was needed, for example, and not forced into a preconceived pattern. Plans, too, could be asymmetrical, designed for convenience, what Pugin called "fitness for purpose." It also encouraged the use of materials that could be washed down, more suited to the dirty atmosphere of cities than absorbent stone, and colored materials allowed the evolution of structural polychromy. Scott's use of iron for staircases at the Midland Grand Hotel and at Kelham Hall was very advanced, and indeed an architecture of iron and glass for new building types was invented from scratch. Demands made by architects encouraged a revival of craftsmanship and invention of materials that were truly staggering, and the arts of making stained-glass windows, encaustic tiles, and elaborate metalwork were all caused to flourish.

In due course, the Gothic Revival led to the Domestic Revival, when architects discovered in vernacular buildings much to admire and emulate, and the enormous advances in both knowledge and craftsmanship gave birth to the Arts-and-Crafts and Aesthetic Movements. There is also no doubt that aspects of Gothic Revival design were also transformed into the sinuousness of what became Art Nouveau, and that the Revival, which reached its apogee in the late-Victorian period, was of immeasurable importance in a great many ways.

SEE ALSO: Architecture, Gothic; Walpole, Horace.

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Asian Gothic

KATARZYNA ANCUTA

While Asia is a somewhat familiar territory for Gothic, Asian Gothic appears to be a category in the making, or a label in search of content. A potential contributor has to face two major issues to begin with. One significant difficulty is to agree upon what exactly is meant by "Asia" in Asian Gothic. If we define Asia by its geographical boundaries, we are immediately confronted with the virtually impossible task of drawing parallels between radically different cultures, for one tends to forget that Asia stretches through the vast territory of Russia and ex-Soviet republics, down to the Middle East and then through the Indian subcontinent toward the Far East of China and Japan (see JAPANESE GOTHIC). There exists also a more convenient and culturally coherent Asia based on definitions of Eastern philosophies and religions derived from various forms and practices of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism, which once again can prove misleading, as it omits a significant Islamic population that has been present in the area for generations, as well as Asian Christians. Needless to say, there is yet another Asia, popularized by influential critical texts which focus on selected economically attractive regions, postcolonial literary heritage, and visual texts from countries with well-established cinematographies, which successfully narrows the continent down to India, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and an occasional mention of South-East Asia, as represented by either Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, or Vietnam (but rarely by all at the same time).

The second obstacle that Asian Gothic studies have to overcome is the fact that the linguistic term "Gothic" is not native to Asian cultures and it has, therefore, rarely been used for classificatory purposes within the local literary, cinematic, or cultural criticism, apart from, perhaps, referring to literary texts from the former British colonies and the Goth-influenced popular visual culture of Japan. In the remaining cases, the search for Asian Gothic tends to take us into three very broadly delineated directions: an exploration of the written and oral lore connected with the supernatural; a re-examination of the classic literary and cinematic works against the existing critical Gothic paradigm; and a recategorization of contemporary popular texts (film, animation, music, fashion, lifestyles, and so on) as "Gothic," leading to the appropriation of the term by various Asian cultures. Bearing in mind the vastness of material to cover, all three areas are still in great need of research and this short entry taking the countries of East, South-East, and South Asia as a starting point should by no means be treated as complete.

Regardless of the current religious and philosophical systems, the links with the older animistic beliefs are still strong in many Asian cultures, which accounts for the existence of a very complex network of spirits, ghosts, lesser and greater deities, and other supernatural beings, whose presence exerts almost tangible influence over the region. Fortune telling, astrology, spiritual healing, exorcisms, black magic, or mediumistic practices are all forms of common everyday encounters with the spiritual forces believed present in the universe. Supernaturally themed magazines, paperback novels, and comic books fill up a significant section of any Asian bookstore, demonstrating a steady demand for texts of this kind. The

same can be said about film, video, and TV drama from the region, from big screen movies to cheap straight-to-DVD productions that frequently feature ghost-related narratives. While some of the stories hark back to earlier written and oral accounts of supernatural encounters, others are invented on a day-to-day basis to fit the demands of the spirit-hungry audience willing to accommodate the supernatural within the contemporary world of Asian megacities, corporate banking, and information technologies.

A great majority of Asian spirits had existed in the imagination and belief of people long before they found their way onto the pages of literary works and in front of the cameras. While some of these spirits, particularly those representing the forms taken by the dead in the afterlife, are easier to deal with, since they can be seen as resembling the ghosts familiar to Gothic, others appear more problematic to classify, for their form and purpose may evoke different responses from the critics than from the local populations, who still firmly believe in their existence. For how is one to deal with ghosts, such as *phii krasue* (Thailand) or *penanggalang/manananggal* (Malaysia) – depicted graphically as a shimmering floating head with entrails that separates itself from the body to feed on filth? How are we to categorize *toyol/tuyul* (Malaysia, Indonesia), *kuman tong* (Thailand), or *xiaogui* (Taiwan, Singapore) – protective baby ghosts obtained from grilling human fetuses and keeping them locked in a jar? What are we to make of *jiang shi/kyonshi* (China) – animated corpses popularly known as the hopping vampires and frequently portrayed as clad in uniforms of the Qing dynasty officials? What are we to do with mischievous foxes, such as the Chinese *huli jing*, Korean *kumiho*, or Japanese *kitsune*, plotting to steal human souls to become human themselves, or with the Japanese *tsukumogami* – a group of *yōkai* monsters consisting of everyday household objects that received a soul on their hundredth birthday?

In the rational West, where ghosts have long come to represent the repressed, it is relatively easy to speak of them in terms of Gothic metaphors. For many Asian cultures, the supernatural remains too real to allow for any metaphorization. This is not the end of the problems. Glennis Byron argues that local varieties of Gothic are frequently identified in the context of examining the production of cultural identities, seeing that they involve differentiating between sameness and monstrosity (Byron 2007: 33). This, however, requires monsters to be seen as fundamentally different, evoking fear and rejection, and this is not always the case in Asia. While it is possible to view at least some Asian monstrosities as embodying particular fears of a given culture, for example, the fear of premature death in childbirth, as represented by powerful female spirits like *kuntilanak* or *pontianak* (Malaysia), or *phii tai thang klom* (Thailand), Asian Gothic must also account for the fact that, on a par with fear, in Asia ghosts and spirits evoke reverence and this mode of relationship with the supernatural remains relatively unexplored in Gothic. Asian "monsters" cannot remain fundamentally different from the living, for many of them (particularly ancestral spirits) have been conceived of to represent the living and the linkage between generations past and present.

Regardless of that, Asian spirits have frequently been simplified for the Western audience in an attempt to mold them to the familiar forms of vampires, ghouls, or zombies, resulting in imposing upon them a set of false expectations concerning their attributes, aims, and behaviors. The Filipino *aswang*, Malaysian *langsuir* and *pontianak*, Thai *krasue*, and Chinese *jiang shi* have all been described as a local variety of vampires, despite their obvious uniqueness and lack of consistent blood-drinking habits; even the *kinnaree* – an angelic half-female half-bird Himmapan creature – has not escaped an occasional vampiric comparison (see VAMPIRE FICTION). Ironically, it seems that the Anglo-American Other seems reluctant to acknowledge the existence of different forms of otherness, opting for the safer, tamer, blood-drinking, brain-eating, friendly

Gothic monster variety instead. If the Orient is already a monstrous territory for Gothic, the acknowledgment of the existence of Oriental monstrosities incompatible with the Western conception of the supernatural is bound to complicate that relationship even more.

In contrast to the overabundance of oral accounts of the supernatural, a relatively easy entry into the disorganized world of Asian spirits leads through literature. Out of many Asian cultures, China and Japan seem to be exceptional here in that there do exist early written tales of the supernatural in both Chinese and Japanese. In his *Asian Horror Encyclopedia* (2001), Laurence C. Bush dates written accounts of ghosts in China to the seventh century BCE and mentions large collections of supernatural tales written in the fourth and fifth century CE (Bush 2001: 56). These stories, known as *zhiguai*, literally translated as "accounts of the strange," written in the period of Six Dynasties (220–589 BCE), according to Robert F. Campany were meant to represent "creative models both of and for proper relations between the living and the dead" (Campany 1991: 16) and prepare their readers for a change in attitude regarding the principle of filial piety by extending it to include not just one's own ancestors but all the souls of the dead (Campany 1991: 18–19). Initially crude in style, Chinese supernatural stories evolved into a full-blown literary form during the Tang dynasty period (618–907 CE), when a new genre, known as *chuangqi* (or the tale of the marvelous) was born. By far the most influential collection of such tales remains *Liaozhai*, written by Pu Songling in the seventeenth century and comprising 431 "strange tales," many of which continue to inspire writers and filmmakers, perhaps the most famous film adaptation to date being Ching Siu-Tung's *A Chinese Ghost Story* (1987).

Pu Songling's tales remain among the most read Chinese ghost stories in the West chiefly thanks to the fact that, unlike many others, they were translated into English. Linguistic inadequacy is bound to remain the thorn in the side of Asian Gothic scholars, for mastering all the most important Asian languages for the sake of research is a formidable task, if not altogether impossible. Needless to say, Gothic re-examinations of Asian literatures depend heavily on second-hand expertise, the existing translations, and texts originally written in English, and are therefore destined to be rather perfunctory and incomplete. Even if, as Andrew Hock Soon Ng asserts, "transgressing taboos, complicity with evil, the dread of life, violence, and the return of the repressed . . . are not specific to any culture or people" (Ng 2007: 1), we cannot forget that much of the critical discussion of Gothic to date has been focused on language, and without access to language(s) the study of Asian Gothic runs the risk of superficiality. It is therefore understandable that much of Asian Gothic is discussed in terms of postcolonial Gothic, as represented by linguistic and stylistic textual hybrids resulting from the negotiation of identities and viewpoints (see POSTCOLONIAL GOTHIC). And even if we agree with David Punter that to engage with postcolonial writing we need to confront the postcolonial with the literary (Punter 2000: 10), at the end of the day, "the literary" very often remains limited to the texts written or translated into English.

Needless to say, we hear significantly more of Indian, Malaysian, or Singaporean Gothic than Thai, Vietnamese, or Filipino ones, precisely because much of the English language literature from the former British colonies stems from either following or questioning English literary models, Gothic included. This is certainly the case with Singaporean fiction, characterized, according to Tamara S. Wagner, by "the haunting presence of literary legacies" and "colonial importations" (Wagner 2007: 46), something that can undoubtedly ring true also when addressing Indian or Malaysian writing in English. The Gothic tropes of trauma, loss, privation, silence, melancholy, violence, otherness, the imaginary, abjection, guilt, and shame (among many others) have been identified in the texts of many Indian authors whose works form the core of most textbooks on postcolonial writings, some more

prominent figures being Rabindranath Tagore, Salman Rushdie, Vikram Chandra, Kiran Desai, R. K. Narayan, Bharati Mukherjee, and Arundhati Roy. Malaysian writers, such as Tunku Halim and K. S. Maniam, and Singaporean authors, such as Damien Sin, Russell Lee, and Catherine Lim, whose stories engage with local narratives of the supernatural while remaining faithful to the literary models introduced during Britain's colonial presence, have also been subjects of similar Gothically minded analyses.

One interesting alternative to the postcolonial Gothic paradigm, suggested by Byron, is "global Gothic," addressing the emergence of new Gothic forms, where "the effects of globalization upon cultural production have also led to the literature and film of different countries feeding off each other to produce new cross-cultural monstrosities" (Byron 2007: 33), with a view to identifying the common ground for all Gothic texts across cultures, discovering the way these texts influence one another, and assessing their cultural specificity (Byron 2007: 33). Global Gothic allows us to bring under examination authors as diverse as Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Indonesia), Nick Joaquin (the Philippines), or Chart Korbjitti (Thailand), whose writings abound in Gothic depictions of mechanisms of marginalization, the primitive, economic and political oppression; as well as S. P. Somtow – toying with the Gothic form to exorcise a concept of "Thainess" as a particularly grotesque cultural identity. At the same time, the globalization of Gothic is primarily evident in the sphere of the visual: in cinema and television, art and photography, comic books and graphic novels, or fashion, where local aesthetics and narrative techniques meet with foreign forms of production and technology, frequently involving the flow of international capital and labor, and striving to meet the demands of the global market.

Although the critical response to Asian cinema is still relatively marginal, this does not change the fact that major Asian film industries are as old as cinema itself. And just as elsewhere, horror remains one of the staple film genres in Asia. Currently, Asian horror films rank among the most popular horror productions worldwide, their success with non-Asian audiences initiated by the sudden boom of J-horror after the worldwide release of Hideo Nakata's *Ringu* (1998). Beyond doubt, Japanese and Korean horror films remain the most successful and influential Asian horror films today. A great majority of these films are tales of the supernatural focusing on the figure of a vengeful spirit, frequently a woman or a child, which seems to be a valid categorization for many Asian horror movies in general.

At the risk of gross overgeneralization, major Asian horror productions can be classified into a number of types, depending on local thematic and structural preferences. And so Japanese horror movies tend to be technologically oriented, transferring supernatural disturbances into the digitalized setting of computers, satellites, virtual reality, and mobile phone technology: *JuOn* (Shimizu 2003), *Kairo* (Kurosawa 2001), *One Missed Call* (Miike 2003). The central figure of fear can be seen as the impingement of chaos on the otherwise highly ordered Japanese way of life. At the other extreme, we find Japanese body horror, beginning with the stories of bodily transformation, like *Tetsuo* (Tsukamoto 1989) and culminating in sadistically inclined gore movies of the *Guinea Pig* series type (1985–9). In contrast with J-horror productions that are frequently filmed in basic video and digital formats and may appear somewhat rough and experimental, Korean horror films usually astound with the richness of the visuals. The great majority of Korean horror films are classic ghost stories retold in modern urban settings: *A Tale of Two Sisters* (Ji-woon Kim 2003), *Into the Mirror* (Seong-ho Kim); frequently inspired by folklore and European fairy tales: *Cinderella* (Mandae Bong 2006), *The Red Shoes* (Yong-gyoon Kim 2005), *Hansel and Gretel* (Pil-seong Lim 2007). Like other Korean productions, K-horror is often overtly political, bringing up the question of national traumas – the Korean War, Korea's past and present relationship with Japan and the United States, hopes and dangers

of reunification: *R-Point* (Soo-chang Kong 2004), *Epitaph* (Beom-sik Jeong 2007). Korean horror films are also perhaps the only ones in Asia that consistently feature serial killer plots: *Tell Me Something* (Yoon-hyeon Jang 1999), *Say Yes* (Seong-hong Kim 2001); also introducing female psychotic criminals, as in *Black House* (Tae-ra Sin 2007), since usually in Asian movies killing is seen as motivated by personal revenge, spiritual possession, or black magic.

Hong Kong horror remains faithful to the Chinese ghost story tradition telling stories of supernatural romance: *Rouge* (Stanley Kwan 1988), *Tiramisu* (Dante Lam 2002), *Painted Skin* (Gordon Chan 2008); or taking a lighthearted approach to the supernatural through martial arts comedy: *Mr. Vampire* (Ricky Lau 1985), *The Twins Effect* (Dante Lam, Donnie Yen 2003). Film plots involving cannibalism are also common: *The Untold Story* (Herman Yau 1993), *Ebola Syndrome* (Herman Yau 1996), *Dumplings* (Fruit Chan 2004). Ghosts are frequently depicted as seeking a replacement and inducing suicides, as in *Ghost Office* (Kuk Kok-Leung, Law Wing-Cheong, Andy Ng 2001), and their appearance is an excuse for a supernatural showdown with a local Taoist exorcist: *Troublesome Night* series (1997–2003), *The Park* (Andrew Lau). In Taiwan, a local contribution includes tales of *xiaogui*, or fetus ghosts: *The Heirloom* (Leste Chen 2005). Singaporean horror offerings tend to stress the cultural connection of Singapore to the Chinese horror lore, for example through celebrating rituals such as the Hungry Ghost month: *The Maid* (Kelvin Tong 2005), *Where Got Ghost?* (Jack Neo, Boris Boo 2009). Mainland Chinese horror films focus on the notion of ghostly love, as in *Matrimony* (Hua-Tao Teng 2007); but also, as a result of years of political repression, explain the supernatural in terms of human action: *Ghosts* (Liu Xiaoguang 2002), *Seven Nights* (Zhang Qian 2005); or mental disease: *Help* (Zhang Qi 2008), *Suffocation* (Zhang Bingjian 2005).

Most South-East Asian films tend to incorporate local figures of fear. Indonesian films introduce the witch-like *leak*, or spirits, such as the *kuntilanak* and *pocong*; in Malaysia horror tends to be dominated by the *pontianak*, while in the Philippines we find creatures such as the *aswang*. Thai horror films tell stories of the vengeful *phii tai hong*, the violently dead: *Shutter* (Wongpoom, Pisanthanakun 2004), *The Victim* (Arayangkoon 2006), *The House* (Arayangkoon 2007); and black magic, in *Long Khong* (The Ronin Team 2005; and resort to a whole variety of local monstrosities for an additional comical effect: *Body Jumper* (Chatemee 2001), *Krasue Valentine* (Sippapak 2006). Most of the films carry an explicit message of karmic retribution: *The Mother* (Thongdee 2003), *Coming Soon* (Sukdapisit 2008), *Alone* (Wongpoom, Pisanthanakun 2007). The Indian film industry has its own share of horror movies, whose plots predictably involve black magic, *Phoonk* (Varma 2008); vengeful spirits, *Bhoot* (Varma 2003), *Darling* (Varma 2007), *13B* (Kumar 2009); haunted mansions, *1920* (Bhatt 2008); reincarnation, *Mahal* (Ramsay 1989). They may include occasional songs and dances.

There is no doubt that a penchant for the macabre, grotesque, excess, violence, or the erotic, characteristic of much Asian art, film, and literature makes it possible to speak of Asian Gothic as a legitimate category. At the same time, in order not to turn the "Gothicizing" of Asian cultures into yet another episode of colonialization, we should revisit some of the Western-centered concepts and terminology of Gothic and approach the vibrant multiplicity of Asian Gothics on their own terms.

SEE ALSO: Japanese Gothic; Postcolonial Gothic; Vampire Fiction.

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Asylums

DIANE MASON

In early Gothic novels such as Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), imprisonment in gloomy dungeons or impenetrable family piles is a pervasive fate that befalls many an embattled heroine (see RADCLIFFE, ANN). In *Udolpho*, Emily St. Aubert is struck with "melancholy awe" at the "gothic greatness" of the stronghold where she is to be held and is overcome with "terrors" as to the dangers that lurk within at the hands of the evil Montoni (Radcliffe 2001: 216, 217). Here, the young, virginal woman is not only confined but also in imminent peril of her virtue, if not her life, through enforced marriage or, by implication, the sexual machinations and threat of physical violence posed by a villainous male captor.

In later, nineteenth-century Gothic novels, notably Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* (1859–60), the dungeon is superseded by the asylum as a locus of anxiety, redolent with the potential for malign incarceration and maltreatment (see COLLINS, WILKIE). As Roy Porter asserts, "Asylum abuse proved an endemic disorder" and "scandals throughout the nineteenth century leave no doubt that confinement of those protesting sanity or malicious imprisonment remained common" (Porter 1997: 504). A woman could be confined on the recommendation of a husband or other male relative(s) so long as they could get the support of two doctors to confirm that the woman in question was mentally (or morally) unsound. In these cases the (supposedly mad) woman could readily fall "[victim] of a doctor's prejudice about what kind of behaviour constituted sanity" (Appignanesi 2008: 96).

The true case of Mary Huestis Pengilly, a sixty-two-year-old widow committed to the Provincial Lunatic Asylum of Saint John, Massachusetts in 1883, on the recommendation of her sons, is a particular example of the way a woman's conduct could be perceived as transgressive. In her 1885 work *Diary Written in the Provincial Lunatic Asylum*, Pengilly recalls the circumstances of her committal. She was living "alone" and "engaged in writing a book on the laws of health," eventually becoming "so absorbed" in her writing that she "forgot to eat" for eight days (Pengilly 1885: 9). At this point she heard angels' voices counseling her to "fast and pray" – a probable consequence of nutritional deprivation rather than an indicator of mental derangement; but her sons, supported by Dr. Steeves at the asylum, thought her "insane" and she was duly committed (Pengilly 1885: 7, 2). Although Pengilly's sons' actions may have been motivated by good rather that ill intent, they were still swift to conclude that she was mad rather than malnourished. There is an undeniable moral ambiguity in this form of female imprisonment, as authoritarian, cheating, or abusive fathers,

husbands, and heirs could claim that they had had the, supposedly maniacal, wife, daughter, or female relative confined for her own good/safety. In the eyes of wider society, ignorant of any ulterior motives, their actions could appear to be entirely paternal, dutiful, or supportive, with the woman's welfare at heart, until such time, if ever, that their evil designs were exposed.

Once put away in the asylum, the woman could be largely forgotten about. She could find herself subject to force-feeding if the poor, institutional fare was not to her taste and to vicious restraint if her behavior was deemed unacceptably excitable. Pengilly recalls a youthful fellow patient bound in "leather handcuffs" fastened so tightly that they made her hands swell "purple with blood" (Pengilly 1885: 9). The same young woman was secured to a chair with a "canvas belt" so taut that, according to Pengilly, "it would have stopped my breath" (Pengilly 1885: 9). This harsh treatment was meted out because the girl tore off her dress and wailed grievously when she was not permitted to leave the asylum after a visit from her father.

Further, less violent but nonetheless tangible, threats to a maliciously incarcerated woman's health could come from the imposition of experimental therapeutic regimes and/or the process of systematic habituation to treat her nonexistent manias or delusions. The idea that the mind could be trained, or habituated, to replace unhelpful thoughts or behaviors through the consistent reinforcement and repetition of more acceptable ones, popularly theorized as "unconscious cerebration" by the British physiologist William Carpenter (1813–85), was, as William Hughes asserts, "central to the management of the mentally ill in British public and private asylums from the mid-nineteenth century" (Hughes 2007: 137). In nineteenth-century Gothic fiction, depictions of this predominant therapeutic regimen for the governance of the mentally ill are unerringly problematic, pregnant with the possibility of deliberate, as well as accidental or misinformed, misuse by the unscrupulous practitioner.

Leaving aside the travails of the viciously confined female, one of the most vivid fictional examples of the way the Carpenterian system was open to intentional subversion in the name of medical experimentation can be found in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) (see STOKER, BRAM). In Stoker's novel, it is a male patient, R. M. Renfield, who affords Dr. John Seward "a wonderfully interesting study" (Stoker 2007: 160). From the outset, Seward assesses Renfield to be "dangerous," even "homicidal," on account of the latter's "zoophagous" appetite, motivated by a "strange belief" that "by consuming a multitude of live things [...] one might indefinitely prolong life" (Stoker 2007: 102, 144, 114, 278). Given the apparent severity of Renfield's affliction, one might expect Seward to employ Carpenter's principals in order to *break* his patient's mental fixation, and its congruent and progressive physical manifestation of feasting on flies, spiders, and birds. Indeed, Seward explicitly cites Carpenter's model of "unconscious cerebration!" in his diary entry for "*8 July*" (Stoker 2007: 112–13). Paradoxically, though, Seward elects to use his knowledge to "keep" his "pet lunatic" to "the point of his madness," something that, in the normal run of events, he would "avoid with the patients as I would the mouth of hell" (Stoker 2007: 102, 277, 102). The practitioner's treatment of Renfield is not only unethical but also potentially injurious given the man's "morbidly excitable" condition (Stoker 2007: 102).

Seward's reference to his patient as a "pet lunatic" further suggests that he regards Renfield as little more than a laboratory animal to be tested to breaking point in the furtherance of medical research. This is reinforced inasmuch as Seward specifically alludes to "Burdon-Sanderson's physiology" and "Ferrier's brain knowledge" as he reflects on his work with Renfield (Stoker 2007: 115). The English physician Sir John Burdon-Sanderson (1828–1905) and the Scottish practitioner James Ferrier (1843–1928) both used vivisection in the course of their research and were instrumental in bringing the practice to public attention. Ferrier was even prosecuted in 1881

under the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1876 though later acquitted. Notably, "The British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection" was "founded in 1898," the year after *Dracula* was published, and the issue remains controversial to this day (Lansbury 1985: 9). The suggestion of medical experimentation on mentally ill *human* subjects in *Dracula* adds a further layer of unease as to the outrages that could potentially await the vulnerable patient behind closed asylum doors.

Returning here to the malignly incarcerated woman, in his novel *The Woman in White*, Wilkie Collins focuses on the dangers that could attend the misinformed application of therapeutic habituation rather than its deliberate misuse. In the words of Lisa Appignanesi, Collins "graphically evokes the difficulty of an individual establishing a 'sane' identity once medical and social forces have combined to put the suspicion of insanity into play" (Appignanesi 2008: 98). In Collins' work, Laura, Lady Glyde, is maliciously committed to an asylum by her husband, Lord Percival Glyde, in the guise of her half-sister, Anne Catherick, who had previously escaped from the institution. During Laura's incarceration she is held "under restraint; her identity with Anne Catherick [is] systematically asserted" and "her sanity" is "practically denied" (Collins 1998: 436). Laura is not only at risk of the systematized destruction of her own identity but also of the imposition of another's identity upon her.

The patient was effectively stripped of her/his rights as an individual by dint of his/her psychological condition and subsumed within the homogenous label of "lunatic." The distressed inmate might remonstrate with any visitors that they had been wronged but the medical staff could assure the concerned caller that the accusations were merely the deluded ramblings of an idiot. Reflecting on her time in the asylum, Mary Huestis Pengilly recalls that, "no matter . . . how earnestly" she "plead[ed]" her sanity to her son, Lewis, he always "believe[d] Dr. Steeves in preference to [her]" (Pengilly 1885: 4). This was a potentially far more sinister – and legitimized – form of "imprisonment" than the dungeon, posing both a physical and psychological threat to the wellbeing of, effectively, sane female inmates. A sane woman subjected to a prolonged period of psychological pressure could crack under the strain and become habituated to her insane role/identity.

Collins' plot motif of malign imprisonment and switched identities continues to exert a fascination for the reader and has more recently been adapted, revised, and given a postmodern twist by Sarah Waters in her Victorian Gothic pastiche *Fingersmith* (2002) (see CONTEMPORARY GOTHIC). In Waters' novel, Sue Trinder, one of a company of thieves run by sinister baby-farmer Mrs. Sucksby, is enlisted as part of an audacious plot to snare the fortune of an allegedly "half-simple" young heiress, Maud Lilly (Waters 2002: 27). In her role as Lilly's maid, it is Trinder's job to encourage her mistress to marry Gentleman, a cultured but vicious male associate of Mrs. Sucksby's. After the wedding, Sue is further required to "keep [Maud] simple" as Gentleman has arranged to have his wife put away in "a madhouse" (Waters 2002: 27). Despite being, as she assumes, in full knowledge of Maud's proposed "fate," Sue finds herself drawn to her mistress as if she "*love*[d] *her*" (Waters 2002: 96, 136). The two routinely share a bed (Maud has troubling dreams) and, eventually, mistress and maid commence a clandestine sexual relationship (see LESBIAN GOTHIC). Unbeknown to Sue, though, Maud is herself in on the plot (which is far more complex than Sue imagines) and the mistress systematically grooms her maid so that Sue can be committed to the asylum in her place. When she is led away by Dr. Graves and Dr. Christie, and sees "the *M*, and the *L*" on the bag at her feet, Sue realizes that she is the one who has been set up (Waters 2002: 174). Although Sue protests that "My name ain't Maud," a regime of brutal habituation is enforced to convince her otherwise (Waters 2002: 409).

Waters' richly intertextual novel, although inspired by the classics of Victorian sensation fiction (see SENSATION FICTION), is a thor-

oughly contemporary work that constantly obscures the binaries of innocence and corruption and predator and prey. Identities are constantly in a state of flux and the characters fluidly transgress the bounds of class and even sexual orientation. The inclusion of explicit lesbian sex scenes – a form of sexuality Queen Victoria "could not imagine" – both foregrounds the relationship between Maud and Sue and playfully interrogates nineteenth-century medical notions associating female sexuality with reproduction (White 1999: 237). The fecundity of Maud and Sue's eventual union is to be measured not by the birth of strong children but rather in the generation of pornographic texts – a literature of hedonism and excess – by which they "get [their] living" (Waters 2002: 546). The centrality of these female characters is reflected in *Fingersmith*'s narrative structure. The overlapping dual narrative is focalized in the first person by Sue and Maud rather than constructed from a conglomeration of largely male-generated documents like *The Woman in White*. Unlike Laura Glyde, whose story of captivity and treatment in the asylum is entombed in the narrative of Walter Hartright, Sue recalls the harsh institutional regime, torturous therapeutic methods, and casual sadism of the doctors and nurses in harrowing and intimate detail.

In conclusion, to return briefly to Mary Huestis Pengilly's true account of asylum life, Pengilly's residency in the Provincial Lunatic Asylum of Saint John was relatively short and she was eventually discharged in April 1884. Fittingly, though, there is more than an element of the Gothic in her perception of herself and her fellow inmates as "poor prisoners" and her rendering of the institution itself, in her writing after her release, as "this castle on the hill" (Pengilly 1885: 3, 10). Momentarily here, the boundaries separating an authentic medical establishment and the fictional horrors of *Udolpho* become tantalizingly blurred.

SEE ALSO: Collins, Wilkie; Contemporary Gothic; Lesbian Gothic; Radcliffe, Ann; Sensation Fiction; Stoker, Bram.

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Atwood, Margaret

ELLEN MCWILLIAMS

The Gothic dimensions of the work of Margaret Atwood (1939–) are most visible in her interrogation of fictions of femininity, in her treatment of the figure of the woman writer, and in the recurring interest in the

possibilities of dual or multiple identities in her writing (see DOUBLES). In her early novel *Lady Oracle* (1976), a Gothic parody in the tradition of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, the main character, Joan Foster, writes Gothic romances for the popular fiction market but also imagines herself as the heroine of her own life. Atwood responds to the sacrificial virgin of seminal Gothic texts such as Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* and Matthew Lewis' *The Monk* by charting her protagonist's quest for agency and self-determination through a maze of Gothic conventions (see LEWIS, MATTHEW; WALPOLE, HORACE). Sections of Joan's Gothic romances are interpolated into the main body of the novel and serve as all-important ancillary texts to the story of her coming of age in Canada and her later escape to Europe (see CANADIAN GOTHIC). Joan Foster is a typical Atwoodian protagonist in that she leads more than one literary life; as well as writing popular romances (published under a pseudonym), she is also the author of an acclaimed collection of poetry that shares its name with the title of Atwood's novel and is marketed as literary Gothic by her publishers. The numerous strands of Joan's Gothic writing overlap and interact with the plot of Joan's life; for example, the men in her life are imagined as villains or as rescuer figures at different points in the text. In determining to take control of the fictions that have come to impinge upon her life story, in the final pages of the novel she abandons the fantasy of Gothic Romance for science fiction. While *Lady Oracle* is perhaps Atwood's most striking engagement with the Gothic, a number of her short fiction works, in particular the title story of her collection *Bluebeard's Egg* (1983), are explicit in reworking fairytales and folktales with a distinctly Gothic aspect to them (see FOLKLORE). In these shorter works, as in her novels, Atwood's revision of Gothic motifs is driven by a feminist interest in unraveling the original texts and generating new meanings from them that force a reconsideration of the roles historically assigned to women in the Gothic tradition.

Ghosts and hauntings also have their place in Atwood's later fiction. The main character of *The Robber Bride* (1993), Zenia, like Joan Foster in *Lady Oracle*, fakes her own death in a bid to escape the past but returns as a ghostly figure to haunt the women that she cheated in her former life (see APPARITION). Zenia is a shapeshifter, able to alter the story of her life to win over and, more often than not, dupe her audience. This interest in storytelling and deception recurs in *Alias Grace* (1996), in which Atwood returns to the scene of colonial Canada, to the story of the "celebrated murderess" Grace Marks, and reanimates a tale of female malevolence that has troubled Canadian literature since the nineteenth century. She alters Susanna Moodie's account of Marks in her memoir *Life in the Clearings Versus the Bush* (1853) but preserves Grace's mystery in scenes that draw on Victorian practices of hypnotism and mesmerism (see HYPNOTISM). Atwood's collection of poetry, *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970), takes up this concern with literary hauntings and can be read as a response to her formidable forebear. The poems in this collection are ventriloquized in the voice of Moodie and she emerges as a troubled figure who, in her more unsettled moments, sees the New World of Canada as hostile and marauding.

If the wilderness in Atwood's work is at times found to have a dark, supernatural aspect to it, then the short story "Death by Landscape," from the collection *Wilderness Tips* (1991), is one of the most vivid explorations of the uncanniness of the wilderness. The death by landscape of the title relates to the mysterious disappearance of a young girl in the Canadian bush. This interest in the uncanny in Canadian literature and culture and in the menacing potential of the Canadian wilderness extends to Atwood's critical work. Her collection *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature* is, in part, an exploration of the grotesque and the monstrous in Canadian culture. Other hauntings can be observed in Atwood's work, from the ghostly image encountered in a lake by the main character of

Surfacing (1972) through to the lingering presence of Laura Chase in *The Blind Assassin* (2000). Laura Chase provides a cover for the real author of *The Blind Assassin* (the novel within the novel), Iris Chase Griffen, and becomes a cult figure to her more devoted readers. The twinning that occurs in *The Blind Assassin* is also echoed in Atwood's critical writing, particularly in her examination of interdependent literary selves in her study of the author through history, *Negotiating with the Dead: A Writer on Writing* (2002).

In her reworking of Gothic scripts, Atwood reanimates Gothic motifs and histories but does so in a way that is distinctly underwritten by her interests as a Canadian woman writer. The Gothic is key to the feminist and postcolonial subtexts of her work and to her conception of engaging with literary tradition as an ongoing process of "negotiating with the dead."

SEE ALSO: Apparition; Canadian Gothic; Doubles; Folklore; Hypnotism; Lewis, Matthew; Walpole, Horace.

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Australian Gothic

KEN GELDER

The Gothic came to Australia as an imported literary genre that quickly adapted to local conditions. Early colonial explorers evoked the foundational tropes of the Gothic as they made their way into the Australian interior, so that the desert and the bush could seem – in an explorer's gloomier moments – as ancient and godforsaken as any ruined castle. As Roslyn Haynes has suggested, colonial explorers could slide from an exhilarating sense of the interior as an endless wide-open space to an often overwhelming feeling of "enclosure and entrapment" expressed in Gothic terms (Haynes 1999: 77). The explorer's psychological condition found its reflection in the landscape, especially when the early optimism of the exploration began to wane. In his 1908 book, *The Explorers of Australia and Their Life-Work*, the popular colonial adventure writer Ernest Favenc wrote about the early Surveyor-General John Oxley (1785?–1828) along exactly these lines:

> He appears to have formed the idea that the interior tract he was approaching was nothing more than a dead and stagnant marsh – a huge, dreary swamp, within whose bounds the inland rivers lost their individuality and merged into a lifeless morass. A more melancholy picture could not be imagined, and with such an awesome thought constantly haunting his mind there is no wonder that he became morbid, and that the dominant tone of his journal . . . is so hopelessly pessimistic. (Favenc 2006: 16)

Melancholy and morbidity came to define aspects of the colonial Australian sensibility, underwriting a counternarrative to the optimism and ideals of discovery, expansion, and nation-building. The theme of the explorer who never returns – like the German explorer Ludwig Leichhardt's expedition, which disappeared in 1848 – soon became prevalent across a range of Australian fiction and poetry, from J. F. Hogan's *The Lost Explorer* (1890) and Ernest Favenc's *Secret of the Australian Desert* (1895) to Francis Webb's *Leichhardt in Theatre* (1952) and Patrick White's novel, *Voss* (1957). "The very emptiness of the desert," Haynes writes, "led the explorers to people it with ghosts" (Haynes 1999: 82).

There are certainly plenty of examples of the spectralization of the desert – and the bush – by explorers given over to a melancholy or morbid frame of mind (see SPECTRALITY). The Adelaide-born best-selling novelist Guy

Boothby had himself traveled across Australia, publishing his experiences in *On the Wallaby* (1894). His story, "With Three Phantoms," from his collection *Bushigrams* (1897), tells of an exhausted explorer who appears like an "apparition" from the desert, and has just enough life left in him to tell his tale in a remote town in northern Queensland one "infernal" Christmas Eve. Going in search of the Leichhardt expedition, he loses his companions one by one, and then encounters ghostly horsemen who lead him out of the desert to his eventual death when his tale is finished. This "spectral explorer" tale presents the opening up of Australia's interior not as a triumph of nation-building, but as a shattering experience involving the loss of faith and reason. As an early instance of the Australian Gothic it provides a counternarrative to the colonial project, as if nation-building must always be shadowed by the losses it incurs.

Colonial Australian Gothic fiction and poetry often intervenes directly in the process of nation-building and settlement in Australia. Stories such as Rosa Campbell Praed's "The Bunyip" (1891) and Hume Nisbet's "The Haunted Station" (1894) – which echoes Edgar Allan Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" in its apocalyptic ending (see POE, EDGAR ALLAN) – turn settlement and home-making in Australia into a kind of traumatic event, producing terrifying spectral outcomes. Even as it was being settled, the Australian interior was imagined as a place of abandoned homesteads and obscured burial sites, as we can see in the Gothic mystery and detection stories of Mary Fortune from the 1860s to the 1890s, or in the Australian-born colonial poet Henry Kendall's "The Hut by the Black Swamp" (1868), a Gothic eulogy to an abandoned homestead that turns the potential triumph of settlement into its dark opposite, colonial violence and desolation. Kendall and his contemporary Charles Harpur – the son of convict parents – were Australia's two most important colonial poets, heavily influenced by Wordsworth and the Romantics. But nature, for them, is animated in a different way, potentially more ominous, even lethal. In Harpur's best-known long poem, "The Creek of the Four Graves" (1845), five white settlers – colonial entrepreneurs full of promise – venture inland in search of "new streams and wider pastures." But as four of them sleep, "painted Savages" burst into the campsite, full of "dread inherited hate and deadly enmity" (Harpur 1984: 161). The fifth explorer, Egremont, watches in horror as his friends are massacred, and then he flees for his life, able later on to tell his story to a public eager for stories about "the wild old times." The poem is both a sensationalist rendering of colonial anxiety, and – even as it chronicles the failure of colonial promise – a melancholy way of claiming the landscape in the name of colonialism, the "four long grassy mounds" of the dead explorers memorializing the act of settlement.

A bleaker sort of colonial Gothic narrative can tend to treat settler death as a matter of banal routine, however. The anonymity of the dead in the Australian interior is perhaps most strikingly rendered in one of Henry Lawson's best-known stories, "The Bush Undertaker" (1892), a Christmas tale that centers around a solitary figure who recognizes and then dutifully buries a corpse in "the grand Australian bush – the nurse and tutor of eccentric minds, the home of the weird, and much that is different from things in other lands" (Lawson 2007: 146). The "weirdness" of the Australian bush becomes a commonplace evocation for the Australian Gothic, a way of expressing the landscape's capacity for generating darker colonial sensibilities among settlers, like melancholy, anxiety, and dread. An often-cited comment by the London-born novelist Marcus Clarke, a key figure in Australia's colonial literary history, strikingly illustrates this point. In 1876, Clarke wrote the preface to a new edition of a book of poetry by Adam Lindsay Gordon, a colonial writer, adventurer, and renowned horseman whose increasing debts had driven him to suicide six years earlier. He pays tribute to Gordon's "manly admiration for healthy living," as if the poet was once an ideal colonial Australian type, masculine and full of promise.

But the registering of Gordon's suicide turns the preface into an act of mourning that somehow shifts in time to a moment before the promise of colonialism can even begin to be realized. Clarke drew on Edgar Allan Poe to acknowledge Gordon's dismal condition and then transferred that sensibility – what he famously called "Weird Melancholy" – onto an imaginary precolonial Australian landscape to produce an escalating sequence of Gothic-horror images:

> The Australian mountain forests are funereal, secret, stern. Their solitude is desolation. They seem to stifle, in their black gorges, a story of sullen despair. No tender sentiment is nourished in their shade . . . The sun suddenly sinks, and the mopokes burst out into horrible peals of semi-human laughter. The natives aver that, when night comes, from out of the bottomless depth of some lagoon the Bunyip rises, and, in form like monstrous sea-calf, drags his loathsome length from out the ooze. From a corner of the silent forest rises a dismal chant, and around the fire dance natives painted like skeletons. All is fear – inspiring and gloomy. (Clarke 1976: 645–6)

This lurid passage sees the Australian bush, Aborigines, and an image of monstrous birth – through that uniquely Australian mythical figure of the Bunyip emerging from the "ooze" – all yoked together under the exaggerated sign of the Gothic. Gordon's suicide is the trigger that produces this bizarre slippage, enabling Clarke to slide from the colonial project of settlement and nation-building to a nightmare of presettlement as if colonialism had never happened.

The colonial imagining of an ancient precolonial past is perhaps an example of what Tom Griffiths has called the "antiquarian imagination" in Australia (Griffiths, 1996). A number of Gothic Lemurian fantasies were published around the end of the nineteenth century, including Favenc's *The Secret of the Australian Desert* (1896), George Firth Scott's *The Last Lemurian* (1898), and Praed's *Fugitive Anne* (1902), all of which involve the discovery of a lost, ancient race in the Australian interior. But other colonial Gothic writing turned to more recent past events. Marcus Clarke's Gothic convict melodrama, *His Natural Life* (1874), recounted the convict experience of Port Arthur and Van Diemen's Land through its hero, Richard Devine, unjustly transported to Australia to suffer all the brutalities of penal life in the early colonies. By the time Clarke wrote his novel, Van Diemen's Land had changed its name to Tasmania (in 1856) and the prisons at Port Arthur had begun to fall into disrepair. But the old penal colony continued to cast its shadow as one of Australia's genuine Gothic ruins. For John Frow in his essay "In the Penal Colony" (1999), Port Arthur is not just a reminder of an otherwise submerged history, it is nothing less than a Gothic point of origin for Australia itself: "its ruined traces bearing ambiguous witness to a whole system of punishment, involuntary exile, and unfree labour which has come to represent the foundational moment of the Australian nation." Frow also writes about the mass murderer, Martin Bryant, who on April 28, 1996 shot and killed 35 people at Port Arthur – which by this time had become a popular tourist destination. For Frow, this terrible event returns Tasmanians to their earlier colonial moment of repression, a point he inevitably expresses through Gothic tropes:

> Nobody uses Bryant's name, but his denied presence is everywhere. Nobody knows the forms which will lay the ghost. Nobody knows what kind of monument will insert this story into the other story for which this site is known, into that other past which is barely available for understanding. (Frow 1999)

The "Tasmanian Gothic" has been a flourishing genre in literature and film, often turning back to the horrors of convict life on the island: for example, in Michael Rowland's film about Van Diemen's Land's most notorious convict-cannibal, *The Last Confession of Alexander Pearce* (2008) (see FILM). The genre has also dealt with the killings of Aboriginal men and

women on the island, as in the writer Mudrooroo's hallucinatory *Master of the Ghost Dreaming* series of novels which begins in 1991. Aboriginal writers and artists have responded to their colonial, and postcolonial, predicaments in a way that we can perhaps identity as "Indigenous Gothic." Tracey Moffatt's films are a good example: *Night Cries: A Rural Tragedy* (1989) looks at an Aboriginal woman who lives out her confinement, nursing her dying white mother in an isolated homestead amid a series of vividly baroque, traumatic recollections, while *BeDevil* (1993) consists of three ghost stories built around locations haunted by different kinds of spirits (see GHOST STORIES). The Australian Gothic continues to build itself around haunted sites, spectral places that testify to some sort of traumatic loss or disappearance. Peter Weir's *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975) is often taken as Australia's first modern Gothic film, telling the story of the disappearance of three girls and their teacher in Victorian bushland on St. Valentine's Day, 1900. But the best known examples of Australian Gothic cinema are George Miller's *Mad Max* films, beginning in 1979, which return to the Australian interior, this time as a place criss-crossed with straight, endless roads and inhabited by lawless gangs of bikers, carjackers, and petrolheads who constantly battle with the police. The remote Australian road lends itself to Gothic representation, as Ross Gibson has noted in his study of a "Horror Stretch" of road in northern Queensland, where he links a series of murders in the 1970s there to "the bloody past of Australia's colonial frontier" and concludes, "history lives as a presence in the landscape" (Gibson 2002: 50).

Colonial traumas do indeed live on in the Australian Gothic, as we see in John Hillcoat and Nick Cave's film, *The Proposition* (2006), a stark portrayal of the brutality of colonial justice and law-breaking. Melbourne-born Cave is globally recognized as a singer-songwriter who has helped to shape and embody a contemporary Goth identity. But he is also tied to the colonial Australian Gothic: evoking the dark tradition of convict narratives in his song "Mercy Seat," for example, or through his role as a prisoner in the film *Ghosts of the Civil Dead* (1988). Cave's work has turned to America and Europe for its influences and its audiences, but like many other practitioners of the Australian Gothic, he has returned time and time again to influential tropes and themes already established during the colonial period.

SEE ALSO: Film; Ghost Stories; Poe, Edgar Allan; Spectrality.

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