

Zeitschrift: Librarium : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Bibliophilen-Gesellschaft = revue de la Société Suisse des Bibliophiles
Herausgeber: Schweizerische Bibliophilen-Gesellschaft
Band: 47 (2004)
Heft: 3

Artikel: The dream ridiculed illusion, allusion, parody and the graphic arts
Autor: Kaenel, Philippe
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-388770>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 29.03.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

PHILIPPE KAENEL

THE DREAM RIDICULED
ILLUSION, ALLUSION, PARODY AND
THE GRAPHIC ARTS

«Le cauchemar, que les Dalmates appellent «Smarra», est un des phénomènes les plus communs du sommeil, et il y a peu de personnes qui ne l'aient éprouvé. Il devient habituel en raison de l'occupation de la vie positive et de l'intensité de la vie imaginative, particulièrement chez les enfants, chez les jeunes gens passionnés, parmi les peuplades oisives qui se contentent de peu, et dans les états inertes et stationnaires qui ne demandent qu'une attention vague et rêveuse, comme celui du berger [...] La jeune fille amoureuse et souffrante qui n'a pas trouvé une âme d'homme pour comprendre une âme de jeune fille... / Vous verrez que ceux-là sont plus sujets que les autres à ces aberrations contemplatives que le sommeil élabore, transforme en réalités hyperboliques, et au milieu desquelles il jette son patient, comme un acteur à mille faces et à mille voix, pour se jouer à lui seul, et sans le savoir, un drame extraordinaire qui laisse bien derrière lui tous les caprices de l'imagination et du génie¹.»

Are dreams and nightmares laughable? Z. Dana Andrus has lately suggested another reading of the work that has become the icon of oneiric iconography for nineteenth-century artists: Henry Fuseli's famous *The Nightmare*, first exhibited at the Royal Academy of London in 1782. She underscores the «strangely postured woman», «the fat, aged little incubus [...] rolling its eyes with a quizzical look», «the horse [which] may just well be laughing its head off», and concludes that «one can surely infer a sportiveness in *The Nightmare* that is not far removed from caricature².»

The so-called «clownish humor» of *The Nightmare* seems motivated by the reputation of the Anglo-Swiss artist as a man of wit and also by the fact that his provocative painting immediately inspired an un-

usual number of caricatures by Thomas Rowlandson, Richard Newton or George Cruikshank³. Moreover, the incubus could be derived from Roman comic masks of the first-century A.D., and it ironically resembles a self-portrait drawn by Fuseli around 1780⁴. Finally, the figure of the woman asleep could be read as a satire of the mythological nudes by Benjamin West, which attracted so much attention in the 1780 exhibition and with which Fuseli tried to compete.

This alternative reading of *The Nightmare*, ingenious as it is, can hardly be justified. First of all, caricatures abounded not because the painting was implicitly humorous, but because they *inverted* its contemporary dramatic and sublime impact on the public. The poetic commentary written by Erasmus Darwin in *The Botanic Garden* (1791), for instance, stresses the horror of Fuseli's painting:

«In vain to scream with quivering lips she
tries,
And strains in palsy'd lids her tremulous
eyes;
In vain she *wills* to run, fly, swim, walk,
creep;
The WILL presides not in the bower of
SLEEP.
On her fair bosom sits the Demon-Ape
Erect, and balances his floated shape;
Rolls in their marble orbs his Gorgon-eyes,
And drinks with leathern ears her tender
cries⁵.»

The suggestion that Fuseli used Roman comic masks remains very hypothetical and the idea of the painter introducing both a

satirical self-portrait and a criticism of the academic institution embodied by Benjamin West seems highly improbable coming from an ambitious artist who was to make a brilliant career in that very institution – not the least thanks to the formidable echo of *The Nightmare*⁶.

The other iconographic corner-stone of dream visions in the nineteenth-century is Francisco Goya's *Capricho 43* («Il sueño de la razón produce monstruos» – «The sleep – or the dream of reason produces monsters») engraved in 1797. For historical and ideological reasons, Goya's self-portrait ambiguously plays with political satire and anguish⁷. The aquatint portrays the Spanish artist leaning on his desk while creatures of the night (cats, owls, bats) invade his (mental) space. One of them is presenting the artist with a pencil, inviting him to draw the products of his imagination. Originally, this plate was meant to introduce the enigmatic album. It is presented as a sort of manifesto pleading for originality, for fantasy and at the same time for reason against the follies of contemporary passions and social or religious behaviors. About thirty years later, the most prolific Romantic artist in the field of dream iconography, J.-J. Grandville, would pay homage to Goya's *Capricho 43* with a portrait of himself dreaming and surrounded by whimsical creatures⁸.

Faust and the Romantics

Fuseli's painting and Goya's aquatint also belong to the «icons» of Romanticism, and as such they were used by opponents of the new artistic trend. From the late 1820's but especially in the 1840's, the identification of Romantic extravaganza with dreams developed into a conservative bourgeois cliché mainly found in caricatures using parody as a rhetorical and satirical instrument. Significantly, an essential part of the nineteenth-century oneiric iconography belongs to the field of the graphic arts (draw-

ings, etchings, engravings, woodcuts and lithographs) probably because black and white seems especially well-suited to nighttime visions⁹. The «natural» conjunction of dreams and prints is emblematised in the frontispice of the *Album lithographique 1827* drawn by Denis Auguste Raffet (1804–1860) showing a crowd of conceited bourgeois and aristocrats as they unveil their nightmare: an incubus crouching on a pile of lithographic and satirical albums.

The lithographic album by Delacroix illustrating Goethe's *Faust* in 1828 was immediately perceived as a Romantic manifesto¹⁰. Writing to the art critic Philippe Burty in 1862, the painter admitted «the oddity of its plates which were the objects of certain caricatures and placed me more and more as one of the leaders of the school of the ugly¹¹». Delacroix was probably referring to Antoine-Jean-Baptiste Thomas' parodic album entitled *Le rêve, ou les effets du romantisme sur un jeune surnuméraire à l'Arrière* (*The Dream, or the Effects of Romanticism on a Young Minor Clerk of the Administration*)¹², which was published in 1829, a year after the adaptation of Goethe's work in the théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin, after the publication of Delacroix's seventeen illustrations, and after the brilliant translation of the text by Gérard de Nerval transposed by Hector Berlioz in his *Huit scènes de la vie de Faust* first played in 1829¹³.

In six lithographs explained by commentaries, Thomas' satire tells the story of a young employee who has returned to his modest chamber after an evening spent with his girlfriend Mélanie watching a popular melodrama, *Le bourreau d'Amsterdam*, which our employee finds better than Goethe's *Faust*. He is then plunged into a nightmare in which he tries to save his mistress before encountering Mephistopheles. The young man is then almost executed in Amsterdam and watches helplessly as Melanie is kidnapped by the devil. He is awakened by the portress bringing him his morning milk¹⁴. Thomas obviously plays

not only with the contemporary parisian theater scene but also with the traditional medical conception of dreams which were known to be caused by imagination or physical experiences¹⁵. The employee's cat plays a decisive role in this context. The young employee embracing his beloved in his visions is in fact clutching his pet in bed. He is literally and physically oppressed by his nightmare which takes the form of his black cat crouching on his chest. The devilish beast multiplies itself, attacks his master's feet and beats on his breast with a pounding device.

The sleeper, the cause of his dream and his visions are presented simultaneously on each plate not only to rationalise the sequence of events, but also in order to comment ironically on the discrepancy between romantic imagination and the reality of life. Just like in Fuseli's *The Nightmare*, the reader and spectator of the young employee's nightmare enjoys a sort of binocular or stereoscopic vision¹⁶. Only the reader-spectator has the ability to link the dream with the dreamer, the mental space of the character with his referential world.

But in Thomas' album, the visions are not only mental projections. They explicitly refer to two contemporary scenic models: the first one is the *theatre* with its dramatic attitudes, with its painted décor, and the other one is the fantasmagory of the *magic lantern*, as if the pages of the album were the screens of a public show. Visions, projections, fantasmagories are paradigmas of romantic illustrations unfolding one of the original meanings of the word: to «illustrate» (*illustrare*) is to throw a light on something¹⁷.

Oneiric sightseeing

The frontispice of the *Voyage où il vous plaira* (*Voyage wherever you like it*) written by Alfred de Musset and P.-J. Stahl (alias Pierre-Jules Hetzel), and illustrated by Tony Johannot shows crowds rushing to the

gigantic mouth of an anthropomorphic mountain, eyes wide opened, crowned by the allegory of fantasy. The satire of this urge for travelling, of this uncontrollable desire for sightseeing – for what is called in French the *dépaysement* – is the theme of the preface to the book. The authors present their work as an invitation to a journey. They assume the role of guides in what turns out to be another world, a world of visions experienced by Franz, the hero who is a natural dreamer. Franz is a German name because Germany is traditionally associated to Goethe's Faust and the irrational as opposed to the French tradition of the Enlightenment.

The young Franz has a passion for travelling which he has to give up since he is about to get married. «Ardent desire to see everything, will you never calm down within me?» he laments¹⁸. To avoid temptation, he abruptly decides to burn his entire collection of travel books (*Histoire Générale de Voyages*), then smokes a pipe and immediately falls asleep in front of his fire. Paradoxically, it is after having destroyed his collection of books that Franz gets involved in an epic oneiric voyage.

The *Voyage où il vous plaira* contains scenes and characters very similar to the romantic parody of *Faust* by Thomas. A young man in love (the typical dreamer according to Charles Nodier)¹⁹, a mephistophelic seducer, the sinking of a ship with the hero who finds himself thrown in the air, moving magically from one scenery or one setting to another. The narration is therefore ruled by the discontinuities that characterise the excentric novel as a literary genre²⁰. The story also belongs to the genre of the *Bildungsroman*, the hero living an oneiric experience only to realise the pricelessness of his daily world and of the woman he cherishes.

Strictly speaking, the *Voyage où il vous plaira* is not a Romantic novel, but a novel on Romanticism epitomized by dreams and travelling. On the one side, the book criti-

cises foolish contemporary attitudes and on the other hand its illustrations parody Romantic iconography, with its procession of fantastic monstrosities. The illustrations by Tony Johannot play an essential role in the book since the idea for the publication was given by the artist himself. His graphic visions thus form the structure of the story which the authors (mainly Pierre-Jules Hetzel) must *illustrate* with their text²¹. This unusual primacy of the image over the text motivates the radical discontinuity of the story which mimes the erratic structure of dreams, for dreams are known to be essentially visual.

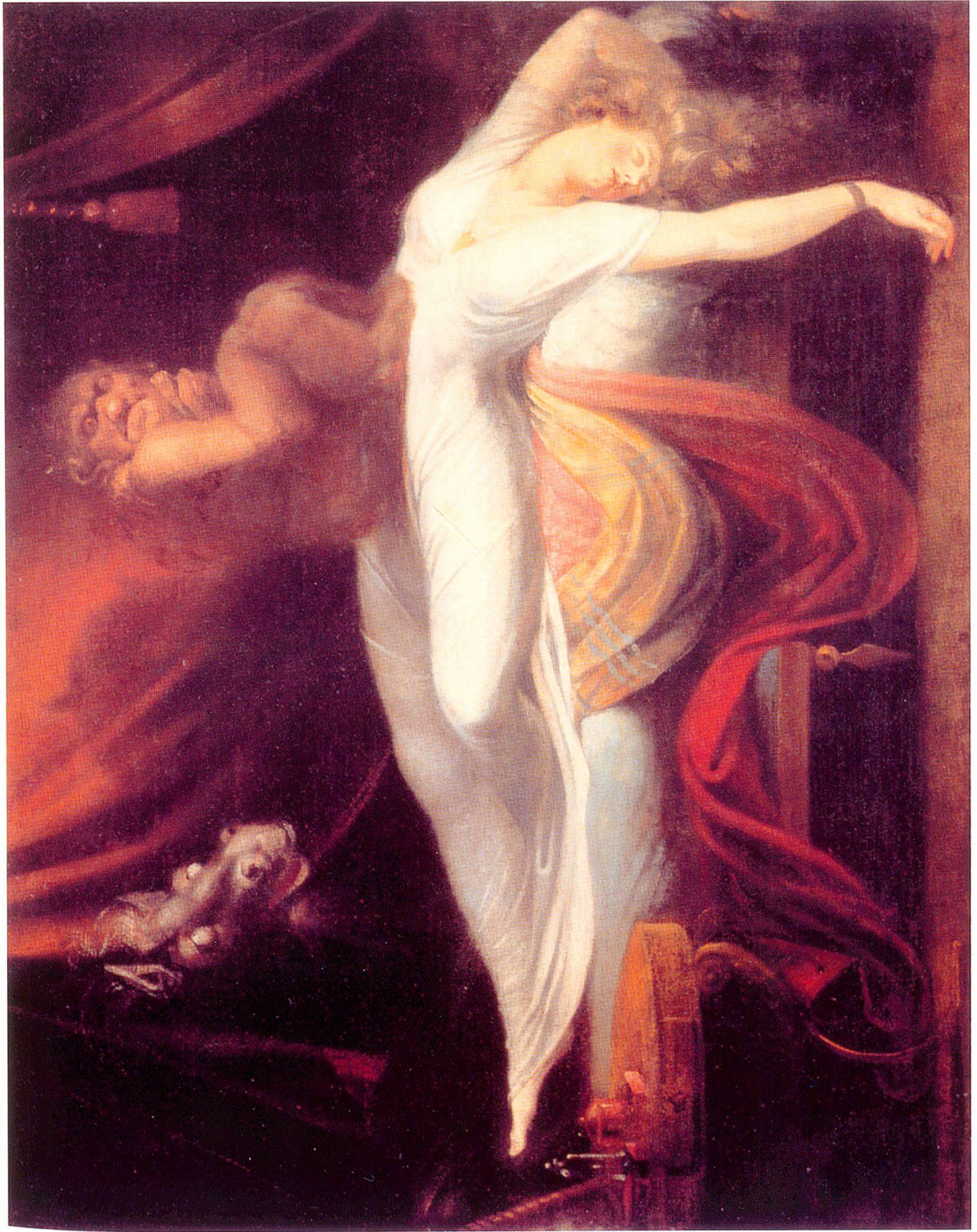
The moralizing end of the *Voyage où il vous plaira* implicitly reflects on this modern urge for sightseeing. The book offers a satirical comment on the scopic pulsion generated by Romanticism, which found its emblematic expression in the outburst of tourism after the napoleonic wars: a fashion, an attitude which was subject to criticism and satire after the 1830's. In a performative and ironical way, the *Voyage où il vous plaira* identifies the reading of illustrated books with oneiric sightseeing. Romantic book illustration as a medium contributed to a new way of seeing²². The incredible proliferation of reproductions in various publications and illustrated magazines gave birth to a new need for visual distraction. Journeying with the graphic imagination, being absorbed in other scenographic worlds, getting involved in historical events were contemporary needs also enacted by the crowds who visited the numerous urban panoramas.

Book illustration not only gave way to what could be called *multifocal representation*, but also developed sequential vision or story-telling by means of images. It is therefore no surprise to find a *résumé* of the cultural connections between dreams, traveling and iconic narration in a book by the one who is credited with the invention of the comic strip: Rodolphe Töpffer (1799–1846), the swiss writer, professor, art critic

and above all draughtsman²³. His most characteristic story entitled the *Voyages et aventures du Docteur Festus* (*Voyages and adventures of Doctor Festus*) was first imagined in the form of an original album of 67 pages containing drawings and texts. It is what Töpffer baptised and later theorised as a

TO THE FOLLOWING ILLUSTRATIONS

- 1 Henri Fuseli, «The Nightmare», 1781, oil-painting, 101×127 cm. Detroit, The Detroit Institute of Arts.
- 2 Francisco Goya, «El Sueño de la razon produce monstruos» («The dream of Reason produces Monsters»), «Capricho» 43, 1797–1798, etching and aquatint, 15,2×21,6 cm. Private collection.
- 3 J.-J. Grandville, «The dream of Grandville», ca. 1829, pencil, pen and brown ink, 34,5×22,8 cm. Nancy, Musée historique lorrain.
- 4 Tony Johannot, frontispice, in «Voyage où il vous plaira» («Voyage wherever you like it»), (Paris: Hetzel, 1842), xylography cut by Brugnot, 20,5×15 cm. Lausanne, Private collection.
- 5 Tony Johannot, «Des chevaux nous attendaient à la porte» («Horses were waiting at the door»), in «Voyage où il vous plaira» («Voyage wherever you like it»), (Paris: Hetzel, 1842), xylography cut by Tamisier, 14×10 cm. Lausanne, Private collection.
- 6 Delacroix, Eugène, Marguerite carried away, in «Faust» (Paris: Motte & Sautélet, 1828), lithography. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.
- 7 Daumier, Honoré, «Un Cauchemar d'un bon petit bourgeois de la place St. Georges», in «Le Charivari», 16.1.1851, lithography. Zurich, J. Albrecht Collection.
- 8–15 Thomas, Jean-Baptiste, «Le Rêve [...]», title-pages and six illustrations, lithographies, (Paris, Delpech, 1829). Zurich, Collection A. Flühmann.
- 16 Nadar, «Egisthe pousse Clytemnestre à tuer Agamemnon» («Aegisthus pushing Clytemnestra to kill Agamemnon»), in «Revue comique» (1849), xylography, 11×14,7 cm. Napoleonmuseum, Arenenberg.
- 17 Nadar, «La justice et la vengeance divine poursuivent le crime» («Justice and divine Vengeance chasing Crime»), in «Revue comique» (1849), xylography, 11,7×14,3 cm. Napoleonmuseum, Arenenberg.
- 18 Grandville, «Nightmare», in «Petites misères de la vie humaine» («The Little Miseries of Human Life»), (Paris: Fournier, 1843), xylography, cut by Brevière. Lausanne, Private collection.
- 19 Grandville, «Metamorphoses of sleep», in «Un autre monde» («Another World»), (Paris: Fournier, 1844), xylography. Lausanne, Private collection.
- 20 Pierre-Paul Prud'hon, «La Justice et la Vengeance divine poursuivent le Crime» («Justice and divine Vengeance chasing Crime»), 1808, 164×198 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre.





2



3



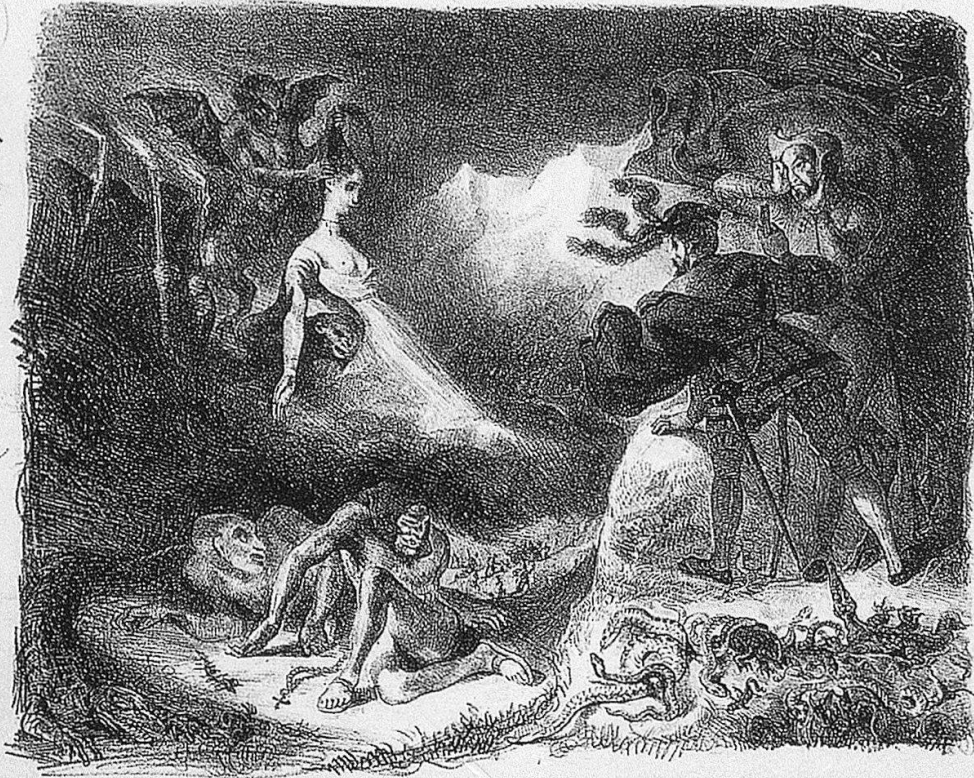
VOYAGE OU IL VOUS PLAIRA.

4



Des chevaux nous attendaient à la porte. — PAGE 12.

5



6

ACTUALITES

32



Chez Aubert & Co 11. de la Bourse 29. Paris.

Imp. de M^{re} V^e Aubert 5. r. de l'Abbaye Paris.

Un Cauchemar d'un bon petit bourgeois de la Place St Georges.

7

Le Rêve.

CHANT PREMIER.

Messe, amie du simple naturel, tu qui secouras heureusement la poussière des vieilles règles prescrites ; toi qui, végétale en châtresse, ne connais de loi que ton caprice ou celui de la mode; Muse, es-tu qui viens inspirer ce jeune adolescent suranné à l'arrière? Le voilà rentré fort tard dans sa modeste mansarde; au hasard de naives paroles il laisse tomber, comme si quel-
qu'un pouvait l'entendre, l'airain, alléché; écoutons.

Minuit et demi aux invalides... il est joliment tard de se coucher. Avalez dans une soirée le Bourreau d'Amsterdam et deux soubelles, recourez Mélanie jusqu'à la porte de sa tante Bebeux, et n'en revenez chez moi par une avenue... on serait fatigué à moins. Foudroyons en larmes au spectacle! Eh bien oui, nous adorons le romantique; la, notre cœur a besoin d'émotions; ainsi la dernière pièce du Bourreau nous a plus amusés que celle de Faust avec son grand diable traqueur. C'est bête de diable, parce que ça n'est pas dans la nature. On se moque de moi, au bureau, mais je me dis crier; j'ai déjà composé un faucon mélodrame et qui n'est pas peigné des bannistes! Ohi oh! l'horloge sonne encore, c'est une heure du matin; il faut se coucher, Anatole; au lit, mon garçon. Ah! je tombe de sommeil.

© Tous droits réservés par l'auteur.

9

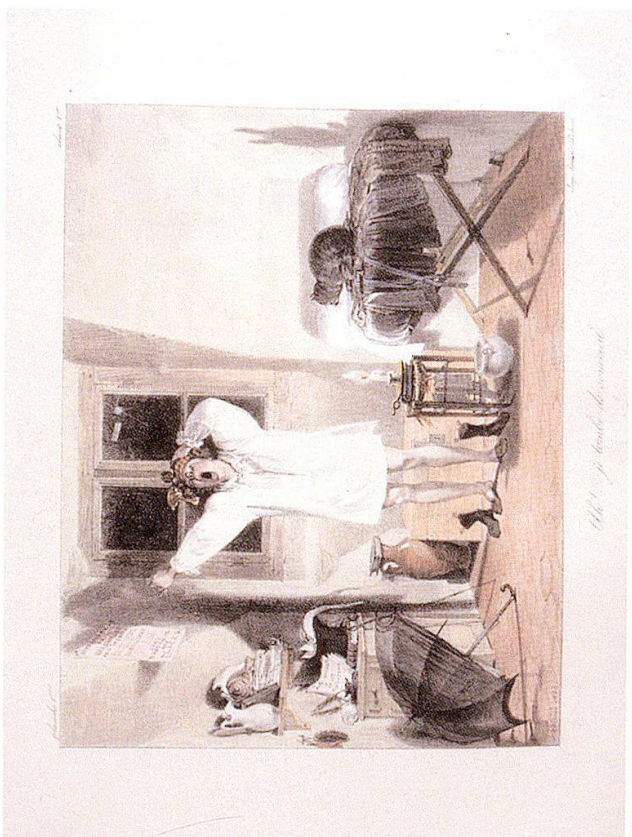


Messieurs, vous n'avez pas vu ce jeune homme qui est tombé du ciel.

11

LES RÊVES
OU
Les Rêves de l'Amant de son
Sur un poème dramatique et d'opéra.
POÈME EN SIX CHANTS
(avec plusieurs intermèdes à l'opéra)
par **THOMAS.**
Paris, chez les Citoyens, Libraires, Palais National, ci-devant de la Nation, ci-après de la Liberté, ci-devant de la République, ci-après de la République, ci-devant de la République, ci-après de la République.
Mars 1829.

8



Messieurs, je trouve le monsieur.

10



12



13



14



15

MUSÉE NATIONAL FRANÇAIS. — ÉGISTHE POUSSÉ CLYTEMNESTRE A TUER AGAMEMNON.



16

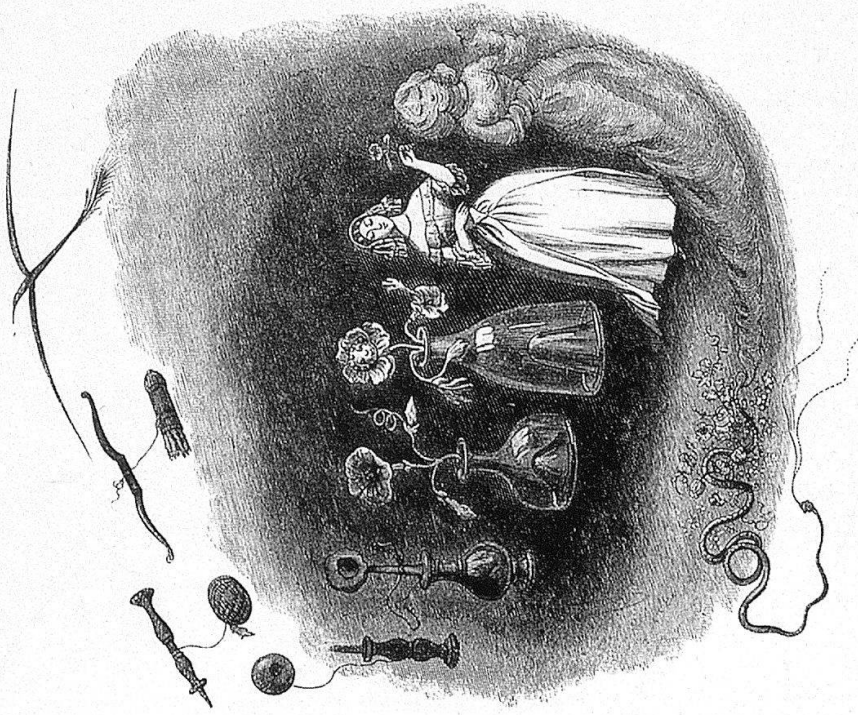
A L'USAGE DES GENS SÉRIEUX.

MUSÉE NATIONAL FRANÇAIS. — LA JUSTICE ET LA VENGEANCE DIVINE POURSUIVENT LE CRIME.

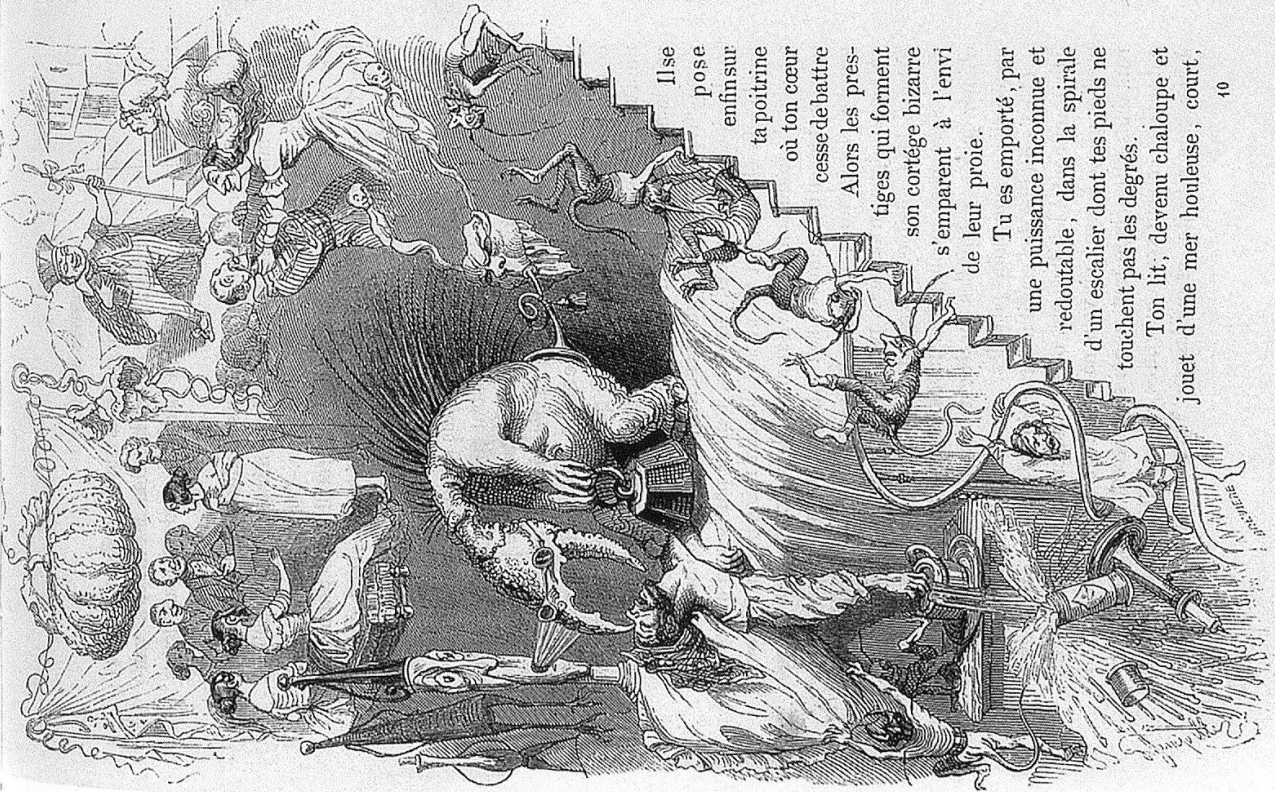


17

disparaît, il se perd dans un nuage de fleurs, dans des



guirlandes enlacées, qui se terminent en rampant comme une couleuvre, éternel et menaçant emblème de la femme.



Il se
pose
enfin sur
ta poitrine
où ton cœur
cesse de battre
Alors les pres-
tiges qui forment
son cortège bizarre
s'emparent à l'envi
de leur proie.

Tu es emporté, par
une puissance inconnue et
redoutable, dans la spirale
d'un escalier dont tes pieds ne
touchent pas les degrés.

Ton lit, devenu chaloupe et
jouet d'une mer houleuse, court,



histoire en estampes, a story in images²⁴. In 1840, Töpffer published the lithographic version of his album and also wrote and illustrated a novel entitled *Docteur Festus*, based on the same story, so that we actually have three versions of it: an original album, a lithographic album and an illustrated book²⁵. It is an excentric novel which unfolds the incredible adventures of an absent-minded scientist, Festus, whose name obviously alludes to the famous doctor Faustus who inspired Goethe. Dreams play an essential role in the story. In the end, the hero finding himself in his bed wonders if his adventures were but a dream. (Significantly, the bedroom scene illustrates the back cover for the book version.) This is a well-known literary device used in Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* and in so many romantic works including, as we have seen, the parodic album lithographed by Thomas and the *Voyage où il vous plaira* illustrated by Johannot.

Töpffer had imagined a continuation of his *Docteur Festus*, in which the hero does not end in bed thinking his adventures were oneiric fictions, but comes back home on his mule and wakes up convinced that his dreams were true. In Töpffer's work, dreams parody the romantic excentric novel, they allude to the fashion set by Goethe's *Faust* and above all they serve as a metaphor for writing and reading, both of which are equated with travelling and dreaming. Töpffer planned to introduce *Docteur Festus* with the following preface: «There is at the confines of the region of seriousness and of reason, a vague and immense territory, peopled by extravagant ghosts, by recreative visions, by crazy figures, sometimes touching the border of truth, but never sojourning there. It is to this place that I made an excursion last year and I brought back my book²⁶.» Töpffer also introduced most of his novels with an epigraph reading: «Go, little book, and choose your world [...].» His fictions thus replay the topos of dreaming and travel-

ling as a self-reflexive metaphor of artistic creation.

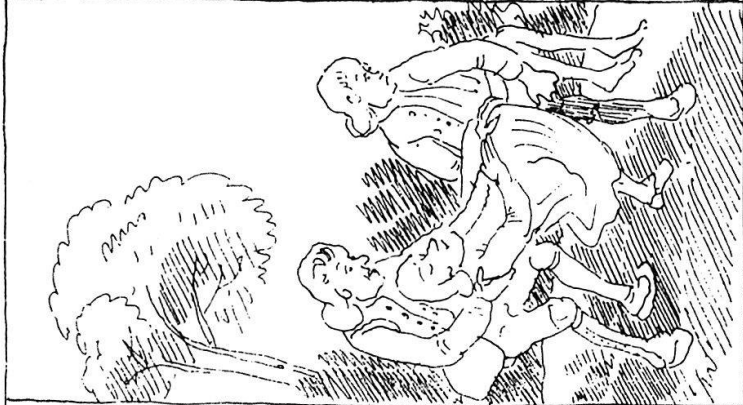
Optics and politics

Dreams and reveries abound in the work of nineteenth-century caricaturists – anonymous or famous such as Gustave Doré, Cham, Nadar in the first part of his career, and above all in the work of Honoré Daumier. His graphic work often alludes to Fuseli's *The Nightmare*, especially the famous lithograph showing the french Minister Adolphe Thiers oppressed by the allegory of the Second Republic as a child in 1851.

From spring to autumn 1849, Nadar published *Mossieu Réac* (*Mr Réac*) in the *Revue comique*, a satirical journal edited by Charles Philipon to oppose the political reaction embodied by Louis-Napoléon. Nadar reused the visual structure invented by Rodolphe Töpffer to imagine the story of a hypocritical and selfish bourgeois who endeavours to succeed in life. In this serial story, Mr. Réac has three dreams: the first one of financial success, the second one of anguish because the red Republic has won, and the last one of bliss because the Monarchy is restored. Noticing the satirical and political advantages of the dream formula, Nadar published at the same time in the *Revue comique* four drawing entitled *Rêve d'un réactionnaire* (*The dream of a reactionary*), and an illustrated short story entitled *Les trois rêves de Mossieu Réac* (*The three dreams of Mr Réac*). In the first dream, Réac is assaulted with hypnagogical visions of european democrats and nationalists. He faces republican soldiers of the french Revolution showing their wounds and is attacked by a regiment of printing presses whose freedom he so very much detests. Réac tries to find a logical explanation to his horrifying nocturnal visions: it is, he thinks, because he fell asleep on the *left* side that he was confronted to so many leftist opponents, socialists and republicans.



Le Docteur revenu à lui le lendemain matin, s'imaginant qu'il n'a pas quitté le logis, et tout en contemplant l'aurière, il songe au beau rêve qu'il a fait.



Le Fermier du Docteur et son fils Jean, étant venus pour cueillir les poires, décrochèrent leur marché et le transportèrent dans son lit.



En approchant de l'écurie, le mulet fait une telle pététrade de joie que le Docteur lancé en l'air retombe sur son poitrail où il demeure accroché et évanoui.

Fin des Voyages et Aventures du Docteur Jabbus

Sleeping on his back nevertheless produces a second nightmare. Réac is in the Louvre Museum, in the prestigious Salon Carré where he admires the paintings of Gérard, Girodet and Guérin. But the forms in the canvases melt and vanish (Réac compares this optical phenomena to a shadow-theatre) and give way to another scene: *Aegisthus pushing Clytemnestra to kill Agamemnon* (*Egishte pousse Clytemnestre à tuer Agamemnon*), derived from a painting by Pierre-Narcisse Guérin (1817). Suddenly, Réac enters the painting under the spell of what he calls «a new game of fantasmagory». He takes the role of Clytemnestra and is about to stab the naked allegory of the french Republic when he is all of a sudden transported into another paragon of neoclassicism: *Justice and divine Vengeance chasing Crime* (*La justice et la vengeance divine poursuivent le crime*), a celebrated painting by Pierre-Paul Prud'hon (1808). Réac wonders if the lady he has just stabbed in this second scene is the allegory of the italian Republic which the french troops helped to repress – to the utter dismay of the french republicans. Or could it be the german Republic? In any case, Réac eventually breaks loose from this artistic and fantasmagorical frame and is welcomed in London with open arms: a probable allusion to the king Louis-Philippe's escape to Britain in 1848. Ironically, Réac, of course a great admirer of Neoclassicism, is plunged into paintings belonging precisely to that school, paintings which turn into absolute nightmares.

In his nocturnal visions, Mr Réac has to face people uneasy to identify. In the scene adapted from Prud'hon's *Justice and divine Vengeance chasing Crime*, the naked victim on the ground could be the italian or the german Republic. In the third dream, Réac

meets a strange character who looks like Charles IX, Louis XIV and Father Loriquet. This confusion, or to be more specific, this fusion is typical of the secondary process



Rodolphe Töpffer, «Festus wakes up in his bed», in «Voyages et aventures du Docteur Festus» (Paris: Cherbulliez, 1840), lithography. Geneva, Bibliothèque publique et universitaire.

analyzed by Sigmund Freud who names it «*Verdichtung*», condensation. But this characteristic dream process was well-known before Freud. Hervey de Saint-Denys (1823–1862), in his pioneering book entitled *Dreams and the Means to Control Them* (*Les rêves et les moyens de les diriger*, 1867), analyses

To page 198

Rodolphe Töpffer, «Festus wakes up in his bed», in «Voyages et aventures du Docteur Festus» (Geneva: Schmid, 1840). Geneva, Bibliothèque publique et universitaire.

what he calls «the panorama of dreams» («panorama des songes»). He compares his visions to a magic lantern show and notices that some «projections» are made with two slides added together, which is an exact metaphor for the Freudian concept of condensation²⁷.

Both in Nadar's *Mr Réac* and in Thomas' faustian visions of a young employee, the scenic metaphor refers to the world of contemporary *optics*. Shadow-theatre, magic lantern, fantasmagory motivate the eccentric narrative sequence, breaking the rules and the logics of time and space continuity. Oneiric imagination as optical projection shapes a voyeuristic frame of reference in which the actor sees and is seen, but also sees himself in the act of seeing. Only the reader has the power to separate the various levels of fiction revealed by the prints. The generic optical medium of this complex interplay is book illustration itself, a genre which is consistent with dreams, conveying apparitions and revelations, allowing visual narration and multifocal strategies.

From illustration to suggestion

Dreams and nightmares could ridicule in the nineteenth-century because they were ridiculous, because they were thought to affect superficial categories of society such as young lovers, readers of books of imagination and of course children (e.g. Windsor McCay's famous *Little Nemo in Slumberland* in 1905). This traditional view of oneiric phenomena was notably transmitted by Charles Nodier himself in the preface to his novel on dreams, *Smarra*²⁸, and it survived throughout the nineteenth-century.

The various topoi of dreaming as travelling, as sightseeing, as self-reflexive artistic creation and as optical projection are explored by the artist who almost specialised in oneiric fantasies: J.-J. Grandville. For example, in 1843, Grandville published the *Petites misère de la vie humaine* (*The Little*

Miseries of Human Life) with a journalist, Emile-Daurand Forgues who was using the pen name of Old Nick (the Devil). The narrator, waking up from nightly visions gets involved in the publication of little stories of human life collected by his friend who is – of course – named Faustus. The introduction contains the illustration of a nightmare that supports mechanical and physiological explanations. So, it is because the sleeper dips his fingers presumably in a cup of tea that he envisions himself thrown in a stormy sea. This wood-engraving is not only remarkable for its adaptation of Fuseli's *The Nightmare*, but also because it develops a complex visual narration which is central to Grandville's artistic explorations in the 1840's. His last two drawings before his death in 1847 were two dreams sent to Edouard Charton, the editor of the *Magasin pittoresque*, a popular periodical²⁹.

About three years before, Grandville produced one of the most astonishing books of romantic illustration: *Un autre monde* (*Another World*). Published in 1844, the book is Grandville's artistic testament and *summa*. It tells the story of an emblematic pencil which decides to explore the world and to write a book with images. The subtitles of *Un autre monde* refer to the genre of the eccentric novel and especially to its French prototype, the *Histoire du roi de Bohême et de ses sept châteaux* (*Story of the King of Bohemia and his Seven Castles*) by Charles Nodier in 1830. The front page of *Another World* is enriched with subtitles such as «Transformations, visions, incarnations, ascensions, locomotions, explorations, peregrinations, excursions, stations / cosmogonies, fantasmagories, reveries [etc.]». One of the chapters entitled «The metamorphoses of sleep» explores the oneiric logic of transformation and proposes a woodcut («The battle of cards») which later influenced that other master of dreams, Lewis Carroll. Grandville's book undoubtedly marks a turning point in oneiric iconography. Its illustrations do not allude

anymore to the tradition inspired by Fuseli or Goya. They give up parody or allusion for the benefit of optical illusion and iconic narration. As in dreams or in public shows using of magic lanterns, the image comes first with all its suggestive and enigmatic potentials. It no longer serves as the illustration of a text.

With the exception of Grandville's late work, graphic dreams until the 1860's mostly function on an illustrative or allegorical level. They deliver a message which is ideological, artistic or political, which unveils the contemporary social and theoretical conceptions of dreams and nightmares. But nightly visions – whether ridiculous and ridiculing – can also be serious when used as instruments of intellectual recognition as in the case of Grandville, or when applied to contemporary politics as with the example of Nadar's *Mr Reac*. From the 1860's on, the romantic revival which animated the young generation of symbolists approached dreams and nightmares with a different and more reverent attitude. In Odilon Redon's lithographic album entitled *Dans le rêve* (1879), visions of the night are no longer laughable. They epitomize the «modern» baudelairian creed of artistic creation based on mystery and suggestion.

NOTES

Many thanks to my brother André in Nancy, to Damien Nelis in Dublin and to Evanghélia Stead in Reims for reading and correcting this paper.

¹ Charles Nodier, 1832, «De quelques phénomènes du sommeil». *Œuvres complètes*. (Paris: Renduel, 1832), V, pp. 162 and 169.

² Z. Dana Andrus, 1995, «Some implications for another reading of Henry Fuseli's *The Nightmare*». *Gazette des beaux-arts*, December 1995, pp. 235–252.

³ Some of these caricatures are listed in Nicolas Powell, 1973. *The Nightmare*. Art in Context (London: Penguin Press), pp. 101–103, and in David H. Weinglass, 1994. *Prints and Engraved Illustrations by and after Fuseli* (Aldershot: Scholar Press), pp. 60–73.

⁴ Self-portrait (ca. 1777), London, National Portrait Gallery; see Gert Schiff, 1973. *Johann*

Heinrich Fuseli 1741–1825. Text und Oeurekatalog. Zurich: Berichthaus, Munich: Prestel Verlag, cat. 1743.

⁵ Quoted from Erasmus Darwin, 1806, «The Love of the Plants», *Poetical Works*, London, pp. 126–128.

⁶ There is a vast literature on *The Nightmare*. See: Powell, *The Nightmare*; Weinglass, *Prints and Engraved Illustrations*; Andrus, «Some implications...»; Marcia Allentuck, «Further Reflections on Henry Fuseli's Nightmare by Way of a New Inventory of Influence and Caricature», *The Humanities Association Review* 27, N° 4 (Fall 1976), pp. 459–465; L. Chappel Miles, «Fuseli and the judicious adoption of the antique in the Nightmare», *Burlington Magazine* (June 1986), pp. 421–422; John F. Moffit, «Malleus maleficarum: a literary context for Fuseli's Nightmare», *Gazette des beaux-arts* (May–June 1990), pp. 241–248; Jean Starobinski, «La vision de la dormeuse», *Trois fureurs* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), pp. 129–162 (first published in *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, N° 5 (Spring 1972); Pascal Dupuy, *L'Angleterre face à la Révolution: la Représentation de la France et des français à travers la caricature, 1789–1802*, dissertation (Université de Rouen, 1998), 3 vol.

⁷ On Goya's *Capricho* 43, see for instance: José López-Rey, *Goya's Caprichos. Beauty, Reason and Caricature* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1970 [1953]); George Levitine, «Some Emblematic Sources of Goya», *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 22, N° 1–2, 1959, pp. 106–131; *Goya and the spirit of the Enlightenment*, exhib. cat. Museo del Prado, Madrid, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1989, pp. 84 sq.; Reva Wolf, *Goya and the satirical Print* (Boston: Boston College Museum of Art, 1991); Volker Adolphs, «Monstren der Einbildungskraft. Goyas *Caprichos* und andere Träume», *Die Erfindung der Natur: Max Ernst, Paul Klee, Wols und das Surreale Universum* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 1994), pp. 80–88.

⁸ Reproduced in *Grandville: dessins originaux*, exhib. cat., Nancy, Musée des beaux-arts, 1986, cat. 109. See my study: «Les rêves illustrés de J.-J. Grandville (1803–1847)», *Revue de l'art*, N° 92, 1991, pp. 51–63.

⁹ On dream iconography in reference to the nineteenth-century, see Franz Meyer, «Traum und bildende Kunst», *Traum und Träumen: Traumanalysen in Wissenschaft, Religion und Kunst* (Göttingen 1984), pp. 162–168; Marielene Putscher, «Über Träume», *Medicinae et artibus: Festschrift für W. Katner* (Düsseldorf 1968), pp. 121–145; James Henry Rubin, «Endymion's Dream as a Myth of Romantic Inspiration», *Art Quarterly*, (Summer 1978), pp. 47–84; Ingrid Schuster-Schirmer, *Traumbilder von 1770–1900: von Traum-Allegorie zur traumhaften Darstellung*, Bremen, 1975, Diss. Bonn 1974; Stephanie Hereaus, *Traumvorstellung und Bild-*

idee. *Surreale Strategien in der französischen Graphik* (Berlin: Reimer, 1998); *Visions du rêve*, sous la direction de Vincent Barras, Jacques Gasser, Philippe Junod, Philippe Kaenel et Olivier Motz, Genève, Georg, 2002.

¹⁰ *Faust, tragédie de M. de Goethe, traduite en français par M. Albert Stapfer [...]*, Paris, Motte & Sautet, 1828.

¹¹ Eugène Delacroix, Letter to Philippe Burty, 3/1/1862, in André Joubin (publ.), *Correspondance générale de Eugène Delacroix* (Paris: Plon, 1938), IV, pp. 303-304.

¹² I could work on this very rare album thanks to generosity of Dr. Adrian Flühmann, Zurich, who bought this superb copy from the Claude Rebeyrat collection, Paris.

¹³ Written parodies of *Faust* abounded in French around 1830 (*Le cousin de Faust*, 1827, *Le nouveau Faust et la nouvelle Marguerite, ou comment je me suis donné au diable* by Charles Nodier in 1832). See André Dabezeis, *Le mythe de Faust*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1972, pp. 113-114. On the Faustian myth in the nineteenth-century, see Pierre Lasserre, *Faust en France* (Paris: Calman-Lévy, 1929); Peter Boerner and Sidney Johnson, ed., *Faust through four Centuries: retrospect and analysis* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1995). A parody of the illustrations by Moritz Retsch – one of Delacroix's models – is found in England in 1834: Alfred Crowquill [Alfred Henry Forrester], *Faust: A Serio-comic Poem with Twelve Outline Illustrations* (London: R. B. King, 1834), 32 p. The Preface reads: «Now we propose, not to give a dull and literal Translation of our Author, but the true spirit and meaning of the Poem in the vernacular. // In order to prove that our ability to execute this proposed task is equal to our inclination, we beg to inform the Gentle Reader; firstly, that our brother plays the German flute; secondly, that we have fed invariably on German sausages during our labors; // thirdly, smoked a veritable German Meerschaum [...].» I owe this information to prof. Evanhélia Stead in Reims.

¹⁴ An allusion to the scene where Faust is brought back from his visions to the real world by his servant Wagner in night-gown and night-cap, holding a lamp.

¹⁵ On historical conception of dreams, especially in the 19th century, see: Albert Béguin, *L'âme romantique et le rêve: essai sur le romantisme allemand et la poésie française* (Paris: J. Corti, 1979, [1937]); Jacques Bousquet, *Les thèmes du rêve dans la littérature romantique: France, Angleterre, Allemagne: essai sur la naissance et l'évolution des images* (Paris: M. Didier, 1964); Roger Caillois and G. E. Von Grünebaum, ed., *Le rêve et les sociétés humaines* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967); Jean Pierrot, *Le rêve: de Milton aux surréalistes* (Paris: Bordas, 1978); Yannick Ripa, *Histoire du rêve: regards sur l'imagi-*

naire des Français au XIX^e siècle (Paris: O. Orban, 1988).

¹⁶ See Starobinski, «La vision de la dormeuse»; Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1990).

¹⁷ On these metaphors, see: Terry Castle, «Phantasmagoria: Spectral Technology and the Metaphorics of Modern Reverie», *Critical Inquiry*, 15 (Fall, 1988), pp. 26-61; Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*; Ségolène Le Men, «Monsieur le Soleil et Madame la Lune», *Lanternes magiques, tableaux transparents*, Les dossiers du Musée d'Orsay N° 57 (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1995), pp. 9-51.

¹⁸ «Désir ardent de tout voir, ne vous calmez-vous donc jamais en moi?» (*Voyage où il vous plaira*, p. 15).

¹⁹ Quoted above, note 1.

²⁰ Daniel Sangsue, *Le récit excentrique. Gautier – De Maistre – Nerval – Nodier* (Paris: J. Corti, 1987).

²¹ On the problem raised by illustration on an aesthetic and sociological level, see Philippe Kaenel, *Le métier d'illustrateur 1830-1880: Rodolphe Töpffer, J.-J. Grandville, Gustave Doré* (Genève: Droz, 2004 [1996]).

²² Charles Rosen, Henri Zerner, *Romanticism and Realism: the Mythology of Nineteenth Century Art* (London, Boston: Faber & Faber, 1984); Ségolène Le Men, *La Cathédrale illustrée de Hugo à Monet. Regard romantique sur la modernité* (Paris, CNRS Editions, 1998).

²³ See *Töpffer*, sous la direction de Daniel Maggetti, Genève, Skira, 1996.

²⁴ David Kunzle, *The History of the Comic Strip: the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1990) (on Töpffer, pp. 28-71); *Töpffer: l'invention de la bande dessinée*, textes réunis et présentés par Thierry Groensteen et Benoît Peeters (Paris: Hermann, 1994).

²⁵ Philippe Kaenel, «Les *Voyages et aventures du Docteur Festus* de Rodolphe Töpffer: d'une histoire en estampes à un livre illustré», *L'illustration. Essais d'iconographie* (Paris: Klincksiek 1999), pp. 39-67.

²⁶ Quoted in Kaenel, «Les *Voyages et aventures du Docteur Festus*», p. 51.

²⁷ «Deux idées, avec leurs images, pourront parfois aussi se présenter, pour ainsi dire, de front, appelées en même temps par l'enchaînement des souvenirs. Ce serait alors comme si l'on passait deux verres à la fois devant l'objectif de la lanterne» (Marie-Jean-Léon d'Hervey de Saint-Denys, *Les rêves et les moyens de les diriger* (Paris: Editions d'aujourd'hui, 1977 [1867]), p. 89. Freud also uses the same comparison in his *Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (series of lectures given in 1917).

²⁸ See note 1.

²⁹ On these two dreams, see Kaenel, 1991.