

International Journal of Human Sciences Research

THE TRAUMATIC OF THE DREAM AND ITS AWAKENING RELATED TO THE HORROR OF THE FANTASTIC TALE, TYQUE AND THE OBJECT OF THE OTHER'S DESIRE

Claudia Rodrigues Pádua Salgado Beato

Universidade de Brasília - UnB, PPGsiCC
Brasília - DF

<https://lattes.cnpq.br/9121611821841496>

Daniela Scheinkman Chatelard

Universidade de Brasília - UnB, PPGsiCC
Brasília - DF

<https://lattes.cnpq.br/3630980140600543>

All content in this magazine is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License. Attribution-Non-Commercial-Non-Derivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).



Abstract: The subject repeats, as continuously as it is unknown, the way in which he responds to what is inscribed as traumatic, just as Freud situates the reality of trauma in 1920. This excess that escapes him is placed as an incessant repetition of the impossible to be represented through language, it is the real as a missing encounter, named as *tiquê* by Lacan in 1964. From these Freudian references on the real of trauma in Lacanian work, we aim to draw a possible analogy between traumatic dreams, anxiety dreams and the horror caused in the reader of *Contos Fantásticos*, as well as to analyze the point at which the writer of fantastic tales seeks to create horror causing an intellectual uncertainty in the one who reads, not knowing if he is facing the real or a fiction. This theoretical work with an investigative purpose has a psychoanalytical framework and takes as its object a reading of some concepts in Freudian and Lacanian work, such as traumatic, graph of desire and object of the Other's desire. We intend to bring as an illustration the comparison of the dream concepts of the burning son in Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* and Hoffmann's *Fantastic Tale*, the *Sandman*. As a result, we can conclude that both this example and the narrative structure of Hoffmann's *Fantastic Tale* can demonstrate the subject's estrangement as the object of the Other's desire, the missing encounter, the astonishment and the possibility of presenting the other scene, our unconscious.

Keywords: Dream. Fantastic. Horror.

INTRODUCTION

Bokanowski (2005) develops a work on the variations of the concept of traumatism: traumatism, traumatic, trauma. The traumatic, according to the author, has an economic connotation, which was elaborated by Freud in his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, through the traumatic neuroses or the war neuroses.

According to Bokanowski (2005, p. 31): "the traumatic functioning is characterized by an anti-traumatic vision, while, at the same time, it repeats the traumatic: a struggle against 'terror' (Schereck) by repeating the 'terror' (...)". This repetitive character in the psyche always harbors something left over and remains unrepresented and persistent in the individual's mind in different ways, where dreams can be one of its forms of expression.

According to Freud (1900/2019), dreams are considered precious for psychoanalysis, as they allow us to come into direct contact with another scene, with our unconscious. According to Freud, "... it is a psychic act of full value; its driving force is always a wish to be fulfilled" (FREUD, 1900/2019, p. 583), and this conclusion was the result of his exhaustive dedication to the work on a book about dreams, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, in 1900. Freud he realized, in his investigations, that there were dreams that were crossed by the traumatic event as anxiety dreams reported by patients, absurd and bizarre dreams that would not fail to be considered as wish fulfillment. According to him, several manifestations could influence the formation of these dreams, such as the condensation of psychic material, its representativeness in sensory images, etc.

Another strand for explaining these anguish dreams crossed by the traumatic can be found in 1920, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, with the repetitive nature of dreams through scenes of suffering, the reliving of these traumatic situations, such as cases of neurosis of war that were researched by Freud. Anguish, highlighted, becomes one of the elements present in these traumatic dreams. And what interests us to investigate in the present work is to think about the interval between these anguish dreams and the dreamer's awakening, the feeling of anguish provoked at that moment between

the dreaming subject and his waking state, which can cause strangeness and horror to the one who dreamed, as being analogous to the horror provoked by fantastic tales.

The reason why we will look for this analogy is because Freud explored the literary field to seek to understand more about the unconscious and its modes of functioning. In addition, he left us a beautiful legacy of dialogue between the literary and psychoanalytic fields, innovating in the scientific universe. We found several fictional and mythical references of literary writing that are taken in Freudian work to be able to say about the unconscious, about the strange and the foreign in each of us, marking, with this, the revolutionary rupture in the Cartesian thought, dislodging the I as conductor of thought and human existence.

For this, we would like to raise some hypotheses for the present work. Can we consider the traumatic dreams, the anguish dreams between the dream and the awakening illustrated by the dream of the son in flames, as similar to the narrative structure of the fantastic tale in literature? The one between reality and fiction – that is, could this gap somehow give us clues to what lies behind, another scene? What makes the subject want to extend both his credibility in fiction and remain dreaming so as not to have to deal with the traumatic reality and awakening?

First, we will present the dream of the son on fire in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, and then we will walk through the fantastic literature. We will briefly describe its narrative structure in *Fantastic Tales* and try to find in this source the way in which Freud favored horror tales to support his phenomenon of the *Unheimliche* (unfamiliar), which generates anguish. According to Freud (1919/2019), this phenomenon is related to what is most hidden, in the depths of our minds returning in the form of estrangement, which is nothing more than something familiar. However, we

intend to demonstrate how this unfamiliarity together with its traumatic dimension can present its possible similarity to the narrative structure of fantastic tales, as a meeting point of the missing real, of the *tiquê*, a place where the subject is faced with the object of the Other's desire, that we will develop better illustrating with the praying mantis metaphor developed by Lacan in 1964.

I invite you, however, to get closer, to walk with Freud on this theme of traumatic dreams, anguish dreams related to horror in literature, to try to understand how this field of fantastic literature was so fruitful for us and that it will be able to transport us to its core, the meeting with the real, the missing point, the *tiquê*.

THE HORROR OF TRAUMATIC DREAMS RELATED TO THE HORROR OF FANTASTIC TALES

So that we can discuss the dimension of horror and reality present in *Fantastic Tales*, let us take the opportunity to bring a dream that opens Chapter VII of the *Interpretation of Dreams* (FREUD, 1900/2019), which may allow us to make an analogy with the horror in these fantastic tales:

A father spent days and nights at the bedside of his sick son. After the child dies, he goes into an adjoining room to rest, but leaves the door open to see the room where his son's body lies, surrounded by tall candles. An elderly man has been put in charge of the vigil and is sitting next to the body, murmuring prayers. After a few hours of sleep, the father dreams that his son is standing beside his bed, who grabs him by the arms and whispers reproachfully: "Dad, can't you see that I'm burning?" He wakes up and sees a strong glow coming from his son's room, runs there and finds the elderly watchman asleep, the shroud and an arm of his son's beloved body burned by a fallen candle. (FREUD, 1900/2019, p. 558)

According to Freud (1900/2019), if the dream is the fulfillment of a wish, what could

we think of this anguish dream? In the interval between sleeping and waking up, we have a return to reality, to consciousness, something makes the father face the reality of the situation, the flames and the perception of reality. An old man who was in charge of this vigil and something that makes a hole in the real, the unconscious, appears without any possibility of representation. And it is precisely at this point, without any representation, without inscription, that the unconscious emerges and that we can find and make an analogy to the interval between reality and fiction, an alarm clock of horror and anguish in the Fantastic Tales that we will unfold below. By describing the narrative structure of *Contos Fantásticos*, we intend to demonstrate the same operation, the presentation of another scene, without any representation. This is what interests us in this work, describing this dimension of non-representation, of the horror that it causes the reader in the fantastic tale, as an object of the Other's desire.

Let us now proceed with an attempt to define the concept of fantastic literature, which we will base ourselves on the writings of Todorov (1939/2010), one of the forerunners of in-depth critical studies on the genre of fantastic literature, highlighting it in the theoretical discussion of contemporaneity. According to Todorov, there is no way to conceptualize fantastic literature without deepening its themes that are articulated in the form of a network, such as the interaction with the world, the question of perception, the look, the implication with the the other, the unconscious and the relationship with language, which, in turn, goes in the same direction as the Freudian purpose, which we intend to approach these common points in the present study.

For Todorov (1939/2010), the fantastic narrative causes a gap in our world, of some fact that cannot be rationally explained by the

laws of nature, causing a feeling of hesitation in the reader. This makes the author consider fiction more outstanding in relation to the rational, which implies a greater interaction of the reader with the universe of the characters, taking them as existing. For him, the fantastic, although articulated with the unreal and the supernatural, is nevertheless related to reality, to a representation of reality, since every literary text takes reality as its starting point. Throughout his work, we can see Todorov build the structural path of the fantastic narrative with fiction, but connected with reality. According to the author, the more intensely reality is described, the greater the possibility of horror in fiction for the reader.

According to Todorov (1939/2008), this ambiguity, this uncertainty whether it is reality or fiction, truth or illusion, invites us to the core of the fantastic, abandoning the world we know, without angels, demons or monsters. According to the author, if we choose one option or another, we enter a neighboring realm, either of the strange or the wonderful. The first option is when we come across elements of the unreal, strange or fantasy order. This literary genre usually presents non-human elements with personality, speakers and, often, with feelings similar to those of people, which can cause strangeness in the reader. The second option is related to the doubt when we do not know the natural laws and we are faced with inexplicable elements.

Even before proceeding, it would be pertinent to bring the definition of the term fantastic that goes in this direction, according to Rodrigues (1988):

The term fantastic (from the Latin *phantasticu*, in turn from the Greek *phantastikós*, both from *phantasia*) refers to what is created by imagination, what does not exist in reality, the imaginary, the fabulous. It is therefore better applied to a phenomenon of an artistic nature, such as literature, whose universe is always fictional

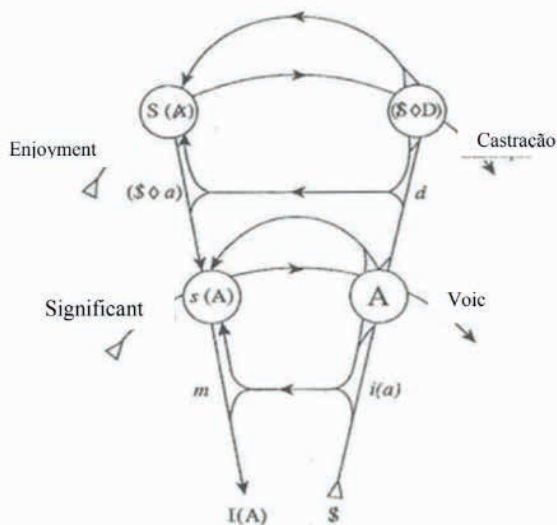
par excellence, however much one wants to bring it closer to reality (RODRIGUES, 1988, p. 9).

We saw that the term fantastic comes from phantasia, fantasy. However, here we can refer to the Freudian text *The poet and the fantasy* (1908/2015), in which the author will tell us that fantasy is the essence, the work material of the literary poet. Let us, then, bring fantasy to the core of our discussions, in which we consider what Rabinovich (2009) clarifies for us when he points out that the structure of fantasy fiction, of make-believe and disguise, screens the subject in front of to its relationship with the desire of the Other. When fantasy is missing for a moment, the subject is faced with the *Unheimlich*, with estrangement. He sees himself in that moment of anguish, because, for the author, all horror fiction in fantastic literature is centered on this passage in which the subject finds himself without a specular correspondence and then comes across as the object he becomes for the desire of the Other.

In view of this, so that we can advance further in our argument that the horror in fantastic tales can allow the subject to face the unrepresentable, in this place of the thing as a thing, in the place of an object, moreover, we invite you to walk in this realm and that we can better understand this place or this moment in which the subject is faced with the object of the Other's desire, a place where fantasy falters and anguish erupts.

According to Lacan (1958-1959/2016), distributing and building a graph on two levels will possibly allow us to understand in a practical way what is related to the structure of the subject and his relationship with the signifier, with his fantasy, word derived from of the term fantastic. This could help us understand and relate to what we intend to develop about this place of horror in fantastic tales.

THE GRAPH OF DESIRE



Extracted from Lacan, 1957-58, p.525

Graph Figure 1

For Lacan (1958-1959/2016), the graph, although it is topologically represented and arranged in an upper or lower level, is intended to demonstrate that these two levels are articulated and related to each other, so that one level is the continuity of the other and represented by the speech and implication of the subject in the form of a speech. For the author, the starting point, to the right of the graph, is given by a Δ , the subject located in his position of need and demand, as a first moment in which we can have news about the subject and his existence in the world.

According to Lacan (1958-1959/2016), the graph starts from four points, Δ , A, D, d: referring to the intentionality of the subject [Δ], the subject as speaking I [A], the field of demand [D] and [d] the field of desire distributed in two levels. Therefore, according to Lacan, this first level related to the subject's field of need and demand in his relationship with the Other is represented by the continuous line from D to S, where we can visualize s(A) towards A. the author, the A is the big Other,

the place of the code, related to the place of references that the subject receives from birth and that are inscribed, marking the subject's body in the form of a rain of signifiers.

We could assume a correlation between this first moment in which Lacan states when this subject is not yet a speaker with the 'experience of satisfaction', named by Freud (1950[1895]/1987). We can say that in this experience, the baby, initially, is situated as an object that this Other can complement him, assuming that this Other is potent, capable of satisfying his lack, needing to be spoken about, named in his existence. We can place this moment of experience of satisfaction at the first level, as the subject is still located in the field of need and demand. But when its need, its demand is not met, the baby starts to hallucinate and when faced with an object that is forever missing and lost, we would relaunch it to the second level, which will speak of something else and constitutive moment of the subject.

According to Lacan (1958-1959/2016), on this second level, faced with this inconsistency coming from the Other, the subject is faced with a lack of significance of the Other represented by the $S(\mathcal{A})$. There is a mismatch in their needs and demands, as this Other also lacks, thus constituting a turning point for the subject, as there is a change of discourse and position in this \diamond passage. In $\$$ puncture of $D - \$ \diamond D$, the subject starts to speak about himself and for himself, who assumes his act of speaking as I, a speaking subject, and ceases to be spoken by the Other, being able to enter or make that its passage to a symbolic universe, as it inaugurates, at this moment, the entry of "Che vuoi?" "What do you want?", a questioning of the Other, which is often unknown to him, which causes anguish, and fantasy can play a fundamental role as a shield and cover for this lack, as a construction for this void of response, for this enigma placed on

the subject, as it is located beyond speech. This moment can be visualized in the continuous line of the second level $S(\mathcal{A})$, signifier of the lack in the Other towards $\$ \quad D$.

According to Lacan (1958-1959/2016), the subject's fantasy is fundamental to his psychic constitution, as it can form a screen to deal with the Real in the face of the lack of the Other, represented by the fantasy formula - $\$$ puncture of a (lost object) - $\$ \diamond a$, and then the one located in the desire graph. The subject does something with this situation of helplessness, otherwise he would be facing continuous anguish. The fantasy makes it possible for him to build a family history and plot as a protective screen against anguish. According to Jorge (2010, p. 240), "if desire is a lack as such, fantasy is what sustains this radical lack at the same time that it illusively indicates 'what is missing'. There is lack, says desire. That's what's missing, says the fantasy. We can say that this garment is this veil that veils, that structures him in his relationships with his fellow men. It is worth mentioning that what matters to us in this research is precisely this moment when fantasy fails, when the veil falls and the subject is faced with the anguish of being the object of the Other's desire, the place of horror in fantastic tales. It is this place between reality and fiction that we highlight as similar to the point of anguish and horror provoked between dream and awakening.

This representation of *Che vuoi?* in the graph of desire perfectly illustrates this moment when the subject is faced with the lack of the Other. This moment of specular disruption of his fantasies is also a moment when anguish enters the scene, and the praying mantis metaphor used by Lacan (1962-1963/2005) is an appropriate illustration. The author invites us to imagine a scene in which a subject can put on an insect mask, a praying mantis, in front of another enormous praying mantis. If the huge insect is a female and the masked

one can be taken as a male, it will be able to devour it, because in the animal kingdom the female praying mantis, after their act of sexual copulation, usually devour the male praying mantis.

This experience, according to Lacan (1962-1963/2005), brings anguish to those who stand in front of this enormous praying mantis, because it is not known what it could want from the one who is masked. For the author, the subject could be placed, at that moment, as the object of this Other's desire, at constant risk of being devoured (SOLER, 2012). Another fact to be highlighted is that this experience happens at a scopical level, the praying mantis insect is the only insect with multifaceted vision, so that whoever is in front of it does not know where this female praying mantis is. Looking, leaving this object that is the subject in a place of incognito and ignorance. This experience can refer us to the experience of satisfaction, from the mother's gaze to her object, the baby subject. It is a look that, even though it satisfies the baby's needs, hunger, cold, being held, relaunches him to the field of demand and desire, to the place of helplessness and anguish, "What do you want?", highlighting what Lacan will tell us: "The desire of man is the desire of the Other" (LACAN, 1962-1963/2005, p. 31). How this Other is marked by a lack, by a hole, by a signifier of the lack of the Other $S(\mathcal{A})$, the baby subject is summoned to his desiring place, his fantasy makes a hole in the form of anguish, to his *unheimlich*, to his estrangement.

The praying mantis mask can be thought of as a fantasy, as a mediation between the subject and the Other, which does not place him directly and face-to-face with the huge insect. This mask veils it, as the place of fantasy that we just saw, as a screen for anguish, and perhaps we can transpose it into the context of fantastic tales, in which the narrative structure transits between reality and fiction, truth and

lies. , thus revealing the point of anguish, and facing the real, in an encounter with this real, *tiquê*, according to Lacan (1962-1963/2005, p. 59).

Fiction not only demonstrates the *Unheimlich* better, but also makes it possible to see the function of fantasy in it. Fantastic literature shows the structure of fantasy fiction – it is a literature that progresses until it culminates in the instant of seeing in its articulation with fantasy. This is the form of literature that most explores the fantasy scene when it escapes the "as if", "when it loses the significant dimension that protects it by the surrounding metaphor" (RABINOVICH, 1993, p. 94).

For Freud (1919/2019), in several other moments in the life of the character Nathaniel, from Hoffmann's short story *O Homem da Areia* - an author considered outstanding in fantastic literature - he tells the experience with his mother in childhood. This experience tells of a mother anxious to put the children to bed early and a nanny saying that if they didn't obey the Sandman, he would come and pluck out their eyes. Other scary characters appear in the tale like Mr. Coppelius and Mr. Coppola, repeating Nathaniel's experience of anxiety in the face of his castration complex. The fictional investment and the intensity of the threshold with something real can cause and transfer anguish and horror to the reader when faced with the enigma of his own castration. The insistence in the form of a 'repetition compulsion' takes place in the unconscious which Freud (1920/1996) tries to show through various manifestations. For the author, what insists and repeats is placed in a strange way, but at the same time it is something familiar and known, dislodging the subject from his own 'I', from his own home (Freud, 1919/2019) and placing him in front of what escapes his control, in front of his unconscious.

The terror of the tale brings us back to what do you want from me? putting us in direct contact with the experience of helplessness and anguish. As shown by the experience of the graph of desire (LACAN, 1962-1963/2005), there is a passage from the 1st to the 2nd level, in which the subject is first faced with the state of anguish, for being the object of the jouissance of the Other, facing his own castration, but he is also crossed by this disquieting and disturbing experience regarding the enigma of the Other's desire "What do you want?". To make himself recognized by the other, he seeks to identify himself through language, which will relaunch him to the place of loss as an object, ceasing to be an object, "through the recognition of the Other, as a human subject" (RABINOVICH, 2009, p. 109).

unconscious, of our deepest feelings and desires as humans, a path that can cause us horror and surprise, but which can also bring familiarities, new discoveries and revelations about ourselves.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In conclusion, we psychoanalysts can bridge the gap between dreaming and waking up and take it as analogous to the narrative structure of fantastic tales. This vacillation point of fantasy, that between reality and fiction, this uncertainty whether it is reality or fiction, leads us to the core of the fantastic, allowing us to encounter horror, the strange, another scene, our unconscious, what can lead us to walk with Freud (1907/2015) when he says that poets are ahead of psychoanalysts in the knowledge of the psyche.

We can reflect a little in the present work on this "between", this interval, this hesitation caused in the subject reader between reality and fiction, of this place as an object of the Other's desire, as a point of anguish and the subject's desire to continue dreaming, where somehow the son presents him as alive, so he doesn't have to face the horror and anguish of losing his son. Both the trauma of the dream, its interval between dream and awakening, and the fantastic tale can bring news of our

REFERENCES

- BOKANOVSKI, T. Variações do conceito de traumatismo: traumatismo, traumático, trauma. **Revista brasileira de psicanálise**, n. 39, n. 1, p. 27-38, 2005.
- FREUD, S. A interpretação dos sonhos. P.C. de Souza (Trad.) In: **Obras completas de Sigmund Freud**. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2019. Originalmente publicado em 1900.
- FREUD, S. Delírios e sonhos na Gradiva de Jensen. Tradução: J. Salomão. In: **Obras completas de Sigmund Freud, volume IX**: Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 2019. Originalmente publicado em 1907 [1906].
- FREUD, S. O poeta e o fantasiar. Arte, Literatura e os Artistas. Tradução: E. Chaves. In: **Obras incompletas de Sigmund Freud**. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2015. Originalmente publicado em 1908.
- FREUD, S. O Infamiliar (*Das Unheimliche*). Tradução: E. Chaves e P. H. Tavares. In: **Obras incompletas de Sigmund Freud**. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2019. Originalmente publicado em 1919.
- FREUD, S. Além do Princípio do Prazer. Tradução: M. R. S. Moraes. In: **Obras incompletas de Sigmund Freud**. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2020. Originalmente publicado em 1920.
- FREUD, S. Projeto para uma psicologia científica. Publicações pré-psicanalíticas. Edição e Tradução: ABREU, J. O. In: **Obras completas de Sigmund Freud, volume I**. Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 1987. Originalmente publicado em 1950 [1895].
- LACAN, J. **O seminário, livro 10**: A angústia. Tradução: V. Ribeiro. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2005. Originalmente publicado em 1962 [1963].
- LACAN, J. **O seminário, livro 6**. O desejo e sua interpretação. Tradução: C. Berliner. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2016. Originalmente publicado em 1958 [1959].
- RABINOVICH, Diana S. **La angustia y el deseo del outro**. Buenos Aires: Manantial, 1993.
- RABINOVICH, D. **O conceito de objeto na teoria psicanalítica**. Rio de Janeiro: Companhia de Freud, 2009.
- RODRIGUES, S. C. **O Fantástico**. São Paulo: Editora Ática, 1988.
- SOLER **O inconsciente. Que é isso?** São Paulo: Anna Blume, 2012.
- TODOROV, T. **Introdução à literatura fantástica**. Tradução: M. C. C. Castello. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2010. Originalmente publicado em 1939.
- TODOROV, T. **As estruturas narrativas**. Tradução: L. Perrone-Moisés. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2008. Originalmente publicado em 1939.