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# Dickensian Physiology of Memory: Recall, Redintegration, and the Historical Novel

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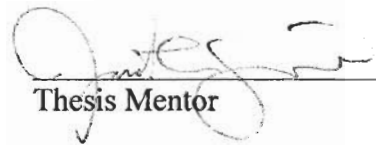
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DICKENSIAN PHYSIOLOGY OF MEMORY: RECALL, REDINTEGRATION,  
AND THE HISTORICAL NOVEL

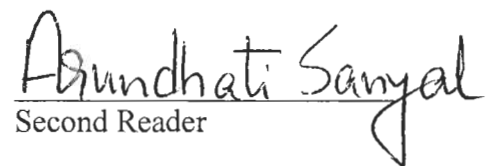
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Dickensian Physiology of Memory: Recall, Redintegration,  
and the Historical Novel

Sir William Hamilton asserts that memory functions by the law of Associationism, defined by Davis as “a mechanism by which one thought automatically called up another close to it, on the basis of the impressions left in the mind by the force of external events working upon the senses. Establishing physical channels along the nerves and brain, the memory of sensory experience would set going a train of thought” (175). Hamilton posits the existence of “lost” cognitions that are enveloped in a dormant state, pushed back into the unconscious, and yet still remain faintly interconnected to the present by a chain of association. The revitalization of such trains requires an active, willed resurrection on the part of stronger cognitions. This willful resurrection opposed John Stuart Mill’s more popularly-accepted, dominant theory of passive memory, but I want to suggest that Hamilton’s theory, although by and large derided by Victorian reviews (thanks to Mill’s powerful critique), nevertheless explicitly articulates a theory of memory that predominated Victorian fiction in implicit forms.

In this paper, I intend to articulate Dickensian psychology of the historical novel in relation to Hamilton’s explicative discourse on cognitive process. In conducting a thorough analysis of *A Tale of Two Cities* as exemplary of his “historical sense,” I will establish two claims: first, that the pages of the novel materially embody his working consciousness--forming a printed representation of authorial mental sequencing organized into a unified, or, to use Hamiltonian terminology, redintegrative narrative--second, that the characters in the novel incarnate individual cognitions inhabiting the mind, both active in the light of consciousness and

depressed in unconscious dormancy. Targeting the theme of resurrection in *A Tale of Two Cities*, the healthy, vigorous cognitions, personified by Lucie Manette and Sydney Carton breathe life into the enervated cognitions of Doctor Manette and Charles Darnay in an act of resuscitation from unconscious death, and thus revive the chain of association through the process of memory. Memory, then, serves as the novel's vital consciousness, recollecting the forgotten associations of the past and lifting them up into a redintegrative present.

#### Works Cited

Davis, Philip. *The Victorians*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print. The Oxford English Literary History Vol. 8.

Dickensian Physiology of Memory: Recall, Redintegration,  
and the Historical Novel

Memory would come like a rope let down from heaven  
to draw me up out of the abyss of not-being,  
from which I could never have escaped by myself.  
--Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past*

Dickens published *A Tale of Two Cities* serially in 1859, the same year Sir William Hamilton came out with his *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*. The concomitant publication is hardly coincidental; Hamilton's explications of human cognitive processing and Dickens's "historical sense" coincide quite seamlessly, as if the elucidation of one was structured to aid the other. Hamilton asserts that memory functions by the law of Associationism, defined by Davis as "a mechanism by which one thought automatically called up another close to it, on the basis of the impressions left in the mind by the force of external events working upon the senses. Establishing physical channels along the nerves and brain, the memory of sensory experience would set going a train of thought" (175). Hamilton posits the existence of "lost" cognitions that are enveloped in a dormant state, pushed back into the unconscious, and yet still remain faintly interconnected to the present by a chain of association. The revitalization of such trains requires an active, willed resurrection on the part of stronger cognitions. This willful resurrection opposed John Stuart Mill's more popularly-accepted, dominant theory of passive memory, but with this paper I want to suggest that Hamilton's theory, although by and large derided by Victorian reviews (thanks to Mill's powerful critique), nevertheless explicitly articulates a theory

of memory that predominated Victorian fiction in implicit forms. Alexander Bain supported this articulation of active stimuli in his comprehensive study *The Senses and the Intellect*.

Importantly, Dickens's and Hamilton's philosophies conjoin in so far as they maintain that willful individual action produces harmonious collective memory. According to Hamilton, the proper excitation of certain cognitions invigorates the entire chain, recalling the whole associative train to life by the unitary principle of Redintegration. Although I may seem to be tracing the losing side of a Victorian argument, Rubin's *Memory in Oral Traditions* reinforces many of these fundamental concepts in the context of modern cognitive science by mapping the brain as a complex network of interconnected nodes from which wholes may be reconstructed in the wake of individual nodal stimulation. Thus this paper also seeks to initiate the resurrection of a strand of Victorian memory theory that prefigures modern cognitive theory.

In classifying Victorian England as "an age so acutely aware of the value and relevance of an historical sense" (Sanders 16), a sense not of pastness alone but of the complete temporal trajectory hurtling resolutely into the future, Andrew Sanders perceives the spirit of cultural hybridity embodied in the historical novelist. His study *The Victorian Historical Novel 1840-1880* presents the novelist as an historian and prophet representative of, on the one hand, collective English society clamoring for a regeneration of the past as a means to reinforce a faltering present, and on the other the individuation necessary to initiate this regeneration. The author's act, therefore, is a cognitive one; the writing of the historical novel illuminates the linearity of time through the act of personal memory, by breathing life into a past that always envelopes the present. Sanders triangulates the novelist, the work he creates, and the history from which the work derives consciousness, and unites them as a single memory process enacted for the purpose of sociocultural remediation.

Nicholas Rance and Avrom Fleishman place Dickens's historical novel theory in the context of Carlylian philosophy. In *The English Historical Novel*, Fleishman acknowledges Carlyle's narratological and imaginative influence on Dickens, particularly in his multivolume work *The French Revolution*, and in his Romantic discourses on the dynamic, resurrectionist aspects of history. Both writers structure their histories as concatenations of "antiquarianism and progressivism" (Fleishman 109) so that the transitional element--an essentially associationistic interconnective medium--of contemporary English society could emerge as their work's vital consciousness. Like Carlyle, Fleishman observes that Dickens stressed the need to impress an active historical sense in the minds of individuals, and that he sought the strengthening of this sense through education; however, the respective ends to which Dickens directs this action reveal a crucial phenomenological difference. Individual units, in Dickens's novels, are interrelated, and this interrelation indicates a collectivist philosophy that consists of individuals intrinsically linked to form a societal whole. On the other hand, Rance's *The Historical Novel and Popular Politics* defines Carlyle's attitude toward society as a conceptualization of fragmentary, unconnected units, where everything begins and ends in isolation. Vis-à-vis this distinction, Rance suggests that Dickens departs from Carlyle in the formulation of historical fiction, specifically when considering the novel, like Sanders, as an act of memory.

More recently, Nicholas Dames downplays the centrality of associative recall in the nineteenth century, though he concedes that it was still very much alive as a residue of eighteenth-century thought. *Amnesiac Selves* advocates an expressly Carlylian taxonomy of novel consciousness under the term "nostalgia," a selective process of memory that allows for the extraction of individual memory fragments. This notion of nostalgic remembrance (or, forgetfulness) proposes a break in the association of ideas, a doctrine whose principles with



regard to memory pervaded eighteenth-century psychology and carried over into the nineteenth century. Dames doubts this continued influence. He endeavors to replace the “outdated” associationist psychology with nostalgia, which denotes a classified retrospect responsible for the recollection of only pleasant memories while the “opposite is just as naturally forgotten; its necessary compliment is a folding back into forgetting” (*Amnesiac* 6). In separating memory from cognition, Dames categorizes the novel as a discourse of utility that only takes the necessary from a predominantly lifeless past--the arbitrary piecing together of fragmentary remembrances to ensure a pleasant, but incomplete, future. Another of Dames’s works, *The Physiology of the Novel*, also neglects memory as an element of novel consciousness, severing it from the history it seems to represent, but provides significantly more argumentation for the binding nature of the novel form. First, Dames recognizes the novel itself as “a mode of cognitive activity” (*Physiology* 45) and proceeds to link the writer to the reader through a transcription and subsequent adoption of consciousness via the novel. The written work, a concretized representation of the author’s consciousness, becomes the reader’s consciousness through the act of silent reading.

Cognitive literary theory analyzes the innate coalescence of basic human thinking, including the memory process, and narrative or story. Mark Turner’s *The Literary Mind* discusses the ability to generate metaphors as a linguistically inherent property; that, in the act of narration, the human mind projects spatial stories onto non-spatial stories to better understand the event through physical representation. The novel works in the same way, its tangibility revealing, in the material projection of concrete image-schemas--i.e. spatial stories--the internal consciousness of the author. The novel, then, embodies the mind, in that the narrative performs mental acts equivalent to human cognition: “The mind is essentially literary” (5). Metaphor

allows novelists to solidify abstraction, such as the conceptualization of mental states or death, in human bodies, spatial location, objects, and so on. In his essay “Poetry: Metaphor and the Conceptual Context of Invention,” Turner uses the conventional pairing of “journey” and “life” as an example of image-schematic projection; the spatial action-story of a journey is projected (intuitively) on the non-spatial event-story of life. In this way, the speaker formulaically concretizes ambiguity.

Applying Turner’s methodology of narrative metaphor construction to *A Tale of Two Cities*, I suggest that Dickens projects the spatial action-story of characters within the historical context of the French Revolution onto the essential historical narrative function of authorial associative memory representation. Appropriately naming the first book of the novel “Recalled to Life,” Dickens embodies “dead” or what Hamilton termed “latent” cognitions cast down in the depths of the unconscious in the imprisoned Doctor Manette:

The faintness of the voice was pitiable and dreadful. It was not the faintness of physical weakness, though confinement and hard fare no doubt had their part in it. Its deplorable peculiarity was, that it was the faintness of solitude and disuse. It was like the last feeble echo of a sound made long and long ago. So entirely had it lost the life and resonance of the human voice, that it affected the senses like a once beautiful color faded away into a poor weak stain. So sunken and suppressed it was, that it was like a voice underground.  
(43)

When considering this description with reference to memory, we must interpret the physical frailness, on the one hand, as an individual cognition and, on the other, in relation to a collective train of association. The novel establishes the Bastille Saint-Antoine, the structural prison confining Manette in darkness and neglect, as analogous to the unconscious mind, which is itself a prison-house that subjects its captive cognitions to death and forgetfulness. The dispossessed thought becomes weaker in the course of its spatial detachment--spatial both in time (days, months, or years removed from its source) and location (physical separation by iron bars)--

manifest as a “stain” of its former self. Dickens delineates this loss of vitality in terms of elevation. Metaphorically, we associate a physical weakening or enfeeblement with a “sinking underground,” a spatial dislocation that implies depression into a lower level of being. Manette’s prison-cell may well have been underground, for the darkness does not suggest its actual location above the wine-shop, but rather it is a buried and forgotten space far from the light of the sun. According to Carlyle’s essay “Characteristics,” the mind is structured in the same way: he places the unconscious, which for him represents the ideal existential habitat, underneath the level of consciousness, and envisions a ladder-construction along which cognitions rise and fall between the two states of mental life. Dickens adopts this conceptual escalator of the mind, but as with most aspects of Carlylian philosophy he changes certain of its characteristic implications. The unconscious domain, though retaining Carlyle’s subterranean associations, becomes for Dickens a cognitive morgue from which hopelessly lost thought, like Manette, may be carried back up to life.

In a more collective sense, this passage parallels Manette as Bastille-prisoner to the deteriorated associationist train animating, or barely inhabiting, the historical novelist’s mind. The description accomplishes this by expressing physical weakness in terms of vocal resonance. In general, verbal articulation reflects the memory process by stringing together thoughts in an associative arrangement and projecting them in linear progression. If the active, willed sequence of speech mirrors conscious association, then the “feeble echoes of sound” symbolize a more passive, unconscious dormancy. Echoes are not sounds themselves, but are set in motion by an active initial sound; the bonds that link echoes to each other, then, are artificial, synthetic imitations of conscious chains. They become less real with increased separation from living consciousness, until “a poor weak stain” is all that remains from a “once beautiful color.”

Recollection, in this passage, can be understood as a recall to reality.

In this paper, I intend to articulate Dickensian psychology of the historical novel in relation to Hamilton's explicative discourse on cognitive process. In conducting a thorough analysis of *A Tale of Two Cities* as exemplary of his "historical sense," I will establish two claims: first, that the pages of the novel materially embody his working consciousness--forming a printed representation of authorial mental sequencing organized into a unified, or, to use Hamiltonian terminology, redintegrative narrative--second, that the characters in the novel incarnate individual cognitions inhabiting the mind, both active in the light of consciousness and depressed in unconscious dormancy. Their interaction, the transitional moment of past and present synthesis, thematizes the psychology of the historical novel. Targeting the theme of resurrection in *A Tale of Two Cities*, the healthy, vigorous cognitions, personified by Lucie Manette and Sydney Carton breathe life into the enervated cognitions of Doctor Manette and Charles Darnay in an act of resuscitation from unconscious death, and thus revive the chain of association through the process of memory. Dickens's characters Doctor Manette and Charles Darnay, locked away in their respective prisons, embody the faint, enfeebled, lost cognitions trapped within the prison of the unconscious mind. From this state of death and forgottenness, the former prisoners are restored to life, the latter to consciousness; and out of this redintegration springs the conscious life of the historical novel. Memory, then, serves as the novel's vital consciousness, recollecting the forgotten associations of the past and lifting them up into a redintegrative present.

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Nineteenth-century English culture experienced a heightened sense of historical accumulation in a present shaped by and enveloped in a living past. Advances in science, technology, and communication resulted in an unprecedented proliferation of scholarship that encouraged the reading public to look beyond the individual, and consider collective man as the product of origins and incremental change. In this way, to Victorian sensibility more so than any other, the human condition mirrored the natural world. Charles Lyell, writing his *Principles of Geology* in 1830, pressed that the holistic view of the earth is essentially an amalgam of componential alteration over time, fusing past and present in an inseparable bond of cause and effect. Darwin followed in a similar vein, promoting temporal adhesion in describing the evolutionary process of living things in his unexpectedly popular *The Origin of Species*. These two innovative, and in ways revolutionary, researches together placed the entirety of physical nature in the context of a necessarily cohesive, organic past, within which the events are both interrelated among themselves and directly related to the present reality.

The linearity of history, a uniquely interconnected series of elements that coalesce in a dynamic, ever-changing whole as Lyell and Darwin propose, echoes associationist psychology. Historical events and faint, distant cognitions or thoughts share similar properties, in their apparent dispersal from any points of commonality. This independent movement following detachment from anything currently recognizable cannot continue indefinitely, and must lead to a dropping off of severed thoughts or histories into the cognitive death of forgetfulness. But the association of events in time, like that of mental impressions, ensures the linkage of even the most insignificant episodic moments, aligning history, as the intertwined sequence of all past events, with mental processing. Specifically, the associationistic cognitive process of memory represents a microcosm of the historical trajectory within the mind of the individual as part of

history. Victorian thinkers across a range of disciplines continually grappled over the complex functions of human memory, producing an extensive phenomenological survey that I will touch upon later. For now, I wish to establish the grounding of memory conception in associationist doctrine. From the eighteenth century, an age saturated with associative thought, to modern cognitive science, the memory process has suggested the excitation of a train of interrelated cognitive echoes. The clarity of particular reminiscences depends on the relative strengths of the associative bonds connecting juxtaposed mental phenomena. Bonds rendered weak due to prolonged unconscious habitation can experience reinforcement from conscious stimuli. This said, the point of departure must again be stressed: revitalization presupposes the existence, however feeble, of links in the chain of psychosomatic life. Given the recurring associative nature of memory in philosophical, physiological, and scientific discourse, it cannot be too revolutionary now, as it was for Lyell and Darwin, to say that “history is an act of memory” (Sanders 20), or, more concretely, history *is* memory itself. Nineteenth-century understanding saw history as a subject to be internally processed rather than something objectively finished and separate from the present.

The Victorian novelist acted as interpreter of society’s collective historical consciousness and transcribed this memory process into historico-literary manuscript form. The English wanted more than solace in a romantic past; they desired to initiate a domino effect of remembrance to reproduce the comprehensive historical condition from which they could derive social cures. The novelist took on the role of initiator, and his production of historical fiction embodies the spark that stimulates the train of association; as Sanders observes, “The historical novels offer a resolution of social ill in the hope of regeneration which extends from the individual outwards” (72).

Concentration on the individual as prime mover is fundamental to associationist physics, though its positioning within the structural function is centrally fixed. Individual stimuli fire retroactive recall to inform present consciousness, while simultaneously looking ahead toward future progression:

To the Victorian historical novelists the past was not frozen by eternity, nor was it, unlike the scenes of Keats's Grecian Urn, rendered eternal, silent, and unrevised by art. To Scott's successors history was contemporary, synchronic and enveloping; it was living and vibrating in the present, and the artist represented its reality as if it were an act of personal memory. The past reinforced rather than undermined the present. Though to many Victorians the past, like the sea lapping Tennyson's Ithaca, moaned with many voices, those voices seemed to call for continued advance into the future. (31)

As the individual responsible for engendering this temporal hybridity, the historical novelist synchronizes a definite past and a speculative future in the novel by articulating his own memory process. History, analogous to memory according to associationist theory, ostensibly acts as the work's living consciousness, while the novelist creates a physical representation of personal contemplative recollection. This concretization of recollective mental phenomena animates the historical fiction of Charles Dickens.

Carlyle's far-reaching ideological influence on Dickens cannot be denied, particularly concerning the psychological structure of his historical narratology. Dickens has himself professed to have devoured his colleague's colossal account *The French Revolution* hundreds of times. He had the two-volume edition of the work in his library at the time of his writing *A Tale of Two Cities*, in the preface of which he provides the preliminary remark:

Whenever any reference (however slight) is made here to the condition of the French people before or during the Revolution, it is truly made, on the faith of trustworthy witnesses. It has been one of my hopes to add something to the popular and picturesque means of understanding that terrible time, though no one can hope to add anything to the philosophy of Mr. Carlyle's wonderful book. (3)

Both Carlyle and Dickens, as literary historians, translated their working consciousnesses into

narrative, infusing the accounts with their privately experienced associative dynamism. Rance confirms the psychological transferal of self on the part of the novelist by quoting Dickens, observing, “The Revolution was painfully contemporary history for [him]: ‘I have so far verified what is done and suffered in these pages, as that I have certainly done and suffered it all myself’” (85). He directly parallels the expressed narrative suffering and endured psychological suffering, and in so doing creates an unmistakable analogy of consciousness between the intrinsically linked mediums of mind and story. Each share a similar hope of social revitalization through the individual in a broadening of historical imagination via education, “that the world, both of nature and history, is dynamic; that its natural course is destruction and renewal” (Fleishman 117). Indeed, individual stimulation denotes a vital principle of associationism. But only Dickens proceeds beyond the individual to realize the doctrine’s collective ends. Carlyle, considering only isolative units, neglects to acknowledge the existence of associative, interconnected bonds required for Dickensian resurrectionist theory. He conceptualizes individual resuscitative possibility that denies interactive recollection. Rance encapsulates Carlyle’s anti-associationist phenomenology, establishing that he “did not recognize in a people any collective life or collective aim. He recognizes only individuals. For him, there is not and cannot be any intelligible chain of connection between cause and effect” (93), whereas “Dickens’s grasp of history [...] as an expression of the collective experience” (Sanders 69) suggests the latter’s more accurate representation of the historical (memory) trajectory relocated from mind to page.

Dickens’s deviation from Carlylian metaphysics is evident throughout *A Tale of Two Cities*, by which publication he identifies himself not with his idol philosopher but as quintessential Victorian historical novelist. Again, I do not disregard Dickens’s indebtedness to *The French Revolution*, nor to Carlyle in general; however, his defining of historical novel



consciousness as associative memory processing signifies a contrary historico-literary approach. Interestingly, even his method of publication suggests part and whole association, as the monthly installments throughout the year of 1859 culminating in the eventual full narrative reflect the unitary principle of individual cognitions assumed into the light of mental consciousness.

Dickens establishes a monochromatic dialectic of life and death that pulsates relentlessly throughout *A Tale of Two Cities*, illuminating resurrection--a physical, spiritual, and psychological "recalling to life"--as its recurring theme. Sanders notes that "for Dickens, the parallel with nature suggested that the individual citizen could also experience death and resurrection. For Bulwer history regenerates itself; for Dickens it is man who can be reborn amid his inheritance of confusion, sin, and death" (72). We are reminded here of the regenerative nature of history; that, in recreating a past of revolution and turmoil Dickens constructs, or reconstructs, in verbalized form his unpleasant memory, recall by painful recall from unconscious death. The dialectic, then, formulates organically as the narrative progresses, and as it drives forward inoculates the deaths of the past and incorporates them into a living present. In conducting a historical study of unjust persecution and the redemptive power of love, Dickens projects a cognitive study of debilitating forgetfulness and the resuscitative power of memory.

Endeavoring to present a novelistic explication of psychological functionality, Dickens enters into the dialogue of contemporary, and pre-contemporary, associationist discourses. Contrary to certain recent studies that suggest the petering out of associationist theory in the nineteenth century (Nicholas Dames's *Amnesiac Selves*, for example), an intellectual war over its principles raged throughout Victorian psychology. The theory's assumptions, codified severally into precepts of slightly varying specificity by a host of scholars, were not dismissed as

nineteenth-century thought progressed but rather were subject to constant explanation and renovation. Fragmentary associative intimations have been recorded as early as Aristotle, conventionally recognized as the first associationist thinker. In his *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, he writes, rather ambiguously,

When, therefore, we accomplish an act of reminiscence, we pass through a certain series of precursive movements, until we arrive at a movement on which the one we are in quest of is habitually consequent. Hence, too, it is that we hunt through the mental train, excogitating from the present or some other, and from similar or contrary or coadjacent. Through this process reminiscence takes place. For the movements are, in these cases, sometimes at the same time, sometimes parts of the same whole. (Maher 201)

The circumlocutory, almost unsure way of describing cognitive process indicates the extremely nascent stage of associationist reasoning. However oblique the explication, Aristotle, in a sense, sets in motion inverse chronological associationism, propelling futuristic “movements” that “hunt” and “arrive” at the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes’ psychological discourse contributed to the importance of mental sequencing, assuming the role of initiator from Aristotle as the prime mover of associationist thought in the modern period. John Locke, immediate precursor and forefather of popular eighteenth-century phenomenology, coined the phrase “Association of Ideas” and supplied a pool of thoughts from which David Hume and David Hartley organized the dominant mental theory of the age, and one that still influences the cognitive sciences.

The “Associationist School” of the nineteenth century, of which Dickens unwittingly became a member, sought to utilize the momentum produced by Neoclassical cognitive philosophy and extrapolate associative theory to reach a more complete understanding of mental resuscitative processing. Alexander Bain, prominent member of the “school” and propagator of multiple analyses of bodily (mental and physical) phenomena, acknowledged the interchangeability of historical novel consciousness and associationistic movement by

“attempt[ing] a large-scale description of genre, in which it might be possible to rename ‘the novel’ [...] as *a mode of cognitive activity*, even (perhaps) a mirror of modern cognition itself” (*Physiology* 45). Bain’s associationism, as well as that of John Stuart Mill and George Henry Lewes, respectively, influenced Dickens’s psychological consciousness, but no other contemporary philosophy better concurs with and informs Dickensian novel physiology than Sir William Hamilton’s cognitive discourse *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*, specifically his exposition on memory. The following section will explore on a case-by-case basis the elemental inoculation of *A Tale of Two Cities* and Hamiltonian theory of recollection. To set up this exploration requires certain terminological clarifications. Dickens’ aforementioned dissociation with Carlyle on the grounds of a preferred collective consciousness, which denotes a parts to whole (resurrectionist) world view, correlates directly with Hamilton’s ultimate “grand law” of Redintegration. To Hamilton, the act of association--that is, memory--is governed by Redintegration, the totalizing principle that renders the entirety of the chain of recollection a single, unified whole *alive* in the light of conscious thought. It is the cognitive equivalent of universal oneness. This illuminates a common goal among the two discourses: a desire to achieve, through individual willed initiation, redintegrative wholes by the revivification of associational bonds.

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Writers of any genre necessarily concretize their abstract ideas and thoughts into words, and organize these significations into cohesive narrative form. What distinguishes the historical novelist is not, therefore, simply an expressed reconfiguration of peculiar mental states

transferred to the page; rather, the difference lies in the specific nature of the narrative expressed. Indeed, the historical novelist translates his mind into fiction, but in contemplating history--itself an act of memory--the narrative embodies the process of memory undergone during contemplation, and the characters, places, and objects that make up the story personify or otherwise concretize mental phenomena that make up the mind. Mark Turner's *The Literary Mind* explains this transcription as the natural product of our innate metaphorical propensity, coalescing and assuming the mind and narrative up into the (redintegrative) totality of thought. He commences his study with the foundational cognitive assertion that "the mental instrument I call narrative or story is basic to human thinking" (7), and he appeals to human biological and sociocultural origins and development, observing that "we are built evolutionarily to learn to distinguish objects and events and combine them in small spatial stories at human scale. [...] The general story is that human beings construct small spatial stories and project them parabolically" (15).

In relating functional complexity of the "mental instrument," namely recollective processing, the historical novelist intuitively represents intangible concepts intelligibly by encapsulating and presenting phenomenological essence in a form accessible to the reading public. This educative approach to manuscript writing renders the historical novelist an effective philosophical instructor of the masses, in stressing practical explication over esoteric theoretical jargon. "Abstract thought and reasoning," Turner argues, "are always grounded, through a kind of archaeology of the mind, in spatial and bodily stories; [...] our understanding of social, mental, and abstract domains is formed on our understanding of spatial and bodily stories" (51).

Referring once again to the Bastille prison scene in the first book of *A Tale of Two Cities*, I will show the physical portrayal and interaction of the characters to embody the psychological

interplay of cognitional resuscitation in the mind of Dickens, illuminating memory as historical novel consciousness. To do this, I will juxtapose the action and events of Dickens's narrative with Sir William Hamilton's explication of memory processing in his work *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*. Published in the same year as *A Tale of Two Cities*, this projection makes a case for Hamilton and Dickens as co-authors of a multivolume work on cognitive psychology, comprised of the former's theoretical discourse followed by the latter's narrative explanation that employs accessible human representations. Hamilton "uses the term *Memory* exclusively to denote the faculty possessed by the mind of preserving what has once been present to consciousness, so that it may again be recalled and represented in consciousness" (208-209), fusing together the several auxiliary terms he used to define the different stages of the process, such as *Recollection*, *Reminiscence*, and *Reproduction*, under one common term that describes the entire process. Hamilton's definition of memory encapsulates the essence of the historical novel, and succinctly expresses the goal of the genre to which it belongs. Lost cognitions must be "preserved" and "recalled" according to Hamiltonian theory; in Dickens, we find Doctor Manette, lost and forgotten in the Bastille prison, as the one to save.

In addition to the characters as spatial image-schematic projections on non-spatial cognitions to embody the mind's animations, the physical location of the prison plays a crucial role in Dickensian psychological construction. Turner posits that "there are two alternative ways to conceive a state, as a *location* or as an *object*, but they combine and reinforce each other" (36), associating place and object as equally viable representations of mental phenomena. Earlier I introduced the delineation between the conscious and unconscious realms perceived in terms of elevated space. Applying Turner's conception of locational projection on mental states, the spatial location of the prison becomes the unconscious mind--a dark, restrictive space that

encases the faint cognitions the prisoner personifies. For Turner, the change of location holds the most significance, and echoes his aforementioned example of image-schematic projection concerning “journey” and “life.” The spatial movement helps us conceptualize non-bodily “movement” from one state to another. Similar to “journey” and “life,” Dickens’s narrative implies a “falling” on the part of the characters (cognitions) into a forgotten state (the unconscious, or, literally the prison). This is the state in which Lucie encounters Doctor Manette.

The task of recalling him from the vacancy into which he always sank when he had spoken, was like recalling some very weak person from a swoon, or endeavoring, in the hope of some disclosure, to stay the spirit of a fast-dying man. (Dickens 45)

Dickens’s vocabulary is precise here. “Sank” invokes the spatial image of falling, or gradually declining, into a lower level of being. The place of destination assumes the term “vacancy,” which suggests two possible definitions, one physical, the other psychological. The dual implication presented in the usage of “vacancy” coupled with the rest of the sentence indicates the novel’s first overt reference to the memory process as historical novel consciousness. “Vacancy,” the state into which the subject “sank,” denotes both a mental inactivity and a physical room, or office, that is unoccupied. By specifically using “vacancy” Dickens parallels Manette’s mental state that he has “fallen into,” i.e. the unconscious, to a room like the prison that envelopes him. Furthermore, the repetitive application of “recalling” bears several meanings that coalesce to entangle the novel in a web of memory. The most obvious of these meanings that relates this and other memory passages is “recollection,” or the re-collecting of past images in the light of present consciousness. That the other characters (other cognitions) are actively trying to recall, or recollect, Manette from the “vacancy” into which he “sank” suggests a desire to initiate the memory process and reassume the prisoner out of the “vacancy” of

unconsciousness. I will offer a more detailed explication of associative revivification later; presently, I wish to relate Manette's captive state to faint cognitions as they exist, however precariously, in the unconscious before excitation commences.

While on the subject of space, it is worth establishing Manette's sensual functionality, or lack thereof, in preparation for memory initiation and external perception. Hamilton observes that "the mind has ideally a native or necessary conception of space" (192), but he diagnoses a mind animate in a waking consciousness. He continues,

The objects of the former are all presented to us in Space and Time; space and time or thus the two conditions,--the fundamental forms, of external perception. The objects of the latter are all apprehended by us in Time and in Self; time and self are thus the two conditions,--the two fundamental forms, of Internal Perception or Self-consciousness. (190-191)

Notice "time" recurs in relation to both internal and external perception. Lost conception of time, then, can only imply unconscious habitation, as the conception of time remains a consistent condition on both planes of consciousness. In Manette's cell, the prisoner lives in complete darkness that offers no indication of the passage of time by external sign. Internally he focuses all existing energy on shoemaking, rendering him totally oblivious to any kind of temporal trajectory. Even during later excitation, he cannot remember when he was taken in, and he refuses to face the light to acknowledge the passage of night into day. Manette's responses to questioning indicate the inanition of past associations:

"Did you ask my name?"  
 "Assuredly I did."  
 "One Hundred and Five, North Tower."  
 "Is that all?"  
 "One Hundred and Five, North Tower." (Dickens 45)

In a cognitive sense, this vapid dissociation of all connecting strands of conscious life suggests the severe weakening of associative bonds set adrift in the acidic waters of the unconscious.

Such extreme detachment seems beyond recollective remediation. The conception of space, Hamilton's "native" property, is likewise lost to Manette, as he prefaces each of his mechanical movements with confused, compulsive glances about himself: "He never looked at the figure before him, without first looking down on this side of himself, then on that, as if he had lost the habit of associating place with sound" (Dickens 44). Dickens's use of "associating" regarding groups of objects or actions implicitly correlates external relationships and internal associationist physics, and therefore defines Manette's loss as associative in nature. Though they seem haphazard (and *are* unconscious), his repetitive, almost manic bodily twitches prove, in their mechanical specificity separated by exact intervals, the latent existence of a deeply internal associationism. The associations of time, identity, space, and sound are only lost to active consciousness; but down below the cognitions and the bonds connecting them are suspended, if by a thread, above obliteration.

Hamilton's ideas on the state of forgotten cognitions in part react against anti-associationist assumptions of unconscious death, as opposed to his own associative vision of death as latency. Hamilton stresses the notion of perpetual cognitive fading: that thoughts depressed into the unconscious realm become increasingly enfeebled the longer they dwell there, until they are invigorated with the rest of the chain. The cognitions cannot be fully destroyed, unless their destruction follows the destruction of the ego. He begins this part of his analysis with a simple delineation of mental states, as he writes, "We are conscious of certain cognitions as acquired, and we are conscious of these cognitions as resuscitated. That, in the interval, when out of consciousness, these cognitions do continue to subsist in the mind" (209). This clarification endeavors to defend various essential associationist claims, the validity of which depends upon the theory's assumptions concerning unconscious "life." If forgetfulness leads



necessarily to cognitional severance from the mental sphere after a certain amount of time or under certain conditions, the principle of Redintegration, that grand law of Totality identifying associationist theory as a part to whole phenomenological system, would be undermined. Thus Hamilton ascribes indefinite longevity to cognitions:

All the cognitions which we possess, or have possessed, still remain to us,--the whole complement of our knowledge still lies in our memory; but as new acquisitions are continually pressing in upon the old, and continually taking place along with them among the modifications of the ego, the old cognitions, unless from time to time refreshed and brought forward, are driven back, and become gradually fainter and more obscure. This obscuration is not, however, to be conceived as an obliteration, or as a total annihilation. (213)

This passage reflects Dickens's description of Manette as forsaken prisoner quite seamlessly. Certain phrases are interchangeable. Hamilton stipulates the capacity of cognitions for recurrent manifestations in the light of consciousness, as long as they once possessed active existence. To understand the impetus that drives the action of movement from one state "back" into the other, Hamilton, and so Dickens, employs image-schematic projection that Turner calls "force dynamics," translating the replacement of mental phenomena into literal pushing, or "driving." "Image-schemas of force dynamics," Turner explains, "are also used to structure non-physical causation; [...] causes are often understood by projecting onto them image-schemas of force dynamics" (29). Thoughts that once enacted replacement are subsequently (and forcefully) moved back, or down, into the unconscious by new thoughts that claim the individual's attention, and as they drift away from their associations the cognitions themselves, together with the interconnective bonds holding them together, get beaten into obscurity, forced to grow weaker with each new replacement. Conversely, the removed cognitions contribute to the force dynamic by fighting back, however vainly; but this struggle to regain lost recognition shows that they do in fact still exist, and it reinforces their capacity to rise again, under favorable and collective

conditions. As the visitors examine the unconscious state of Manette, they notice “some long obliterated marks of an actively intent intelligence in the middle of the forehead, gradually forced themselves through the black mist that had fallen on him. They were overclouded again, they were fainter, they were gone; but they had been there” (46). Though extremely weak, Manette as cognition shows embattled remnants of life, which “had been there” when he was strong and may again manifest themselves as part of a redintegrative whole. Dickens explicitly invokes cognitive force dynamics, and uses the term “forced” to represent non-spatial movement along the causeway between mental states. The “mist” Manette fights through is black, symbolizing the unsure journey through the unconscious (associated, again, with the darkness of the Bastille cell). Forced back to the mental deep, Dickens reaffirms Carlylian theory of psychological elevation, and again projects the spatial action-story of “falling” onto the rejected cognition. But most importantly for associationist memory, the dispossessed mental phenomena maintain a dormant existence that is conducive to re-excitation.

As we move to the next step of the process, that of external perception, individual initiation, and retroactive stimulation, a brief re-acquaintance with Dickensian collectivist philosophy offers perspective on his historico-literary direction as memory narrative. The phenomenological departure from Carlylian individualism to a theory based on action extended from the “individual outwards” allows for the narrative execution of associationist physics, as Dickens’s ultimate literary goal as parts to whole symbiosis develops counterpoint to Hamiltonian Redintegration. Though channeled through the self, these initiatory sensations that set the process in motion originate in a moment of arousal from external reality. Perceptual necessity, promoted by Hamilton, creates a hybridity of corporeal and spiritual nature that sets the precedent for psychological union between the conscious and unconscious. “Our knowledge

is all ultimately obtained by an *influx* or *incursion* from things external; which knowledge afterwards undergoes various modifications by means of analogy, composition, division, amplification, extenuation, and other similar processes” (196). This mutual dependence on one another outside ourselves, while individually playing an active role in the greater context of association, mirrors the resuscitative trajectory that starts from the memory spark and proceeds by the sequential revivification of associative components along the mental train. Concerning perception specifically, Hamilton discusses the sensual requirements for proper subject and object coalescence, and in doing so intuitively projects the image-schema of “touch” as metaphor representing the multiplicity of sense:

The only object ever perceived is the object in immediate contact,--in immediate relation with the organ. [...] My conclusion is, therefore, that, in all the senses, the external object is in contact with the organ, and thus, in a certain signification, all the senses are only modifications of Touch. (185-186)

Excitation presupposes more than close proximity; impression can only occur as a result of active, willed contact, where the initiator directly infuses life into the other through sensual interaction. Hamiltonian perception suggests cognitive theory application, where the contact of mental and corporeal existence is explicitly concretized in the form of physical touch. This expressly spatial interpretation of memory leads Hamilton to conclude, “No other mental power betrays a greater dependence on corporeal conditions than memory” (216).

In John Stuart Mill’s *System of Logic*, he denies active recollection and posits the assumption that “association proceeds by passive memory” (Davis 176). Though only one of his several arguments opposed to Hamiltonian metaphysics, the implications of this contrary idea of associational impetus are central to understanding cognitive functionality. On the other hand, Romantic phenomenology supports Hamilton’s (and Dickens’s) conceptualization of active psychological construction, as Coleridge (ventriloquizing Kant) argues “that we are not merely

passive sense-instruments but actively carry into the world with us antecedent frameworks, categories such as consciousness of time and space, which, like mental spectacles, enable us to bring the world to focal life” (177). Coleridgean discourse on the Imagination shares certain similarities with associationist theory, insofar as it envisions a combining power of mind that achieves part to whole integration. Regardless of contemporary influence, Hamilton stands firm on his principle of willful associationism, where an individual kindles the spark that can set the entire associative train ablaze. The “channel of sensation” (Hamilton 197) between the subject and the object, formed “as a modification of Touch” during external perception, denotes an aggressively constructed interconnective medium over which the flame of life passes to remediate weak and forgotten cognitions: “Knowledge is not acquired by a mere passive affection, but through the exertion of spontaneous activity on the part of the knowing subject” (Hamilton 211). Before Lucie begins her work as resurrectionist, the “exertion” performed on the part of the male visitors in the cell, namely Mr. Lorry and Defarge, in the “task of recalling him from vacancy” is evident, and this physical struggling is compounded by the “exertion” of Manette himself in his attempt to climb “through the black mist” of the unconscious prison. The psychological strain experienced in the cell at this moment in no way suggests passive activity.

Associationism could not yet commence, however, due to physical distance between subject and object. Despite the effort to rouse the lost cognition to consciousness and effectively “stay the spirit of [the] fast-dying man,” the various initiations were indirect and removed from sensual contact. This artificially excites disconnected, isolated parts of the chain, but the lack of structural support from the immediate relational bonds allows the temporarily invigorated intimation to “fall” from consciousness, as Hamilton explains:

For example, let us suppose that A and C are thoughts. [...] A excited B, but the excitement was not strong enough to rouse B from its state of latency, though strong

enough to enable it obscurely to excite C, whose latency was less, and to afford it vivacity sufficient to rise into consciousness. (244-245)

Until physical contact establishes a structurally sound interconnective medium, this sporadic “walking up and down” (Dickens 99) between mental states occurs at random. Indirect excitation interrupts the memory process; the agitation of G at the expense of D quells associative fluidity and renders Redintegration impossible. Lucie Manette, after hiding in the shadows of her father’s cell, assumes the role of active initiator in a desperate “exertion” to recall him from unconscious death.

Trembling with eagerness to lay the spectral face upon her warm young breast, and love it back to life and hope--so exactly was the expression repeated (though in stronger characters) on her fair young face, that it looked as though it had passed like a moving light, from him to her. [...] He recoiled, but she laid her hand upon his arm. A strange thrill struck him when she did so, and visibly passed over his frame. [...] His cold white head mingled with her radiant hair, which warmed and lighted it as though it were the light of Freedom shining on him. (Dickens 46-48)

Several Hamiltonian precepts coalesce in this passage, wherein Dickens translates the moment of memory stimulation in spatial form. Lucie establishes a mutual connection, placing *his* head on her breast and *her* hand on his arm, and she reforges the associative bond that has grown weak over time and circumstance. Once in contact, Manette experiences a “strange thrill” coursing through his internal self--a physical sensation that represents recollected life transferred from living consciousness directly into the unconscious cognitive body via the medium erected.

Hamilton describes this “thrill” in terms of electricity, observing that “each of these momentary circumstances is a kind of electric shock which is communicated to a certain portion,--to a certain limited sphere, of intelligence; and the sum of all these circumstances is equal to so many shocks which, given at once at so many different points, produce a general agitation” (256).

Subject and object are literally fused together. Beyond the physical connection of the head, hands, arm, and breast, their respective expressions reflect each other, though (naturally) to

varying degrees. Recalling Manette's faint, "obliterated marks" of past intelligence vaguely apparent in his visage, Lucie reveals the same expressive features, but of a more vivacious character. This mirror image reaffirms Hamilton's theory of cognitional latency. Enveloped in a dormant state, the cognitions maintain a hint of their previous life that resides like a "weak stain" on their once blooming face.

Following cognitive stimulation, the mind begins to reconstruct previous associations by reproducing suggestive patterns. Although interconnection persists throughout the mental train, individual cognitions directly related to one another must recognize others close by, and then those link onto the next, until the train regains continuity. Hamilton names this faculty *Reproduction*, described as the result of laws that regulate the associative process under which is bound "a ceaseless succession or train of thoughts, one thought suggesting another, which again is the cause of exciting a third, and so on" (229). The laws dictate associative reconstruction in elucidating the multiplicity of ways in which associations are recalled. Cognitive philosophy has, over the centuries, assigned a vast number of titles to these laws, but the laws themselves have in large part been indisputable. Thus to enumerate the changes of headings from Aristotle to Hamilton serves little purpose; the subject of analysis here is the spirit of the laws. Hamilton identifies two laws that gather associative data and inosculate to form a redintegrative whole in consciousness. The first, the law of *Simultaneity*, concerns associations on the grounds of time, including recollections that presuppose each other based on closeness in time (*Immediate Consecution*). The second he calls the law of *Affinity* (or, *Resemblance*), which he defines as follows: "The Affinity of Thoughts will be best illustrated by the cases of which it is the more general expression. In the first place, in the case of resembling, or analogous, or partially identical objects, it will not be denied that these virtually suggest each other" (234). Manette,

already connected through touch to the resurrectionist cognition that bears the light of consciousness, achieves the next step toward Redintegration by realizing these laws and bolsters associative strength through re-solidifying past connections.

Her golden hair, which she wore in long curls, had been hurriedly pushed aside, and fell down over her neck. Advancing his hand by little and little, he took it up and looked at it. [...] He laid down his work, put his hand to his neck, and took off a blackened string with a scrap of folded rag attached to it. He opened this, carefully, on his knee, and it contained a very little quantity of hair: not more than one or two long golden hairs, which he had, in some old day, wound off upon his finger. He took her hair into his hand again, and looked closely at it. "It is the same. How can it be! When was it! How was it!"  
(47)

Previously unable to speak, the prisoner suddenly envisions flashes of memory that attempt to pierce the unconscious "mist." The main law in consideration here is that latter of Affinity. Dickens attributes her hair, mingling with Manette's, as possessing two qualities: warmth, as opposed to Manette's "cold white head," and light, both of which are common symbols of conscious life. In this passage, he concentrates on her hair because it resembles to Manette a familiar but long lost glow of consciousness. Using the hair, or semblance of consciousness, as a point of comparison he recognizes his daughter to be a "partially identical object" of his deceased wife on the grounds of Affinity. This remembrance illuminates other bonds as a result, such as those memories associated with his wife, his abandoned child, and consequently his imprisonment. Affinity works together with Simultaneity, so that now he regains his lost conception of time on the associative momentum provided by the former law. In exacting the relationship between the supposed "identical objects" of wife and daughter, Manette suddenly admits that this identification cannot be possible, considering the age discrepancy of the two women. But Manette never would have been capable of age evaluation in his previous enfeebled state. This testifies to the interconnected network wherein resuscitation occurs not only at the point of concentration but spreads to related areas. In the wake of initiatory stimulation and the

instantaneous, binding laws of association, the prisoner-cognition Doctor Manette is “recalled to life” with the revitalization of his entire mental train “carried up into one supreme law of Association, which I call the law of Redintegration or of Totality” (Hamilton 239).

Dickens repeats this spatial memory process throughout the novel. Manette’s successive relapses into forgetfulness represent the author’s constant psychological setbacks, and his need for continual resuscitation to accurately narrate history as memory. Each time a relapse occurs, Dickens reiterates the stages of cognitive processing as outlined in the first prison scene, and he creates a dialectic where the theme of memory--or “recalling to life”--animates the novel’s consciousness. *A Tale of Two Cities* ends where it began: in a prison housing a forgotten cognition, this one faint with the anxiety of immanent death by execution. Here again, Dickens’s narrative prepares for associative recall through active, individual initiation by a conscious stimulus--this time embodied in the character Sydney Carton. Charles Darnay, the unfortunate prisoner-cognition alone in unconscious darkness, awakes the morning of his execution out of “oblivion, [...] unconscious where he was or what had happened” (Dickens 346), analogizing the contrary states of sleep and wakefulness as equal states of “oblivion” in unconscious dormancy. Locked in the prison of the unconscious mind, these activities are synonymous. Like Lucie, Carton as resurrectionist-cognition employs force dynamics to establish contact with the subject through which he can channel his energies, and “with wonderful quickness, and with a strength both of will and action, that appeared quite supernatural, he forced all these changes upon him. The prisoner was like a young child in his hands” (Dickens 348). Turner’s use of the term “manipulation” when discussing image-schematic projection of force dynamics applies more literally to Carton here than to Lucie, although the latter’s willful grasp does suggest a kind of manipulation. Turner elucidates in spatial terms Carton’s plan to instigate association,



explaining that “self-powered movement overlaps with manipulation of physical objects. To manipulate an object, we must often go to it, move our arm and hand toward it, grasp the object, and manipulate it” (43). Manipulation accomplishes all of Hamilton’s prerequisites for perception and initiation, namely in producing sense impression through touch and temporarily controlling one’s mind to excite a natural process that could not be excited under its own power. Carton moves his “arm and hand toward” the unwitting Darnay as he scribbles a letter to Lucie,

As he said these words with his eyes fixed on the writer, his hand slowly and softly moved down close to the writer’s face.  
 The pen dropped from Darnay’s fingers on the table, and he looked about him vacantly. “What vapour is that?” he asked.  
 “Vapour?”  
 “Something that crossed me?”  
 “I am conscious of nothing; there can be nothing here. Take up the pen and finish. Hurry, hurry!”  
 As if his memory were impaired, or his faculties disordered, the prisoner made an effort to rally his attention. (Dickens 349)

Dickens reverses his resurrectionist approach in this scene. Previously, the single intention of the active cognition was to initiate instantaneous universal ascension, where the vivacious thought maintained and the forgotten thought rose to consciousness. The unconscious cognition, then, experienced the sole act of resurrection. In this final scene, Dickens prefaces resurrection with sacrifice: Carton and Darnay, as the two sides of conscious existence, both plummet into the unconscious depths at the hands of conscious initiation, so that, from shared death, they may rise again to life. Interestingly, Carton actively “impairs” Darnay’s “memory”--seemingly counterproductive to historical narratology--in preparation for the application of memory later. Aside from this methodological inconsistency, the actual memory process proceeds in the same way as before, and results in the ultimate redintegrative manifestation of Darnay in the light of consciousness, “recalled to life” from the unconscious prison.

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After expounding my argument concerning the essentiality of memory in Victorian fiction, I would like to restate Nicholas Dames's position as elucidated in his book *Amnesiac Selves*, and in doing so place the contrary memory discourses in dialogue. In addition to the oppositional views of memory and Victorian fiction intersections, our respective interpretations of nineteenth-century psychology itself are likewise weighted heavily in favor of our own points of contention. Our ideas generally conflict on the issue of cognitive centrality in literature. Dames specifically categorizes Victorian memory as "a remembrance that leaves the past behind, [...] sealing off the past halts its contamination of the present" (*Amnesiac* 5), rejecting entirely a willingness to acknowledge and work within a historical trajectory that accepts the present as a product of past events, both physical and ideological. This statement does not imply a passive preference for present reality and future possibility, but rather an active denial of past influence--an aggressive cutting off of tradition in all its forms--with the hope that through forgetting we can protect ourselves against the unpleasant residue of painful memory. By turning a blind eye to history, we can live in a perpetual present where each moment becomes an unfettered creation that exudes a purposefully regulated, artificial yet pleasant measure of happiness. These supposed conceptions, Dames insists, were translated into and subsequently shaped Victorian fiction, forming a period-genre of literature that not only is content to forget but considers forgetting necessary and beneficial. He contends that "retrospective moments in Victorian fiction take the shape of disowning the specific recollections on which they might seem to depend" (*Amnesiac* 4).

Dames's interpretation of Victorian novel consciousness, then, is literally a process of

forgetting that begins with “nostalgia,” or “a highly selected, relevant, classified retrospect” (*Amnesiac* 127), and dissolves inevitably (and hopefully) into “the pathological forgetting we call amnesia” (*Amnesiac* 7), a process that at best ensures a personalized, subjective past that only exists as one wishes to see it. Literature always reflects contemporary trends in psychology, a truth that Dames does not deny; he diagnoses Victorian psychological explication “as a study of cognition, perception, and sensation--in essence, cognitive philosophy--than an inquiry into the dynamics of remembrance, repression, or genetic memory” (*Amnesiac* 9), somehow extracting memory, and with it associative theory, from the greater cognitive philosophy of the period. Associationism was primarily an eighteenth-century phenomenon (or craze) that bothered itself with memory theory, whereas the nineteenth century, according to Dames, “saw recollection as among the least compelling of the mental processes” (*Amnesiac* 9). The Victorian age, together with its literature, philosophical systems, and sociocultural ideology, saw no place for memory or in the study of its physiological complexity, as the past it seeks to recollect is neither connected to the present nor worth retrieving.

Dames, although sound in many of his specific fictional references and individual citation of passages, is on the whole rather misguided in his claims. Contrary to his vision of Victorian society’s neglect of the past for the comfort of a perpetual present, nineteenth-century culture was fascinated with the linearity of history and the constant envelopment of the present in a living, breathing, forever influential past. And there is no doubt that this preoccupation pervaded the literature. Here our discourses are most contradictory: I uphold that the process by which the novel receives consciousness is exactly the process Dames denies, namely the memory process as opposed to nostalgia and amnesia. Though I deal specifically with the historical novel, Dames groups all fiction under the same umbrella marked by the desire to forget, including historical

fiction. He may concede that the novel embodies the mind of the author, but that mind physically represented on the page longs for dissociation, whereas I argue for mind reconstruction based on association. Regarding Victorian psychology, we need only give a cursory glance to most psychological works by Bain, Mill, Lewes, Hamilton, and a host of others to find extensive and always present studies of memory physiology. Indeed, it is nearly impossible to find a Victorian account of cognitive philosophy where any dichotomy exists between “study of cognition” and “remembrance,” as perception, sensation, and memory are intimately bound by associationist principles that did anything but die in the eighteenth century.

Because of this widespread propagation of memory theory in Victorian discourse, I have resurrected another Hamiltonian mode of memory that not only expresses a characteristic form of Victorian cognition but also defines the novel’s physical and psychological structuring. This competing mode of novelistic memory functions alongside Mill’s critique of Hamiltonian cognitive processing and Dames’s modern conception of Victorian amnesia, and endeavors to reconstruct a forgotten strand of Victorian consciousness. *A Tale of Two Cities* functions as the reproductive medium through which this (associative) strand emanates, and thus invigorates Hamiltonian memory and reintegrates its principles into Victorian discourse. The novel, then, cannot be read (as Dames might) as a static narrative, solitary and alienated in an amnesiac present--but as omnipresent; alive and elevated on the scaffold where past suppression, present sacrifice, and future liberation reintegrate.

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