This essay examines two related Romantic figures: the figure of the mirror and the figure of the spectre. A focused rhetorical reading of some exemplary texts will demonstrate that the former corresponds to a self-contained structure of redoubling or self-duplication, which generates a paradoxically egotistical sense of community; and that the latter stands in for a structure of dedoubling, which is generative of alterity. The two also point to different strategies in reading, writing, and interpreting: the spectral emerges from the spectacle, presenting itself as a thoroughly disruptive revision, as a secondary event, or as an allegory. The contemporary term for this kind of disruptive structure is fancy or fantasy, and as the essay shows, it is a term that was specifically used to name a dynamic of trauma and fear.

The essay develops this argument in tracing the shift from duplication to spectrality in key writings by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth, and in using for its conclusion a reading of a highly self-conscious and integrative commentary by Thomas De Quincey. In addition, the discussion frames this shift by taking up at crucial turns a debate between Geoffrey Hartman and Paul de Man.

A lady once asked me whether I believed in ghosts and apparitions. I answered with truth and simplicity, *No, madam! I have seen far too many myself.* I have indeed a whole memorandum book filled with records of these Phaenomena, many of them interesting and data for Psychology, and affording some valuable materials for a theory of perception and its dependence on the memory and imagination.¹

1. Reflections
The prevalence of mirrors, echoes and related effects in Romantic literature and the singular enthusiasm that Romantic authors express for such instances of reflection have long been key points of reference.

The modern history of the critical reception of reflection goes as far back as M.H. Abrams’ *The Mirror and the Lamp*, which was first published in 1953. Abrams’s central argument revolved around the duplicity of duplication. Romantic writers, he argued, certainly take great delight in mirrors, but their point is precisely to leave behind such emblems of a strictly mimetic conception of writing. Art, that is, was no longer to be imitative of reality but prophetic of ideality: be the lamp, not the mirror; see and then break through seeing. Subsequent generations of readers have significantly revised Abrams’ assumptions and presumptions, but they have remained faithful to his essential intuition: Romantic mirrors are far from straightforward devices of one-on-one duplication. It is in its duplicitous capacity to conform as well as to deform, to redouble and to dedouble, that reflection has continued to excite interest, especially from those quarters of a more or less deconstructionist affiliation: Geoffrey Hartman has written widely on the topic as has Paul de Man; as have such commentators as Tilottama Rajan, Sean Gaston and Éric Dayre. So very persuasive has the hold of mirrors on the critical imagination become that in one essay Hartman develops the motif as an “emblem of interpretation”; as a critique of criticism itself. The following essay relies heavily on these texts and their critical or metacritical engagement with reflection: it develops from them the devices to conduct a persistently “rhetorical” reading of reflection, which means that it will ground its concepts in such terms as metaphor, symbol, metonymy and allegory. Its specific contribution is a nearer examination of the ways structures of duplication, which establish a paradoxically egotistical community, intersect with two other critical questions in keeping with the guiding themes of the present volume: “fear” and “fantasy”. To that end, the section immediately following

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