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# TECHNIQUES OF TERROR, TECHNOLOGIES OF NATIONALITY: ANN RADCLIFFE'S *THE ITALIAN*

BY CANNON SCHMITT

## I

It was said by Fletcher of Saltoun, "Let me make the ballads of a nation, and I care not who makes the laws." Might it not be said with as much propriety, Let me make the novels of a country, and let who will make the systems?

—Anna Letitia Barbauld<sup>1</sup>

The place of nationality in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* (1797) appears obvious: the text promises to reveal the secrets of an alien national identity to English readers. The novel's very title makes this promise, as does the much-admired frame tale that precedes the narrative proper. Anna Letitia Barbauld, in her introduction to Radcliffe's novels in *The British Novelists* (1810), writes of this frame:

Nothing can be finer than the opening of this story. An Englishman on his travels, walking through a church, sees a dark figure stealing along the aisles. He is informed that he is an assassin. On expressing his astonishment that he should find shelter there, he is told that such adventures are common in Italy.<sup>2</sup>

The Italian who has explained the mores of his strange country proceeds to give the English traveler a manuscript—one that, in good Gothic fashion, turns out to be *The Italian* itself. Though the assassin in the church does not figure in what follows, this lack of direct plot connection between prologue and tale confirms rather than negates the promise that the novel will exhibit and explain alien behavior. The otherwise unmotivated preamble on the ways of the Italians suggests that the text in its entirety should be taken as emblematic of Italianness, Catholicism, a mysterious and un-English way of life.

Similar promises and textual conceits may be found in many Gothic novels, including that work most often cited as the first Gothic, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). Walpole, writing under a pseudonym, claims in the preface to the first edition

that the text of *Otranto* was “found in the library of an ancient catholic family in the north of England” and “printed at Naples, in the black letter, in the year 1529.”<sup>3</sup> He offers his “translation” of this manuscript to the English reader—just as Radcliffe offers *The Italian*—as an entertaining artifact of another age and country, a window on a world displaced by time and distance: “I have no doubt but the English reader will be pleased with a sight of this performance.”<sup>4</sup>

In the wake of the remarkable success of *Otranto*, however, Walpole admits to having written the book and undertakes to explain his reasons for doing so. A new set of concerns is articulated in his preface to the second edition (1765), concerns that have more to do with eighteenth-century England than sixteenth-century Italy. *Otranto* is now claimed, not as a found manuscript, but as a generic experiment in which the author self-consciously set out to “blend the two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern.”<sup>5</sup> The literary implications of this attempt are not only personal and self-promotional, but explicitly national as well: in writing his new form of romance Walpole sought to imitate the “mixed” style of Shakespeare rather than a classical model, and to defend the English bard—“our immortal countryman”—against the vilifications of his French detractor, Voltaire.<sup>6</sup>

The same domestic literary concerns mark *The Italian*, so that a text that seems to hold out to its late-eighteenth-century English readers the pleasures of a pure exoticism actually involves them as much in modern Englishness as ancient Italianness. The insistent presence of chapter epigraphs drawn from English literature—from Shakespeare and Horace Walpole himself to Milton, Collins, Gray, and Beattie—indicates that the novel seeks to belong, as did *Otranto* and Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) before it, to a specifically English literary tradition.<sup>7</sup> Other, less obvious borrowings demonstrate the same ambition. That *The Italian* is offered as a found manuscript, for example, serves at once to confirm as canonical a line of English writers from Samuel Richardson through Walpole to Clara Reeve and to announce Radcliffe’s intention of belonging to this line. In addition to allying itself with desirable precursors, the novel rejects undesirables—most importantly Matthew Gregory Lewis. As David Punter has written, Radcliffe’s novel must be seen as “at least in part a de-parodization of *The Monk*,” Lewis’s 1795 imitation of Radcliffean Gothic, which threatened to sensationalize the genre to the point that it could no longer be read.<sup>8</sup>

Thus *The Italian*, which appears at the outset to be a simple object lesson in otherness, breaks down upon examination into a complex mixture of generic conventions driven by national literary aspirations.

There remains, however, much that is alien in the novel—villains whose demeanor and behavior are clearly foreign to English experience, exotic natural landscapes with no equivalents in England, even more exotic social landscapes: monasteries, convents, the prisons of the Inquisition. The simultaneous presence of this intransigent otherness and domestic sameness in *The Italian* provides but one example of the multifarious and often conflicting allegiances in Radcliffe's fiction. Her novels resist being read monologically: they promote aristocratic as well as bourgeois values, demonstrate both progressive and conservative political beliefs, and are at once feminist and anti-feminist. So pervasive is this unresolvable conflictedness that various twentieth-century critics of Radcliffe have elevated it to a definitive characteristic of Radcliffian Gothic.<sup>9</sup> These critics offer a variety of historical and social factors in explanation of divided allegiances in the fiction. Radcliffe wrote at a historical juncture between the aristocratic advance of the mid eighteenth century and the triumph of the middle class in the nineteenth; she succeeded as a novelist at a time when authorship posed problems of respectability for women; her novels span a tumultuous and unusually fractious decade in English history, the decade of the French Revolution.<sup>10</sup>

The circumstance most clearly responsible for the specific conflicts between foreign and domestic seen above, and one to which little attention has been given, is the novels' relation to English nationalism. *The Italian*, like the rest of Radcliffe's work, belongs to a period of particular importance in the formation of the English nation and the elaboration of a concept of English national identity. The text presents in its heroine an incarnation of Englishness. In addition, it employs a device enabled by eighteenth-century travel writing but nonetheless specifically attributable to the Gothic: the fictional presentation of foreign landscapes and foreign villains as anti-types, exempla of otherness.<sup>11</sup>

Though the fundamental opposition between heroine and villain is central to *The Italian*'s contribution to the construction of English national identity, more significant still is the deployment in the novel of narrative techniques of terror. Like a conduct book, *The Italian* teaches young women how to behave: in the heroine it models proper behavior, in the villain improper and un-English behavior.

The novel is more effective than a conduct book, though, insofar as it enacts the values that it promotes. That is, the structure of the reader's experience of the novel parallels that of the heroine as she negotiates an alien landscape. The effect of this experience—a decidedly Gothic series of betrayals, confused identities, nebulous malevolences, and opaque motivations—is to induce a wide-ranging paranoia. All-encompassing distrust of others and, especially, of the self leads in turn to an internalization of surveillance—as Foucault has argued, precisely what distinguishes the modern bourgeois subject, the subject of discipline. Thus *The Italian* and novels like it contributed to the constitution of bourgeois subjectivity by promoting, via techniques of terror, the need incessantly to monitor the self. In the context of England in the 1790s, however, *The Italian's* deployment of these techniques is at the same time a deployment of a technology of nationality that aims at the formation, not simply of a bourgeois subject, but more particularly of that gendered national subject known as the “Englishwoman.”

## II

I must say first of all that description itself is a political act.  
—Salman Rushdie<sup>12</sup>

At one point in *The Italian* the book's male protagonist, Vincentio di Vivaldi, gently mocks his servant Paulo for displaying feelings of attachment to Naples. Admiring the mountains surrounding the lake of Celano, Paulo exclaims: “It reminds me of home; it is almost as pleasant as the bay of Naples! I should never love it like that though, if it were an hundred times finer.” After Vivaldi and his beloved, Ellena, make obligatory observations on the sublime and beautiful aspects of the lake, the servant continues:

“Have the goodness to observe how like are the fishing boats, that sail towards the hamlet below, to those one sees upon the bay of Naples. They are worth all the rest of this prospect, except indeed this fine sheet of water, which is almost as good as the bay, and that mountain, with its sharp head, which is almost as good as Vesuvius—if it would but throw out fire!” “We must despair of finding a mountain in this neighbourhood, so *good* as to do that, Paulo,” said Vivaldi, smiling at this stroke of nationality.<sup>13</sup>

Here Paulo admires a landscape merely because it resembles that of his birthplace and home. Admiration on such grounds betrays an insensitivity linked to class in that it fails to employ an aesthetic

discourse of the sublime and the beautiful and, in doing so, is reduced to dependence on inappropriate terminology—as Vivaldi indicates by his emphatic repetition of Paulo’s praise-term, “good.” Servants in Radcliffe’s novels often display this sort of local attachment, and they often receive mocking treatment at the hands of their social superiors for doing so. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Annette’s longing for French ballads and French landscapes while imprisoned with her mistress in the Apennines is of a piece with her incessant gossiping, her inability to narrate properly, and her general frivolity. Peter, a servant in *The Romance of the Forest* (1791), amuses that novel’s heroine with an outburst of unbounded enthusiasm upon returning home to his native Savoy.<sup>14</sup>

If local attachment as practiced by the lower classes seems quaint and laughable to the genteel protagonists of Radcliffian Gothic, its opposite, sophisticated cosmopolitanism, is understood as despicable and potentially dangerous. Relativistic attitudes as to the value of one country in relation to another are held most often by villainous aristocrats, and the function of such attitudes is to provide self-serving rationales for heinous acts.<sup>15</sup> The Marquis de Montalt of *The Romance of the Forest*, unrepentant fratricide and would-be incestuous rapist, incarnates the evil cosmopolite. He attempts to urge Pierre de la Motte to crime with a lecture on the essential equivalence of national codes of behavior:

“There are certain prejudices attached to the human mind,” said the Marquis in a slow and solemn voice, “which it requires all our wisdom to keep from interfering with our happiness. . . . Nature . . . every where acts alike in the great occurrences of life. The Indian discovers his friend to be perfidious, and he kills him; the wild Asiatic does the same. . . . Even the polished Italian, distracted by jealousy, or tempted by a strong circumstance of advantage, draws his stiletto [sic], and accomplishes his purpose. It is the first proof of a superior mind to liberate itself from prejudices of country, or of education.”<sup>16</sup>

Montalt, with his peculiar combination of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and debased Rousseauistic primitivism, anticipates later Radcliffian aristocrats who cynically disregard mere “prejudices” against criminal or violent acts in the service of desire: Montoni in *Udolpho* and the monk Schedoni—otherwise Count di Marinella—in *The Italian*.

Radcliffe’s refusal to endorse either localism or cosmopolitanism may seem to signal an abandonment of the issue of nationalism

altogether. By embodying these opposed positions on the question of the nation in clownish servants and Machiavellian aristocrats, Radcliffe leaves room for her protagonists, most notably her central heroines, to escape the trammels of either viewpoint and thus to behave “naturally.” This very naturalness, however, promotes English nationalism on a more subtle, and thus more effective, level than outright partisanship. Inhabiting a place outside recognizable positions in the localism/cosmopolitanism debate, Radcliffe’s heroines incarnate a national archetype rather than espouse nationalist (or anti-nationalist) beliefs. Radcliffe, writing in the tradition of the sentimentalists, like them creates heroines who are recognizably “English”—and this is the case even though these heroines are nominally French or Italian.

The Englishness of Radcliffe’s heroines takes on greater clarity and significance when placed in the context of the development of English nationalism in the eighteenth century. Following K. R. Minogue, Isaiah Berlin, and other theorists and historians of nationalist movements, Gerald Newman asserts in *The Rise of English Nationalism* that “nationalism is, at the outset, a creation of writers.”<sup>17</sup> While misleading as an unqualified generalization, this pronouncement has particular relevance to eighteenth-century England.<sup>18</sup> Newman locates the initial impulse to codify and valorize Englishness in the response of various eighteenth-century artists, writers, and intellectuals to a crisis in the system of patronage. This crisis, brought on by the shift from aristocratic support to marketplace value for artistic production, was perceived by some English artists as a form of favoritism by which foreign, and particularly French, artists were given support before or instead of their English competitors. This apparent injustice spurred native artists to cling to and elevate Englishness by reformulating localism as nationalism. Nationalism, in turn, was adopted by the middle class—the class to which most of the disgruntled artists belonged or aspired—as a weapon in their struggle with the aristocracy for political power. Thus it was that the aristocratic culture of Francophilia, coupled with a nationalistic revaluation of domestic traditions, enabled the middle class to portray the upper class as aliens in their own nation.<sup>19</sup>

Newman finds evidence of this nativist movement in cultural manifestos such as John Brown’s *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757), in the paintings of William Hogarth, in the lexicography of Samuel Johnson, and, most importantly, in sentimental novels written by such authors as Samuel Foote, Fanny

Burney, Tobias Smollett, and Thomas Day. He looks largely to the sentimentalists when seeking to document the attempt to give form to an ideal Englishness, and in the protagonists of sentimental fiction finds a national stereotype created to embody as English the psychological and ethical traits of “innocence, honesty, originality, frankness, and moral self-reliance.”<sup>20</sup> Day’s *Sandford and Merton* (1783-89) is representative of these fictions. The novel’s construction invites comparison between rustic, simple Harry Sandford and the aristocratic and Frenchified Tommy Merton. At every turn the novel upholds simplicity and forthrightness as admirable and quintessentially English while denigrating fashion, imitativeness, and urbane polish as conspicuously foreign and therefore suspect.<sup>21</sup>

*Sandford and Merton* in one sense fails to typify nationalist-sentimentalist novels, however, in that it lacks a plot device common to many: a central heroine who either incarnates English virtue or vacillates between that virtue and the specious attractions of foreign polish. *The Italian* features just such a heroine, which is one of the reasons why, despite the ridicule with which it treats localism, the novel displays an identifiable nationalist impulse. Ostensibly Italian herself, Ellena di Rosalba unmistakably possesses attributes singled out by eighteenth-century cultural nationalists as English.<sup>22</sup> It is possible simply to list those attributes; such a list, however, fails to be convincing on its own. While Ellena’s innocence, frankness, and self-reliance do make her a fit emblem of Englishness, more indicative than the mere existence of these qualities is their contribution to incoherent characterization. Ellena is contradictory in a variety of ways: although of noble parentage, she must work to support herself and her aunt; she defies authority in some instances but remains obedient to the ideology of the “proper lady” in others; she lives amidst metropolitan temptation but retains an innocence so complete as to be comic. The demands of Englishness explain the need for such apparently irreconcilable character traits.

Ellena’s ambiguous class status is exemplary here. In true Radcliffean fashion, her origins are initially presented as humble only finally to be revealed as noble. Certainly the plot of *The Italian* depends on such dissimulation: earlier knowledge of the true circumstances of Ellena’s birth would eliminate most of what occurs in the novel. Aside from its necessity to the plot, though, delay in the revelation of Ellena’s nobility functions to nationalist ends insofar as it allows her to demonstrate the middle-class, English virtue of self-reliance and to be loved for this virtue by her suitor, Vivaldi. Thus

early in the novel the reader learns that in order to secure an income Ellena “passed whole days embroidering silks,” a form of “industry, which did honor to her character” (I, 9). Her financial independence is emphatically approved of, even to the extent that we are told of Vivaldi, heir to one of the most illustrious houses in Naples: “If he had known of these circumstances, they would only have served to encrease the passion, which . . . it would have been prudent to discourage” (I, 9).

Ellena displays mental as well as material independence. In contrast to many of Radcliffe’s heroines, and in defiance of the demands of a femininity understood as quintessentially passive, at several points in the text she actively, even vigorously, resists oppression. When imprisoned in a convent and pressured to take the veil, for instance, Ellena confronts the Abbess and “demand[s] by whose will she had been torn from her home, and by whose authority she was now detained, as it appeared, a prisoner. The Abbess, unaccustomed to have her power opposed, or her words questioned, was for a moment too indignant to reply . . .” (I, 68). This resistance and its forthright expression should be seen in the context of Ellena’s Englishness; so, too, should her absurdly exaggerated innocence. At the outset of *The Italian*, Ellena lives in seclusion in the midst of Neapolitan grandeur, impervious to the temptations of the cosmopolitan metropolis.<sup>23</sup> She is not simply resistant to evil, but in fact unable to recognize it, as is clearest in the episode where Schedoni, the Italian of the title, attempts to murder her. Despite ample evidence that Schedoni has come to inflict harm, Ellena persists in putting the best interpretation on the discouraging fact of his presence—with a dagger—in her bedroom at midnight: “Did you come to warn me of danger? . . . had you discovered the cruel designs of Spalatro? Ah! when I supplicated for your compassion on the shore this evening, you little thought what perils surrounded me!” (I, 238).

Ellena parallels sentimental heroines in her possession of model traits; like those heroines, though, Ellena is recognizable as English only because she is defined against the foreign. If sentimental novels advanced the cause of England and Englishness by means of opposed characters, presenting in a domestic setting a distinction between English virtue and Francophilic vice, the Gothic at once retains and intensifies this opposition by setting its action in an antination and pitting its protagonists against monstrously “other” anti-types. The specific contribution of the Gothic to the binarism of

sentimental novels is the former's concern with foreign villains and foreign social landscapes. As Anna Letitia Barbauld notes of Radcliffe, her "living characters correspond to the scenery:—their wicked projects are dark, singular, atrocious. They are not of English growth; their guilt is tinged with a darker hue than that of the bad and profligate characters we see in the world about us."<sup>24</sup>

Foreignness in *The Italian* is concentrated in the figure of Schedoni.<sup>25</sup> The presentation of the novel conspires to give him the status of exemplary other. As noted earlier, this status is signaled by the title itself, which suggests that although the entire novel is set in Italy—and thus that readers might expect to be presented with numerous Italians—one of these will be especially representative. This suggestion is borne out in the passage where Schedoni makes his first appearance: "There lived in the Dominican convent of the Spirito Santo, at Naples, a man called father Schedoni; an Italian, as his name imported, but whose family was unknown . . ." (I, 34). Repeating the singular gesture of the novel's title, the passage attests to Schedoni's representative nature by singling him out as "an Italian" in a book populated by none but "Italian" characters. Further, the passage returns attention to the opening sequence of the assassin in the church, reinvoking that sequence's equation between Continental Europe, Catholic mystery, and macabre criminality while embodying all these in the person of the monk.

Chloe Chard, in her excellent introduction to the Oxford edition of *The Romance of the Forest*, notes that

in its portrayal of murder, incest, and other manifestations of "vice and violence," the Gothic novel, adopting an imaginative geography of a semi-feudal, Roman Catholic Europe, appropriates from contemporary travel writing an equation between the foreign and the forbidden.<sup>26</sup>

The operation of such an equation in *The Italian* means that Schedoni need not display specifically un-English traits in order to embody foreignness. It serves just as well merely to assert his Italianness and then couple it with the blackness of his crimes—crimes that include ordering the murder of his brother (I, 361), forcing his brother's widow to marry him and then attempting to murder her (I, 363), plotting the abduction and murder of his niece (I, 233-35), forging documents in order to send Vivaldi to the dungeons of the Inquisition (I, 245), and poisoning his erstwhile accomplice, Nicola (I, 402-3). His crimes speak his otherness, as does even his physiognomy: despite the difference in social class

between the two, we may say of Schedoni, “the Italian,” what Radcliffe writes of his servant Spalatro, that he “had ‘villain’ engraved in every line of his face” (*I*, 211).

In a typological sense, then, *The Italian* figures Ellena as English and Schedoni as Italian—or, more broadly, simply foreign. That Ellena is actually Italian herself may seem to contradict this argument about her Englishness. On the contrary, the national label she is given serves to suggest the universality of the English ideal: according to the logic of the novel, that is, all good women behave as if they were Englishwomen. The novel’s foreign setting also allows for the contrasting of this ideal with a fantastically amplified and distorted foreignness in a way impossible to domestic fiction, fiction set in England itself.

*The Italian* holds more implications for nationalism than can be exhausted in character typology, however, insofar as the text does not merely represent what it is to be English but, in its language and structure, enacts Englishness for and communicates Englishness to its readers. If the opposition between heroine and villain provides a model for how and how not to be, an image of English nationality as well as of what is “foreign” to it, such a model threatens to remain only that—to have no effect. This possibility leaves room for readers to keep a distance, to invest in neither Ellena nor Schedoni. Worse still, readers might—as perhaps is suggested by Barbauld when she refers to foreign villains as Radcliffe’s “living characters”—read against the text to reject Ellena’s absurd innocence in favor of Schedoni’s tortured aspirations. What is missing in the account of the novel so far is a mechanism of Englishness, a technology of national subject formation that works to confirm identification between English reader and “English” characters and characteristics. In *The Italian*, and in the Gothic generally, this technology is provided by the techniques of terror enabled by, but not reducible to, a foreign setting and a dualistic framework.

### III

“Ever since I was condemned, my confessor has besieged me; he threatened and menaced, until I almost began to think that I was the monster that he said I was.”

—Justine Moritz in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*<sup>27</sup>

Few devices are more typical of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century English Gothic novels than their tendency to be set in the

distant pasts of foreign countries. Most attempts to account for this displacement, however, have been unsatisfactory.<sup>28</sup> I have argued above that one function of displacement in *The Italian* is the intensification of a binarism between English and foreign already at work in the domestic settings of sentimental fiction. The more significant function of Gothic displacement, however, is that it initially provided the means for developing techniques of suspense and terror characteristic of the Gothic novel and its literary descendants: sensation, horror, and detective fiction.<sup>29</sup> By placing their protagonists at a distance from eighteenth-century England—in medieval Italy, early Renaissance France, the Spain of the Inquisition—Gothic novelists enabled the proliferation of criminality and confusion. Such confusion involves a starkly physical problem of location (one result of the labyrinthine architecture of the Gothic castle is its opacity to heroines and readers alike), but encompasses as well ignorance as to the motivation of others, difficulty in communication, the unreliability of language itself.<sup>30</sup>

Insight as to how such uncertainties might contribute to the formation of a certain kind of subject is provided by Nancy Armstrong in her Foucauldian reading of the novel, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*. Armstrong demonstrates that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novels and conduct books were active in the work of middle-class subject formation. Most important for our purposes is Armstrong's invocation of the Gothic at precisely the point where she discusses surveillance: in her account of the eponymous heroine's rise to middle-class power in Richardson's *Pamela* (1740). According to Armstrong, Pamela's forced move from the house where she is first persecuted to an estate in Lincolnshire indicates a relocation of the arena of power from aristocratic display to middle-class surveillance:

For the Lincolnshire estate is represented as a grimly gothic version of the first manor house. . . . This nightmarish version of the country house leaves no doubt that the threat of self-annihilation intensifies as the assault on Pamela's body becomes more a matter of ocular rape than of physical penetration. Such a shift in the strategy of sexual violation to the violation of psychological depths provides a strategy for discovering more depths within the female body to write about. . . . Pamela wins the struggle to interpret both herself and all domestic relations from the moment the coach swerves off the road to her father's house and delivers her to Mr. B's Lincolnshire estate. The power dominating at the estate is already female power. It is the power of domestic surveillance.<sup>31</sup>

Armstrong's emphasis is, first, on the evocation of surveillance as a response to the Gothic inscrutability of the Lincolnshire estate and, second, on the role of women in surveying others. This role is, for Armstrong, constitutive of middle-class subjectivity and of women's power within the middle class.

With Foucault in mind, we may extend this emphasis on surveillance of others to self-monitoring: for Foucault, the distinctive feature of the modern subject is surveillance of the depths of the self.<sup>32</sup> I will argue in the final section of this essay that Radcliffean Gothic contributed to the formation of that subject by encouraging the adoption of habitual internal surveillance in heroines and readers alike. In order to read this contribution as simultaneously a strategic development in the history of English nationalism, however, it will first be necessary to establish what relation, in England at the end of the eighteenth century, the installation of surveillance had to Englishness.

Hannah More's *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, published two years after *The Italian* in 1799, provides an indication of that relation. More, an Evangelical crusader for sincerity and propriety, sets out in *Strictures* to criticize and reform the way women are educated.<sup>33</sup> The importance of this effort lies in the central position More claims for women: "The general state of civilized society depends . . . on the prevailing sentiments and habits of women."<sup>34</sup> By means of the influence they wield, women shape those around them and, by extension, society as a whole. Influence, however, is a two-way street, and women not only wield it to great effect but are especially susceptible to it as well. Only proper education is capable of arming women against this susceptibility, and present educational efforts are failing. More attacks the prevailing method of bringing up girls as well as the kind of woman such a method produces; she condemns the reigning triumvirate of "*vanity, selfishness, and inconsideration*" (S, 66), the obsession with externals over the cultivation of the spirit (S, 92-107), and the neglect of Christian instruction (S, 222-336). She argues for change in the direction of the Evangelical virtues of piety, seriousness, and restraint.

What is significant given Armstrong's and Foucault's claims about the modern subject is More's focus specifically on surveillance—surveillance of others, but most especially surveillance of the self—as the essential practice of well-educated women. Women require such surveillance because they are by nature unruly, subject to

continuous internal rebellion fomented by “the *imagination*,” which More describes as “a lion, which though worldly prudence indeed may *chain* so as to prevent outward mischief, yet the malignity remains within . . .” (S, 296). The idea of childhood innocence, then, is a dangerous myth. Teachers of girls must possess

*such a strong impression of the corruption of our nature, as should insure a disposition to counteract it; together with such a deep view and thorough knowledge of the human heart as should be necessary for developing and controlling its most secret and complicated workings.* (S, 67)

The impossibility of completely or permanently conquering the imagination, however, means that external surveillance is never sufficient; girls and women will almost certainly be led astray if they are not themselves constantly engaged in struggle with, enabled by surveillance of, the self. The best means of inculcating the habit of self-monitoring, More explains in a chapter ominously entitled “The Benefits of Restraint,” takes the form of restrictions imposed on the activities of girls. The chapter begins with an alarmed prediction that the present assertion across the Channel and among English radicals of the rights of man eventually may lead to demands for “*the rights of youth, the rights of children, the rights of babies!*” (S, 170). Against what she terms this “revolutionary spirit in families” More prescribes early restraint. Although useful in itself, the primary importance of restraint is as a tool for teaching self-doubt: “Girls should be led to distrust their own judgment . . .” (S, 180). Self-doubt, in turn, instills in girls and women the need for constant internal surveillance. A passage on confession near the end of her book reveals that the self-scrutiny More advocates requires not only incessant searching for imperfection, but incessant discovery as well. Indulging in a fantasy of the more-than-complete success of her recommendations, More reminds readers that, while girls must be encouraged to confess their failings frequently, frequency alone provides no guarantee of truthfulness. A proper confession

must be a confession founded on self knowledge which is itself to arise out of the practice of self-examination; for want of this sort of discriminating habit, a well-meaning but ill-instructed girl may be caught confessing the sins of some other person, and omitting those which are more especially her own. (S, 327)

*Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, then, incarnates the kind of conduct book Armstrong argues helped

construct the subject of discipline. For More, though, the project undertaken in *Strictures* goes beyond the production of merely generic modern subjectivity, or even of proper middle-class femininity. Her entire argument, from first to last, is couched in nationalistic terms that demonstrate that the real end in view is the shaping of women into English national subjects. Misguided educational efforts, More asserts early on, leave women susceptible to the evils of influence. And influence—bad influence, at least—takes the shape of the foreign: for More, it is foreign mores that threaten to undermine English girls' morals, foreign languages that distract them from mastery of the English tongue, foreign religiosity (or fashionable foreign universalism) that destroys their English Christianity.

More's book is suffused with nationalism to the extent that her examples, her tropes, and her very metaphors are of the nation. Criticism of women, she explains in the Preface to *Strictures*, should not be blamed as treasonous, for "so to expose the weakness of the land as to suggest the necessity for internal improvement . . . is not treachery, but patriotism" (S, viii). An avowed enemy of French cosmopolitanism, she condemns Napoleon for attempting to be "an Infidel in Paris, a Papist at Rome, and a Mussulman at Cairo" and recommends that educators "teach the [English] youth to hug his prejudices, to glory in his prepossessions" (S, 269). Modern France poses an immediate military threat, but England has been vitiated for centuries by its inhabitants' fondness for all things Continental. Despite the war with France, foreign customs, books, and citizens continue to be brought into the country. French governesses (who receive a third of a chapter unto themselves) pose the most dangerous imported threat to young women: it has been an especially deleterious habit of women of rank "to entrust their daughters to foreigners, of whose principles they know nothing" (S, 105). Other harmful influences work their way into England in the form of literature, products of the German and French press. More notes that women in particular "have been too eagerly inquisitive after these monstrous compositions" which are "irrevocably tainting them" (S, 46, 47).

There is a convergence between More's promotion of conduct in the form of internal surveillance and the thoroughly nationalistic bent of her argument. The ideal subject envisioned in *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* closely resembles the Foucauldian middle-class subject of discipline. At the same time,

this ideal subject is also represented in terms of a specific national identity. More's is a conduct book, that is, that advocates inculcation of surveillance explicitly as the first and most indispensable step in the production of the Englishwoman. Radcliffe's *The Italian* makes a similar demand for surveillance, and with a similar end in view.

#### IV

The drama of terror has the irresistible power of converting its audience into its victims.

—Charles Robert Maturin<sup>35</sup>

*The Italian* enacts the formation of the proper Englishwoman that More takes such pains to recommend. Through a combination of plot devices and narrative techniques the novel elicits from its heroine “Englishness” in the form of self-surveillance. As sketched out above, these techniques are methods by which suspense is built and uncertainty maintained; in short, techniques of terror. Terror, enabled by Gothic displacement, lays the groundwork for the heroine's generalized paranoia. Paranoia is also required of the readers of *The Italian*. As Patricia Meyer Spacks writes of the novel, it “invites identification not with villainous plotters but with their victims; it places its readers in the imaginative dilemma of victimization.”<sup>36</sup> Its placement of Ellena in the midst of mysterious environs is at the same time a similar placement of its readers—and one that requires a similar paranoiac and vigilant subjectivity by way of response.

Insofar as Ellena can be said to develop at all (like most heroines in early Gothics, her virtue is as static as it is complete), she moves through the novel in the direction of doubt: doubt of others and of self. The narrative of her misfortunes chronicles a series of imprisonments and escapes the overall tenor of which is to bring into question most of what she has held as true. Some of the uncertainty thus raised, though sensationalistic, is fairly straightforward: the narrative undermines authority by revealing that convents may sometimes be prisons, monks murderers, and aristocrats petty conspirators. A more disruptive kind of uncertainty, though, assails the foundations of perception and knowledge. Sounds occur that appear to have no source. Vision is partial and frequently mistaken. Self-understanding fails, shaken by circumstances.<sup>37</sup>

Roughly the first third of the novel relates Ellena's initial abduction from Naples and her life in and escape from San Stefano, one of Radcliffe's luridly imagined convents. Ineffability, inexpressibility,

and uninterpretability recur throughout the sequence, casting suspicion on Ellena's capacity to perceive or behave correctly. Her kidnappers take her in a closed carriage through unknown villages over mountain passes "more terrific than the pencil could describe, or language can express" (*I*, 63). Her first view of San Stefano, "seen at intervals beneath the gloom of cypress and spreading cedars, seemed as if menacing the unhappy Ellena with hints of future suffering" (*I*, 64). A nun warns her of the punishments to which she may be subjected with the phrase "Imagination cannot draw the horrors of—," a warning that enacts its own truth, ending in a dash that refuses to mention what cannot be described.

This sequence of the novel culminates in Ellena and Vivaldi's thwarted attempt at marriage. We find, however, even before the two are torn from one another at the altar by supposed agents of the Inquisition, the effects on Ellena of pervasive uncertainty. Doubt turns inward. Unable, at first, to agree to Vivaldi's marriage proposal, Ellena puts him off. He rebukes her for this, and for the first time her own actions and motivations appear as opaque to her as those of others:

She appeared to herself an unjust and selfish being, unwilling to make any sacrifice for the tranquility of him, who had given her liberty, even at the risk of his life. Her very virtues, now that they were carried to excess, seemed to her to border upon vices; her sense of dignity, appeared to be narrow pride; her delicacy weakness; her moderated affection cold ingratitude; and her circumspection, little less than prudence degenerated into meanness. (*I*, 181)

Needless to say, Ellena is actually nothing like what she accuses herself of being here. Passages such as this one, in which moral certainties disintegrate before the corrosive power of Gothic circumstance, are significant precisely because of the heroine's perfect virtue. The workings of the plot create uncertainty where none has been or should be, sparing no one.<sup>38</sup>

The section of the novel most illustrative of the proliferation of uncertainty is also, perhaps, its most memorable: Ellena's sojourn at an isolated house on the seashore. Having escaped from San Stefano and almost succeeded in marrying Vivaldi, Ellena is spirited away to yet another place of imprisonment, "an ancient and peculiar structure" inhabited by Schedoni's servant, Spalatro. Each new object and turn of events in this house instills suspicion: Spalatro's face, in which "villainy and suffering" are equally marked; the constant

threat of a death sentence constantly put off; midnight visions that leave Ellena “congealed with terror”; the possibility of poisoned food; seemingly indulgent offers that “she knew not whether to accept or reject” (I, 210-19). As this list should indicate, the difficulties posed for Ellena in this prison are not those of survival—she can do nothing to escape, and little to affect events—but of interpretation. Patricia Meyer Spacks writes in explanation of how Ellena resolves these difficulties that “Ellena’s ways of ‘making sense’ create orders of fear.”<sup>39</sup> It would be more accurate to say that Ellena’s ways of making sense create orders of doubt, levels of paranoia.

Paranoia, moreover, is particularly justifiable in *The Italian*, as the climax of this section of the novel demonstrates. Schedoni arrives at Ellena’s seaside prison determined to murder her. Having steeled himself to the task, he enters Ellena’s room while she is sleeping, draws aside her clothes in order to stab her, and is stopped by the sight of a “miniature . . . which had lain concealed beneath the lawn [fabric] that he withdrew” (I, 234-35). When he awakens Ellena and demands to know how she has come to bear the miniature, the exchange that ensues takes nearly all of its power from repeated plays on the word “father.”<sup>40</sup> Ellena, whose faith in the fathers of the church has already been shaken, now learns (erroneously, it turns out) that Schedoni is her father in another sense: the portrait on the miniature is, of course, of Schedoni himself.

Ellena’s predicament recalls that of other orphan heroines of the Gothic who must interpret and respond appropriately to destabilizing events without familial guidance. Ellena’s miniature in *The Italian*—like Emily’s miniature in *Udolpho* and the manuscript Adeline finds in *The Romance of the Forest*—encodes a tale of crime resulting from the ascendancy of selfish passion over selfless reason (in this case, Schedoni’s murder of his brother, Ellena’s actual father). All these artifacts admonish the young women who possess them, as Signora Laurentini admonishes Emily in *Udolpho*, “‘Sister! beware of the first indulgence of the passions; beware of the first!’”<sup>41</sup> And all, as Laurentini’s “Sister!” may be taken to indicate, reveal buried family connections. The stories represented in miniatures and manuscripts function as imperatives to scrutinize the depths of the self and restlessly to examine the surfaces of the outer world—to identify and resist the passion found within and to search every stranger’s face for lineaments of enmity or kinship. The artifacts in themselves, however, exceed the status of mere warnings precisely

because of their function in the novels as clues. Wearing about her neck a portrait that may be of her father or his murderer, reading over a manuscript that may tell of fratricide in the distant past or foreshadow her own fate in the immediate future, the Gothic heroine is conditioned to interrogate each object with which she comes into contact, to seek out and yet fear each new revelation.

These artifacts and the monitory stories they encode function as clues for readers of the Gothic as well. They take their place along with all the other devices and techniques with which the genre attempts to move readers, to use the stick of terror and the carrot of curiosity as incitements to reading. In *The Italian*, hints and promised revelations proliferate wildly: family resemblances exist where none should; interrupted narratives suggest vague but terrible crimes; inexplicable sounds may be ghosts, *banditti*, or the projections of a guilty conscience. The reader's position with regard to these hints replicates, in a *mise en abîme*, that of the heroine herself: for reader and heroine alike, each new bit of evidence, each new piece of suggestive information demands interpretive attention. In the heroine's case, this demand is often a matter of personal survival, as an episode in *The Italian* involving an unreadable note demonstrates. Ellena, alone in the darkness of her cell in the convent of San Stefano, cannot make out instructions Vivaldi has sent her regarding an escape:

A thousand times she turned about the eventful paper, endeavoured to trace the lines with her fingers, and to guess their import, thus enveloped in mystery; while she experienced all the various torture that the consciousness of having in her very hand the information, on a timely knowledge of which her life, perhaps, depended, without being able to understand it, could inflict. (*I*, 132)

With the life-or-death urgency removed, this passage serves as a figure for the predicament, not only of the heroines, but also of the readers of the Gothic. Apparently possessed of all they need to know to interpret events and piece together strands of the narrative, they nevertheless cannot make out the truth and are driven to turning over the "eventful paper"—each succeeding page of the novel, we might say—all the while "enveloped in mystery."<sup>42</sup>

Of course, the mysteries in Radcliffe's Gothic novels are, famously, "solved" in the end. Ellena's parentage is cleared up, Schedoni's actual history is recounted in full, sounds and sights that at one time appear inexplicable turn out to be so mundane as to have

been made by owls, importunate servants, or the wind. An excess, however, remains. Michelle A. Massé, addressing the disparity between disturbing middle and comforting end in the Gothic, writes that the “ending’s reassurances have specious weight when balanced against the body’s mass of suffering; there is a surplus of anxiety still unaccounted for by ‘reality.’”<sup>43</sup> There can be little doubt that contemporary readers felt this surplus. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in a review of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, complains that “curiosity is raised oftener than it is gratified; or rather, it is raised so high that no adequate gratification can be given it. . . .”<sup>44</sup> Anna Letitia Barbauld, in words nearly identical to those of Coleridge, says of *The Italian*: “The scenes of the Inquisition are too much protracted, and awaken more curiosity than they fully gratify; perhaps than any story can gratify.”<sup>45</sup>

It is this excess of curiosity, this remainder of anxiety and paranoia, that constitutes *The Italian*’s signal contribution to the formation of the Englishwoman. Certainly it is significant that the novel’s heroine is possessed of traits advanced by eighteenth-century English cultural nationalists as English, and that these traits appear in explicit contrast to a monstrous foreignness. Hannah More’s *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, though, suggests that even more characteristic of and appropriate to the Englishwoman than a given set of character traits is an attitude of paranoia and a habit of surveillance. On this reading, that Ellena serves as a model of correct Englishness for readers of *The Italian* is less important to the construction of English national subjects than the novel’s promotion of a generalized paranoia. If everything is finally explained, if readers leave the novel with all specific mysteries cleared up, they leave with mystery itself untouched. Anxiety remains, anxiety to which, in Coleridge’s words, “no adequate gratification can be given”—to which the only adequate response is an increasingly penetrating surveillance.

Hannah More condemns the kind of reading to which *The Italian* belongs, novels that “have become one of the most universal, as well as most pernicious, sources of corruption among us” (S, 218). If my claims about the work of national subject formation performed by Radcliffe’s novel have validity, this condemnation is ironically misguided. Yet it is by no means an unusual response to Gothic novels, particularly around the turn of the eighteenth century. Associated with revolutionary France by virtue of their apparent valorization of

transgression, emotionality, and individual consciousness, Gothic novels continued to be viewed with suspicion as long as counter-revolution held sway in England.<sup>46</sup> While Walpole's and Radcliffe's nationalist literary aspirations were successful in the longer term—novels by both authors are included by Barbauld in her *British Novelists*—the Gothic novel nevertheless fails to become synonymous with English nationalism in the way that, for instance, the Gothic revival in architecture does. The final irony may be, however, that the suspicion and hostility these novels generated in the critical establishment provides the most concrete evidence extant that the paranoid temperament the novels feature—and that constituted, for women in the 1790s and early 1800s, an important form of Englishness—was communicated to actual readers.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Anna Letitia Barbauld, "On the Origin and Progress of Novel-Writing," in *The British Novelists*, ed. Barbauld, 50 vols. (London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1810), 1: 62.

<sup>2</sup> Barbauld, Preface, *The Romance of the Forest*, in Barbauld (note 1), 43: v.

<sup>3</sup> Horace Walpole, Preface to the First Edition, *The Castle of Otranto*, ed. W. S. Lewis (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Walpole (note 3), 5.

<sup>5</sup> Walpole, Preface to the Second Edition, in Lewis (note 3), 7.

<sup>6</sup> Walpole, Preface to the Second Edition (note 5), 9n. In this attempt Walpole anticipates the painter Sir Joshua Reynolds, who in a late unfinished essay defends as "English" the Shakespearean mixture of tragic and comic against (presumably French) notions of art that demand purity of form on theoretical grounds. See John Barrell, "Sir Joshua Reynolds and the Englishness of English Art," in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (New York: Routledge, 1990), 173. See also Seymour Howard's essay on Blake's late incorporation of a self-consciously nationalistic "Gothicism" into the cosmopolitan, neo-classical style of his youth. Howard, "Blake: Classicism, Gothicism, and Nationalism," *Colby Library Quarterly* 21 (1985): 165-87.

<sup>7</sup> Chloe Chard convincingly demonstrates Radcliffe's ambition to belong to an English literary tradition. See her Introduction to Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), vii-xxiv.

<sup>8</sup> David Punter, "Social Relations of Gothic Fiction," in *Romanticism and Ideology: Studies in English Writing, 1765-1830*, ed. David Aers, Jonathan Cook, and Punter (London: Routledge, 1981), 109.

<sup>9</sup> Both Mary Poovey and Marilyn Butler have noted, for instance, that Radcliffe's novels are at once progressive and conservative, indicting the oppression of the individual but finally preferring oppressive tradition over liberating instability. Norman Holland and Leona Sherman find that the Gothic "permits [the reader] to hover between radical exploration and a familiar, conservative ending." Daniel

Cottom attributes the peculiar behavior of Radcliffe's heroines, their fainting spells and moments of mute powerlessness, to the "unsettled disposition in these novels of the conflict between traditional aristocratic and sentimental middle-class orders of value." In related readings, Ellen Moers writes of the unusual freedom to travel given by Radcliffe to heroines who nevertheless remain concerned "to preserve their identity as proper Englishwomen [sic]" (this seeming misattribution of nationality to characters who are in fact French and Italian is one to which I will return), while Terry Lovell maintains that Gothic novels by Radcliffe and others addressed a readership that "desired the rewards of feminine conformity yet simultaneously feared the dangers of submission to male domination." See Poovey, "Ideology and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*," *Criticism* 21 (1979): 307-30; Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 30-32 and *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background 1769-1830* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981), 22-23; Holland and Sherman, "Gothic Possibilities," in *Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts*, ed. Elizabeth A. Flynn and Patrocinio P. Schweickart (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1986), 225; Cottom, *The Civilized Imagination: A Study of Ann Radcliffe, Jane Austen, and Sir Walter Scott* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985), 56; Moers, *Literary Women* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976), 139; Lovell, *Consuming Fiction* (London: Verso, 1987), 71.

<sup>10</sup> Butler, *Romantics* (note 9), 12-14; Cottom (note 9), 35-67; Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1984); Ronald Paulson, *Representations of Revolution, 1789-1820* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1983), 215-47.

<sup>11</sup> For an extended treatment of this point, see Chard (note 7).

<sup>12</sup> Salman Rushdie, "Imaginary Homelands," in *Imaginary Homelands* (London: Penguin, 1991), 13.

<sup>13</sup> Radcliffe, *The Italian, or, The Confessional of the Black Penitents, A Romance*, ed. Frederick Garber (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), 159. All further references will be included in the text, and abbreviated *I*.

<sup>14</sup> Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest* (note 7), 240-41. Peter's inappropriate use of language upon returning home to Savoy parallels Paulo's derided use of "good" in *The Italian*—although in Peter's case it is the narrator, not another character, who calls attention to his solecism: "When he came within sight of his native mountains, his extravagant joy burst forth into frequent exclamations, and he would often ask Adeline if she had ever seen such *hills* in France" (240). Peter's failure to distinguish mountains from "hills"—like Paulo's repeated use of "good"—is at once an indication and enforcement of inferior class status. Both instances of nonstandard language use occur at moments when servants voice feelings of local attachment, and this suggests that Radcliffe is concerned to avoid the appearance, when rejecting aristocratic cosmopolitanism, of embracing a bumpkinish localism. While I have not pursued such an analysis here, a valuable reading of Radcliffe's novels—and one that might begin to address the problem of servants in the Gothic—would attend to the complexities of gender, class, and nationality as reflected in these novels' language use. The second chapter of John Barrell's *English Literature in History 1730-80: An Equal, Wide Survey* (London: Hutchinson, 1983), "The Language Properly So-Called," provides a helpful introduction to the issues involved.

<sup>15</sup> But compare Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk*, ed. Howard Anderson (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973), which features a poem entitled "The Exile" wherein a disowned and exiled Spanish aristocrat pines for his homeland (215-17).

<sup>16</sup> Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest* (note 7), 222.

<sup>17</sup> Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740-1830* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 87. For a more recent discussion of English and British nationalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1992).

<sup>18</sup> Benedict Anderson, in a widely influential reconsideration of nationalism and nationness, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), stresses, both in the title of his study and in the attention he gives to newspapers and novels, the importance of writers to the work of nation formation. Nevertheless, Anderson's discussion of the role of bureaucratic pilgrimages—as well as his brief but suggestive allusions to the function of radio in twentieth-century nationalisms—indicates that writers are by no means indispensable to the work of imagining the nation (on bureaucratic pilgrimage, see 50-65; on radio, 48, 56, 123).

<sup>19</sup> Newman (note 17), 63-67. K. R. Minogue demonstrates that class warfare under the guise of national purification was not limited to the English nationalist movement, but characterized the early stages of French and German nationalism as well. See his *Nationalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1967), 38, 52, 53-80.

<sup>20</sup> Newman, 133.

<sup>21</sup> Newman, 100-9.

<sup>22</sup> In her Englishness Ellena resembles the heroines of other Radcliffe novels. As Ellen Moers (note 9) notes, "There is something very English about Mrs. Radcliffe's doll heroines . . ." (139). Ronald Paulson (note 10) makes the same point in his discussion of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, and in doing so suggests the nature and context of this Englishness: "The deeply intuitive feelings of Emily [the heroine of *Udolpho*] are the quiet English virtues of the spectator of sublime overthrow across the channel . . ." (225).

<sup>23</sup> The Radcliffean/sentimental opposition of rural virtue to metropolitan corruption is clearest in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, the second paragraph of which contrasts the joys of "pastoral simplicity" to the vitiating influence of "the busy scenes of the world." Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho, A Romance*, ed. Bonamy Dobrée (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), 1. The point is driven home with the case of the heroine's suitor, Valancourt, whose sojourn in Paris leaves him dissipated (see vol. 2, chap. 8).

<sup>24</sup> Barbauld, Preface (note 2), 43: i.

<sup>25</sup> As is appropriate to such powerfully resonant figures, the meaning of the Gothic's villainous, aristocratic foreigners is overdetermined: they concentrate in a single character anxieties about class, nationality, feudalistic sexual rapaciousness, and capitalistic avarice.

<sup>26</sup> Chard (note 7), xiii.

<sup>27</sup> Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus*, ed. M. K. Joseph (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), 87.

<sup>28</sup> The question of displacement is raised but not answered by Punter (note 8), who writes that in the Gothic "we find an intense if displaced engagement with political and social problems, the difficulty of negotiating these problems being

precisely reflected in Gothic's stylistic conventions" (107). Poovey argues that displacement allows social critique without outright threat ("Ideology" [note 9], 317). Butler suggests that displacement assures that Radcliffe's novels, despite their subversive valorization of the individual, finally side with orthodoxy—that is, a critique of tyranny in the past of a foreign country poses no challenge to late-eighteenth-century English hierarchy (*War of Ideas* [note 9], 30-31). Robert Kiely, in *The Romantic Novel in England* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1972), puts forward a similar claim, arguing that "by setting their stories in other countries and periods" Radcliffe and Walpole, if not other Gothiccists, hoped to avoid the appearance of urging social disorder (22). Paulson claims that the Gothic "serve[d] as a metaphor with which some contemporaries in England tried to understand what was happening across the channel in the 1790s" (217).

<sup>29</sup> It later becomes possible, by transference to contemporary England of plots first set abroad, to write (oxymoronical) "modern" and "domestic" Gothics such as the novels of the Brontës, sensation fiction of the 1860s, and, most spectacularly, Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). (Clara Reeve's *Old English Baron* [1778] is only a partial exception; although set in England, the action takes place at approximately the same time period as that of *The Castle of Otranto*—during the Crusades.) Some indication of why it was necessary initially to develop terror in a foreign setting is given by a passage from Austen's parody of the Gothic, *Northanger Abbey*, ed. Anne H. Ehrenpreis (London: Penguin, 1972), in which Henry Tilney chastises Catherine Morland for believing Gothic events could take place in contemporary England: "If I understand you rightly, you had formed a surmise of such horror as I have hardly words to—Dear Miss Morland, consider the dreadful nature of the suspicions you have entertained. What have you been judging from? Remember the country and the age in which we live. Remember that we are English, that we are Christians" (199).

<sup>30</sup> As Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has pointed out, the "ineffable" in many ways defines the genre. See *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (New York: Methuen, 1986), 17.

<sup>31</sup> Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987), 123.

<sup>32</sup> See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Press, 1979), 195-228, and *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Press, 1990), 58-73.

<sup>33</sup> For a consideration of More in relation to conduct books, see Armstrong (note 31), 65, 90. For a discussion that places More among Evangelical promoters of the ideology of the proper lady, see Poovey, "Ideology" (note 9), 310-11, and *Proper Lady* (note 10), 3-47.

<sup>34</sup> Hannah More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, vol. 7 of *The Works of Hannah More*, 18 vols. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1818), 2. All future references will be included in the text, and abbreviated S.

<sup>35</sup> Charles Robert Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, ed. Douglas Grant (Oxford and New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), 257.

<sup>36</sup> Patricia Meyer Spacks, "Female Orders of Narrative: *Clarissa* and *The Italian*," in *Rhetorics of Order / Ordering Rhetorics in English Neoclassical Literature*, ed. J. Douglas Canfield and J. Paul Hunter (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1989), 169.

<sup>37</sup> On uncertainty in Radcliffe, see Cottom (note 9), 57-63; Spacks (note 36), 168.

<sup>38</sup> As Pierre Macherey writes of Radcliffean Gothic: "Every incident and every scene becomes a trial: every manifest presence brings with it an equivocal double: the most exposed shapes are ideally veiled." See *A Theory of Literary Production*, trans. Geoffrey Wall (London: Routledge, 1978), 32.

<sup>39</sup> Spacks (note 36), 167.

<sup>40</sup> On this point see also Spacks, 168.

<sup>41</sup> Radcliffe, *Mysteries of Udolpho* (note 23), 646.

<sup>42</sup> Chard (note 7) makes a similar remark about a passage from *The Romance of the Forest* in which Adeline finds a decaying manuscript and is drawn to read it: "In describing the process by which Adeline reads the manuscript, *The Romance of the Forest* underlines the promise of horror and terror on which its own narrative structure is based. Like all works of Gothic fiction, the novel constantly raises the expectation of future horrors, suggesting that dreadful secrets are soon to be revealed, and threatening the eruption of extreme—though often unspecified—forms of violence" (vii).

<sup>43</sup> Michelle A. Massé, "Gothic Repetition: Husbands, Horrors, and Things That Go Bump in the Night," *Signs* 15 (1990): 689. Compare Macherey (note 38): "The mystery novel, as it is practised by Mrs Radcliffe, seems, then, to be the product of two different movements: the one establishes the mystery while the other dispels it. The ambiguity of the narrative derives from the fact that these two movements are not, properly speaking, successive . . . but are inextricably simultaneous" (34).

<sup>44</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, review of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, in *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism*, ed. Thomas Raysor (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1936), 357.

<sup>45</sup> Barbauld, Preface (note 2), 43: vii.

<sup>46</sup> Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries* (note 9), 11-38; see also Bradford K. Mudge, "The Man with Two Brains: Gothic Novels, Popular Culture, Literary History," *PMLA* 107 (1992): 92-104.