Ann Radcliffe

The Italian

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

THE ITALIAN

ANN RADCLIFFE (née Ward) was born in London in 1764. Her father was a reputable haberdasher who took up the management of a porcelain showroom in Bath for the business partners Thomas Bentley and Josiah Wedgwood. Ann's childhood was subsequently spent with her parents in Bath, and with her uncle in fashionable Chelsea, which may have exposed her to radical politics and philosophy, as well as immersing her in the vibrant Dissenting culture of rationalism, radicalism, and republicanism.

In 1787 Ann Ward married William Radcliffe, an Oxford-educated journalist, who wrote for and soon became the editor of the *Gazetteer, and New Daily Advertiser*, a campaigning newspaper that celebrated the French Revolution, freedom of the press, and Dissenters' rights. Ann, meanwhile, appears to have taken up writing out of boredom. She wrote a succession of increasingly popular romance novels—*The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789), *A Sicilian Romance* (1790), and *The Romance of the Forest* (1791)—before *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) set a dazzling new standard in supernatural romantic fiction, variously dubbed at the time 'the Terrorist System of Novel Writing', 'the hobgoblin-romance', and ultimately the 'Radcliffe school'. Radcliffe's profits from her writing enabled her husband to quit his job, and the two of them toured the Netherlands and Germany, which she later described in a travelogue, *A Journey made in the Summer of 1794, through Holland and the Western Frontier of Germany . . . to which are added Observations during a Tour to the Lakes* (1795). *The Italian* (1797), written at the height of her powers, was also the last of the works of 'the great Enchantress' to be published in her lifetime. Despite her international celebrity, little is known of the remainder of Radcliffe's life, and she died in 1823. Her last novel, *Gaston de Blondeville*, was published in 1826, together with poetry, further travel writings, and a memoir by Thomas Noon Talfourd.

NICK GROOM is Professor in English at the University of Exeter. He has published widely for both academic and popular readerships, and his many books include *The Forger's Shadow* (2002), *The Union Jack* (2006), *The Gothic: A Very Short Introduction* (2012), *The Seasons: An Elegy for the Passing of the Year* (2013), and several editions of eighteenth-century texts. He has edited Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (2014) and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (2016) for Oxford World's Classics.

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics have brought readers closer to the world's great literature. Now with over 700 titles—from the 4,000-year-old myths of Mesopotamia to the twentieth century's greatest novels—the series makes available lesser-known as well as celebrated writing.

The pocket-sized hardbacks of the early years contained introductions by Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, Graham Greene, and other literary figures which enriched the experience of reading. Today the series is recognized for its fine scholarship and reliability in texts that span world literature, drama and poetry, religion, philosophy, and politics. Each edition includes perceptive commentary and essential background information to meet the changing needs of readers.

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

ANN RADCLIFFE

The Italian

or

The Confessional of the Black Penitents

A Romance

Edited by
FREDERICK GARBER

Revised and with an Introduction and Notes by
NICK GROOM

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

First published by Oxford University Press 1968
First published as a World's Classics paperback 1981
Reissued as an Oxford World's Classics paperback 1998, 2008
New edition 2017

Impression: 1

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016946823

ISBN 978–0–19–870443–0

Printed in Great Britain by
Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

JUDITH LUNA commissioned this edition, for which I am most grateful. Luciana O'Flaherty, assisted by Kizzy Taylor-Richelieu, has been an extremely patient and attentive editor—which I have very much appreciated—and the edition has benefited significantly from the scrupulous attention and keen eye for detail of the copy-editor, Rosemary Roberts. The British Library kindly granted permission to print the manuscript material in Appendix II. My thanks are due to Jonathan Barry, Greg Buzwell, Steve Poole, and Dale Townshend, and, as ever, to my family. My interest in Radcliffe's writings developed through lively debate with my students, and I would like to acknowledge them here. This edition is dedicated to my research students—past, present, and future.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

After writing *The Italian*, Ann Radcliffe reputedly went mad. The signs were already there: she had, it was said, written that suffocatingly claustrophobic book during the year 1796, by candlelight with the 'shutters and curtains closed against the outside world'.[1] It was her sixth book in less than a decade, her previous novel being *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), for which she was paid the small fortune of £500 and which made her name. For *The Italian* (1797) she received an unparalleled £800—over three times her husband's annual income—and with that book she appeared to be at the height of her powers. But we shall never know. She abandoned writing and vanished, and her readers were left with a host of copycat writers and unconvincing forgeries of her work.[2] Rumours abounded: Radcliffe was incarcerated in a lunatic asylum, and, by 1806, she was dead, 'having died in that species of mental derangement called "the horrors" ', a victim of her overheated imagination.[3] But Ann Radcliffe had lost neither her wits nor her life to her art: financially independent and jaded by criticism of her work, in the wake of the publication of *The Italian* she had, at the age of 32, simply retired into genteel affluence and obscurity. She travelled with her husband (and their dog), received the occasional visitor, and lived a life of ease until she did eventually die more than a quarter of a century later.

As the best-selling novelist of the decade, Radcliffe defined 1790s 'terror' fiction, mixing sublime aesthetic effects with Enlightenment empiricism and ratiocination into a characteristic style that sought to exhilarate rather than shock readers. She dwelt on the psychological effects of fear and dread while disdaining supernatural sensationalism.

[1] Aline Grant, *Ann Radcliffe: A Biography* (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1951), 78.

[2] The forgeries included *Le Tombeau* (1799): see Daniel Hall, *French and German Gothic Fiction in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2005), 143.

[3] *Biographie moderne, ou Dictionnaire biographique, de tous les hommes morts et vivans, qui ont marqué à la fin du 18e siècle et au commencement de celui-ci . . .*, 2nd edn, 4 vols (Leipzig: Paul-Jacques Besson, 1806), iv. 119; Thomas Noon Talfourd, 'Memoir of the Life and Writings of Mrs. Radcliffe', prefixed to Ann Radcliffe, *Gaston de Blondeville, or The Court of Henry III.*, 4 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1826), i. 95. Talfourd is referring to Charles Apthorp Wheelwright's 'Ode to Horror' in *Poems, Original and Translated; including versions of the Medea and Octavia of Seneca* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Browne; and Deighton, 1810), 272–81 (see Rictor Norton, *Mistress of Udolpho: The Life of Ann Radcliffe* (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1999), 211–12).

Eighteenth-century concepts of the emotions and sense-perception are consequently at the heart of Radcliffe's work, and she is as much the heir of debates on education and socio-political thinking as she is of Horace Walpole's Gothic tale *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). But her interest was not simply theoretical; she also provided a practical example in confronting and overcoming the issues that faced women in the literary world. In her career, Radcliffe was a trail-blazer: she demonstrated that women could be professional writers and earn a living by the pen.

Unlike Radcliffe's earlier novels, *The Italian, or The Confessional of the Black Penitents* is set in the eighteenth century, and begins with an English traveller in Italy, horrified to learn that the Catholic Church is prepared to offer sanctuary to an assassin. As if in explanation, he is given an account of a case that occurred a few years earlier—and this is the story that we read. The plot focuses on the thwarted love of the aristocrat Vincentio di Vivaldi for the petty-bourgeois artist and embroiderer Ellena di Rosalba. Vivaldi's mother is furious that her son would even contemplate marrying so far beneath his station, and enlists the assistance of a sinister and commanding monk, Schedoni. Together they conspire against the lovers; Ellena is abducted, and interned in a convent. The narrative then traces Vivaldi's attempts to rescue her and Ellena's own efforts to escape. Over these endeavours Schedoni hangs like a nightmare—seemingly inescapable, invincible, and remorseless. These interlacing episodes of flight and pursuit, which take place among ancient ruins and stupendous landscapes, are complicated by disturbing rumours and unspeakable family secrets, chance encounters and shocking revelations. The novel's protracted climax is a tour de force of suspense in the dungeons of the Inquisition: it is there that power is exposed in all its ruthlessness. Radcliffe's portrayal of the dark tribunal of the Inquisition is not merely an expression of familiar Protestant fears. Rather, there is in *The Italian* a considered attempt to understand an individual's—particularly a woman's—position, opportunities, and responsibilities within a society haunted by history and mired in institutions. What Radcliffe offers is, effectively, a theology—or rather a sociology—of the Gothic.[4]

Radcliffe had something to prove in this work. Matthew Lewis's lurid horror tale *The Monk* had appeared in 1796 as a retort to Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. *The Italian* is in part Radcliffe's response and

[4] See Brenda Tooley, 'Gothic Utopia: Heretical Sanctuary in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*', *Utopian Studies*, 11.2 (2000), 42–56 (51).

thus draws directly on Lewis's sidelong scrutiny of the dreadful events of the French Revolution, and although she resisted the temptation to write a wholly supernatural story, she did concede some ground.[5] *The Italian* is Radcliffe's sole novel in which apparently supernatural occurrences are not all reassuringly accounted for. In her previous fiction, ostensibly magical or uncanny events all had rational explanations: there were no ghosts or spectres, spells or enchantments, devils or demons—only phantasms conjured by an excitable imagination. But in *The Italian* what explanation is offered—of, for instance, incorporeal voices—is desultory and implausible. *The Italian* is, then, Radcliffe's most unnerving novel.

Life and Writings

Very little is known of the life of Ann Radcliffe: her most assiduous modern biographer describes her as a 'Reclusive enigma' who left only the most meagre factual traces.[6] She was born in Holborn, London, on 9 July 1764 to William Ward, who at the time was a reputable haberdasher, and his wife, Ann Oates. Ann subsequently spent time in Bath, where her father had taken up the management of a porcelain showroom for the business partners Thomas Bentley and Josiah Wedgwood, and with her uncle in Chelsea, which may have exposed her to radical politics and philosophy. The family had a strong background in Dissenting culture—a culture that since the seventeenth century had developed into a rich and diverse theological tradition based on Protestant individualism and the fundamental rejection of state intervention in religious belief. Dissenters did not conform to the prescribed practices and creed of the established Church of England, such as using the Book of Common Prayer. They were intellectuals and educationalists, social reformers and scientists, free-thinkers and activists, and their culture accordingly embraced rationalism, radicalism, and republicanism.[7]

In 1787 Ann Ward married William Radcliffe, an Oxford-educated journalist who wrote for the *Gazetteer, and New Daily Advertiser*, a fiercely radical paper that celebrated the French Revolution, freedom

[5] See Matthew Lewis, *The Monk*, ed. Nick Groom, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. vii–ix.

[6] Norton, *Mistress of Udolpho*, 1.

[7] See Tessa Whitehouse, *The Textual Culture of English Protestant Dissent, 1720–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

of the press, and Dissenters' rights; he also worked as a translator. William became the paper's editor in January 1791, and his wife, meanwhile, appears to have taken up writing out of boredom.[8] She wrote a succession of increasingly popular romance novels before *The Mysteries of Udolpho* set a dazzling new standard in romantic fiction with a gripping narrative that detailed the persecution and detention of the orphan Emily St Aubert by the maleficent aristocrat Signor Montoni. It was a runaway success. The profits from *The Mysteries* enabled William to quit his job and the two of them undertook a tour of the Netherlands and Germany, which she later described in a travelogue. William briefly returned to the *Gazetteer* as editor in 1795 before in 1796 purchasing the *English Chronicle or Universal Evening Post*—a Whig paper known as 'the Englishman'. Radcliffe, meanwhile, wrote *The Italian* at their new house in Southwark (despite its being dated '1797', Cadell and Davies probably published the novel at the end of 1796).[9] Little more is known, and there is very little in the way of surviving personal papers, correspondence, or notebooks to shed light on the rest of her adult life.

Radcliffe's fiction is distinctive for its employment of almost intolerable suspense, for her psychological character development, for her expansive picturesque landscapes, and for her narrative drive. Her early biographer Thomas Noon Talfourd, whose 'Memoir' (1826) was published three years after her death and with the backing of her husband, considered Radcliffe a pioneering originator whose writing was 'a class apart from all which had gone before'.[10] Similarly, for Sir Walter Scott she was the 'mighty enchantress', the founder of a new style of literature: she was

> the first to introduce into her prose fictions a tone of fanciful description and impressive narrative, which had hitherto been exclusively applied to poetry. . . . [She] has a title to be considered as the first poetess of romantic fiction. . . .
>
> She led the way in a peculiar style of composition, affecting powerfully the mind of the reader. . . .[11]

He concludes that

> she has taken the lead in a line of composition, appealing to those powerful and general sources of interest, a latent sense of supernatural awe, and curiosity

[8] See Norton, *Mistress of Udolpho*, 64.

[9] Ann Radcliffe, *The Italian, or The Confessional of the Black Penitents*, ed. Robert Miles (London: Penguin, 2000), p. xxxvii.

[10] Talfourd, 'Memoir', i. 3.

[11] Sir Walter Scott, *Lives of the Novelists*, World's Classics (London, New York, and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1906), 308, 235, 319–20.

concerning whatever is hidden and mysterious . . . [in which] she has never been excelled or even equalled.[12]

As early as 1798 Radcliffe was considered to be 'among the first novel-writers of her age', and Cassandra Cooke christened her 'Queen of the *tremenduous*' [*sic*] in her novel *Battleridge* (1799).[13] The essayist Nathan Drake had no qualms in dubbing his contemporary 'the Shakspeare of Romance Writers', reflecting that for the reader of *The Italian* 'every nerve vibrates with pity and terror'.[14] Anna Laetitia Barbauld (née Aikin), too, claimed that some of Radcliffe's scenes possessed 'far more nature and truth' than those of William Shakespeare.[15] Radcliffe explicitly identified her own writing with that of Shakespeare, as well as Torquato Tasso, Ludovico Ariosto, Edmund Spenser, James Thomson, and Thomas Gray, and she was also influenced by eighteenth-century poets such as Thomas Warton, and the novelists Clara Reeve and Fanny Burney.

Although the category of the 'Gothic novel' did not yet exist (and would not be recognized until well into the nineteenth century), there was then a strong sense of what Gothic entailed, and in his *Literary Hours* of 1798 Drake outlined the emergent genre of 'the Gothic' as being northern and supernatural in style.[16] But by the 1790s it already held a complex ideological position as a political creed in opposition to Tory values: the principle behind extending human rights through the democratic resistance to oppressive despotic power. Gothic thinking brought together the Whig (later Liberal) credos of liberty, belief in progress, and faith in market economics within the structure of a constitutional monarchy balanced by an elected Parliament. Gothic principles were, moreover, as strongly Protestant as they were Whiggish, holding that the Reformation was a watershed in the nation's history,

[12] Ibid., 342–42.

[13] David Rivers, *Literary Memoirs of Living Authors of Great Britain, arranged according to an Alphabetical Catalogue of their Names; and including a List of their Works, with Occasional Opinions upon their Literary Character*, 2 vols (London, 1798), ii. 181; Cassandra Cooke, *Battleridge: An Historical Tale, Founded on Facts*, 2 vols (London, 1799), i. p. viii.

[14] Nathan Drake, *Literary Hours or Sketches Critical and Narrative* (Sudbury, 1798), no. xv, 249–50.

[15] Anna Laetitia Barbauld, 'Mrs. Radcliffe', preface to *The Romance of the Forest*, in *The British Novelists*, xliii (London: F. C. and J. Rivington *et al.*, 1810), p. iii (in which Barbauld mistakenly refers to *The Italian* as '*The Sicilian*').

[16] Drake, *Literary Hours*, no. vi, 87–96 (87); see Dale Townshend and Angela Wright, 'Gothic and Romantic Engagements: The Critical Reception of Ann Radcliffe, 1789–1850', in Dale Townshend and Angela Wright (eds), *Ann Radcliffe, Romanticism and the Gothic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 3–32 (17).

and seeing in the ruins of abbeys and priories evidence of the defeat of Catholic tyranny. Historically, the Gothic focused on the cultural and architectural inheritance of the Middle Ages, as opposed to that of imperial Rome and the classical revivalism of the Renaissance. The mediaeval gave a distinguishing form to an indigenous national identity, even if it was, ironically, saturated in Catholicism—but then such contradictions would literally haunt the Gothic imagination in the form of a vanquished, spectral history that insistently returns through the disclosure of restless secrets, in revenge of past crimes, and, of course, as dreams and ghosts and the supernatural. It is certainly notable that nearly all the writers with whom Radcliffe was compared were male poets enlisted by Whig Gothic ideology: they were not classical or neo-classicist but were often mediaevalist custodians of British history, and they were also perceived as paradigms of politically inflected aesthetics such as originality, subjectivity, and the sublime—all of which were linked to the Whiggish belief in social and commercial progress, individual responsibility and self-determination, and a rootedness in the natural environment.

But if the category 'Gothic novel' did not exist in 1797, the term 'modern romance' did, and both Arthur Aikin and Samuel Taylor Coleridge described *The Italian* as such in their reviews in that year.[17] Aikin, reviewing *The Italian* for the *Monthly Review* in March, defined the 'modern Romance', in which 'high description, extravagant characters, and extraordinary and scarcely possible occurrences combine to rivet the attention, and to excite emotions more thrilling than even the best selected and best described natural scene'—clearly drawing on the tradition of mediaeval romance.[18] Coleridge, on the other hand, writing in the *Critical Review* for June, considered that the '*modern romance*' was part of a current canon that had commenced with the novels of Henry Fielding and Tobias Smollett.[19] Walpole had in fact already distinguished between two kinds of romance in the preface to the second edition of *The Castle of Otranto* (1765), suggesting that his tale was

> an attempt to blend the two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern. In the former all was imagination and improbability; in the latter, nature is always intended to be, and sometimes has been, copied with success.[20]

[17] '*Gothic* romance' had first been used by Richard Hurd as early as 1759: *Moral and Political Dialogues* (London, 1759), 118.

[18] *Monthly Review*, new series, 22 (Mar. 1797), 282–3.

[19] *Critical Review*, 22 (June 1797), 166.

[20] Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, ed. Nick Groom, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 9.

In other words, Walpole had attempted to replot the possibilities of the novel of sensibility (a type that presented abundant feelings as proof of true virtue) by charting the ebb and flow of emotional response not in the familiar domestic situations of courtship or seduction, but under the most extreme—often supernatural—circumstances. *The Italian* is very much in this eighteenth-century sentimental Walpolean tradition.

Critics of the time certainly noticed this, although *The Italian* did divide opinion.[21] The review in the *Analytical Review* (probably written by Mary Wollstonecraft) characterized Radcliffe as conjuring 'vague and horrid shapes which imagination bodies forth', and the reader in consequence as having to 'guard against the delusions of the imagination, which he knows to be glistening bubbles, blown up in air'. Even so, Wollstonecraft grudgingly admired Radcliffe's enchantment: 'We are made to wonder, only to wonder; but the spell, by which we are led, again and again, round the same magic circle, is the spell of genius'.[22] Coleridge, however, believed that Radcliffe had become repetitive in her typically exaggerated use of suspense: 'So many cries that "the wolf is coming," must at last lose their effect'. He felt that Radcliffe had peaked with *The Romance of the Forest* (1791), and that in *The Italian* she was revisiting 'the same characters and the same scenes'. Nevertheless, the novel was 'an ingenious performance . . . many persons will read it with great pleasure and satisfaction'.[23]

Coleridge's criticism of Radcliffe's repetitious refrains of gloom may be fair, but this was certainly what her readers wanted and expected; neither did it prevent him from embracing such imagery and effects in his poem 'The Mad Monk' (1800). But there was another, more pressing reason why Radcliffe was intent on reiterating her singular style: the recent publication of Lewis's novel *The Monk*. Challenging Radcliffe's 'modern romance' of sensibility and rational explanation, Lewis appropriated Gothic mediaevalism to produce an appalling catalogue of depravity: seduction and corruption, rape and murder, matricide and incest, Satanism and Sadism, magic and mayhem. *The Monk* was a *succès de scandale*—vilified by critics, threatened with prosecution, and outrageously popular.

[21] A selection of reviews of *The Italian* is provided by Emma Clery (*The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 108): *Analytical Review*, 25 (1797), 516–20; *English Review*, 28 (1797), 574–9; *Monthly Review*, new series, 22 (March 1797), 282–4; *Critical Review*, 2nd series, 23 (June 1798), 166–9.

[22] *Analytical Review*, 25 (May 1797), 516.

[23] *Critical Review*, 22 (June 1797), 166, 169.

Radcliffe's literary standing was tarnished by her association with *The Monk*, which was seen as being the spawn—however monstrous and illegitimate—of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. So although *The Italian* is a continuation of Radcliffe's preoccupations with character and suspense and owes much to Shakespeare (especially to *Macbeth*)—and even though she may not actually have read *The Monk* through—it is nevertheless Radcliffe's swift riposte to Lewis's horror fiction.[24] She takes the core innovations of Lewis's novel—the evil clergyman and the faceless Inquisition—and magnifies them so that they dominate the entire narrative; she takes the violence and eroticism that so titillated readers of *The Monk* and subsumes them beneath the veil and the cowl of oppressive Catholicism; she dramatically cuts back her lyrically sublime descriptions of landscape and interludes of poetry; and she more than hints at the supernatural in the figure of the furtive monk who haunts the ruins of Paluzzi, in the disembodied voice that whispers into Vivaldi's ear, and even in prophetic dreams.

The Monk also caught the dark and fearful mood of the time by dramatizing the dangerous allure of the Inquisition. German writers such as Friedrich Schiller in *The Ghost-Seer* (1787–9), Cajetan Tschink in *The Victim of Magical Delusion* (a 'Magico-Political Tale', 1795), and Carl Grosse's *Horrid Mysteries* (1796)—the latter two translated by Peter Will—were laced with networks of informants and spies reporting to impervious autocratic powers, and thereby articulated contemporary suspicions of authority and control. Radcliffe accordingly moved from the feudal power struggles of her earlier work to a more timely study of paranoid intrigue. Indeed, in contrast with *The Mysteries*, Radcliffe's genre-defining triumph, there are no eerie cadavers, muttering phantoms, or weird witcheries in *The Italian*. Instead, the world of *The Italian* is tangibly real, if riven by the most savage passions, despicable crimes, and state terrorism. Schedoni remains human even at the extremes of his inhumanity. He is not, literally, a monster; he is diabolical, but he is not the Devil incarnate. In contrast, Vivaldi and Paulo, and Ellena, Bianchi, and Olivia are shallow figures but good souls—for to be virtuous in this furious Italian hothouse, governed as it is by an unholy alliance between the old aristocracy and the priesthood, is to be restrained, rational, refined, and sensible (in its eighteenth-century meaning of moral perceptiveness)—moved by the sublimity of art and nature rather than by lust, wrath, and the desire to dominate.

[24] Shakespeare is quoted in *The Italian* four times as often as any other writer.

There was plenty on which to draw: an account of the Inquisition appears in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (first published in 1563), which also subsequently included the story of William Lithgow's arrest and torture on the rack at the hands of the Inquisition (later reprinted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1776); the *Memoirs of Charles Townly* (1789) described his imprisonment in the Bastille; and Benedikte Naubert's *Hermann von Unna* (1788, attributed to Carl Cramer and translated into English in 1794) exposed a secret tribunal in Westphalia.[25] The events of *The Italian* take place in 1758 and so Radcliffe presents the Inquisition as an active and pervasive force, although it had actually been defunct in Italy since the early seventeenth century.

The appearance of the Inquisition makes *The Italian* an early conspiracy novel. A year before William Radcliffe took over editing the paper, the *Gazetteer* had, on 21 January 1790, carried a report on the Illuminati and the Inquisition, describing the supposed activities of these underground fraternities—secret, shadowy organizations that were believed to influence international politics through abominable plots, clandestine webs, and the exercise of abnormal powers.[26] Fears of anonymous and capricious tyranny were merged. The castle and the prison, the Inquisition and the Parisian Bastille, formed part of the same authoritarian complex in the English imagination: both were manifestations of continental despotism, both were figured in the same way, and both were Gothicized (p. 187). As Vivaldi exclaims, aghast, 'Can this be in human nature!' (p. 189). Although *The Italian* is not about France, Catholic Europe could, from the perspective of Britain, be much of a muchness. English Protestantism, assumed to be tolerant and liberal, defined itself in opposition to such bodies—directly so, as the Bastille had been used to incarcerate Protestants.

Indeed, as in *The Monk*, where the Inquisition offers the only point of stability in a world gone mad, in *The Italian* it is the Inquisition that presides over the restoration of order—which is why Vivaldi becomes

[25] Terry Hale claims Radcliffe's tribunal scenes are 'clearly modelled' on Naubert: 'French and German Gothic: The Beginnings', in Jerrold E. Hogle (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 63–84 (68). Radcliffe also used Francesco Guicciardini's ten-volume *History of Italy, from the Year 1490, to 1532* (trans. Austin Parke Goddard, London, 1753–6), Pierre Jean Grosley's *New Observations on Italy and its Inhabitants* (trans. Thomas Nugent, London, 1769), and Hester Lynch Piozzi's *Observations and Reflections made in the course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany* (London, 1789): see Mirella Agorni, *Translating Italy for the Eighteenth Century: British Women, Translation, and Travel Writing, 1739–1797* (Manchester, and Northampton, Mass.: St Jerome Publishing, 2002), 29.

[26] See *The Italian*, ed. Miles, pp. xvi, xxii.

an unwilling accomplice to its deeply questionable machinations. The Inquisitors have absolute power and are fully aware of their formidable and chilling reputation. They are a law unto themselves; they operate underground and in crepuscular darkness; and their lair echoes with the cries of inmates. The delirial dislocations and disorders of reality consequently experienced by characters are not supernatural: rather, they are the results of Catholic manipulations of the understanding, a calculated assault upon reason.

There was, predictably, a minor craze for Inquisition narratives in the wake of *The Monk* and *The Italian*, from anonymous potboilers (*The Inquisition*, 1797, and *The Libertines*, 1798) to William Godwin's *St Leon* and William Henry Ireland's *The Abbess* (both 1799).[27] *The Italian* also inspired a subgenre of convent fiction, including Sarah Wilkinson's 'bluebook' stories *The Fugitive Countess* (1807), *The Mysterious Novice* (1809), and *The Convent of the Grey Penitents* (1810), as well as a chapbook version, *The Midnight Assassin* (1802).[28] Meanwhile *The Italian Monk*, James Boaden's maudlin adaptation of *The Italian*, opened on 15 August 1797 at the Haymarket Theatre, London, and ran to a respectable dozen performances.[29] Furthermore, many among the next generation of writers admired Radcliffe's idiosyncratic style. Thomas De Quincey commended her as 'the great enchantress of that generation'; Lord Byron included her in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (canto IV, 1818); Thomas Medwin, Percy Bysshe Shelley's cousin and biographer, noted that 'Anne Ratcliffe's [*sic*] works pleased him most, particularly the *Italian*'; and John Keats even described the Devon countryside as Radcliffean: 'I'll cavern you, and grotto you, and waterfall you, and wood you, and water you, and immense-rock you, and tremendous-sound you, and solitude you.'[30] She retained a cult following, her readers

[27] See Robert Miles, 'The 1790s: The Effulgence of Gothic', in Hogle (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, 41–62 (52).

[28] 'Bluebooks' or 'shilling shockers' were short, cheap, ephemeral publications, abridged or plagiarized from bestsellers: see Franz J. Potter, *The History of Gothic Publishing, 1800–1835: Exhuming the Trade* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); 'The Mysterious Novice' is included in Peter Haining (ed.), *Tales from the Gothic Bluebooks* (Chislehurst: Gothic Society, n.d.), 25–53.

[29] See H. Philip Bolton, *Women Writers Dramatized: A Calendar of Performances from Narrative Works Published in English to 1900* (London and New York: Mansell Publishing, 2000), 250.

[30] Thomas De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, ed. David Masson, *The Collected Writings of Thomas De Quincey*, 14 vols (London: A. & C. Black, 1897), iii. 282; Thomas Medwin, *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, 2 vols (London: Thomas Cautley Newby, 1847), i. 30; and *The Letters of John Keats*, ed. Maurice Buxton Forman, 4th edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 113 (14 March 1818); Keats also compared the

devoted in their fandom: by the time he had supper with her in 1822, Charles Bucke had read Radcliffe's *Romance of the Forest* four times, *The Italian* five times, and *The Mysteries* nine times.[31] And in Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley* (1849), the independently minded Rose Yorke is discovered reading *The Italian*.

Charlotte Brontë's acknowledgement of Radcliffe suggests that half a century after her withdrawal from literary life she still shone as an example for aspiring female authors. The novels of Radcliffe and her 'school' tended to dramatize the plight of intellectually and emotionally sophisticated heroines disturbed by fear and guilt, confronting repression, escaping or fleeing from incarceration or labyrinthine environments, embodying fears of unbridled imagination and madness, and often rebelling against authority. These narratives focus on female imperilment and ensuing empowerment—either through resolving their protagonists' predicaments, or through suffering—and they are characterized by dysfunctional domesticity, suspense, and terror. This is what Ellen Moers identified as the 'female Gothic'; 'male Gothic', in contrast, could be said to be typified by a fascination with authority figures, the exploration and penetration of the unknown, objectified female characters who become victims of violence (often sexual in nature), unaccountable supernatural occurrences, disorientation and questioned identities, and baleful (if not tragic) plots.[32]

The category of 'female Gothic' also potentially draws attention to the gender politics of Gothic novels. There is, however, no explicit sexual violence in Radcliffe and the sexual crimes alluded to in the novel (the rape of Olivia by her dead husband's brother, the violations of Baróne di Cambrusco) are a generation in the past. While they do admittedly cast a shadow over the text, the fraught relations between Schedoni and Ellena never become eroticized.[33] Yet Radcliffe is a subtly disquieting writer and, while she does not catalogue sexual crimes with the prurient and sickening delight in which 'Monk' Lewis revels, she does slyly mislead her readers. In *The Italian*, Radcliffe quotes three times

names in his poems 'Isabella', 'The Eve of St Agnes', and 'The Eve of Saint Mark' with names in Radcliffe (299).

[31] See Rictor Norton (ed.), *Gothic Readings: The First Wave, 1764–1840* (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2000), 361.

[32] See Ellen Moers, *Literary Women* (London: Women's Press, 1978), 90–110.

[33] The absence of an erotic element has not prevented some critics from asserting that this is a world in which women are victimized and consumed: see Diane Long Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1998), 121.

from Walpole's *The Mysterious Mother* (1768); these are audacious—and hardly innocent—allusions: *The Mysterious Mother* is a shocking text that infamously hinges on double incest.

Attempts to define a 'female Gothic' have also been entangled in emancipatory politics. Feminist criticism of late eighteenth-century and Romantic-period writers has tended to assume a radical, liberationist agenda among those women writers. As Anne Mellor persuasively argued in 1993:

> women Romantic writers tended to celebrate, not the achievements of the imagination nor the overflow of powerful feelings, but rather the workings of the rational mind, a mind relocated—in a gesture of revolutionary gender implications—in the female as well as the male body.[34]

But this poses a serious problem in the case of Radcliffe. It is notable that Radcliffe's contemporaries, such as the critic Thomas-James Mathias, not only described her as 'Gothic' (with all that that implied), but also set her apart from the other women writers of the time (such as Charlotte Smith, Elizabeth Inchbald, and Mary Robinson), whose 'impossible adventures' are 'now and then tainted with democracy': 'Not so the mighty magician of THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO, bred and nourished by the Florentine Muses in their sacred solitary caverns, amid the paler shrines of Gothic superstition and in all the dreariness of inchantment'.[35] Ann Radcliffe was no Mary Wollstonecraft. The radical feminist Wollstonecraft dismissed Gothic trappings in the opening of her novel *Maria* (posthumously published in 1798); Radcliffe, in contrast, was not only the doyenne of Gothic literature, but was also much more conventional in her thinking.[36]

Relationships between women too are particularly troubled in *The Italian*, which may be a reflection of Radcliffe's partial estrangement from the sisterhood of writers at the time. The convent of San Stefano is presented as an 'anti-utopian' female community pervaded by jealousy, spite, the 'busy whispers' of gossip (p. 66), and institutionalized humiliation.[37] Vivaldi's mother is a vindictive tyrant, bent on dictating her son's life and who, believing Ellena to be his social inferior, engages a contract killer to have her murdered. But the deepest love interest in

[34] Anne K. Mellor, *Romanticism and Gender* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 2.

[35] Thomas-James Mathias, *The Pursuits of Literature: A Satirical Poem in Dialogue*, 2nd edn (London, 1797), 14n ('dreariness' meaning gloom).

[36] See Mary Wollstonecraft, *Mary and The Wrongs of Woman*, ed. Gary Kelly, World's Classics (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 75.

[37] Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism*, 108.

The Italian is also between women: between mother and daughter, Olivia and Ellena. This is first manifested through physical and physiognomical attraction, but rather than indicating a homoerotic subtext this shared charm indicates that female consanguinity runs profoundly deep. The reunion of Vivaldi and Ellena is cursory in comparison with that of Ellena and Olivia, which is as idealized as it is in Shakespearean romance and may indeed allude to *The Winter's Tale*: Olivia (a Hermione figure) has been stabbed by Ferando Count di Bruno and left for dead, but, sequestered in a convent for many years, now returns to restore domestic order and bless the young couple.

Sublime Landscape, Sublime Terror

John Keats's admiration for Radcliffe's depiction of landscape is a reminder that Radcliffe was renowned for her lavish and allusive natural descriptions—christened '*sublimication*' by William Gilpin.[38] Her picturesque settings drew on voguish paintings of the time—notably by Claude Lorrain and Salvator Rosa—but had their roots in Edmund Burke's aesthetic theory set forth in *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757). Burke's essay is a modernization of Longinus' *Peri hypsous* (a first-century treatise on poetic creativity) fitted for fashionable Whig connoisseurship. His proposition is that the sublime arises from the mind's encounter with the infinite. It can be experienced, but is essentially unknowable; it engages and expands the imagination—especially when obscurity (mist, darkness, even the threat of death) veils the experience. For Burke,

> Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling.[39]

Radcliffe acknowledges the oxymoronic quality of terror inspired by the sublime: it is, in *The Italian*, a 'dreadful pleasure' (pp. 62, 87), much as it is for Burke a 'delightful horror'.[40]

[38] William Gilpin, *Remarks on Forest Scenery, and other Woodland Views, (Relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty) illustrated by the Scenes of New-Forest in Hampshire*, 2 vols (London, 1794), i. 263.

[39] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. Adam Phillips, World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), Pt I, section vii, p. 36.

[40] Ibid., Pt II, section viii. 67.

The longevity of Burke's *Inquiry* is evident from the fact that Henry Francis Cary, for example, was reading it in January 1797, some four decades after it had first been published.[41] In the meantime, others had also become bewitched by the concept. Anna Laetitia Aikin (later Mrs Barbauld), who had a particular fascination with mediaeval ruins and romance, introduces the phrase 'Gothic romance' in her essay 'On the Pleasure derived from Objects of Terror' (1773). She observes that,

> A strange and unexpected event awakens the mind, and keeps it on the stretch; and where the agency of invisible beings is introduced, of 'forms unseen, and mightier far than we,' our imagination, darting forth, explores with rapture the new world which is laid open to its view, and rejoices in the expansion of its powers. Passion and fancy co-operating elevate the soul to its highest pitch; and the pain of terror is lost in amazement.[42]

Ten years later, the poet James Beattie developed the notion by reinforcing the amorality of the sublime. It is beyond good and evil, pleasure and pain:

> a character may be sublime, which is not completely good, nay, which is upon the whole very bad. For the test of sublimity is not moral approbation, but that pleasurable astonishment wherewith certain things strike the beholder.[43]

Walter Scott recognized this quality in Radcliffe's work: she 'made much use of obscurity and suspense, the most fertile source, perhaps, of sublime emotion', by 'throwing her narrative into mystery, affording half intimations of veiled and secret horrors'.[44] For Radcliffe, the sublime is beyond language, and also beyond class, gender, and education: it is a manifestation of an egalitarian empathy, or a shared sensibility. The sublime mediates a relationship with the other—either as oppressor or as the beloved. But whereas for Burke distance is fundamental to the experience—the mind is 'so entirely filled with its object', but the spectator is not physically under threat—for Radcliffe the protection of distance is almost entirely dissolved and the terror is brought much closer, within, for example, the compass of living memory.[45]

In the visual arts too, Burke was highly influential. Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Discourses*, delivered before the Royal Academy from 1769

[41] See Norton (ed.), *Gothic Readings*, 342.

[42] J. and A. L. Aikin, *Miscellaneous Pieces, in Prose* (London, 1773), 125.

[43] James Beattie, *Dissertations Moral and Critical. On Memory and Imagination. On Dreaming. The Theory of Language. On Fable and Romance. On the Attachments of Kindred. Illustrations on Sublimity* (London, 1783), 612.

[44] Scott, *Lives of the Novelists*, 326, 313.

[45] Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry*, Pt II, section i. 53.

to 1790, re-orientate the artist, advising that one should aim at 'the idea of the perfect state of nature, which the artist calls the Ideal Beauty'.[46] For Reynolds, art is addressed to 'the desires of the mind, to that spark of divinity which we have within, impatient of being circumscribed and pent up by the world which is about us'.[47] This provided the momentum for the aesthetic of the picturesque: the infusion of artistic representations of natural environments with a sublimity that transcends the scene. In her renderings of landscape, Radcliffe frequently quotes from James Thomson, whose poem *The Seasons* (1726–30) was a touchstone of the picturesque. Radcliffe allegedly carried a telescope with her on her travels—as does Ellena in *The Italian*—in order to capture images from nature.[48] Her landscapes, then, may be ferocious vistas of cruelty and predation, populated by banditti and assassins, but Ellena's survey of such views when she is imprisoned enables a form of escape (for example, p. 87).

It is through such scenes that Radcliffe portrays the therapeutic power of the sublime. Ellena is an artist copying the antiquities of Herculaneum—remnants of a fallen empire—in drawings and embroidery.[49] She is also a work of art herself: her 'Grecian outline' (p. 7) and the 'light drapery of her dress . . . and attitude' (p. 13) make her a statuesque classical beauty, an *objet d'art*.[50] As an artist, Ellena is susceptible to the sublime effects of landscape: meditating on untamed panoramas gives her spiritual hope; she is 'elevated' through these sublime experiences, if, ironically, this ascent is often achieved by looking down from a place of incarceration.

The sublime environment also offers itself as a prospect for communion between characters, a site of bonding. Thus, as the critic Jerrold Hogle points out, 'scenery in *The Italian* . . . is always already a painting'—it is picturesque and sublime, inhabited by memory and identity, and is also often seen through a window or bordered by leaves as if it were a framed picture, as well as frequently being tinted with

[46] Sir Joshua Reynolds, *A Discourse, delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy, on the Distribution of the Prizes, December 14, 1770, by the President* (London, 1771), 7.

[47] Sir Joshua Reynolds, *A Discourse, delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy on the Distribution of the Prizes, December 11, 1786, by the President* (London, 1786 [1787]), 29.

[48] Norton, *Mistress of Udolpho*, 76.

[49] Radcliffe may have been influenced here by the jasperware designs of Bentley and Wedgwood, which were based on ancient Greek vases.

[50] There is also perhaps some slight allusion to Emma Hamilton's eroticized 'attitudes' here. (Lady Hamilton, later Lord Nelson's mistress, was renowned throughout Europe for her mime performances, striking poses as various classical characters while draped in flowing robes.)

Burkean obscurity.[51] But such sublime scenery is also shot through not only with indeterminacy but also with knowing humour—a quality often missed in Radcliffe. When Ellena and Vivaldi conduct each other through their picturesque readings, their sublime epiphany of gendered and libidinal nature is swiftly undercut:

> 'See,' said Vivaldi, 'where Monte-Corno stands like a ruffian, huge, scared, threatening, and horrid!—and in the south, where the sullen mountain of San Nicolo shoots up, barren and rocky! From thence, mark how other overtopping ridges of the mighty Appennine darken the horizon far along the east, and circle to approach the Velino in the north!'
>
> 'Mark too,' said Ellena, 'how sweetly the banks and undulating plains repose at the feet of the mountains; what an image of beauty and elegance they oppose to the awful grandeur that overlooks and guards them! Observe, too, how many a delightful valley, opening from the lake, spreads its rice and corn fields, shaded with groves of the almond, far among the winding hills; how gaily vineyards and olives alternately chequer the acclivities; and how gracefully the lofty palms bend over the higher cliffs.' (p. 153)

Paulo immediately punctures these syrupy intimations of love: looking forward to his next meal, he interrupts by pointing out the fishermen working in the bay, and then roguishly speculates that one of the mountains should really be an erupting volcano.[52] This sudden carnalization of the scene misleads the reader, suddenly unsure of the real import of the sublime and deserted by the evasive author.

Radcliffe's depiction of Italy can be considered 'an imaginative geography' of landscapes, flora, sounds, and lighting effects.[53] It is a geography derived from literature rather than from her own travels; it was inspired by the images of Claude Lorrain, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, and Salvator Rosa, and drew on travel writing and historians such as Francesco Guicciardini for her southern European settings; in addition, many of the places mentioned are imaginary, named after artists.[54] But even if there are episodes of confusion and illusion, Radcliffe is also precise about much of the detail in *The Italian*. So although she

[51] Jerrold E. Hogle, 'Recovering the Walpolean Gothic: *The Italian: or, The Confessional of the Black Penitents*', in Townshend and Wright (eds), *Radcliffe, Romanticism and the Gothic*, 151–67 (163).

[52] Paulo, like other servants in Radcliffe's fiction, 'is extremely oral, being both tediously loquacious and perpetually hungry': Maggie Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 181.

[53] Diego Saglia, 'Looking at the Other: Cultural Difference and the Traveller's Gaze in *The Italian*', *Studies in the Novel*, 28 (1996), 12–37 (15).

[54] See J. M. S. Tompkins, 'Raymond de Carbonnières, Grosley and Mrs Radcliffe', *Review of English Studies*, 5 (1929), 294–301; and notes to the present edition.

never toured Italy herself, this is not wholly a fantastical or figurative landscape—it seeps into and overlaps with a specific personal, literary, and political environment. As Walter Scott, himself profoundly influenced by Radcliffe, put it, Radcliffe

> selected the south of Europe for her place of action, whose passions, like the weeds of the climate, are supposed to attain portentous growth under the fostering sun; which abounds with ruined monuments of antiquity, as well as the more massive remnants of the Middle Ages, and where feudal tyranny and catholic superstition still continue to exercise their sway over the slave and bigot. . . . These circumstances are skilfully selected, to give probability to events which could not, without great violation of truth, be represented as having taken place in England.[55]

This novel is more a matter of credibility than it is of fantasy. Radcliffe, for all her self-conscious artifice and artistry, is not building castles in the air but censuring what at the time were believed to be prevailing Catholic perversions of power: endemic corruption, collusion in spreading superstitions and endorsing mass delusions, and what we might describe today as persistent abuses of fundamental human rights.

Italy in *The Italian* is, then, an alien culture that affords Radcliffe the opportunity to examine how individual identities and freedoms can be expressed and exercised within an oppressive society in which progressive thinking has no choice but to work with state powers—a state not unlike pre-Revolutionary France, in which the modern Enlightenment breathed the air of the *ancien régime*.[56] In critiquing continental despotism in this way, *The Italian* is a forthright endorsement of middle-class English Protestantism. The novel begins with an Englishman grand-touring abroad, distrustful of Italian religion and laws. Ellena belongs to what in England would be the middling class, and Vivaldi, for all his impulsiveness, is really a hapless English gentleman who finds himself embroiled in impassioned Italian family strife, as if he has inadvertently wandered onstage during an opera. Bianchi, Ellena, Vivaldi, Olivia, and the Abbess of Santa della Pieta are anglicized by their virtues; they are not, like the Marchesa and Schedoni, prototypical Italians. Indeed, this bias towards English values is evident in the text's asymmetric structure. The text does not end by returning to the framing narrative, in which the English tourist is given the text of *The Italian*—indeed, it is

[55] Scott, *Lives of the Novelists*, 345.

[56] See Chris Baldick and Robert Mighall, 'Gothic Criticism', in David Punter (ed.), *A Companion to the Gothic* (Malden, Mass., and Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 209–28, esp. 219.

not usually considered to be a 'found manuscript' narrative at all. Instead, the novel assimilates a diasporic Englishness into the work itself: in the final chapter Vivaldi and Ellena withdraw to their 'English' country idyll—a 'fairy-land'—in an egalitarian marriage union that is scrupulously modern and Protestant (p. 390). Moreover, the main focus of the final scene is between Vivaldi and Paulo, between master and servant: a model of class relations. Paulo is loyal to the point of puppyish adoration, but does have a generous helping of native wit and gets the last word in a Puckish, Shakespearean speech. Evidently not all Italians are spiteful, scheming, and crooked. Paulo's blind faith may be comic, but his zest is infectious: his appetite is for revelry, and he brings the festivity of 'Merrie England' to the novel's closing scene.[57]

Church and State

Little is known for certain of Radcliffe's politics or religion, although critics and biographers have inferred a great deal from her background, society, and writings. Concerns of Church and State had been all but inextricable in Britain since the Reformation and Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries. In particular, the intractable implications of Charles I's religious affairs had ultimately led to civil war, regicide, the Commonwealth, and the Glorious Revolution of 1688. It was from these recent and drastic upheavals that the Whig party of the eighteenth century had taken its momentum, notably in confirming Protestantism as the national religion and securing its role within government: by the Act of Settlement of 1701 only a Protestant could legally ascend to the throne.

Religion and politics cannot be disentangled in the ensuing history of Britain in the period, especially in the revolutionary decade of the 1790s. Both are crystallized in another of Edmund Burke's works: *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). In this polarizing polemic, Burke frequently invokes the nascent Whig theory of history with an emphasis on the progress of politics in Britain, the extension of parliamentary and religious rights, and on loyalty to family and nation. Burke traced the illustrious descent of the English from the ancient Goths—the fountainhead of natural liberty—to the 'purity and vigour' of the resultant constitution:

[57] The review of *The Italian* in the *Anti-Jacobin Review* declared that 'allowing that human nature is nearly the same in all countries, we should still contend, that Paulo is more of an Englishman than an Italian': *Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine* 7 (Sept. 1800), 29.

from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties, as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves an unity in so great a diversity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and an house of commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties, from a long line of ancestors.[58]

Historical precedent and the hereditary descent of power were the gatekeepers of English identity. As 'a noble freedom', culturally—and textually—imagined, liberty was a metaphor for the inherited constitution.

Burke is not concerned to delineate abstract values or advocate arithmetical models of governance, but conjures up a vision of objects and artefacts. English identity is inseparable from the antiquarian paraphernalia of culture—from the shadow of mediaevalism. This is the very matter of Britain—tangible and meaningful—and it is the stuff of trade and commerce too. The market-based values of Whiggism, founded on entrepreneurship, investment, and profit, had helped to generate a national ethos that strove to protect property ownership and the distribution of political power—hence the abiding anxieties over legitimacy and authenticity in so much of eighteenth-century Gothic fiction.

This is not to say that Burke's theory of English history was static and inert. On the contrary, major and progressive shifts of power had taken place in the previous century, in 1649 with the execution of Charles I and the ensuing Commonwealth, with the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, and with the Glorious Revolution of 1688 when William and Mary had replaced James II—a preservative revolution that had maintained the institution of monarchy (if not the Stuart dynasty):

The two principles of conservation and correction operated strongly at the two critical periods of the Restoration and Revolution, when England found itself without a king. At both those periods the nation had lost the bond of union in their antient edifice; they did not, however, dissolve the whole fabric. On the contrary, in both cases they regenerated the deficient parts of the old constitution through the parts which were not impaired.[59]

Burke therefore seeks to historicize and defuse revolution, to show that it can be a calm and balanced process. The crude melodrama of the French Revolution, by contrast, is its own evidence of wrongfulness:

[58] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. L. G. Mitchell, World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 4, 33; the 'Declaration of Right' refers to the Bill of Rights (1689). [59] Ibid., 22.

'Plots, massacres, assassinations, seem to some people a trivial price for obtaining a revolution. A cheap, bloodless reformation, a guiltless liberty, appear flat and vapid to their taste.'[60]

Burke's *Reflections* was, in other words, a forthright reminder of the politics of the Gothic. For Burke, 'the old feudal and chivalrous spirit of *Fealty*' was the basis for modern rights and liberties.[61] 'Gothic' accordingly became a buzz-word in the resultant revolutionary debate, specifically linked with Burke and feudal despotism and reviled by radicals: Wollstonecraft, for instance, contemptuously uses the word 'gothic' seven times in *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (1790), 'each instance', according to Robert Miles, bringing out another negative sense of chivalry'.[62] Any description of Radcliffe as 'Gothic' at the time therefore carries this Burkean, anti-Jacobin insinuation.

But matters went further than that: the entire revolutionary enterprise was a vast Gothic drama. Burke depicts the events across the Channel as 'a drunken delirium', and the assault on the French royal family as a Gothic nightmare, an indelible stain on the nation's past.[63] For the Marquis de Sade, 'the strange flights of Mrs. Radcliffe's brilliant imagination' were 'the inevitable result of the revolutionary shocks which all of Europe has suffered'.[64] In other words, Gothic literature had encapsulated insoluble crises in conceptualizing history and progress, authority and rebellion, and the rights of the individual, specifically in societies such as France that endeavoured to amalgamate the traditional exercise of power with modern rationality and the Enlightenment.[65]

For English Protestants, the Catholic Church was the archetypal obsolete institution, as well as being a central pillar of the French *ancien régime*. The Gallican Church was necessarily a prime revolutionary target, and was being determinedly dismantled even as Burke was writing—losing property, revenue, and a state role, and being ceaselessly and mercilessly attacked in revolutionary propaganda. The September Massacres of 1792 exterminated some 200 priests, and in 1793 and

[60] Ibid., 65. [61] Ibid., 78.

[62] Miles, 'The 1790s', in Hogle (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, 47.

[63] Burke, *Reflections*, 91.

[64] Marquis de Sade, 'Reflections on the Novel' ['Idée sur les romans'], *The 120 Days of Sodom and Other Writings*, trans. Austryn Wainhouse and Richard Seaver (London: Arrow Books, 1990), 89–116 (108–9).

[65] Likewise, Hazlitt later remarked that Radcliffe's '"enchantments drear," and mouldering castles, derived part of their interest, no doubt, from the supposed tottering state of all old structures at the time' (William Hazlitt, 'On the English Novelists', *Lectures on the English Comic Writers* (London: Taylor & Hessey, 1819), 244; the quotation is from Milton's 'Il Penseroso').

1794 the Revolutionary Tribunal pursued a deliberate policy of state atheism (specifically, dechristianization) and the promotion of rational thinking through movements such as the Cult of Reason ('Culte de la Raison'). Scores of priests and nuns were charged, tried, and convicted for counter-revolutionary activities such as possessing elements used in celebrating the Mass—though comparatively few were guillotined. England, meanwhile, had been fundamentally anti-Catholic for over two centuries: Catholics were discriminated against in education, politics, and public life, as well as economically, and effigies of Pope Paul V were customarily burnt on Gunpowder Treason Day. It was only in 1791 that the Catholic Relief Act (the latest in a succession of emancipatory legislation) had permitted Catholics to run their own schools and to practise at the bar, but the Gordon Riots of 1780—anti-Catholic riots in London that had raged for days, leaving seven hundred dead and necessitating the imposition of martial law to re-establish order—were still fresh in the memory.[66]

Until the 1790s Burke had entertained sympathies towards Catholicism, as he did towards non-politicized Dissent. However, by 1792 the French Revolution had converted him, in historian Jonathan Clark's words, into 'a champion of the Anglican aristocratic monarchical regime'.[67] Clark identifies this shift as the politicization of religion—and it is key to understanding Radcliffe's account of eighteenth-century continental Catholicism in *The Italian*: 'The great conflict [as Burke saw it] was no longer between Popery and Protestantism or Anglicanism and Dissent, but between Christianity and Jacobinism'.[68] In a 1792 letter to his son Richard on the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland, Burke argued that revolutionary politics had supplanted religious extremism as the primary challenge to established order and national security:

> If ever the Church and the Constitution of England should fall in these Islands, (and they will fall together), it is not Presbyterian discipline, nor Popish hierarchy, that will rise upon their ruins. It will not be the Church of Rome nor the Church of Scotland—not the Church of Luther, nor the Church of Calvin. On the contrary, all these Churches are menaced, and menaced alike. It is the new fanatical Religion, now in the heat of its first ferment, of the Rights of Man, which rejects all Establishments, all discipline, all Ecclesiastical, and in truth all Civil order, which will triumph, and which will lay prostrate your Church;

[66] See Diane Long Hoeveler, *The Gothic Ideology: Religious Hysteria and Anti-Catholicism in British Popular Fiction, 1780–1880* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014), 3–4.

[67] Jonathan Clark, *English Society, 1688–1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 250.

[68] Ibid., 252.

which will destroy your distinctions, and which will put all your properties to auction, and disperse you over the earth.[69]

For Burke, Dissenting sectarianism was by 1792 much more than a 'theological Sect'; it represented a '*political* faction'.[70] Dissent, he argued, was now assimilated with Jacobinism—with the democratic extremism that was driving the French Revolution. In the light of the events in Paris, therefore, calls for British parliamentary reform potentially threatened to escalate into strategies designed to overthrow both the established Church of England and the institutions of the monarchy and the aristocracy. For Burke, the ancient bequest of Saxon (i.e. Gothic) polity was that the monarchy was hereditary rather than elective (William of Orange's arrival in 1688 being merely 'a small and temporary deviation from the strict order of a regular hereditary succession'), and so the people did not possess an inalienable right to frame their own government.[71] At the heart of this reading of national history was the understanding that the Revolution of 1688 did not inaugurate a new political order, but was its natural continuation.

It is striking how much of the turbulent political debate in England in the 1790s was concerned with expounding what rights had been established in 1688. The Whigs doggedly defended the parliamentary principles of the Glorious Revolution during and after the French Revolution, while radical Dissenters attempted to reinterpret its significance as a revolutionary precedent. In 1792, for instance, John Reeves founded the Association for the Preservation of Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers ('Levellers' being a resurrection of the seventeenth-century political term for radical proto-communists).[72] The organization, which soon numbered over 2,000 local branches, was straightforwardly Burkean in celebrating 1688: 'to my understanding', Reeves wrote, 'the principles most discernible in the Conductors of the Revolution, are those of preserving the antient hereditary Monarchy of this Realm, with its Laws and Government. Those I think, are true *Revolution Principles*.'[73] In contrast, radicals such as the Unitarian

[69] Edmund Burke, *On Empire, Liberty, and Reform: Speeches and Letters*, ed. David Bromwich (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 427–8.

[70] Edmund Burke, 'Speech on Unitarians' Petition for Relief, 11 May 1792', *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, gen. ed. Paul Langford, 9 vols, iv: *Party, Parliament, and the Dividing of the Whigs, 1780–1794*, ed. P. J. Marshall and Donald Bryant (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 494.

[71] Burke, *Reflections*, 17.

[72] See Saree Makdisi, *William Blake and the Impossible History of the 1790s* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 288–9.

[73] John Reeves, *Thoughts on the English Government. Addressed to the Quiet Good Sense of the People of England. In a Series of Letters. Letter the Second* (London, 1799), 52.

minister Richard Price attempted to redefine the rights won by the 1688 Revolution as being comparable to those sought by the revolutionaries in America and now within the reach of the *sans-culottes* in France.[74]

This protracted debate is of central significance to Radcliffe—and indeed to *The Italian*—as Radcliffe's modern biographer, Rictor Norton, has credibly argued that she was a radical Unitarian. Unitarians formed the intellectual nucleus of Dissenting culture: neither Anglican nor conventionally nonconformist, they were more secular than the former and more rational than the latter, believing in collective progress through advances in science and the pursuit of knowledge. Unitarians were individualist and meritocratic, politically Whiggish but willing to engage with egalitarian radicalism. Norton produces suggestive contextual evidence from Radcliffe's family background and her social circle linking her to Unitarians, and evidently her husband, as a journalist and editor, was a spokesperson for radical politics. But although she was almost certainly exposed to radical Dissenting ideas, Norton concludes that 'Her work was really beyond political analysis'.[75] However, *The Italian* is not only Radcliffe's most immediate novel (set as it is in the mid-eighteenth century), it is also her most political.

Some attitudes and episodes in *The Italian* do seem to be decidedly Unitarian, even Jacobinical. Religious practice in the novel is not doctrinal and makes no mention of Jesus. Instead, rational Dissent—in which faith is presented as a pragmatic and communal occupation of civic duty (and indeed the convent of Santa della Pieta is itself depicted as a reasonable establishment, run according to Protestant values by a merciful Abbess)—is compared with the Catholicism of Schedoni and his ilk, for whom the Church is an expedient institution ruthlessly condoning subjugation, persecution, and homicide. These Unitarian sympathies are carried into personal politics when Ellena defies the tyrannical women she encounters. When threatened by the Abbess of San Stefano, Ellena is daringly individualistic, deploying the political language of rights and liberties in her confrontation by claiming her 'immortal love of justice' (p. 81).[76] Ellena's response to natural panoramas is also Unitarian: she believes that by being so majestically sublime these scenes offer a perspective on the individual's predicament that functions as

[74] See Richard Price, *A Discourse on the Love of our Country, delivered on Nov. 4, 1789, at the Meeting-House in the Old Jewry, to the Society for Commemorating the Revolution in Great Britain* (London, 1789): see Clark, *English Society*, 253, 332.

[75] Norton, *Mistress of Udolpho*, 133; see also Mark Canuel, *Religion, Toleration, and British Writing, 1790–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 55–81.

[76] See Tooley, 'Gothic Utopia', 44.

a humane source of comfort and reveals the design of God. Schedoni, in contrast, is criminally deficient in humanity: he has no sublime engagement with nature, and thus sees the world as a godless wilderness in which the best strategy for survival and success is not praying, but preying.

Perhaps Radcliffe was Unitarian; yet according to Talfourd, Radcliffe's first biographer, the case may be rather more straightforward: 'She was educated in the principles of the Church of England; and through life, unless prevented by serious indisposition, regularly attended its services. Her piety, though cheerful, was deep and sincere.'[77] There is little reason to doubt this statement. Although familiar with radical ideas and Dissenting theology, and keen to encompass empirical rationalism as a pillar of intelligent modern faith rather than as an intellectual threat, Radcliffe was an informed late-eighteenth-century Anglican, able to accommodate the challenges and insights of rationalism and science without becoming either sectarian (i.e. a Unitarian) or an atheist. Consequently, Radcliffe reflects on the contradictions and consolations of faith in her writing. Providence worked according to the laws of nature—laws that could be comprehended by reason and science, and which accordingly revealed the hand of a systematic creator—and thus the natural world was proof of the divine. And this was most marked when it was experienced as sublime, engaging the spectator in a form of communion. This is the basis of her 'explained supernatural': God may work in mysterious ways, but He always acts according to the laws He has laid down. Hence natural landscapes can offer spiritual succour, and aesthetic experiences coincide with religious values.

Radcliffe's attitude to Roman Catholicism too is typically Anglican. The Inquisition may be less sensationalized and less explicit in *The Italian* than it is in Lewis's *The Monk*, but it is more institutional, more invidious, and far more intimidating. Schedoni's crimes may have been committed before he took the cloth, but he nevertheless spends the vast majority of the novel engaged in slander, kidnap, and conspiracy to murder. Neither is the Inquisition itself a benign or moderate operation—it is devastatingly fearsome. In any case, a church offering refuge for assassins casts doubt on the moral authority not only of an institution that condones such a concept of sanctuary, but also of a nation that allows such an organization the freedom to act under its own independent laws—unanswerable to the sovereign, the government, or the people. The lurking assassin sheltered by the misguided priesthood at

[77] Talfourd, 'Memoir', i. 105.

the beginning of the novel suggests that Schedoni is less the exception in Italy than the rule.

Furthermore, in her *Journey made in the Summer of 1794* (published shortly before she began *The Italian*) Radcliffe ridicules the Catholic relics in Bonn and gives a pitiable report of the Poor Clares of Cologne and their unnatural confinement: 'Accounts of such horrible perversions of human reason make the blood thrill and the teeth chatter.'[78] This is typical Anglican anti-Catholicism, and it is so precisely because Catholicism remained a present threat. The Gallican Church survived the ravages of the French Revolution: far from being destroyed, a spent force eliciting sympathy rather than denunciation, it rose again from the ashes of annihilation. By 1795 Catholicism had been rehabilitated within the Republic: churches were reopened and the faith was once again observed—Catholicism was not eradicated; it refused to die.

If Radcliffe's religious sympathies were conventional, so, it follows, were her politics—meaning that she was extremely wary of the immense political upheavals that had transformed France. The most salient evidence of Radcliffe's mainstream (if enlightened) Anglicanism is therefore her Burkean Whiggism. For all its picturesque descriptions, Radcliffe's *Journey made in the Summer of 1794* also contains reminders of the violence of the English past. Travelling through Westmorland, the Radcliffes visited the hamlet of Mardale and called at the parsonage. Despite its idyllic location and views, the residence was far from being a serene haven from the contemporary world, having among its library a collection of political annals: 'Alas! to what scenes, to what display of human passions and human suffering did it open! How opposite to the simplicity, the innocence and the peace of these!'[79] Whig history was clearly within the aesthetic realm of the Lake District. But the most revealing moment in the tour comes when Radcliffe climbs the hill overlooking Kendal:

> Kendal is built on the lower steeps of a hill, that towers over the principal street, and bears on one of its brows a testimony to the independence of the inhabitants, an obelisk dedicated to liberty and to the memory of the Revolution in 1688. At a time, when the memory of that revolution is reviled, and the praises of liberty itself endeavoured to be suppressed by the artifice of imputing to it the crimes of anarchy, it was impossible to omit any act of veneration to the blessings of this event. Being thus led to ascend the hill, we had a view of the

[78] Ann Radcliffe, *A Journey made in the Summer of 1794, through Holland and the Western Frontier of Germany, with a return down the Rhine: to which are added Observations during a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland* (London, 1795), 109.

[79] Ibid., 402.

country, over which it presides; a scene simple, great and free as the spirit revered amidst it.[80]

Radcliffe is lamenting the appropriation of the Glorious Revolution—the birth of the modern Whig party—by radicals 'imputing to it the crimes of anarchy', that is, revolution and republicanism and dechristianization. Her politics align perfectly with her Anglicanism.

The Italian *and the Italian, Schedoni*

What does all this mean for *The Italian*? Vivaldi, if he is the hero of the novel, is a Burkean hero. He rebels against his parents, but this rebellion is permissible as their desire to control him is exposed as oppressive and wilful rather than communally beneficial. In addition, Vivaldi himself has a strong sense of social responsibility that is set above personal desires. Likewise, his notion of love is mutual and chaste. The love Vivaldi bears towards Ellena is the love of devotion; it is never improper or even remotely sensual.

In her depiction of Vivaldi, Radcliffe's Gothic is sociological: propelled by the cult of sensibility, she explores a new sense of masculinity as an ideal of civil behaviour—aesthetic, impressionable, imaginative, and above all sociable. Radcliffe therefore rewrites the first scene of *The Monk*—which opens with a salacious depiction of the shrouded Antonia—in order to refute Lewis's voyeuristic fixation with veiling and unveiling, disguise and exposure:

> It was in the church of San Lorenzo at Naples, in the year 1758, that Vincentio di Vivaldi first saw Ellena Rosalba. The sweetness and fine expression of her voice attracted his attention to her figure, which had a distinguished air of delicacy and grace; but her face was concealed in her veil. (p. 7)

Desire is not a vice for Radcliffe: Vivaldi's captivation with Ellena is a blessing, as virtuous as his imagination is creative.

Vivaldi is in any case first attracted by Ellena's voice, further challenging Lewis's obsession with the male gaze; Olivia too initially appears veiled, enticing Ellena through her own singing voice before she reveals herself. Nevertheless, veils, both literal and figurative, do become a repeated structural element in *The Italian*. Veiling is pervasive, both as protection and threat. Ellena spends much of the novel trying to resist being forced to 'take the veil' as a nun. She is abducted by being

[80] Ibid., 389.

smothered in a veil, much as Vivaldi is blindfolded under a black veil by the Inquisition. *The Italian* is a novel of lines of sight—of pursuit, flight, evasion, and hiding—in which characters struggle to control their own images. Yet it is also a novel of the capacity of the voice—of debate and persuasion, in which decisions are contested and overturned. Characters are increasingly guarded in their language: Ellena, for instance, struggles to contain the meanings conveyed by her own words, but Vivaldi overhears her plea of lament of unrequited love—which she promptly asks him to forget; later, she refuses to speak as a way of resisting the Abbess of San Stefano—'my own voice never shall sanction the evils to which I may be subjected' (p. 81).

These complications of sights and sounds suggest hidden depths, and the novel is riddled with buried settings and chthonic episodes, from the tunnels that zigzag beneath ruins and convents to the stifling vaults of the Inquisition. Ellena's archaeological artistry—she copies trophies of classical Herculaneum excavated from volcanic ash—embeds her in a land strewn with Roman remains, haunted by the past. It is a landscape 'stained with human blood' (p. 154) and laced with sepulchral convents teeming with cells. Taking the veil is live burial: when she encountered the Poor Clares, Radcliffe described their condition as a literal 'entombment'.[81]

Within this cryptic subterraneana, characters are not able to grasp what they see: they cannot make sense of flitting shapes and shadows, ethereal voices, macabre and unreadable signs in bloodstains, the 'dreadful hieroglyphic' of the straw mattress of the dead nun (p. 135), or the unsettling simplicity of the Inquisition tribunal's table (an item of domestic furniture weighed down with terrible associations). Radcliffe dwells on inscrutability: there are eerily doubled figures and settings and episodes (two Abbesses, two convents, two incarcerations for Ellena); mistaken reports (the death of Bianchi); and misinterpretations (of Ellena's miniature portrait). But this is no dream-world. Unlike *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, in which characters are famously spectralized to become ghosts of themselves, in *The Italian* it is only Nicola di Zampari who is a phantasmic figure: Schedoni, the Marchesa, and the communal fellowship of the virtuous characters have a corporeal flesh-and-blood materiality. Characters are real and have depths; it is just that those depths are unfathomable.

Coleridge admired Radcliffe's 'art of escaping the guesses of the reader': nothing is to be trusted and we are constantly being wrong-

[81] Ibid., 109.

footed.[82] This recurrent misdirection fractures the narrative, which twists and turns as the matrimonial endeavours of Ellena and Vivaldi are repeatedly frustrated. The constitution of the entire novel is unsteady, perplexing to the reader: the framing narrative is asymmetrical; fragmentary stories overlap and coalesce. Characters fashion themselves through speech, argue and dispute and disagree, eavesdrop, cross-examine, and persuade; evidence is a mix of reliable reports, hearsay, conversations, the irrelevant (such as the tale of Baróne di Cambrusca), and the irrational (such as Vivaldi's sudden conviction on his way to visit Ellena that she is dead). Dead-ends and deliberate repetitions are among Radcliffe's most effective devices of suspension and deferral.

The reader is required to be analytical, forensic, even inquisitorial—but is also effectively on trial, experiencing the tribunal through Vivaldi's heightened awareness and similarly at a loss as to process and judgment. The trial scene itself is an early instance of legal machination in fiction, drawing on the appetite for crime narratives typified by the popularity at the time of Newgate 'calendars' and the cut-and-thrust of legal prosecution. Modern readers inevitably recognize a Kafkaesque quality in Radcliffe's depiction of a totalitarian legal system that perverts language and has power over life and death within its drama of invisible, elusive forces.

The prime mover, director, and chief actor of this covert performance is the monk Schedoni. Among a cast of Italians, Schedoni is *the* Italian. He towers over the plot like an evil genius. Sir Walter Scott recognized Schedoni as 'the real hero of the tale', while the later critic Mario Praz described Schedoni as Radcliffe's 'masterpiece' and an inspiration for the Romantic 'Fatal Man' or Byronic hero.[83] Radcliffe's attention to villainy was a new departure for her. Schedoni is inspired by the immense anti-heroes of Elizabethan and Jacobean revenge tragedy, and by Milton's Satan. He is also a reworking—an immeasurably successful reworking—of Ambrosio, 'Monk' Lewis's study in corruption. But while Lewis dwells with minute particularity on Ambrosio's sins, and revels in the fall of the man of God, Schedoni is already fallen and, in contrast, the reader bears witness to the knitting and unravelling of his despicable plots. Schedoni is a bold experiment who, through his suppressed suffering and desperate motivation, is a much more

[82] *Critical Review; or Annals of Literature*, 11 (Aug. 1794), 361; this review of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is attributed to Coleridge.

[83] Scott, *Lives of the Novelists*, 314; Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, trans. Angus Davidson, 2nd edn (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 60–1, 87–8.

compelling study in infamy than Ambrosio, who, it is eventually revealed, is a mere pawn.

Schedoni appears wreathed in a dark cowl, carries with him an 'habitual gloom' (p. 35), and his secretive origins are matched by his stealthy comings and goings. He is driven by extraordinary passions, consumed by guilt, tormented by melancholy: 'There was something . . . terrific in the silent stalk of so gigantic a form; it announced both power and treachery' (p. 210). He is ashen-faced and evil-eyed: his 'vulture' eyes are weaponized (p. 165), 'impowered with the destructive fascination attributed to that of the basilisk' (p. 381). Schedoni himself is unreadable, but his own gaze is 'so piercing that [it] seemed to penetrate, at a single glance, into the hearts of men, and to read their most secret thoughts; few persons could support [its] scrutiny, or even endure to meet [it] twice' (p. 35).

Schedoni's chamber too is indecipherable, inexplicable to Vivaldi. It 'contained little more than a mattress, a chair, a table, and a crucifix; some books of devotion were upon the table, one or two of which were written in unknown characters; several instruments of torture lay beside them' (p. 98). Are the instruments of torture for the mortification of Schedoni's own flesh (as is later implied, p. 231), or destined for others? His language is also dangerous, ensnaring: 'he cared not for truth, . . . but loved to exert the wily cunning of his nature in hunting it through artificial perplexities' (p. 35). Schedoni ominously 'speaks the language of philosophical libertinage', comparable to Sade, and, despite being a defender of the abhorrent old regime, he is also a 'gaunt tyger' (p. 163), the very image of revolutionary fervour.[84] He commands a villainous ubiquity, overlapping with both and Spalatro (his vicious henchman) and Zampari (the spectral monk), as well as with the unnamed assassin lurking in the church at the opening of the novel, and he is also confused with the Baróne di Cambrusca who lived in a tower, immersed himself in the occult, abused his daughter, and was eventually killed in an earthquake. He is a perpetual threat because the horrifying terror in which he is cloaked envelops the sublime landscape itself, inscribing his malevolent presence upon the very environment.

Schedoni's torments, it turns out, have a source: he is tortured by his past. But does that make him redeemable or elicit the reader's sympathy? He has, lest we forget, murdered his brother and raped his

[84] Robert Miles, *Ann Radcliffe: The Great Enchantress* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), 162; see also James Watt, 'Ann Radcliffe and Politics', in Townshend and Wright (eds), *Radcliffe, Romanticism and the Gothic*, 67–82 (77).

sister-in-law and is living in the belief that he has succeeded in murdering her as well. Yet as his malicious schemes collapse, making him no longer the spider at the centre of his perfidious web but a fly enmeshed in strands of duplicity and error, he never achieves a tragic status. Rather, he becomes a wretchedly spent force, then bestial, and monstrously strange. His final cry is a 'demoniacal' howl: 'At the instant of [Zampari's] fall, Schedoni uttered a sound so strange and horrible, so convulsed, yet so loud, so exulting, yet so unlike any human voice, that every person in the chamber . . . struck with irresistible terror, endeavoured to make their way out of it' (p. 381). This death, effected by a poison unaccountably conveyed by him, is the final, despicable plot twist. But Schedoni is not a demon; he is human, all too human. That is what makes him so horribly disturbing, and his malice remains in his final, senseless killing of Zampari: the cornered creature still has teeth—and venom. Zampari's offence is little more than moral ambiguity: in a novel that is steeped in treachery he has defamed Ellena to Vivaldi's father, and betrayed Schedoni; for this he is summarily executed and dies unmourned. But once Schedoni has finally poisoned himself, the malign and unremitting hold that the past has had over the present suddenly vanishes, and the novel is abruptly wound up, its driving force extinguished.

Walter Scott pulled at various 'loose stitches' in the novel: Schedoni's response to Cambrusca, the unlikely acoustics of the voice, and the motives of Zampari.[85] But these are not faults that should have been tidied up more neatly: they are deliberate loose ends that contribute to the uncomfortable atmosphere of a novel that never seems to be completely within the reader's grasp. The final chapters of *The Italian* are perfunctory precisely in order to expose the shortcomings and conventions of dramatic narrative, akin to the closing scenes of Shakespeare's dark comedies. Most curiously, the seclusion to which Ellena and Vivaldi retreat is not confined to the novel: it uncannily (if doubtless unintentionally) prefigured Radcliffe's own imminent departure from cultural life.

The End

The obituary for Ann Radcliffe in the *New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal* for May 1823 claimed that the criticism of *The Italian* caused Radcliffe to lay down her pen:

[85] Scott, *Lives of the Novelists*, 316.

The anonymous criticisms which appeared upon this work, the imitations of her style and manner by various literary adventurers, the publication of some other novels under a name slightly varied for the purpose of imposing on the public, and the flippant use of the term 'Radcliffe school,' by scribblers of all classes, tended altogether to disgust her with the world, and create a depression of spirits, which led her for many years, in a considerable degree, to seclude herself from society.[86]

What rankled most, though, was not so much the vagaries of the literary marketplace outlined here, but the accusation that she was Jacobinical—a revolutionary republican—or, which may have been worse, a laughable writer. George Canning, one of the founders and outspoken contributors to *The Anti-Jacobin* and a later Tory prime minister, accused the whole cult of sensibility as being Jacobinical, mocking it as the 'Sweet child of sickly Fancy!'[87] Although some critics suggest *The Italian* is a critique of sentimental literature comparable to the attacks of Mary Wollstonecraft, and Radcliffe herself a subversive writer operating behind the mask of conservatism, her novels are not Jacobinical—and she wore no mask. As to risibility, a notorious letter condemning 'Terrorist Novel Writing' accused her of provoking a fashion

to make *terror* the *order of the day*, by confining the heroes and heroines in old gloomy castles, full of spectres, apparitions, ghosts, and dead men's bones. . . . If a curtain is withdrawn, there is a bleeding body behind it; if a chest is opened, it contains a skeleton; if a noise is heard, somebody is receiving a deadly blow; and if a candle goes out, its place is sure to be supplied by a flash of lightning.

A footnote to this letter explicitly attacks Radcliffe's '*system of terror*' for 'the tedious monotony of her description' and claims that 'she affects in the most disgusting manner a knowledge of languages, countries, customs, and objects of art, of which she is lamentably ignorant'. The letter ends with a recipe for making a Gothic novel.[88] And on top of all this was the contamination of Gothic romance writing by 'Monk' Lewis and the brood of German horror writers. Radcliffe published nothing more until the posthumous appearance in 1826 of *Gaston de Blondeville* and her essay 'On the Supernatural in Poetry' (see Appendix I to this edition), in which she again distanced herself from the French Revolution, radicalism, and Lewis.

[86] *New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal*, 9 (May 1823), 232.

[87] George Canning, 'New Morality', *The Anti-Jacobin*, 36 (9 July 1798), repr. in *Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin*, 4th edn (London: J. Wright, 1801), p. 239, l. 125: see Angela Wright, *Britain, France and the Gothic, 1764–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 75.

[88] *The Spirit of the Public Journals for 1797* (London: James Ridgway, 1802), 227–8.

Ann Radcliffe may not have been a revolutionary, but her work is far from being conservative—she repeatedly tested the boundaries of orthodoxy at a time of revolutionary foment. This may explain why everything is under scrutiny in *The Italian*. It is a novel suffused with secrets and mysteries, and pervaded by scrutiny, examination, and interrogation; it is a novel of revelation and disclosure, beginning and ending in confession, and subtitled 'The Confessional'. It looks forward to a society in which order is enforced by institutions keeping individuals under perpetual surveillance. As such, *The Italian, or The Confessional of the Black Penitents* is very much a novel for the twenty-first century.

NOTE ON THE TEXT

The text used in this volume is taken from the first edition, dated 1797 and published by Cadell and Davies of London. In the same year a second edition appeared, also from Cadell and Davies, and there were other editions in Dublin, New York, and Philadelphia, as well as a number of translations. The date of the last edition published in Radcliffe's lifetime is 1811; it is erroneously styled the second edition, and although it shows hundreds of changes, the author is unlikely to have participated.

Obvious printing errors have been silently corrected in the present version, most of which follow revisions made to the second edition of 1797. The original punctuation, grammar, and spelling (apart from the long 's') have been retained, although they are occasionally erratic, and some words are spelt in different ways on the same page. For instance, 'Shakespeare' alternates with 'Shakspeare' in the attribution of epigraphs; '*Maestro*', the servant Paulo's favourite term of address, is not always italicized, and once appears with an added acute accent over the 'e'. Such inconsistencies were not uncommon in eighteenth-century publishing. Several minor textual errors have been corrected in the present volume from earlier OWC editions.

F. G. (1981), rev. N. G. (2017)

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Life and Writings

Chandler, Anne, 'Ann Radcliffe and Natural Theology', *Studies in the Novel*, 38 (2006), 133–53.

Cottom, Daniel, *The Civilized Imagination: A Study of Ann Radcliffe, Jane Austen, and Sir Walter Scott* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Lewis, Jayne, '"No Colour of Language": Radcliffe's Aesthetic Unbound', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 39 (2006), 377–90.

Mackenzie, Scott, 'Ann Radcliffe's Gothic Narrative and the Readers at Home', *Studies in the Novel*, 31 (1999), 409–31.

McMillan, Dorothy, 'The Secrets of Ann Radcliffe's English Travels', in Amanda Gilroy (ed.), *Romantic Geographies: Discourses of Travel, 1775–1844* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), 51–67.

Michasiw, Kim, 'Ann Radcliffe and the Terrors of Power', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 5 (1994), 327–46.

Miles, Robert, 'Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis', in David Punter (ed.), *A Companion to the Gothic* (Malden, Mass., and Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 41–57.

Miles, Robert, *Ann Radcliffe: The Great Enchantress* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995).

Napier, Elizabeth R., *The Failure of Gothic: Problems of Disjunction in an Eighteenth-Century Literary Form* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

Norton, Rictor, *Mistress of Udolpho: The Life of Ann Radcliffe* (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1999).

Rogers, Deborah D., *Ann Radcliffe: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 1996).

Rogers, Deborah D. (ed.), *The Critical Response to Ann Radcliffe* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 1993).

Saglia, Diego, 'Looking at the Other: Cultural Difference and the Traveller's Gaze in *The Italian*', *Studies in the Novel*, 28 (1996), 12–37.

Schmitt, Cannon, 'Techniques of Terror, Technologies of Nationality: Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*', *English Literary History*, 61 (1994), 853–76.

Shapira, Yael, 'Where the Bodies Are Hidden: Ann Radcliffe's "Delicate" Gothic', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 18 (2006), 453–76.

Shuttleworth, Sally, 'Psychiatric Discourse and the Novel of the Romantic Era: Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* and William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*', in B. Castel, J. A. Leith, and A. W. Riley (eds), *Muse and Reason: The Relation of Arts and Sciences, 1650–1850. A Royal Society Symposium* (Ottawa: Queen's Quarterly for the Royal Society of Canada, 1994), 179–202.

Todd, Janet, 'Posture and Imposture: The Gothic Manservant in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*', *Women and Literature*, 2 (1982), 25–38.

Tooley, Brenda, 'Gothic Utopia: Heretical Sanctuary in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*', *Utopian Studies*, 11 (2000), 42–56.

Townshend, Dale, and Angela Wright (eds), *Ann Radcliffe, Romanticism and the Gothic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Gothic Contexts

Baldick, Chris, and Robert Mighall, 'Gothic Criticism', in David Punter (ed.), *A Companion to the Gothic* (Malden, Mass., and Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 209–28.

Brown, Marshall, *The Gothic Text* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

Carson, James, 'Enlightenment, Popular Culture and Gothic Fiction', in John Richetti (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 225–76.

Chaplin, Sue, *Gothic Literature* (London: York Press, 2011).

Clery, E. J., *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Ellis, Kate Ferguson, *The Contested Castle and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989).

Ellis, Markham, *The History of Gothic Fiction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000).

Gamer, Michael, *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Groom, Nick, *The Gothic: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Kilgour, Maggie, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

Martin, Rebecca E., '"I Should like to Spend My Whole Life in Reading It": Repetition and the Pleasure of the Gothic', *Journal of Narrative Technique*, 28 (1998), 75–90.

Miles, Robert, *Gothic Writing, 1750–1820: A Genealogy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

Miles, Robert, 'The 1790s: The Effulgence of Gothic', in Jerrold E. Hogle (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 41–62.

Praz, Mario, *The Romantic Agony*, trans. Angus Davidson, 2nd edn (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

Punter, David, *Gothic Pathologies: The Text, the Body and the Law* (London: Macmillan, 1998).

Punter, David, *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (London and New York: Routledge, 2013).

Robertson, Fiona, *Legitimate Histories: Scott, Gothic, and the Authorities of Fiction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

Watt, James, *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict, 1764–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Theology and Society

Acosta, Mana M., 'Hotbeds of Popery: Convents in the English Literary Imagination', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 15 (2003), 615–42.

Agorni, Mirella, *Translating Italy for the Eighteenth Century: British Women, Translation, and Travel Writing, 1739–1797* (Manchester, and Northampton, Mass.: St Jerome Publishing, 2002).

Canuel, Mark, *Religion, Toleration, and British Writing, 1790–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Clark, Jonathan, *English Society, 1688–1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Gephardt, Katarina, *The Idea of Europe in British Travel Narratives, 1789–1914* (Abingdon: Ashgate, 2014).

Haydon, Colin, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England, c. 1714–1780: A Political and Social Study* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

Hoeveler, Diane Long, 'Anti-Catholicism and the Gothic Imaginary: The Historical and Literary Contexts', *Religion and the Age of Enlightenment*, 3 (2012), 1–31.

Hoeveler, Diane Long, *The Gothic Ideology: Religious Hysteria and Anti-Catholicism in British Popular Fiction, 1780–1880* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014).

Leask, Nigel, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770–1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

McCann, Andrew, *Cultural Politics in the 1790s: Literature, Radicalism, and the Public Sphere* (London: Macmillan, 1999).

Mackenzie, Scott R., 'An Englishwoman's Workhouse Is Her Castle: Poor Management and Gothic Fiction in the 1790s', *ELH*, 74 (2007), 681–705.

Maniquis, Robert M., 'Filling Up and Emptying Out the Sublime: Terror in British Radical Culture', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 63 (2000), 369–405.

Paulson, Ronald, 'Gothic Fiction and the French Revolution', *ELH*, 48 (1981), 532–54.

Pocock, J. G. A., *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

Purves, Maria, *The Gothic and Catholicism: Religion, Cultural Exchange and the Popular Novel, 1785–1829* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009).

Sage, Victor, *Horror Fiction in the Protestant Tradition* (London: Macmillan, 1988).

Schmitt, Cannon, *Alien Nation: Nineteenth-Century Gothic Fictions and English Nationality* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997).

Smith, R. J., *The Gothic Bequest: Medieval Institutions in British Thought, 1688–1863* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

Tarr, Mary Muriel, *Catholicism in Gothic Fiction: A Study of the Nature and Function of Catholic Materials in Gothic Fiction in England (1762–1820)* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1946).

Wright, Angela, *Britain, France and the Gothic, 1764–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Female Gothic

Anolik, Ruth Bienstock, 'The Missing Mother: The Meanings of Maternal Absence in the Gothic Mode', *Modern Language Studies*, 33 (2003), 24–43.

Castle, Terry, *The Female Thermometer: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Invention of the Uncanny* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Clery, Emma, *Women's Gothic: From Clara Reeve to Mary Shelley* (Tavistock: Northcote House, 2000).

DeLucia, JoEllen, 'From the Female Gothic to a Feminist Theory of History: Ann Radcliffe and the Scottish Enlightenment', *The Eighteenth Century*, 50 (2009), 101–15.

Grove, Allen W., 'Coming Out of the Castle: Gothic, Sexuality and the Limits of Language', *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, 26 (2000), 429–46.

Haggerty, George E., *Unnatural Affections: Women and Fiction in the Later 18th Century* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998).

Hoeveler, Diane Long, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1998).

Howells, Coral Ann, 'The Pleasure of the Woman's Text: Ann Radcliffe's Subtle Transgressions in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian*', in Kenneth Graham (ed.), *Gothic Fictions: Prohibition/Transgression* (New York: AMS Press, 1989), 151–62.

Johnson, Claudia L., *Jane Austen: Women, Politics and the Novel* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

Keane, Angela, *Women Writers and the English Nation in the 1790s: Romantic Belongings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Mellor, Anne K., *Romanticism and Gender* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

Miles, Robert (ed.), *Female Gothic Writing* (Wallingford: Triangle Journals, 1994) [special issue of *Women's Writing: The Elizabethan to the Victorian Period*, 1.2].

Shakespeare

Drakakis, John, and Dale Townshend (eds), *Gothic Shakespeares* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008).

Norton, Rictor, 'Ann Radcliffe, "The Shakespeare of Romance Writers" ', in Christy Desmet and Anne Williams (eds), *Shakespearean Gothic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), 37–59.

Price, F. W., 'Ann Radcliffe, Mrs Siddons and the Character of Hamlet', *Notes and Queries*, n.s. 23 (1976), 164–7.

Sabor, Peter, and Paul Yachnin (eds), *Shakespeare and the Eighteenth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

Salter, David, ' "This Demon in the Garb of a Monk": Shakespeare, the Gothic and the Discourse of Anti-Catholicism', *Shakespeare*, 5 (2009), 52–67.

Townshend, Dale, 'Gothic Shakespeare', in David Punter (ed.), *A New Companion to the Gothic* (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 38–63.

Further Reading: Oxford World's Classics

Burke, Edmund, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. Adam Phillips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Burke, Edmund, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. L. G. Mitchell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Lewis, Matthew, *The Monk*, ed. Nick Groom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Radcliffe, Ann, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, ed. Alison Milbank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Radcliffe, Ann, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, ed. Bonamy Dobrée (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

Radcliffe, Ann, *The Romance of the Forest*, ed. Chloe Chard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Radcliffe, Ann, *A Sicilian Romance*, ed. Alison Milbank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Walpole, Horace, *The Castle of Otranto*, ed. Nick Groom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

A CHRONOLOGY OF ANN RADCLIFFE

Year	*Life*	*Historical and Cultural Background*
1764	(9 July) Ann Ward born to William Ward, haberdasher of Holborn, London, and wife, Ann (*née* Oates); (5 Aug.) christened at St Andrew's in Holborn.	Expulsion of John Wilkes from House of Commons. Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (Eng. trans. 1799); Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique*; Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*; child prodigy Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart resides in London for 16 months, composes Symphony no. 1 (K 16), aged 8 years.
1772	Family relocates to Bath for William Ward to take up management of the Wedgwood & Bentley decorative ceramic ware showroom.	James Cook's second voyage. Francis Grose, *The Antiquities of England and Wales* (1772–6).
1775		American War of Independence commences (ends 1783). Samuel Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*.
1776		American Declaration of Independence; Cook's third voyage. Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–89); Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*.
1777		Thomas Chatterton, *Poems, supposed to have been written at Bristol, by Thomas Rowley, and Others*; Clara Reeve, *The Old English Baron*.
1778		France joins with American revolutionaries. Frances Burney, *Evelina*; Chatterton, *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*; death of Voltaire.
1779		Britain declares war on Spain; siege of Gibraltar (ends 1783); Samuel Crompton's spinning mule makes possible large-scale textile production. James Beattie, *The Minstrel, in Two Books* (books first published 1771, 1774); Johnson, *Lives of the Poets* (1779–81).
1780		Anti-Catholic protests culminate in the Gordon Riots; Newgate prison stormed.

Year	*Life*	*Historical and Cultural Background*
1781		Robert Jephson's *The Count of Narbonne*, a stage adaptation of Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, runs for twenty-one nights; Mrs Siddons performs as Hamlet at the Bristol Theatre Royal.
1782		Rockingham ministry. Burney, *Cecilia*; William Cowper, *Poems*; William Gilpin, *Observations on the River Wye*.
1783		Peace of Versailles recognizes American independence; Fox–North coalition followed by Pitt ministry. William Beckford, *Dreams, Waking Thoughts and Incidents*.
1784		India Act regulates East India Company; death of Johnson.
1785		Cowper, *The Task*; Walpole, *Hieroglyphic Tales*.
1786		Beckford, *Vathek*; Robert Burns, *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*; Gilpin, *Observations, Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty . . . particularly the Mountains, and Lakes of Cumberland, and Westmoreland*.
1787	(15 Jan.) marries William Radcliffe, an Oxford law graduate and coincidentally also the son of a Holborn haberdasher, in Bath; they move to London; William's revision of Gregory Sharpe's translation of Ludvig Holberg's *An Introduction to Universal History* published.	Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade founded, supported by Josiah Wedgwood. Mary Wollstonecraft, *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters*.
1788		Warren Hastings impeached for corruption while in office in India; George III succumbs to bout of madness.
1789	*The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne. A Highland Story* published anonymously; William joins staff of the Whig *Gazetteer, and New Daily Advertiser* as parliamentary reporter, and publishes his translation of Karl Hablitz's *The Natural History of East Tartary*.	Storming of the Bastille and beginning of the French Revolution; Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, founding document of the Revolution; mutiny on the *Bounty*. William Blake, *Songs of Innocence*; opening of John Boydell's Shakspeare Gallery at Pall Mall in London.