THE THEORY AND INTERPRETATION OF NARRATIVE

THE PROGRESS OF ROMANCE

Literary Historiography and the Gothic Novel

DAVID H. RICHTER

Ohio State University Press
Columbus

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Richter, David H., 1945–
The progress of romance : literary historiography and the Gothic novel / David H. Richter.
p. cm. — (Theory and interpretation of narrative series)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-8142-0694-8 (cloth : alk. paper).
1. Horror tales, English—History and criticism—Theory, etc. 2. English fiction—18th century—History and criticism—Theory, etc. 3. English fiction—19th century—History and criticism—Theory, etc. 4. Gothic revival (Literature)—Great Britain. 5. Romanticism—Great Britain. 6. Reader-response criticism. 7. Literature—Philosophy. 8. Narration (Rhetoric) I. Title. II. Series.
PR830.T3R53 1996
823'.0873809—dc20 95-53094
CIP

Text and jacket design by Nighthawk Design.
Type set in Bembo.
Printed by Cushing-Malloy, Inc. Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The paper in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials. ANSI Z39.48-1992.

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

CONTENTS

PREFACE

This book has gone through many changes since its germination many years ago. I had become interested in the literary-historical aspects of my critical study of endings in didactic novels like *Candide* and *Catch-22*, and after that was published in 1974 I began wondering how much neater it might be to think about generic change in a genre that—unlike the apologue—had a real beginning, middle, and end. My original conception for the book, which I batted around with Sheldon Sacks before his death in 1979, was of a straightforward history of the Gothic novel from the perspective of Chicago neo-Aristotelian critical discourse. But as I began working on that, I saw that, for all its merits, there was a great deal about the history of the Gothic that such a method would necessarily leave out. At first I began to see how reception theory provided a really necessary supplement to any specifically formalist approach, and later, after strongly resisting the claims of Marxist literary historiography, I came to understand in what ways that could enrich any understanding of how the cultural ground was prepared for the Gothic, specifically why the Gothic arose around the time the Bastille fell. Finally I came to the Russian formalists, who had in many respects anticipated by half a century what Ronald S. Crane, Sheldon Sacks, and Ralph Rader had taught me about literary history, but who were better able to express what happens when genres die, how in a strange afterlife they mutate into new forms, blend and merge, and even reemerge in later centuries with different themes and techniques.

In the course of my study I naturally read most of what had been written about the Gothic novel and whatever was currently coming out. The 1980s were a great period of Gothic studies, although for reasons I discuss in chapter 1 the favored mode has been literary criticism and interpretation rather than genuine literary history.

In addition to outlining the ways in which recent critics of the Gothic have with few exceptions evaded the task of providing genuine literary history, chapter 1 discusses the general antipathy to and skepticism about literary historiography that have paradoxically accompanied an age whose

primary watchword has been "Always Historicize!" In particular, I wrestle with the paradoxes posed by David Perkins in *Is Literary History Possible?* (1992), which codifies the contemporary skepticism about the possibility of writing history that is simultaneously coherent and true. I argue there that Perkins has set up a high standard that renders not only literary history but history of any sort impossible, but that his arguments are what British lawyers call counsels of perfection, dilemmas through the horns of which it is possible to pass with only a few scratches. Nevertheless I agree with Perkins that no mode of historiography has a monopoly on truth, and in fact it is precisely the disparate truths of inconsistent historiographical modes that provide us with a literary history that can approach a full and rounded explanation of a literary phenomenon such as the Gothic romance.

In chapter 2 I present my sense of three distinct modes of literary historiography, those informed by Althusserian Marxism, formalism (itself subdivided into Russian formalism of the 1920s and the Chicago neo-Aristotelian formalism of the 1960s through 1980s), and reception theory. In subsequent chapters I present these theories as they work in practice, in particular as they bear on the Gothic novel. I discuss their theoretical claims, how each mode of inquiry operates, how evidence is treated, how the relationship between the "extrinsic" and "intrinsic" causes of literary development are defined. All this appears in chapter 2, the only exclusively theoretical chapter, where I argue that, while devotees of each school (Marxists like Pierre Macherey and John Frow, formalists like Tynyanov and Shklovsky, neo-Aristotelians like Crane and Rader, reception theorists like Iser and Jauss) have emphasized their differences from one another in order to attack the competition, there has been a surprising degree of convergence toward a centrist position assigning important roles to both "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" causes of literary change and, within the extrinsic area, to changes in general and literary ideology and in the motives and composition of the literary audience. Nevertheless, the various modes of literary history will "focalize" the story they tell differently—as the chapters of practical criticism that follow will show.

In chapter 3 ("The Gothic in History") the Gothic is discussed as a social text, in terms of the contemporary attempts to find in the Gothic novel coded versions of the history of its own time. There have been several different versions of this cryptohistorical version. One is that of Ronald Paulson, who reads the Gothic as a coded response to the French Revolution in a way similar to the "new historicism." Another is the feminist approach of Kate Ferguson Ellis, for whom the Gothic agon reflects a social,

indeed a domestic "revolution" that produced the Victorian doctrine of "separate spheres" for men and women, men out in the world, women as angels in the house. Each of these readings of the Gothic novel essentially reads the Gothic as an allegory for a corresponding social conflict. But as I once argued about Golding's *Lord of the Flies,* when multiple allegorical significances are claimed it begins to argue that the text is not allegorical at all.[1] Instead, the chapter argues in post-Althusserian fashion that the vogue of the Gothic was less a way of encoding history than of evading it.

Chapter 4 proposes the formalist approach to the history of the Gothic with which I began. It argues that the moral/aesthetic rules of the late eighteenth century led novelists to create the Gothic novel as a reinscription of Richardson's *Pamela,* but one that separated the roles Richardson had combined in Mr. B.—the hero and the villain, the threat and the reward. But the revision had the inevitable effect of making the novels incoherent or episodic in plot. The works were affectively forceful and popularly appealing but were downgraded by contemporary critics whose Georgian aesthetic valorized unity and coherence. (Now, in the heyday of *différance,* the Gothic has again come back into vogue.) The problem of incoherence surfaces as early as Walpole, and the subsequent history of the Gothic novel can be seen as a series of attempts to evade or draw attention away from the incoherence (e.g., by making the villain into the protagonist; or by making the threats to the protagonist severer, more baroque). After the vogue of the Gothic, the Brontës returned to the Richardsonian combination of hero and villain in a single character, as may be seen in *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights.*

Chapter 5 treats the same period from a very different angle, from the vantage point of reception theory. Based on a variety of evidence (contemporary reviews, diaries, letters, journalism, parodic and satirical novels), I argue that the vogue of the Gothic sits astride a historic shift in the composition of the literary audience and in that audience's motives for reading. The effect of the Gothic was to accentuate a change already in process, a change from reading for the sake of delight and instruction to reading for the sake of imaginative play and escape. The impact of the Gothic was to pave the way for the more respectable elements of the Romantic movement. Though some men clearly read the Gothic, its primary appeal, then as now, was to women; it was typed as "female reading." While the vogue of the Gothic increased the literary audience among women, nevertheless that appeal spread to men when a form could be found whose external manifestations were acceptable to males, as they were in the historical romances of Scott. The historical "solidity" and "veracity" of Scott licensed males to experience

the imaginative play and escape that had formerly been confined to the "female reading" of the Gothic. Given the dominance of male over female ideology, Scott (and the vogue of the historical novel) effectively killed off the Gothic as a genre; it was moribund by 1820.

Chapter 6 takes up the question of the Gothic aftermath: the various offshoots of the Gothic novel. In one well-chronicled development, various elements of the Gothic novel—character types, situations, symbols, and so forth—begin to invade novels by realists of the "great tradition" like Eliot, James, and Conrad. In another, the Gothic develops literary progeny in the "horror story" beginning with the vogue of the literary ghost story in the *fin de siècle* in Stevenson, Wilde, James, and Stoker. In a third, the Gothic becomes the parent of other subliterary genres (science fiction, the mystery story, adult fantasy) emphasizing elements that had played a part in the original genre. Here I suggest that the various forms of literary historiography, which had *converged* on the portrait of the Gothic in its original 1764–1820 vogue, *diverge* in their capacities to explain the later manifestations. (For example, the causal relationships involved in the splitting off of science fiction from Gothic via Shelley's *Frankenstein,* or the detective story via the explained supernatural of Radcliffe, work best within a formalist perspective on literary historiography.) This chapter lays the groundwork for a sequel to *The Progress of Romance.*

The final chapter returns to the theory of literary history and the question of the problems of explanation and history, and the degree to which the various explanations provided by different historical modes have converged and competed. Here I need to underscore the difference between the history of a genre and the history of a mode. The former can be seen as a coherent *movement* in literary history, a process in which a form emerges, flourishes, and dies—like the vogue of the Gothic—on which the various explanations, whatever their "focal length," can be seen to converge. Any purported "history" of the novel around the turn of the nineteenth century that failed to find a place for some version of the "story" that appears on my first page would be convicted thereby of inadequacy. Modes, on the other hand, may not have coherent histories. The later literary-historical *relationships* that may obtain between the various offspring of different genres may make sense within one theoretical framework but not within another. Both William Faulkner and Isak Dinesen might be thought of as Gothic writers in the middle third of the twentieth century but surely not Gothic in the same sense. While I try to avoid reifying my notion of literary-historical movements, it seems clear to me that every system of historical thinking is going

to have to cope with the differences between "real" movements that need to be explained regardless of the language we are using for explanation and those more tenuous modal relationships that may be drawn between any text and almost any other via that web of relationships that the literary tradition concatenates.

In the course of rereading and revising these seven chapters, I became well aware that none has fully treated its subject, that each "might be continued," extended profitably into a book on its own. But it would have been at the expense of the one I have actually wanted to write about the relations of theory and practice in the writing of literary history.

For financial help in beginning this project I am indebted for a fellowship to the National Endowment for the Humanities; the book could not have been completed without several summer travel grants from the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York, which allowed me leisurely research time in London. Most of the work was done at the New York City Public Library in Manhattan; and in London at the British Library in Great Russell Street, the Senate House Library of the University of London, and a nearby flat at Queen Court, Queen Square, under the watchful eye of the late Henry Carr, veteran, freemason, and raconteur extraordinary.

Earlier versions of the present study were published elsewhere in different form. Parts of chapter 3 were included in "The Unguarded Prison: Reception Theory, Structural Marxism and the History of the Gothic Novel," *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 30 (Autumn 1989): 1–17; and in "From Medievalism to Historicism: Representations of History in the Gothic Novel and Historical Romance," *Studies in Medievalism* 4 (1992): 79–104. Part of chapter 5 was included in "The Reception of the Gothic Novel in the 1790s: Facts, Interpretations and Problems," in Robert Uphaus, ed., *The Idea of the Novel in the Eighteenth Century* (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1988).

Literary criticism, like the Gothic novel, has an institutional history with lines of filiation by which we enable each other's work; I myself am shaped even as I help to shape. I have dedicated *The Progress of Romance* to Wayne C. Booth and Laura A. Wadenpfuhl, with whom—along with so many other teachers and students—I form links of love of learning in another history that abides and endures.

CHAPTER ONE
Toward a Pluralistic Historiography of Literature

The Story

While the origins of most literary genres are lost, either in scholarly controversy or the dark backward and abysm of time, those of the Gothic novel present an admirable clarity. Beneath the papier-mâché machicolations of Strawberry Hill, the antiquarian and aesthete Horace Walpole, inspired by a nightmare involving "a giant hand in armour,"[1] created at white heat the tale published Christmas 1764 as *The Castle of Otranto*. Not one but two genres were thus begun. The one established first was the historical romance, which derived from elements in both *Otranto* and the earlier romance by Thomas Leland, *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury;* this form was pioneered by Clara Reeve (in *The Champion of Virtue,* 1777)[2] and developed by Sophia Lee (in *The Recess,* 1783–85) and reached its culmination in the early nineteenth century with the medieval romances of Walter Scott. The second, the Gothic tale of supernatural terror, was slower to erupt. The *Otranto* seed had time to travel to Germany and bear fruit there in the *Räuber- und Ritter-romane* before being replanted into its native English soil. It was not until the 1790s that the Gothic became a major force in English fiction and tales set in Italian castles and Spanish monasteries began to crowd out—generally to the disgust of contemporary reviewers—those set in London houses and Hampshire mansions. *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) by Ann Radcliffe and *The Monk* (1796) by Matthew G. Lewis spawned numberless imitators in a craze whose original impetus carried it into the 1820s. By far the greatest part of this output was trash, of little interest today save to antiquarians, bibliophiles, and literary historians. A very few were

works of talent and genius, among which were numbered William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794), his daughter Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), and James Hogg's *Private Confessions and Memoirs of a Justified Sinner* (1824). By then, the original impulse of the Gothic had played itself out, though the tale of terror was to survive both as an influence on mainstream realist fiction through the Victorian era and indeed beyond, and as a minor component of the house of fiction in both high and popular art up to the present.

Stories and Histories

Such is the story of the Gothic novel, and a narrative such as this one has been retold numerous times in the critical studies of the genre that began to appear in the 1920s, by Birkhead, Railo, Tompkins, Summers, and Varma.[3] But to make a necessary distinction, it is a story—or rather a chronicle, in Hayden White's terms—and not a history.[4] It represents the important events and major happenings in the order of their occurrence, but it makes no claim to understand why these events occurred when they did and why others did not occur in their place, nor does it try to understand the context and the backdrop against which they occurred. Moving from chronicle to history is far more difficult.

This is a book about writing the history of the Gothic novel. Writing the literary history of important genres is one of the more common things literary scholars have traditionally done, but for a variety of reasons the Gothic novel has escaped almost scot-free. Perhaps one reason is that the bare story—as opposed to the history—seems so compelling and dramatic.

This is not to say that the Gothic has escaped attention. On the contrary. Around 1978 a number of forces began to converge around the Gothic with the result that a field that was once neglected at best—and at worst a bastion of bibliophilic cranks—very rapidly became a very important area of study attracting many of the best minds of the past fifteen years. (One need only mention the names of Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Judith Wilt, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Norman Holland, Claire Kahane, Margaret Doody—the list goes on and on.) Perhaps the most obvious force at work was feminism, which seized on the Gothic novel partly, of course, because many of its important authors (like Radcliffe and Shelley) were women, but primarily because the Gothic had always been considered *female reading* even when it had not been *female writing*. (As Ina Ferris has pointed out *[Achievement]*, at

the turn of the eighteenth century the novel in general was gendered female as reading: we can hear this in Jane Austen's prize coxcomb John Thorpe's insistence to Catherine Morland, "I never read novels; I have something else to do.") Furthermore, the female Gothic has become a significant part of the feminist agenda, less because there was very much hope of unearthing lost masterpieces, as the discoverers of Kate Chopin and Lady Mary Wroth had done, than because the plight of the passive heroines of romance could be read as a convenient metaphor for the plight of all females under the restrictions of patriarchy.

And there were other movements aside from feminism leading to renewed interest in the Gothic. One was the growing sense that *popular* literature was as deserving of literary analysis as canonical texts. As a valorized category of writing, literature is socially constructed and its definition changes with the times. Until the late Victorian period, "literature" was the Greek and Latin classics, first and foremost, and secondarily the works of the principal vernacular poets from Chaucer through Pope. Not until the 1870s did English and American literature as it is currently understood become a topic of scholarship. Contemporary literature as late as the 1950s was discussed only in popular magazines; starting in the late 1960s it became an academic subject and now has a host of journals as well as books devoted to its analysis. By the 1970s, the turn came of the popular literature of the past.[5] And this too led to a consideration of the Gothic novel.

But there are other factors as well, and I hope it would not be too cynical to suggest that intellectual currents of this sort may reflect not only a change in the ideology attaching to literature but also material professional needs. Here we need to remember that the enormous growth in college teaching in the postwar years generated an equally intense need for new subjects about which academics could write books to achieve tenure and promotion. One result of this was the opening up of the canon to include writers who had formerly been excluded or given a minor place (in particular, to formerly neglected women writers from Christine de Pisane and Lady Mary Wroth to Harriet Beecher Stowe and Kate Chopin). But another was a growing interest in texts that had never been canonical in the usual sense but that had nevertheless formed the consciousness of contemporary culture. These texts included works like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein,* which can today be said to have entered the canon, but also ones like Bram Stoker's *Dracula* that will probably never be considered canonical in the usual sense, even though most people, including those who seldom read books, are familiar with their stories.

Dehistoricizing the Gothic

Nevertheless, despite the efflorescence of criticism of Gothic texts from the period of its first vogue and in contemporary popular culture, the great majority of the many books and articles recently published have avoided any serious attempt to write a literary history of the Gothic. This is not the place for a chapter-length review article on the last dozen years of Gothic criticism, but three specimen approaches can represent the variety of ways of evading historiography that modern critical theories encourage.

The Gothic as Nexus of Conventions

One way of dehistoricizing the Gothic novel is to treat it as a set of literary conventions. This was the most common approach in the literature on the Gothic between Birkhead and Varma. The organizational plan of Eino Railo's *The Haunted Castle*—which divides the subject into separate chapters on the castle, the monk, and so forth—typifies the benefits and weaknesses of the method. The central dilemma of what R. S. Crane has called the *preconstructional* historian is that once one treats the Gothic as the nexus of a collection of separable conventions, each of which developed in its own way, one arrives at a set of histories that (however adequate in themselves) cannot add up to a history of the Gothic as a whole. For there seems no reason why the history of haunted castles (beginning with Otranto and continuing through Tom-All-Alone's in Dickens's *Bleak House* to Sutpen's Hundred in Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*) should connect in any way with the history of criminal clerics (starting with Matthew Lewis's Ambrosio in *The Monk* and continuing through Sinclair Lewis's eponymous Elmer Gantry and Flannery O'Connor's Hazel Motes in *Wise Blood*).

The only way the approach through conventions can lead to a coherent history of the Gothic is if you assume the contrary, that all the conventions are interconnected, as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick did in her first book, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*.[6] Sedgwick believes that the Gothic is not unified in emotional tone, like an Aristotelian genre, and is best defined as a nexus of shared conventions in a variety of categories: mise-en-scène, character types, narrative techniques, and themes. Nevertheless, history goes out the window once more when, in her interesting opening chapter, she tries to explain what these defining conventions have in common. Taking off

from previous work by Miyoshi, Heilman, and Nelson, Sedgwick locates a single common factor linking the numerous Gothic conventions:

> When an individual fictional "self" is the subject of one of these conventions, that self is spatialized in the following way. It is the position of the self to be massively blocked off from something to which it ought normally to have access. This something can be its own past . . . ; it can be free air . . . ; it can be a lover; it can be just all the circumambient life, when the self is pinned in a death-like sleep. Typically, however, there is both something going on inside the isolation . . . and something intensely relevant going on impossibly out of reach. While the three main elements (what's inside, what's outside, and what separates them) take on the most varied guises, the terms of the relationship are immutable. The self and whatever it is that is outside have a proper, natural, necessary connection to each other, but one that the self is suddenly incapable of making. (12–13)

Sedgwick is trying to find a factor sufficiently general to be capable of unifying Gothic conventions that operate in the realm of narrative technique (like the fragmentary manuscript or the story-within-the-story) and ones that operate in the realm of themes or character types (like premature burial or criminal monks). What she finds is broad enough, but it is perhaps too broad, since the triadic relation of the self, its object, and a barrier between them is so general it could be applied to any narrative or any drama whatsoever. The historical uniqueness of the Gothic moment is thus out of the picture.

In fact the more interesting problem with Sedgwick's explanation is not that it *fails* to unify the conventions of the Gothic but that it succeeds at too great a cost. A literary convention is like a rule. We know that in general to understand an activity defined in terms of rules, it is not necessary to find a super- or meta-rule that accounts for each and every rule of the activity. Baseball is a rule-governed activity, but it doesn't seem clear that there needs to be some super-rule that accounts for disparate conventions like the distance between the bases, the number of strikes before one is out, and the fact that games are postponed on account of rain. Neither does there seem to be any meta-rule that contains the essence of the rules of chess.

Games function as an analogue to genres conceived of as loci of conventions because there is a sense in which a game can be described exhaustively in terms of its conventions or rules. (Obviously, rules are not all there is: there is a history of baseball and of chess, and the games could be profitably discussed in other ways as well, but rule books are intended as ways of

successfully codifying games.) Thinking of the Gothic as a "game" with "rules" is an analogy that will eventually break down, but it can save us from making some strange assumptions. For one thing, there is no reason to suppose that every convention of the Gothic will be unique to the Gothic, any more than the board used in chess is used solely in chess. And the history of some conventions supposedly typical of the Gothic, such as the story-within-the-story, will be more accurately assessed if one remembers that nested narratives are used in non-Gothic early narrative from *The Arabian Nights* to *Don Quixote.*

The Gothic as Feminist Charter

It is no accident that, in recent days, the association of the Gothic with femininity has been reflected in the growing interest in the female Gothic, a term applied by Ellen Moers to *Frankenstein* (in *Literary Women,* 1976) and now used in any number of ways. It is applied to the works of Ann Radcliffe and her followers, more broadly to any romantic fiction by women, and finally to any fiction descended from the Gothic by its myriad lines of filiation, from the Brontës to Carson McCullers and Flannery O'Connor to the nearly anonymous authors for Mills and Boon, and even at times to works by males who can be brought within the aegis of femininity. *The Female Gothic,* edited by Juliann Fleenor (1983), brought together essays from each of these groups, establishing a category that has been mined extensively ever since.[7]

The most important of the many studies that take this line is surely *The Madwoman in the Attic,* by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, which can rightly be said to have instituted a revolution in feminist criticism.[8] *The Madwoman in the Attic* is not limited to traditional Gothic romance texts—though Gilbert and Gubar discuss at length *Frankenstein, Jane Eyre,* and *The Lifted Veil*—but its ideology imposes an essentially Gothic myth upon all female creativity, which Gilbert and Gubar see in terms of "images of enclosure and escape, fantasies in which maddened doubles function as surrogates for docile selves, metaphors of physical discomfort manifested in frozen landscapes and fiery interiors, . . . along with obsessive depictions of diseases like anorexia, agoraphobia, and claustrophobia" (xi). If these are the principal effects in which female creativity manifests itself, its causes are rooted in a very special version of the "anxiety of influence" posited by Harold Bloom.[9] Bloom's theory records the results of the struggles that strong sons engage in with their poetic "fathers," but this Oedipal picture cannot be

applied to women authors without serious revision. For women, the patriarchal quality of poetry itself, its status as a largely masculine preserve, creates an even more fundamental "anxiety of authorship," one that takes the form of "a radical fear that she cannot create, that because she can never become a 'precursor' the act of writing will isolate or destroy her" (49). To write at all, for Gilbert and Gubar, is to be a rebel, for even the most docile woman author, even one who apparently accepts the image of woman imposed by patriarchal literature, has in creating for herself refused to allow men the exclusive right to create her. Docility and self-denial constitute a strategy for coping with this "anxiety of authorship," chronologically the first that female authors adopted. But denial would subsequently give way to anger and anger to escape as strategies for responding to this special female anxiety.

These strategies enable women to say what they need to say indirectly where it cannot be given direct exposition. This accounts for their treatment of the madwomen, monsters, and villainesses that populate nineteenth-century fiction by women. They are in effect the true heroines, for it is through such characters that the authors' rebellion against patriarchy is expressed. Premiere among these looms Bertha Mason Rochester, the titular "madwoman in the attic," who, far from being Jane Eyre's foil, represents instead her secret self, "her own imprisoned 'hunger, rebellion and rage'" (339). Secret heroines need not be so melodramatic: Jane Austen's are the manipulative Mary Crawford and Emma Woodhouse and the class of powerful matriarchs that includes Lady Catherine De Bourgh, Aunt Norris, Mrs. Churchill, and Mrs. Ferrars. Although the narrators of Austen's novels may convey distaste, disgust, or even contemptuous amusement at such figures, this is merely a "cover story," a coding that makes the novels acceptable in patriarchal society. Beneath the surface, it is through these figures that the longing for female autonomy is expressed.

How deep, psychologically speaking, is this "cover story" supposed to go? Were Austen (and Eliot and the rest) conscious that they were expressing "female truth" in disguised form, or was the truth so "repressed" as to be inaccessible even to the authors themselves? If the former, one would expect to find some hint of the authors' true beliefs in their private letters and journals—and unfortunately these documents do not always support Gilbert and Gubar. But if the rebellion was repressed beneath the level of conscious awareness, if literary representations reveal the distorted shape in which the psychic censor released the fantasy material, why limit the investigation to *female* representations of rage and domination?—for within the unconscious the authorial ego might identify as intensely with a male as a female

character. In fact, Gilbert and Gubar want to have things both ways: to see the rebellion against patriarchy simultaneously as part of the author's awareness and as hidden from it.[10]

Most important for my own study, the three strategies would also, in theory, make possible a "history" of the female Gothic: Once upon a time, according to Gilbert and Gubar, there was

> a single woman artist . . . a woman whom patriarchal poetics dismembered and whom we have tried to remember. Detached from herself, silenced, subdued, this woman artist tried in the beginning . . . to write like an angel in the house of fiction: with Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth, she concealed her own truth behind a decorous and ladylike façade, scattering her real wishes to the winds or translating them into incomprehensible hieroglyphics. But as time passed and her cave-prison became more constricted, more claustrophobic, she "fell" into the gothic/Satanic mode and, with the Brontës and Mary Shelley, she planned mad or monstrous escapes, then dizzily withdrew—with George Eliot and Emily Dickinson—from those open spaces where the scorching presence of the patriarchal sun . . . emphasized her vulnerability. . . . She took refuge again in the safety of the "dim hypaethric cavern" where she could be alone with herself, with a truth that was hers even in its fragmentation. (101–2)

This "myth" is in fact a plan for the consecutive rhetoric of *The Madwoman in the Attic,* but it is hard to know how seriously this metaphorical fable is meant as an outline of the history of women's literature. It depends on whether one believes that Gilbert and Gubar would claim (for example) that the decorous denial associated with Austen and Edgeworth ceased to be a viable response to the psychic demands of "anxiety of authorship" by the late nineteenth century (and a fortiori, into the present century). Given Gilbert and Gubar's sequels to *Madwoman,* which continue the notions of cover stories and encodings, these strategies cannot be historically sequential; they are rather alternatives, like Harold Bloom's six "revisionary ratios." In fact, reading carefully, Gilbert and Gubar suggest that the strategies of denial, rage, and withdrawal are all *simultaneously* available to and were used by nineteenth-century women authors, though particular authors may have emphasized particular strategies (or different strategies in different texts). This may not seem historically plausible. David Perkins for one is surprised that "history seems to have entailed so little change. Gilbert and Gubar assume that the social and psychic dilemmas of women writers did not change essentially throughout the nineteenth century and have not altered since. Hence, they freely quote contemporaries, such as Anne Sexton and

Adrienne Rich, to illuminate the states of mind of nineteenth-century women writers" (Perkins 137).

To me the main difficulty with the notion of cover stories and encodings as historical explanations is that, like revisionary ratios, they flatten history out. Just as Bloom's Yeats is not engaged with the life of his time but with the ghost of Shelley, so Austen is secretly engaged, not with the battles of Wollstonecraft's time, but with those of Doris Lessing's. Gilbert and Gubar gave feminism a criticism of its own, and that was immensely liberating at the time, but in so doing they cut women's literature off from the narrative of its development.

Archetypes and Monomyths

Another way, perhaps the best way, to evade writing the history of the Gothic with impunity is to decide that it has no history. Riddle: When has a genre no history? Answer: when it is not a genre but a myth. It has been clear since Plato that what belongs to the world of becoming has a history; what belongs to the world of pure being—ideas, essences, myths—can have none. When the Gothic is approached as the bearer of an essence or the carrier of a myth, the genre becomes timeless: each instance of the Gothic is simply a different manifestation of its eternal form. The temptation to find the eternal essence of the Gothic is almost irresistible, even though this is a way that leads ever downward, toward the torture chamber of literary analysis, the critic as Procrustes.

There have been quite a variety of recent examples of what I will call mythological criticism of the Gothic, each of which has its own virtues; most are filled with accurate information and interesting interpretations of the major Gothic novels, but none of them has even the slightest hint of an idea about the history of the Gothic novel.[11]

In *The Gothic Tradition in Fiction,* for example, Elizabeth MacAndrew envisions the Gothic as a genre consisting of "literary fantasies embodying, for didactic purposes, ideas about man's psychology . . . , evil not as a force exterior to man, but as a . . . warping of his mind" (MacAndrew 4–5). Fulfilling her commitment to this idea, MacAndrew reads the novels of Walpole and Radcliffe, Lewis and Maturin, as allegories or even as monodramas, with the various characters and settings seen as the psychological elements of a single individual. Thus even representations of the devil incarnate—characters like Matilda and Lucifer in *The Monk,* the Giaour in William Beckford's *Vathek,* and the eponymous antihero of *Melmoth the Wanderer*—

become "symbolically, not literally diabolical" (81). Such a reading seems paradoxical if not entirely perverse, since no form of literature has insisted so strongly on portraying evil as an exterior force. And again MacAndrew submerges the traditional and useful distinction between the "explained supernatural," where the source of terror is finally assigned a naturalistic cause, and fantastic tales, whose probability schemes include monsters, ghosts, and demons to which we are asked to accord at least notional assent.

The use of the monomyth not only fudges useful critical distinctions but often forces one into strange readings of the novels, which have to be stretched or forced to fit the preconceived scheme. Because the Gothic novel is about psychopathology, and because Horace Walpole was (as is shown by his play *The Mysterious Mother*) abnormally concerned about incest, this must also be the central theme of *The Castle of Otranto*. MacAndrew reiterates this half a dozen times until it is with difficulty that the reader recalls that the only incest involved is of the technical sort: Prince Manfred wishes to marry the former fiancée of his dead son. Again, since the Gothic is a monodrama, supernatural events must stand for psychological realities; thus "the statue of Alfonso," which represents Manfred's consciousness of sin, "bleeds when Manfred stabs Matilda" (13). Manfred does indeed stab his daughter, but the statue's demonstration—it is a nosebleed—occurs ten pages before that event in my edition. Similarly, MacAndrew tells us that the portrait of Alfonso "disgustedly slams a door in Manfred's face" as a "gesture of scorn" (13). My own edition of *The Castle of Otranto* says no more than that the miraculous portrait exits "with a grave and melancholy air" (Walpole 29).

Choosing a better monomyth leads to different texts but ultimately to many of the same difficulties. William Patrick Day's *In the Circles of Fear and Desire,* one of the best studies of the Gothic to come out in the 1980s, reads all the central texts of the Gothic novel as different versions of the following story: The protagonist—either a Faustian male or a passive female—undergoes a descent into the "Gothic underworld," a nightmare world beyond Death, a world in which he or she is enthralled, where motion is circular and action futile, a world where the Self dissolves and disintegrates, attacking itself as an Other; from this underworld the protagonist may be released (back to life as in Radcliffe's happy endings, or to death, as in Shelley's tragic ones) but he or she cannot escape. The virtue of Day's scheme is that it successfully accounts for many of the most striking elements in the best Gothic narratives. It combines the notion of vampiric death-in-life with that of the eternal pursuit (as hunter or hunted), while positing that the objects of pur-

suit are stray parts of the disintegrating Self. It allows for fantasies of persecution (in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* or, in even purer form, "The Pit and the Pendulum"), and for novels about the doppelgänger (where the Other can be a creation, as in *Frankenstein;* an alter ego, as in *Jekyll and Hyde* and "The Jolly Corner"; or a representation, as in *Dorian Gray*). And it accounts for features of the Gothic novel that had not previously been noted, much less explained, such as the ineffectuality of the protagonists—even heroic males—to transform their world, or the curiously restrained emotional affect of the Gothic denouement, where even formally happy endings conclude, not with positive felicity, but with the sense that the protagonists have surmounted dangers that are still lurking, at least for others.

Nevertheless, even if we use the most promising monomyth, not every major text conforms to the stereotyped fantasy, no matter what variations and epicycles the theory permits. As a result the critic must either exclude deviant texts from the genre or else trim, pad, or cram them into the procrustean mold. Day has done both. He eliminated from his study "not only those ephemera that have passed from anybody's consciousness"—including most of the Gothic texts from its 1790–1820 heyday—"but also those canonical works that have strong affinities with the Gothic," including *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre* (Day 2). Even with a whole set of problematic exemplars eliminated, though, Day occasionally has to violate his texts to maneuver them into consonance with what his theory suggests they should contain. For example, he exaggerates the passivity of Maud Ruthyn (the heroine of Le Fanu's *Uncle Silas*), claiming that she willingly embraces the terms of her father's will despite their danger to her (Day 111); in fact, Maud is a minor and has no legal choice but to submit. But the problem is not the minor details Day gets wrong but the way in which he evades having to cope with the problems of writing literary history. Whatever Day can tell us, it will never explain why the Gothic novel grew up in the latter part of the eighteenth century, nor why it changed as a genre in response to various intrinsic and extrinsic pressures as the nineteenth century progressed.

The Annihilation of History

One possible reason that the evasion of literary history has become so nearly universal may have to do with our current skepticism about the possibility of writing literary history worthy of the name. This skepticism has a long and honorable tradition. From R. S. Crane in the 1950s to Hans Robert Jauss in

the 1960s to David Perkins in the 1990s, it has been a common topos of philosophers and literary historians that history, and literary history in particular, have been practiced badly, inadequately, incoherently.[12]

Crane and Jauss both fulminated against the inadequacy of literary history as it was practiced in their own times, but these caustic rebukes were really intended as the bulldozer's pass over the building site, designed to clear the rubble of the past before constructing a new and more adequate literary historiography. I discuss both of them in my next chapter: they are central to my own vision of a more adequate literary history. But I would like to pause for a moment here to examine David Perkins's monograph on literary historiography, *Is Literary History Possible?* Perkins's project, unlike Crane's or Jauss's, is an exercise in almost pure negativity: a multiplex reductio ad absurdum of literary historiography in general, aimed at showing why it is that no "construction of a literary past can meet our present criteria of plausibility" (Perkins 17). Perkins's is the most recent and the most thoroughgoing attempt to discredit the coherence of literary historiography as a project. He takes up various modes of literary historiography in terms of (1) its plan of organization, (2) its method, or (3) its principles of historical explanation, and finds that, no matter which of several choices is selected under each heading, the literary history created fails either as history or as literary explanation. Perkins's arguments are very plausible and need to be analyzed at some length. If they are accepted at face value, my own reconstruction of literary history, and most others as well, would be entirely chimerical.

1. Under organizations, Perkins discusses two possibilities: literary histories may be presented either as wholes or in fragments, either as narrative history or in postmodern form as encyclopedias. For Perkins, the problem with the postmodern encyclopedia is that it is an evasion, or rather a deconstruction, of history: it represents objects that exist within history without commitment to any consistent view. Recent encyclopedic histories, like the *Columbia Encyclopedia of American Literary History* and Harvard's *New History of French Literature* consist of articles by various hands that may well contradict one another. In the Columbia volume, Cary Nelson claims that Eliot and Pound were racist anti-Semites and that this has been "long suppressed by academic critics," whereas Walton Litz's essay "Pound and Eliot" in the same volume illustrates this suppression by downplaying these ideological factors. The Harvard history of French literature has enormous gaps (e.g., no article mentioning Proust other than in passing) that make it difficult to get a coherent sense of any single period (particularly as different writers engage the periodization of French literature in different ways).

"Encyclopedic form is intellectually deficient. Its explanations of past happenings are piecemeal, may be inconsistent with each other, and are admitted to be inadequate. It precludes a vision of the subject. Because it aspires to reflect the past in its multiplicity and heterogeneity, it does not organize the past, and in this sense, it is not history. There is little excitement in reading it" (Perkins 60).

If encyclopedic history fails to organize the past, narrative history in effect organizes it too well, so well that it is no longer credible. Although Perkins admires some of the classic nineteenth-century narrative literary histories, he finds the crux of the problem in the way in which the formal requirements of narrative dictate what the history will be able to say. Furthermore, histories that are at the same time good stories are more likely to be accepted than ones that don't fit one of the standard plot patterns. A history must always be a story, must have a plot, with a beginning, middle, and end. For a fictional narrative, this poses little problem, but in reality (as Henry James noted) "relations end nowhere," and thus a history must always begin and end at some arbitrary point dictated by the historian's rhetoric. Meanwhile the plottedness required by narrative invariably simplifies the complex set of events that is to be explained. And since literary genres cannot fall in love or go on quests, there is a limit to the kinds of plots literary histories can have. Essentially one can tell only of a rise, a fall, or a rise-and-fall: "Literary history is and perhaps must be written in metaphors of origins, emergence from obscurity, neglect and recognition, conflict, hegemony, succession, displacement, decline, and so forth" (Perkins 33). Once a story has to be told, there is the temptation to oversimplify the story: to find a single hero or villain at the crux of the plot, when the truth is in fact ragged and complex, with many significant actors. Perkins's objections here follow from the insights of Hayden White in *Tropics of Discourse:* as a mode of rhetoric, history inevitably betrays the complexities of historical circumstance by a fall into literary form; even where the distortions caused by plotting are not the problem, writers of history invariably think in terms of master metaphors that guide (and thus help to oversimplify) the construction of the narrative.

2. Perkins's second set of arguments concern the distortions imposed by periodization and classification. Literary histories that are not histories of a single text or texts by a single author or related group of authors must inevitably be histories that classify texts by genre or period or both—a process within which lie many pitfalls.[13] For Perkins the sorting of texts takes place variously by classes (works with features in common), by types (works approximating a conceptual model), and by groups (works connected by the

personal relations of linked authors). None of these multiplicities—classes, types, or groups—have their metaphysical significance graven in stone, and as I myself once argued in "Pandora's Box Revisited," such disparate criteria have been invoked to underlie the various generic groupings as to make genre theory itself in need of some sorting out. Periods too are seen as "necessary fictions" (Perkins 65), not natural chronological groupings but rather eras constructed by the historian for his or her own rhetorical purpose. On the other hand, classifications and periodizations are often utilized without regard for their utility (as in the case of classical Greek lyric poetry, for which the scheme of the third-century Alexandrian grammarians has been followed blindly to this day).

3. Finally, Perkins takes up the thorniest matter of history, the problem of causal explanation. Again there is a dilemma dependent on two disparate possibilities. On the one hand, the causal principle of literary history may be *contextual,* exterior in some sense to the text or its tradition. The particular qualities of a specific text or set of texts are ascribed to some feature or features of the environment in which it was brought into existence: the structure of the society, the social roles of men and women, the economic system, its manifestations of power, or ideological concomitants of these material things—ideas, values, trends, attitudes, roles, and so on. On the other hand, the causal nexus may be *immanent* to the literary system itself. A literary vogue (like that of the Gothic novel) draws progressively more and more writers into the trend, evolving and varying elements for the sake of novelty until at last the genre is exhausted, mined out, upon which another trend takes its place.

One difficulty with contextual literary history is that context is endless. As Derrida, among others, has reminded us, there can never be enough context to explain fully any particular work of art.[14] If we discuss a text in terms of its society's gender roles, we will probably underestimate the importance of social class; if we focus on the language of a text, we may miss its mythic overtones. (John Livingston Lowes's attempt in *The Road to Xanadu* to find the source of every image in Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" is a wonderful example of this: by the end the reader knows as much as can be known about how the images came to be in the poet's head, but finds himself as far as ever from understanding how it was that those images and those only, of the many thousands stored in Coleridge's memory, were selected and arranged into the poem.)

Another is that, since quite disparate texts are written at the same time, one must appeal to the same context as the cause of very different works of

art. (Austen's *Persuasion,* Scott's *The Antiquary,* and Shelley's *Frankenstein* were written within a year of one another.) A third problem is the fact that (as R. S. Crane insisted) few contextual explanations give us more than the *necessary* causes of a literary text; they seldom give us *sufficient* causes. To know that Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities* could not have been written in the absence of the French Revolution (or of Carlyle's *French Revolution*) tells us very little about the form or content of Dickens's novel.

Immanent literary history has many of the same problems. Texts written within any literary system must either conserve that system (by continuing its trends) or act to counter and change that system (by moving against the trends). But how can we account for the fact that a given text is conservative or subversive? To find an answer one must go into the individual psychology of authors—which (since it is not immanent to the texts) is not a subject of immanent history.

If Perkins's objections are entirely well founded, the entire enterprise of literary history (and most of the kindred enterprises of intellectual and social history as well) must be completely without merit. I would argue, however, that there is considerably less to Perkins's destructive arguments than meets the eye.

1. Perkins's objections to narrative (plotted) histories ultimately come down to his sense that the pre- and postverbal actions and situations of the past are invariably betrayed or distorted by the tropical nature of the language in which they must be encoded to become "history" as such. This argument would of course hold not only for literary history but for any form of history, and indeed (if one were to pursue the issue deeply enough) for any factual exposition, including the rhetorical presentation of any scientific experiment or mathematical proof. Hayden White's master here is Jacques Derrida, who offers (in *Of Grammatology* and elsewhere) to show that no discourse can be purified of the sediments of metaphor that lend richness but also ambiguity, paradox, and even self-contradiction to any text. Inevitably all historical narrative will be fraught with the problematic of language. But it is one thing to say that we need to be on our guard against the ways in which language writes historical texts, the ways in which the development of plotted narratives tempts us to oversimplify the messy contingencies of historical concatenations, and another to completely dismiss the explanatory power of such narratives. Though "telling stories" is a euphemism for "lying," telling stories is nevertheless the best way humans have found for explaining what happens in the world.

About the unsatisfying quality of encyclopedic literary history as historical

narrative, Perkins is no doubt perfectly right. The encyclopedic form is if anything hostile to continuous narrative. But his barrage of objections to it is not of a piece: they have different levels of force. The failure of the encyclopedic form to provide any coherent vision of the past is very serious: without this we have information but not history. But I am not quite so deeply impressed by the fact that, within the encyclopedic form, different articles "may be inconsistent with each other" because they adopt different principles of explanation. Inconsistency is by no means the same as self-contradiction, and—the world being the complicated thing it is—Emerson was surely right to declare "a foolish consistency" to be "the hobgoblin of little minds."

Consistency of explanation so hampers one's perspective that most of us would be unable to get through an average day without shifting our principles of explanation many times. It is not just that scientific, moral, and economic explanations compete with one another: they also compete with themselves. Scientists view the earth as composed of solid rock and (at the same time) as elastically deformed and pulled at by the tides, or as consisting (as a collection of atoms) principally of empty space. Morally, we alternately consider our friends' behavior as motivated by conscious moral choice and by unconscious psychological drives. In the marketplace, we may deplore our labor union's strategic mistakes in dealing with management, while remaining aware of larger economic forces that make all unions extraordinarily vulnerable. Nevertheless the human mind for all its limitations is capable of entertaining all these notions simultaneously. How the mind can organize this potential chaos—as it must do—is not perfectly understood.[15] However it may be, we are in fact continually besieged by competing forms of causal explanation and have evolved ways of making more than inexplicable contradictions out of this competition. Nevertheless, I shall have much more to say in chapter 7 about how we organize our response to complementary explanations of phenomena.

2. Perkins is right that there always seems something slightly arbitrary about any classification system. And it would not be a theoretical defense that, pragmatically, any history other than a limitless set of annals—and not just literary history either: the subject could equally be intellectual, social, political, or military—must somehow be bounded. For the sake of dialectical completeness and rhetorical closure, if no other reason, texts must be classified by some principle or other and some more-or-less arbitrary period set as limits to the inquiry. Nevertheless, it seems unfair of Perkins to object simultaneously that some literary historians adopt a particular periodization

or genre definition with malice aforethought—so as to conveniently limit their subject and to help prove their point about it—and that others (like the historians of the Greek lyric) adopt periodizations and classifications purely in accord with tradition without any further motivation whatever. By Perkins's logic, one is damned whichever way one plays (and one cannot refuse to play, either).

If Perkins is looking for a single clear and simple way out of this dilemma, there isn't one. Tradition is not always trustworthy. Tradition may identify a particular text with a genre even when there are relatively few formal features in common, as Shelley's *Frankenstein* has been identified with the Gothic novel. When this happens, there may turn out to be very good literary-historical reasons for viewing the text outside its contemporary context and for reclassifying it with different groups of works. In the case of *Frankenstein* there are two alternative models that help us understand its genesis, one common during the eighteenth century (the apologue) and another that doesn't appear to coalesce as a genre until much later (science fiction). But if traditions aren't always trustworthy, neither are innovative critics. Any critic whose definition of a genre excludes a very large number of traditional exemplars (as with William Patrick Day's definition of the Gothic novel, which excludes *Jane Eyre, Wuthering Heights,* and most of the novels of the 1790–1820 vogue) should rightly be suspected of special pleading on behalf of an arbitrary and inadequate rule. But although traditions sometimes violate logical coherence, and although critics' logic sometimes does violence to the tradition, within these broad limits there are usually a number of ways of construing generic limits. As we shall see in the following chapters, the Gothic novel—while retaining its overall coherence and broad limits as a genre—takes on different aspects when viewed from the vantage points of neo-Marxism, of formalism, and of reception theory.[16]

3. Common to Perkins's attacks on both contextualist and immanent literary history is the charge that neither alone is adequate to the task of explaining the qualities and succession of literary works, and that, in particular, contexts come in a host of disparate sizes and shapes, any of which may be necessary but not sufficient conditions for the creation of particular literary texts.

One difficulty stems from the atomistic nature of literary history relative to other historical subjects. The smallest unit of literary history, the individual text, emerges from the pen of a single writer at a given moment in time; and a text's relations with other texts (filiation, likeness and difference, participation in a literary equivalent of dialectical conflict) are seldom strong

enough to generate the sorts of strong explanatory narratives that political histories do. On the other hand, literary schools and genres, whose operation is more closely analogous to social and political history, are susceptible to different modes of definition, in which a text (like *Frankenstein*) may be variously historicized relative to the Gothic novel, science fiction, and literature by women.

If literary history is by its very nature hard to write, its theorists have not made it easier to agree on first principles. R. S. Crane, for example, contrasted "constructional" literary history, the only type he favored, with "preconstructional" history, which focused on parts of texts (character types, themes, plot elements) at the expense of wholes, and with "postconstructional" history, whose focus was on general matters above and beyond literature (social structures, history of ideas, the construction of gender), in which changes are analogical to literary change. Jauss argues that reception history combines the best of what is valuable about formalist literary history and Marxist literary history. In each case the privileged theory is an Aaron's rod that swallows up the rest, and the theorist is content to dismiss as either unhistorical or unliterary the version of causality rival views can give. But while it is understandable that the theorists themselves can hardly resist feeling that their own views are unchallengeable, the practical historian may find a syncretic (or, better, a pluralistic) view of literary history better at describing causal sequences of events.

In this respect, literary history is different, I think, from literary criticism. While a Marxist and a Freudian critical analysis of an individual text like *Frankenstein* might operate so differently as to suggest that the two critics were reading quite different texts, literary historians cannot so easily evade explaining the same facts. In the case of criticism, the "data" to be explained—the words of the text—would be exactly the same, but what Stephen Pepper calls the "danda" (facts as shaped by interpretations) would be so different as to be entirely irreconcilable. A syncretic literary criticism, such as Paul Hernadi has proposed, would be a farrago of untranslatable languages. But with literary history, both data and danda would be the same or at least very similar. What differentiates the varieties of literary historiography is primarily the principle of explanation to which the historian appeals. And it isn't at all clear that the simultaneous appeal to a number of different explanatory principles weakens our sense of historical understanding.

Exactly what the relationship is, or ought to be, between rival modes of literary historiography is a question that I think we can afford to leave for the last chapter, after we have seen in practice what kinds of explanation each

mode affords. It is possible to conceive of the various modes of literary historiography as mutually exclusive, each speaking a language that is incommensurable with any of the others and untranslatable into any other. Another alternative to solipsism is hegemony: where a single voice by virtue of its greater power predominates over the others by including them in its broader scope and wider focus. A third alternative would be something like a pluralistic view of literary historiography. In such a view various theoretical modes of writing literary history—modes such as cultural materialism informed by post-Althusserian Marxism or the formalist historicism that one can find in both late neo-Aristotelians like Ralph Rader and late Russian formalists like Yuri Tynyanov or the reception theory of Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser—provide differently focused but essentially complementary explanations of the rise and fall of the Gothic novel.[17] None is an exclusive source of the truth. Instead, looked at in practice, these modes of historical explanation reinforce one another (overlap) in places and contradict one another (compete) in others; in addition there are topics on which one speaks and the rest are silent—issues that lie in the blind spots of the others' assumptions. Because of the difference of focus, no single mode of literary history provides the whole truth about the past. Because the explanations are complementary, however, they can, once set into dialogue, provide more complete explanations than any one provides alone.

The history of the Gothic that I am going to be presenting in chapters 3, 4, and 5 can be sketched only very roughly and reductively here as a syncretism of Marxist, formalist, and reception historiography, which provide respectively a sense of the origins, course, and end of the Gothic movement. I am going to be arguing that the groundwork was set for the Gothic novel by broad and deep changes in the social structure of England that had been accelerating since the Restoration, changes that created new attitudes toward history, toward human suffering, toward political power. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the tyrannical but lucid power structure of the patriarchal family was being eroded by what Lawrence Stone calls "affective individualism," the sense of the universal right to the pursuit of happiness. Yet if everyone has the right to pursue his or her desires, who has the authority to reconcile conflicting claims? The alternative to tyranny seemed to be anarchy. A world in the grip of change has two nightmares: the past and the future. And the Gothic novel was a way of embodying in fantasy both the nightmare of control by the principles of hierarchy and order and the nightmare of uncontrolled individual desire, nightmares from which one can escape only by waking up.

And the literary form taken by these representations of nightmare was taken from the text that, more than any other, had embodied the tenuousness of social authority and hierarchy in England, Richardson's *Pamela*. But in accordance with the aesthetic ideology of Radcliffe's age, which abhorred mixed characters, the melodramatic structure of *Pamela* was revised so as to split Richardson's predatory male into his two aspects, the villain and the hero, the heroine's threat and her reward. But the revision had the inevitable effect of making the novels incoherent or episodic in plot. The threats are not merely irrational but, given eighteenth-century belief in distributive justice, cannot be carried out; whatever the intensity of the heroine's sufferings, they must be temporary, and the hero will receive her intact in mind and body. Furthermore, the suffering experienced by the protagonists does not harden or deepen or change them in any way. This combination of incoherence and inconsequence gave the Gothic plot a dreamlike quality. The history of the Gothic novel from Radcliffe until the end of the vogue in the 1820s can be written as a series of attempts to evade or draw attention away from the incoherence by making the villain into the protagonist or by making the threats to the protagonist severer, more baroque, from Radcliffe's imagined spooks and spirits to the genuine ghosts, golems, and doppelgängers of the early-nineteenth-century Gothic.

Whatever contemporary critics thought of the Gothic—and most of them despised it—while it was in vogue the Gothic helped to produce a historic shift in the composition of the literary audience and in that audience's motives for reading. The effect of the Gothic was to accentuate a change already in process, a change from reading for the sake of delight and instruction to reading for the sake of imaginative play and escape. The impact of the Gothic was to pave the way for the more respectable elements of the Romantic movement. Though some men clearly read the Gothic, its primary appeal, then as now, was to women; it was typed as "female reading." While the vogue of the Gothic increased the literary audience among women, nevertheless that appeal spread to men when a form could be found whose external manifestations were acceptable to males, as they were in the historical romances of Scott. The historical "solidity" and "veracity" of Scott licensed males to experience the imaginative play and escape that had formerly been confined to the "female reading" of the Gothic. Given the dominance of male over female ideology, Scott (and the vogue of the historical novel) effectively killed off the Gothic as a genre; it was moribund by 1820. But it was "undead": its later avatars persisted throughout the nineteenth century and, in popular literature, are again dominant today.

Do these three explanations constitute a braided strand that defines the single master narrative providing something like the whole truth about the Gothic novel? In an age when new master narratives are announced each week by every branch of cultural studies, my own claim is somewhat more modest. While the historical narratives using Chicago formalism, phenomenological reception theory, and Marxist cultural materialism seem to fit together well—each taking up the story where the other leaves off—I would never suggest that these are the only critical systems that could be set into a mutually reinforcing dialogue with one another. I am also too aware of the personal choices and diverse accidents that sparked my interest in each of these sets of literary ideas to think this ménage-à-trois a marriage blessed by special heavenly decree. There are reasons, though, that these theories happen to be able to see one another's blind spots. I discuss these reasons, some notions about the discourse of historical causality and its application to literary texts, and some claims for historical pluralism as an antidote to its *mise en abîme* in the course of chapter 7, and the reader who can't wait will have to skip ahead.

It is hardly surprising that doubts should be common about literary history when both literature and history are currently under attack. Literature itself, for a number of reasons I have discussed elsewhere, is on the defensive in departments of English and other modern languages by a younger generation of scholars who want to direct the profession's attention away from literature and toward cultural studies.[18] History itself, for a variety of reasons, has become a concept more frequently appealed to rhetorically—as a force that brings favored ideologies into phase or that makes it unimportant to bother answering embarrassingly hard questions—than an area of knowledge capable of holding surprises for us, one that needs to be studied in detail as well as in the aggregate. What has seemed almost dreamlike about the contemporary criticism of the Gothic are its evasions of history, its inability to frame historical hypotheses, to locate or find or even invent facts to fit them.

"History"—as Stephen Dedalus articulated—"is a nightmare from which I am struggling to awaken." For his alter ego James Joyce nearly a century ago, a reader of both Vico and Spengler, history was archetypal, repetitious, a gyre ever seeking to spin itself out yet once more. Such cyclical theories no longer have us in thrall. For me history is a new morning—and whether it is sunny or clouded cannot be known by looking within; it can only be discovered by looking out the window. It is a new morning *into* which I am struggling to awaken.

CHAPTER TWO
Theories of Literary History

Histories Manqués

What David Perkins decried in 1992 as "encyclopedic history" was decried in 1946 by R. G. Collingwood as "scissors-and-paste history" and in 1967 by R. S. Crane as "atomistic" history.[1] In all three the model for the narrative is the "life and works": there is no history aside from bio-bibliography. A true encyclopedia can generate enough bio-bibliographies to attain the status of a massive book, but whether the work contains one life-and-works or a thousand, a new chapter is begun for each figure.[2] The result can be informative and insightful or banal, depending on the quality of the commentator. With as astute a critic and scholar as Robert Kiely doing an atomistic history of the Gothic novel, the result, *The Romantic Novel in England,* can be very fine indeed.

A slightly different version of "scissors-and-paste" literary history might be called "thematic" history, in which a single idea or a small set of ideas is called into play to account for the differentiation of a subgenre from other contemporary texts. Devendra Varma's *The Gothic Flame,* for example, chooses the quality of the "numinous" as the differentia between Gothic and non-Gothic novels of the 1764–1824 period.[3]

One difference between atomistic and thematic histories is that the former variety views writers primarily as individuals, the latter as part of a group that has contributed to a subgenre. The major similarity between them is that neither posits any mechanism for change. Atomistic historians tend to emphasize individual influences; thematic historians tend to minimize even this mechanism, since it is unusual for an entire subgenre to show the same, or even a similar, pattern of individual influence. In both atomistic and thematic history, history has no motor. In thematic history, literature essentially does not change: the causes of variation are accidental and

adventitious, but the genres or kinds are like Platonic essences and continue in their mode indefinitely. These are essentially modes of literary criticism rather than literary history, ways of grouping texts. They avoid as far as possible raising specifically historical questions. This chapter deals instead with three varieties of literary history in which at least some mechanism for historical change is posited, and in which literary change is presumed to follow fixed, or at least regular and thus predictable patterns, rules, laws of development.

At first glance it may be hard to discern the attraction of atomistic or thematic literary history. Why would a literary historian want to evade trying to understand mechanisms for change? One possible reason may be precisely the disbelief in or distaste for the notion that the creation of literature—or any other humanistic activity—can be rule governed. One would rather attribute literary change to chance or contingency, which by definition cannot be understood, than view human behavior as mechanical or law governed. While this view may be a mere prejudice, it may also result from a misunderstanding of the nature of contingency.

Perhaps there has always been a conflict between those (like Aristotle) who find contingency at the basis of history, and those (like Hegel and Marx) who seek for law and regularity in patterns of explanation. The conflict is not resolvable because both are right. They are both right because what we call "contingency" is an artifact of the intersection between two systems of "laws." A contingency is something that occurs according to a law we aren't paying attention to. For a biologist studying evolution on a Pacific island after the eruption of a volcano, the adaptive behavior (or the extinction) of organisms follows genetic and ecological laws. The laws are statistical—no one can tell whether an individual organism will survive—and they operate in the aggregate. On the other hand, for the biologist the eruption itself was a purely contingent, random event. But for a geologist, the eruption was not random but rule governed. Geologists wish they knew those rules better than they now do, but they understand at least that a system of probabilities governs which areas of the earth's surface are likely to be volcanic, and which are unlikely. On the other hand, a fluctuation in the sun's heat that affected the development of a mountain range would strike the geologist as a contingent event. But for the astronomer, that fluctuation might be a predictable event according to the laws of stellar evolution.

It follows that those who attack the Marxists for their failure to predict history are just as misguided as the Marxists who offered to predict it. The social and economic laws and patterns Marx perceived are indeed useful,

and we ignore them at our peril. Nevertheless the intersection with these laws of other systems of law and probability is likely to interfere with (and is eventually certain to falsify) any long-term set of predictions.

For those who would propose purely formal sets of laws for the development of literary genres, the problem is that historical factors external to literature sometimes set up blank walls into which this development runs. There are obvious cases: English drama hit a blank wall in 1642 with the closing of the theaters, and so did satiric political farce in 1737 with the passage of the Licensing Act. There are also walls that are less blank, as when the arrival of a new technology condemns aesthetic forms to lingering desuetude. For instance, certain kinds of physical film comedy declined after 1927 with the arrival of sound and the possibility of comedy that combined rapid-fire dialogue with visual humor. The Keystone Kops did not cease to exist, and Charlie Chaplin made masterpieces, but both became vestigial.

There are other shifts in form that clearly arrive as a result of splits in the general ideology. This happened in the economically strained 1920s and 1930s within the detective story, when a split emerged between the classic British school (exemplified by Agatha Christie) and the hard-boiled American school (Dashiell Hammett), which developed very different stock characters and plot devices. The ideological split turned on whether one considered a social order based on property protected by police as the foundation of civilization or as a deeply corrupt bargain. Since around 1975, the pure puzzle and the hard-boiled school have merged to a great extent, thanks to a new consensus that both society and the police are at least slightly corrupt. Similarly, feminism has produced not only female detectives like Sue Grafton's Kinsey Milhone and Sara Paretsky's V. I. Warshawski but also feminized ones like Robert Parker's Spenser, while the multicultural movement has produced ethnically differentiated detectives in and outside the police, such as Walter Mosley's Easy Rawlins and Tony Hillerman's Joe Leaphorn.

Converging Theories

The three schools that I would like to discuss in this chapter—they surely do not exhaust the field—are formalism (both the Russian variety and the neo-Aristotelian version that continues into our own day), Marxist literary history, and reception theory.[4] Both the Russian formalists and the neo-Aristotelians have traditionally emphasized the internal factors in literary

change, while both Marxists and the reception theorists of the school of Konstanz have emphasized the external factors. But what is interesting is how the three schools have converged. At the outset, all three predicated a relatively "pure" version of history that negated and dismissed the others. But contemporary formalists, Marxists, and reception theorists share a tendency to move toward the central, eclectic position, which would posit that literature changes for both internal and external reasons.

A theory of internal change—such as the one associated with Yuri Tynyanov and the Russian formalists—presumes that texts are written to imitate, copy, and otherwise duplicate other texts, to reply to other texts, to complement other texts, to extend and complete other texts, to negate other texts. After each individual breakthrough, a space is created that gets filled up by other less revolutionary works. After a while the space gets crowded and the time becomes ripe for a new direction to be taken, though no one can necessarily predict which direction.

But there are also external reasons for literary change. One external feature is the audience. Audiences are not static. Partly they change in demographic composition. The group of readers (or theatergoers) changes, and with them, the interests of the group. Or audiences change internally: they come to want something different out of their texts or experiences. (An audience may want to be challenged—or somewhat later, it may want to be soothed and reassured.) Another external factor is the publisher and all the other intermediaries between the author and audience. The conditions of publication may favor literary experiment at one time but not at others. Then there are broader but more distant movements: social and political changes—changes in the very shape of society—that alter the form and content of texts. These operate over the longer term and over broad spectra of texts.

To say that literary-historical theory shows a convergence toward a central, eclectic position is not to say that there is a homogenized consensus on literary history. Several factors prevent this. Of these the most common, though perhaps the most tractable, and even possibly avoidable, is the general tendency to argue with opponents as though opponents were taking more extreme positions than they are. Whether poets follow Harold Bloom's model and engage in misprision of other poets, significant forebears, in order to clear space for themselves to operate, it seems pretty clear that literary critics and historians engage in the sport. This is why Hans Robert Jauss argued with the Marxists as though they were still tied to a "reflection" theory of literature, and continued to do so long after his errors

had been pointed out to him. Similarly, John Frow (a post-Althusserian Marxist) reads the Russian formalists as far more tied to change coming exclusively out of formalistic patterns than they ever were, and certainly more so than they became, and attacks Jauss for not carrying a party card. R. S. Crane accuses the older "vulgar" Marxists of oversimplifications that they avoided, while Ralph Rader accuses Michael McKeon of opinions he never held. In an economic universe, it is understandable that anyone with what he hopes is a new idea is going to emphasize differences from competing products, and consumers of literary theory can grow as cynical about self-advertising in this area as any other, as aware that brand X has something to be said for it.

Distortions aside, much of the disagreement among these groups of individuals is genuine, in fact genuinely intractable, and is not going to respond to any amount of rhetorical therapy. For instance: Given the structure of their assumptions, Chicago formalists will always tend to emphasize the role of individual contributions within genres, while Marxists will always tend to suppress this and treat the individual as only a member of a class or, more subtly, as the sum of his or her various "insertions into ideology"—a series of class characteristics that, sufficiently refined, will almost uniquely place the individual as different from other writers of the time, while nevertheless not allowing him or her any purely individual characteristics at all. Reception theorists, who like the Marxists view the work of literature as part of a socioeconomic system, will tend to stress the role of consumption over that of production, though both are obviously equally necessary. The point is that each system posits a somewhat different role to the various vectors that mediate and cause literary change. This gives rise to differences in emphasis, and also to alternative explanations of phenomena. In the rest of this chapter I discuss the three versions of literary history and the way in which they have converged toward overlapping versions of historical causality.

Russian Formalism and Literary Evolution

The formalist group (OPAYAZ) began with the task of what we would today call literary analysis, and it came to literary history relatively late in its brief vogue as a critical movement.[5] At first, the primary issue was what literature was, and how it worked, rather than how it was created and came to be what it was. The basic literary principle enunciated by Viktor Shklovsky, is that of defamiliarization *(ostranenie):* the function of literature is to estrange

the world from us, in order to allow us to see it anew, by shedding the conventional forms of expression that have become so automatized that they no longer allow us to experience reality through them.

If the idea of the literary was the important feature of formalism, nevertheless literary history, or as it is called here literary evolution, rapidly becomes one of the main concerns of the school.[6] There is no attempt to account for the coming-into-existence of a particular work—its origins or genesis, especially its origins as something caused by a particular individual. It is rather the collective fate of genres that concerns the formalists. As Yuri Tynyanov put it, "The problem of the evolution and the shift of literary phenomena is being replaced by the problem of the psychological genesis of each phenomenon and instead of literature we are urged to study the personality of the artist. Yet clearly the genesis of each phenomenon is one problem and its evolutionary significance, its place in the evolutionary series, is another" (Tynyanov,"The Literary Fact" 12–13). For the formalists, the older modes of literary history were essentially unexplanatory because they had never established any strong sense of what made a particular text into literature in a given age: without any systematic notion of the literary, the only causal mechanisms available were what Boris Eikhenbaum in "Literature and Literary Life" called "the naive theory of 'inheritance' and 'influence' and hence naive biographism based on individual psychology" (52).

The formalists considered that at any given moment a national literature was not a collection of individual works but rather a system of genres. As Tynyanov puts it, "It is clear that in literature there is no such thing as a *separate* work, but that the separate work belongs to the system of literature, correlates with it in genre and style . . . that a work has a function in the literary system of a given period" ("Ode" 48–49, quoted in Shukman 41). Any synchronous study would reveal that the system was hierarchical—one genre was supreme over all the others—and that the others tended to exist in dialectical relations with one another.

In mid-eighteenth-century England, for example, the highest honors were given to poetry in general and to philosophical poetry ("Essay on Man," "The Vanity of Human Wishes") over satirical poetry (*Dunciad,* "London"), and satirical over pastoral and elegiac. Such a preference is not constant over time. (The pastoral mode had been in vogue at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and it would return to vogue at the turn of the nineteenth as well.) This constant conflict over hierarchy, according to Tynyanov, is a natural feature of literary systems: "A literary period, literary contemporaneity, is by no means a static system in contrast with the

dynamic evolving historical series. In contemporaneity, the same historical conflict between different levels and formations is going on as in the multi-period historical series" ("The Literary Fact" 11).

Literary genres can come into existence for a variety of reasons. Either a form that had existed but was not considered "literary" is placed into the system of what the age denominates as literature, or a form diverges from another form. Once genres are established they can never actually go out of existence—they always remain as a possible model for new work—but they can fall into desuetude. Yuri Striedter has summarized some of the formalists' studies of this: "For the Formalists the epoch . . . is a system with a characteristic intention *(ustanovka)* and corresponding dominants. Genres particularly suited to expressing this intention advance to the head of the hierarchy of genres and become the dominant ones of the epoch. . . . In the 1820s, for example, the old genre of the heroic poem becomes, in the version of the Byronic poem, the dominant genre of Russian Romanticism" (*Literary Structure* 64).

In discussing the movement of systems, the dethroning of one dominant genre by another, the formalists were quite clear that difference was more important than similarity. The succession of genres was not a clear line of influence, with one dominant passing on the position to another within its range of filiation, but rather of divergence. Shklovsky uses the following metaphor: "When literary schools change, the succession passes not from father to son, but from uncle to nephew" (28). Exactly how far one can take this metaphor may not be clear (other formalists use the similar metaphor "grandfather to grandson"). But Shklovsky seems to be suggesting that the dominant of one era is not an obviously predictable development of the dominant school of the former era. In the period to which this study relates, it might be the principle behind the fact that the historical novel of Scott was the heir of the historical romance we call the Gothic. They share a family resemblance—the avoidance of contemporary realism, the chronotope (in Bakhtin's terminology) of an exotic time/place—but have a significant difference: realism vs. fantasy.

Shklovsky goes on to claim that

> every new literary school is a revolution, something like the emergence of a new class. But of course this is only an analogy. The defeated line is not wiped out; it does not cease to exist. It is merely dislodged from the peak and goes down to the fallow and can be resurrected once more: it remains a permanent pretender to the throne. In reality, of course, things are complicated by the fact that the new leader

> is not usually simply the restorer of an earlier form, but is enriched by features from other younger schools and, for that matter, by features inherited from its predecessor on the throne, though these now play a subservient role. (227–28)

One can see the application of this sort of analysis to the relation between the historical novel of Scott and the Gothic, particularly the fact that intruded stories and legends within the Waverley novels were in the mode of the Gothic tale. And the resurgence of the Gothic mode within the sensation novel in the 1860s, and its recrudescence in the last decade of the nineteenth century, show it really was a "permanent pretender to the throne." We shall be outlining some of the "avuncular"—or as I prefer to term them, "modal"—literary-historical relations of the Gothic in chapter 6.

One example of the formalist approach to the succession of genres is in Yuri Tynyanov's essay on the ode as an oral form. The causal mechanism for literary evolution, in the earlier stages of formalism, was purely internal. Here is Tynyanov's telescoped version of it:

> In analysing literary evolution we come up against the following stages: 1) the principle of automatization is dialectically opposed by the constructional principle; 2) then comes the application of it—the constructional principle seeks the easiest mode of application; 3) it spreads over the largest possible range of phenomena; 4) it becomes automatized and brings into action opposite constructional principles. ("The Literary Fact" 17)

Tynyanov's sense of the motor behind formal succession is that as a genre becomes dominant within an era it develops a system of conventions—plot devices, character types, tropes of language—that can be thought of as characteristic of the genre. The genre, as a dominant, then attracts more and more writers to it, and the writers attracted become less and less creative and more and more imitative. Seeking originality within the traditional range of the genre, the genre expands to fill as much territory as it can, as any successful organism expands to fill as many niches as possible in its potential habitat. Furthermore, the genre becomes coarsened: the effects that worked before have become familiar, and it is necessary to deliver stronger sensations to provide the same literary impact. As the genre expands, then, it is held together essentially by its conventions; it thus becomes automatized, and the automatic—as Shklovsky had said—is the mark of the nonliterary. A genre that has reached this point thus becomes ripe for being toppled from the dominant position: a new genre becomes dominant, and the process contin-

ues all over again within the new dominant. (As we shall see in chapter 4, each step of this process is quite visible in the vogue of the Gothic novel.)[7]

Thus far, the formalist perspective is simply one of literary evolution within a generic system. In effect it predicts that "nothing fails like success." Regardless of the ideology of the age or the role of the reader, successful genres expand until they become automatized and then cease to be successful. Around 1927, however, in the course of its debate against the Marxist aestheticians, formalism began to include questions about exterior causes of literary evolution. One of the clearest perspectives is provided by the Tynyanov–Roman Jakobson collaboration, "Problems in the Study of Literature and Language":

> The history of literature (art) being simultaneous with other historical series, is characterized, as is each of these series, by an involved complex of structural laws. Without an elucidation of these laws, it is impossible to establish in a scientific manner the correlation between the literary series and other historical series. . . . However, these laws do not allow us to explain the tempo of evolution, or the chosen path of evolution, when several, theoretically possible evolutionary paths are given. This is owing to the fact that the immanent laws of literary (linguistic) evolution form an indeterminate equation; although they admit only a limited number of possible solutions, they do not necessarily specify a unique solution. The question of the specific choice of path, or at least of the dominant, can be solved only by means of the correlation between the literary series and the other historical series. . . . This correlation (a system of systems) has its own structural laws, which must be submitted to investigation.[8]

As Roman Jakobson's participation suggests, this essay is protostructuralist: it suggests that human life is a system of systems, each law driven. Nevertheless, unlike the most usual structuralist position, there is no suggestion that each mode of human activity is reducible to the laws of linguistics. Instead, Tynyanov and Jakobson suggest that each system "has its own structural laws" and that so do the correlations between these semi-independent systems.

Furthermore, there is even a suggestion that the influence of these various series has a different weight at different periods of literary history. According to a minor member of the formalists, Lev Ginzburg, "We may speak of 'formal' periods when a thoroughly literarized theme lives and alters according to some kind of immanent laws; and of ideological periods when theme is dictated by an external series and discussed and evaluated according to the laws of these series" (92).

This recomplication of what begins as a simple, dialectical process of literary evolution also brings the Russian formalists closer to the Marxist critics who, in the Soviet Union at least, became their heirs. If historicism replaced formalism in the Soviet Union, the situation in America was the reverse. Formalism (both the New Critical and the Chicago varieties) flourished in the middle third of the century, displacing in interest a theoretically naive historical scholarship. R. S. Crane himself began as a historical scholar before he became the chief theorist of Chicago formalism, and he spent his life trying to reconcile these aspects of his philological career.[9]

Neo-Aristotelian Literary History: Crane, Rader, and the Theory of Emergent Forms

Ronald Crane had begun as a philological scholar and had developed into something of a historian of ideas long before he instituted his formalist theory of literature, and he was aware that literary history is always more complicated than any description of it can possibly be. Having done such a wide variety of practical work, Crane did not want to leave anything out, to dismiss or bracket important historical factors such as those he had investigated in the most traditional scholarly ways at the beginning of his career. Indeed, writing *Critical and Historical Principles of Literary History* may have been for him a way of putting his working life into some sort of order, of coming to terms with the relationship between his work as philologist, historian of ideas, critic, and theorist.[10]

Crane assumes that literary works of art are constructions in which a literary form dictates choices of actions, characters, and philosophical thought, along with language and devices of disclosure (narrative or dramatic technique), all engaged so as to effect a formal end. An analysis of these relations is the "constructional" aspect of the text. There is also a "preconstructional" aspect: the work's origins, sources, and analogues. For a writer working within a given genre, the preexisting tradition offers a storehouse of literary conventions (familiar plot devices, character types, verbal strategies, narrative conventions) to which the author looks in composing his or her original work. On the other side, there is a "postconstructional" aspect of a work, the ways that literary works affect their readers in terms of "common causes of all human discourse: language, the mind, society, history, and so on." All three aspects of the text are important, but Crane felt that the constructional aspect had been relatively ignored in literary history. It was simply easier to

treat historically a given material aspect of a set of texts, apart from any considerations of how that material is shaped by the requirements of the text's form, or else to philosophize about common aspects of texts—their embodiments of a common idea or myth, say—that their authors might never have considered. Crane wants to consider texts as wholes rather than just as parts, at least partly because organized wholes have demanding shapes. A novelist's choice early in a work can force a certain mode of development, a certain handling of language, later on. And on the other hand, he wants to consider them as *literary* wholes, as forms rather than mere texts that may embody any sort of discursive content.

Crane's commitment to the primacy of the constructional aspect of the literary work naturally demands that he emphasize the causes inherent in literary form, both the causes productive of literary success in general and those that are demanded by the specific requirements of particular literary genres. For him the "first interpretative task of the historian of forms" will be uncovering "the various reasons of art which presided in their making." And for Crane, even the apparent "defects" of a form can be dictated by formal considerations:

> A case in point is the tendency exhibited by most of the Gothic novelists of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to endow their principal agents, whether heroes, heroines, or villains, with relatively little character and to represent them acting from simple, uncomplicated motives easily intelligible in the light of the situations they face. This doubtless detracts from the interest such works can have for serious minds, but the historian, before passing judgment, will ask whether the neglect of specificity and roundedness of character in the Gothic stories may not have been dictated, in some sense, by the artistic end their authors had in view, namely, a concentration on the mysteriously terrifying quality of the events portrayed. To portray character in more vivid detail would either introduce moral issues conducive to something like tragic pity and fear or divert the reader's attention from the unusual and sinister happenings to the persons involved in them. What the form demanded, in short, was enough character to impel readers to take sides . . . and nothing more. (*Principles of Literary History* 63–64)

In effect, Crane suggests that what critics may term the formal defects of a text may be the side effects, or unintended consequences, of choices made to secure some other good.

Crane's notion of "narrative histories of form," as he presents it in *Principles of Literary History*, rests on his formal method of analyzing literary texts. In "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of *Tom Jones*" the novel is viewed as a

plot structure that induces, develops, and finally cathartically resolves in the reader an active concern for a protagonist which results from the tension between what the reader is led to believe will happen to the character (his or her fate) and what the reader is led to think ought to happen (his or her desert). This model holds for only a certain set of novels—though they include a great many of the canonical texts. In *Fiction and the Shape of Belief* (1964), Sheldon Sacks extended Crane's model to two alternative fictional models, the apologue and the satire, two didactic forms that were popular in the eighteenth century and have also become important in our own day.[11] Crane and Sacks were able to use this model to analyze the novels of Richardson, Fielding, and Austen, among others, and a number of their students have used the model effectively with certain fictions from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

To my present way of thinking, there are a number of weaknesses with the Crane-Sacks model. One is that it presumes that novels have a single protagonist and a single plot, and hence the model fails to deal with such important forms as the Victorian multiplot novel. The model also fails to account for a number of fictions that are unequivocally registered as novels, but that also fail to fit into the action model, including among others the novels of Defoe, written before the action model came into existence, and the novels of Joyce and Woolf, in our own century, which do not fit the pattern of "objective fantasy" the action model requires. Most important, especially for the present subject, the Crane-Sacks model implicitly presumes that literary texts are written and interpretable entirely within the confines of a generic model. For Crane, mimetic novels were ipso facto not didactic. Sacks, who was more explicitly aware of the role of messages implicit in novels of action, was nevertheless convinced that a novelist's beliefs, indeed, explicitly didactic intentions, such as Fielding's intention "to recommend goodness and innocence" in *Tom Jones,* could be integrated with seamless perfection into objective fantasy. But as Ralph Rader has pointed out, partially incoherent mixed forms, like *Humphry Clinker, Amelia,* and *The Vicar of Wakefield,* are more frequent within the literary canon than masterpieces of form like *Tom Jones* and *Emma* ("The Literary-Theoretical Contribution" 189).

Rader has suggested that the Crane-Sacks model might be made more useful if we "think of literary works not as embodiments of a priori principles of form but as constructions in which the author's attempt to realize his aesthetic and allied aims may produce conflicts which leave on the works the marks of their solutions." Rader demonstrates this theory in "From

Richardson to Austen," in which he argues that the morally serious comedy eventually perfected in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma* was distorted in the course of its development by what he calls "Johnson's Rule," that feature of eighteenth-century aesthetic ideology typified in Samuel Johnson's *Rambler* essay no. 4 (but visible elsewhere) demanding that narratives not based on historical subjects have heroes and heroines of perfect moral rectitude (461–83).

The requirements of Johnson's Rule caused works like *Tom Jones* and *Roderick Random* to seem ethically ambivalent or deficient but caused many other works written in conformity to the rule to be slackened affectively. *Sir Charles Grandison,* written explicitly in order to demonstrate what male rectitude would look like, is so etiolated by its three moral paragons that it fell from canonical status soon after the turn of the nineteenth century, while the novels of Burney and even early Austen (*Sense and Sensibility* and *Northanger Abbey*) are weakened by the formal compromises required for conformity with the rule. Rader envisions the sequence of *Pamela* through *Grandison, Evelina,* and *Sense and Sensibility* to *Pride and Prejudice* as the search for a form that will be simultaneously acceptable to the ideology of the age and dramatically effective. Jane Austen's solution is to present the hero and heroine as possessing traits that temporarily keep them from happiness with each other, character flaws that nevertheless do not amount to moral faults. But the solution is no sooner reached than—with the change of aesthetic ideology at the start of the nineteenth century—it becomes practically irrelevant to the further formal development of the novel, which takes up other courses. This feature of Rader is not really a divergence from Crane, who insists in *Principles of Literary History* that we may use the external causes of literary history primarily to explain the formal inadequacies of literary texts. But the notion of evolutionary sequences, literary-historical "plots" with a beginning, middle, and end, is a very attractive one, and one that makes what Crane was trying to explain easier to comprehend.

Another feature of Rader that differs at least in emphasis from Crane and Sacks, is Rader's insistence on the significance of interpretive history. While Rader thinks that, at bottom, our experience of literary texts is much more similar than our varying descriptions of them would lead one to believe, the way we talk about texts—and in particular the way we *disagree* about them—tends to point not only to defects in our critical vocabularies but to unique features of the texts themselves. For instance, Rader's account of Defoe's *Moll Flanders* rests heavily on his explanation of the controversy over whether *Moll* is or is not ironic; his account of Joyce's *Portrait of the*

Artist explicates the quarrel over the degree of irony in Joyce's attitude to Stephen in that work. In both cases, though in different ways, Rader shows how the controversy results from applying a common narrative model to a text that belongs to a different genre. Agreement, when it is universal enough, is also a sign of a literary-historical fact. For example, the fact that no literary critic has questioned whether *Pamela* is an English novel, while doubts have been expressed down the years whether various other earlier narratives (like *Pilgrim's Progress, Robinson Crusoe,* or *Gulliver's Travels*) should be called novels, demonstrates for Rader that *Pamela* was indeed the first novel (the first, that is, in what Rader calls the "action-plot-judgment" mode, the central genre in the history of narrative, in which we are meant to register the controlling intention of an author tacitly operating behind the intentions of the various characters and narrators).

Like Crane, Rader has attacked Marxist versions of literary history. But unlike Crane, who targeted the relatively simple-minded "vulgar" Marxism of Hicks and Caudwell, which was always searching literature for evidence of attention to class struggle and the proletariat, Rader has attacked the enormously more sophisticated Marxism of Michael McKeon's *Origins of the English Novel.* For Rader, McKeon goes wrong on the very first page, where he claims that "genre theory cannot be divorced from the history of genres, from the understanding of genres in history. Another way of saying this is that the theory of genre must be a dialectical genre theory" (Rader, "Emergence of the Novel" 1).

As Rader sees the case, McKeon does not have a concept of the English novel adequate to inform *any* literary history. The elements that went into the English novel are related to the economic and cultural stream, but the novel is never understood as a literary form and therefore never placed adequately in history. It is as though someone were to advertise a history of the English apple pie but were to produce a series of chapters on apple growing in England, on pig farming, on milling, and on the development of the oven. Obviously an apple pie needs apples and flour and lard and an oven, but equally obviously an apple pie is *more* than apples and flour and lard and an oven. Like a pie but far more complicated, the English novel for Rader is more than the sum of its elemental materials and techniques, and even if McKeon had succeeded in a right understanding of the historical development of the elements *necessary* for the novel, the existence of those elements would not be *sufficient* to explain their combination in a particular sort of literary form.[12]

The feature of Rader's version of literary history I feel rests on the shakiest

ground is one that at the moment is only implicit in the several essays and studies that have appeared to date. But the corpus of his work ineluctably conveys the notion that the major canonical texts of English narrative (such as *Pamela, Tom Jones, Pride and Prejudice, Wuthering Heights, Jane Eyre, Vanity Fair, Bleak House, Middlemarch, Tess of the D'Urbervilles, Lord Jim, Portrait of the Artist,* and *Ulysses*) are also the world-historical texts, the ones that have begun or ended the major evolutionary sequences. This is hard to prove or disprove—doing so would necessitate discovering which literary sequences were the most important. But to me it seems a recrudescence of the tendency of the Chicago school, back to Crane, to valorize the historical implications of masterpieces.

Rader has not yet explicitly defended this view, so it would be out of place for me to attack it here. But my studies in the Gothic novel and other less canonical forms throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have suggested that it is not always the most artistic versions of a genre that appear first. Rader's own study of the morally serious comedy suggests that *Grandison,* which starts the main sequence that leads to Austen, is a novel whose canonicity evaporated after about 1820.[13] Similarly, the English historical novel is usually thought to begin with *Waverley,* which is artistically weaker than later works by Scott (such as *The Bride of Lammermoor, Ivanhoe,* and *Redgauntlet*).[14] Much later, the second return of the Gothic novel—the era of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, The Turn of the Screw, Dracula,* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*—began with an obscure sensation novel, *Called Back* by F. J. Fargus, in which the sensation plot is given what it had not had before: a supernatural twist. I am equally sure that turning points in the drama can be found that involve equally uncanonical texts, failed or at least not entirely successful experiments that later writers were able to bring to perfection.

Marxist Literary History

While "vulgar Marxists" like Christopher Caudwell and Granville Hicks often seemed to eliminate challenging historical questions from literary history,[15] that cannot be said of Raymond Williams, who in *The Country and the City* (1973) produced what many would agree is the first major triumph of Marxist literary historiography. It is interesting that Williams—of Welsh rural proletarian background—was not at the time an avowed Marxist and took pains to avoid the jargon (base and superstructure, ideology and false consciousness) of Marxist social and literary theory. He talks instead about

the political, social, and economic development of England and about the "forms of feeling" generated by social change that are "precipitated out" in literary form. Here is Williams on "the morality of improvement" in Richardson and Fielding:

> [In the eighteenth century] an estate passed from being regarded as an inheritance, carrying such and such income, to being calculated as an opportunity for investment, carrying greatly increased returns. In this development, an ideology of improvement—of a transformed and regulated land—became significant and directive. Social relations which stood in the way of this kind of modernisation were then steadily and at times ruthlessly broken down. (60–61)

Marriage, in feudal days arranged for family alliance, now is a way of concentrating and improving an estate. Richardson's Clarissa is a pawn in the Harlowe family's plan to rise in rank by uniting James's lands with those of the odious Solmes; similarly, Fielding's Sophia Western is to be forced to marry Blifil in order to join her father's estates with Allworthy's. The eighteenth-century novel chronicled "the long process of choice between economic advantage and other ideas of value." Fielding raises the dilemma but finally, with "a deliberate—one might say a calculating—geniality," dismisses it: by sleight of hand, Tom Jones becomes Allworthy's heir, so that both Sophia's desires and her father's are simultaneously achieved. In *Clarissa,* Richardson dramatizes

> the reverse of consolidation, of the necessary settlement, the striking of a bargain between advantage and value. The integrity of the human person is fanatically preserved, by its refusal to compromise and then its accepted destruction. . . . *Clarissa* is an important sign of that separation of virtue from any practically available world which is a feature of the later phases of Puritanism and still later of Romanticism. . . . It is in the end not a criticism of a period or structure of society but of what can be abstracted as "the world." . . . It is in its own way an answer to the problems being raised by an increasingly confident capitalist society. (Williams 65)

Instead of accusing Richardson of "false consciousness," Williams notes his tendency to view the dramatic tensions of his work as problems of character and morality rather than of the social organization of society. In its grasp of both social process and how that process finds its way into literature, this is a far cry from Hicks's canned sauerkraut. Nevertheless, the way Williams draws up his questions, there are problems he cannot help to solve. Literature is still seen as the epiphenomenon of economics and sociology.

Richardson and Fielding are understood in terms of their complementary responses to the social changes produced by agricultural concentration and improvement, but not in terms of their hostile/emulative responses to each other, the generation of *Joseph Andrews* by *Pamela,* or of *Sir Charles Grandison* by *Tom Jones.*

For me the most conspicuous flaw of the chapter is Williams's failure to understand why Defoe (despite consciously knowing more about capitalism than Richardson and Fielding did) restricted himself to writing about economic man as an isolated individual *(Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders)* rather than as a being enmeshed in social relations. Lacking a sense that developments in *literary form* (rather than in society) might ever take the reins and drive the cart, Williams has no way of evaluating the possibility that the isolation of Defoe's heroes derives from the single-voiced form in which he wrote: an imitation of naive incoherent autobiography. Once Richardson had pioneered the action-plot-judgment form that allows dramatic intensity combined with variable focus and multiple voices, the individual no longer needed to be seen as an "isolated history" (Williams 62).

The possibility of transcending what Williams achieved within Marxist literary historiography demanded a reinterpretation of Marx. As long as one took Marx's claim in *The German Ideology* at face value, literature could have no history. The reinterpretation was done in *Reading Capital* by Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar, which reads Marx as a canny critic of his own sources. Instead of the old base/superstructure dichotomy, or the notion of culture as a "totality," Althusser posited a much more fragmentary system with slippage between the various structural elements. Elements of superstructure (law, theology, philosophy, art) affect the base as well as being affected by it. Although "in the last analysis" economic realities rule, literature is a semiautonomous practice of ideology, and to the extent that it is autonomous, it should have its own history immanent within its praxis, though that history must undoubtedly be affected by (and must itself affect) other levels of production—political, social, economic, and so on.

From this one might expect a rush by neo-Marxists to the reconstruction of literary history. But there was no such rush, and one reason may be that in the same volume in which Althusser suggests (without precisely stating) that literary history may be a sensible project, his collaborator, Etienne Balibar states outright that a structural Marxist history of literature may be impossible, or at least might not resemble anything we would want to call literary history. As Balibar tells us in *Reading Capital,*

> We can formulate the indispensability of *other histories* than those of the modes of production, histories whose objects remain to be constituted. Not all histories are possible; historical research . . . is beginning to sense this. . . . The determination of the objects of these histories must await that of the relatively autonomous instances of the social formation, and the production of concepts which will define each of them by the structure of a *combination,* like the mode of production. . . . It might be suggested . . . that the history of ideologies, and notably the history of philosophy, are perhaps not histories of systems, but histories of concepts organized into problematics, whose synchronic combinations it is possible to reconstitute. . . . Similarly, the history of literature may not be that of the "works," but that of another object, a specific one, i.e., a certain relation to the ideological (itself already a social relation). (251)

Whether or not this is the reason, it does not seem that literary history is the mode in which the post-Althusserian Marxists have been doing their most serious work. We have many brilliant critical essays by Pierre Macherey, Fredric Jameson, Terry Eagleton, and their followers, but one has everywhere the sense that, despite the extreme shift in philosophical and social premises, there is still a hidden loyalty to the New Critical cult of textual interpretation, to finding the hidden music beneath the surface of the language, the Word behind the word.[16]

The most distinguished attempt by an Althusserian to work toward a literary history is the fourth chapter of *Criticism and Ideology,* by Terry Eagleton (then in his high-Althusserian phase), and both its successes and failures are instructive. True to the prescription of Etienne Balibar, Eagleton does not structure his essay as a history of texts but as a history of a relationship between literature and ideology, so that the essay turns on the various uses in Victorian and modern fiction and poetry of the Romantic ideology of organicism. Here, for example is how Eagleton envisions the embodiment of the problem in *Middlemarch* of how to show society as a coherent whole and simultaneously as in inevitable conflict:

> Each of the novel's four central characters represents . . . an historically typical totalisation: Casaubon idealism, Lydgate scientific rationalism, Bulstrode Evangelical Christianity, Dorothea Brooke Romantic self-achievement. . . . Each of these totalities crumbles, ensnared in the quotidian . . . , the bleak victory of an entrenched provincial consciousness over rationalist or Romantic drives to transcend it. . . . The *web* as image of the social formation . . . is a *derivative* organic image, a midpoint between the animal imagery of *Adam Bede* and some more developed

> theoretical concept of *structure*. The complexity of the web, its subtle interlacing of relatively autonomous strands, its predatory overtones, the possibilities of local complication it permits, accommodate forms of conflict. . . . But at the same time the web's symmetry, its "spacial" dehistoricising of the social process, its exclusion of levels of contradiction, preserve the essential unity of the organic mode. (119–20)

There are some astonishing individual insights like this one scattered along the route, but one comes away more impressed by Eagleton's *structural* than by his *historical* perspective here. James's approach to organicism, for instance, is presented as an extension of Conrad's, which is surely correct in purely analytic terms, though it ignores the chronological fact that James's work was nearly over when Conrad's began, and the principal texts Eagleton cites were written over thirty years earlier. Similarly, Dickens's later novels are presented as a development from George Eliot's, particularly the way Dickens makes structural communities and social institutions (Chancery in *Bleak House* or the Circumlocution Office in *Little Dorrit*) into the protagonists of his fiction. We may recall with difficulty—as Eagleton avoids giving dates—that *Bleak House* was written seven years before *Adam Bede* and twenty years before *Middlemarch*. The sequence is interesting but cannot contribute to any explanation of the *genesis* of these texts.

Part of the reason that Eagleton has difficulty coming to terms with history in any usual sense is his acceptance of the replacement of the individual self by what Althusser calls the "interpellated subject." Althusser's scientific Marxism avoids the need to deal with issues of individual psychology by positing a fragmented but basically collective response. All who live within an age respond to its ideology, but each of us is slightly differently "inserted" into the ideological continuum. The representations I can form of the world around me are different because I am a Jew rather than a Christian or a Muslim, a New Yorker rather than an American of the South or West, the son of a factory worker rather than a professional, and so on. Each of the classes and groups to which I belong reshapes my perspective, and what I (in current false consciousness) want to call my individual identity is actually only the sum of the collective allegiances that make me partly similar, partly different from the people I meet at work or in society.

This theory is what inspires Eagleton to say that "the phrase 'George Eliot' signifies nothing more than the insertion of certain specific ideological determinations—Evangelical Christianity, rural organicism, incipient feminism, petty-bourgeois moralism—into a hegemonic ideological formation

which is partly supported, partly embarrassed by their presence" (113). The way this is put is designed to tease out of thought any of us who have retained the post-Romantic habit of thinking of "George Eliot" as a human being with an individual psychology. And for his purposes, Eagleton needs to challenge us there. But there is a sense in which this affects Eagleton's ability to provide historical explanations. It is perhaps too difficult for us—not just as post-Romantics but as people, and not just ordinary folks like ourselves but Terry Eagleton too—to imagine concretely a history caused by agencies but without agents. Such has been the dream of idealist historians since Hegel, of course, for it creates a history that operates without contingencies, which is more serious and philosophical than any poetry could be. At which point, of course, it would in effect cease to be history at all.

Another, perhaps less serious problem, in my estimation, lies in Eagleton's evaluations of the writers he discusses. Eagleton is above the "vulgar Marxist" habit of deriding writers whose work can be defined as retrogressive at the expense of progressive writers. Instead he has a tendency to claim that when one writer is better than another, it is because of a more "productive" insertion into ideology rather than because of any inherent personal qualities. When Eagleton suggests that "*The Waste Land* emerges from a potentially more 'productive' problematic . . . than, say, Georgian poetry" (86), it is a complicated and awkward way of saying that Eliot was a greater writer than Robert Bridges because Eliot was more "relevant" to his own time than Bridges, which is arguable (though to those of us who survived the 1960s, the honorific of "relevant" maketh the flesh to creep). Where Eagleton contrasts Ben Jonson with Walter Savage Landor as conservative classical humanists, his oblique point is that Jonson wrote in the heyday of humanism—the right moment in history—while Landor was born too late (186–87). I don't know anyone who prefers Landor to Jonson; I don't in fact know anyone else who has made that particular comparison. But one is bound to wonder whether the burden should lie so heavily on history, or whether here as with Eliot and Bridges we might want to attribute something to the degree of talent in the individuals concerned. We might even want to ask whether Jonson's comparative vitality is attributable to the characteristic he shares with Landor, or whether we tolerate Jonson's conservative classical humanism because it underlies a tart and cruel comedy much to the taste of a society that relishes Joe Orton.

One appreciates that Marxist critics are in a bind. On the one hand, it is vulgar to praise tendentious or proletarian art, but on the other hand it seems almost as pernicious to do what Eagleton does, to justify the current critical

canon right down the line using Marxist terminology. There is much to be said for the proposal of Marxist critic Tony Bennett that Marxists get out of the business of aesthetic judgment altogether. But merely avoiding the dilemma of literary evaluation clearly is not going to make for a major improvement in Marxist literary history so long as there is no real attempt to take advantage of the Althusserian notion—derivable, actually, from Marx himself—that literature has a semiautonomous character, so that the motor of history will come *both* from extrinsic and from intrinsic sources. The most promising development in Marxist literary historiography, to my mind, is the advent of new theorists willing to build bridges to alternative methodologies. Here I would like to mention John Frow, whose ideas return to some of those of the Russian formalists, already analyzed in this chapter, and Tony Bennett, whose ideas look toward those of the reception theorists we shall discuss later on.

John Frow posits a very complex dialectical relationship that—in my opinion—embodies the very real complexities of literary history:

> The process of literary evolution occurs in two contradictory ways: discontinuously, through the production of deviant forms of textuality, and continuously, through the reproduction of the literary norm. . . . Historically, literary development has occurred above all through the evolution of genres and the displacement of established genres by newer genres. . . . In the broadest sense, then, the literary system is a mode of production, a structure of functional relations in which there exists a hierarchy of genres, a constant modification of relations to other modes of artistic production—which in turn modifies the hierarchy—and a specific relationship to an audience. . . . Diachronic development is . . . possible only through an intersection with the synchronic literary field: this is represented by the dominant norm, but necessarily involves the "extraliterary" factors of the discursive field, the relation to an audience, social function, and relations of dominance within the total social structure. (105–11)

To my ear, Frow seems to be reviving, from an explicitly neo-Marxist perspective, the later literary-historical ideas of Tynyanov and Jacobson. In fact, his problem is not that the formalists' ideas were so different from the Marxists' but that they were so similar. Both he and they hold a dialectical idea of history. Instead of believing in a totalizing cultural stream that bears all along with it, the formalists believed that history is made not by imitation of forebears but by reaction against them. (Imitation causes automatization; reaction causes the defamiliarization *[ostranenie]*, the most characteristic aspect of literature.) Movement A produces a countermovement B.

Furthermore, Frow is, like the formalists, working to "establish the unity of the conceptual level at which extraliterary values and functions became structural moments of a text and at which, conversely, the 'specifically literary' function acquires an extra-aesthetic dimension," which is going to involve "being willing to relate literary discourse to other discourse (to the structured order of the semiotic field) rather than to a reality that transcends discourse; to relate literary fictions to the universe of fictions rather than to a non-fictive universe" (99).

Frow may not understand how thoroughly formalist his own project has become—and the differences between his own Marxism and their formalism sometimes evaporate under examination. As Harold Bloom suggested about poets, Frow has to engage in a strong misreading of Russian formalist literary history in order to clear the space for his bridge between Marxism and formalism built from the Marxist side. The distortions of Russian formalism take a number of forms. One is taking Shklovsky and the early Tynyanov as the principal spokesmen for formalist literary history rather than the later Tynyanov, whose position is so close to his own. And while Frow is willing to quote Bakhtin's more dogmatic follower Medvedev *(The Formal Method of Literary Study)* against Tynyanov, he ultimately has to deride that book as "dogmatic and dismissive" (98), because Medvedev has a scorched-earth, vulgar-Marxist attack that would destroy the possibility of his own bridge between formalism and Marxism if it were taken seriously.

Frow distorts Hans Robert Jauss as well, but with less respectable motivation, since he has little interest in the consumption side of the productive cycle.

> The problem with the concept of a horizon of expectations . . . is that it appeals to a phenomenology of consciousness rather than a theory of signifying systems and practices, and so remains vague about the structuring of *discursive* authority. In any case the "horizon" is described as an accumulation of quite heterogeneous values (generic conventions, experiential norms, language types) and Jauss offers no explanations of the mediations between them. (126)

Frow criticizes Jauss for not creating the sort of totalized theory of the relationships between literature and other social phenomena that neo-Marxists such as Jameson and Eagleton have jettisoned.

But Jauss may have his uses for the Marxists. Tony Bennett—who criticizes Eagleton's historiography as blatant idealism—suggests in *Formalism and Marxism* a radical cure: "What is needed is not a theory of literature *as*

such but a historically concrete analysis of the different relationships which may exist between different forms of fictional writing and the ideologies to which they allude." Bennett goes on to explain what some of those relationships are:

> As Marx reminds us often enough, it is only consumption which completes the process of production. Whilst the literary text may, by virtue of its intrinsic properties, determine to a certain extent the way in which it is "consumed" or read, it does not do so entirely. For the process of the consumption of literary texts is necessarily that of their continuous *re-production;* that is, of their being produced as different objects for consumption. This is not merely to say that the history of criticism is one of "creative treason" whereby the same texts are successively plundered for different meanings. The way in which the literary text is appropriated is determined not only by the operations of criticism on it but also, and more radically, by the whole material, institutional, political and ideological context within which those operations are set. (134–35)

To me Bennett's critique seems to be presenting a version of reception theory in a post-Althusserian Marxist context. He never names Jauss, but in effect he takes up most of his central concerns. In effect literary sociology and reception theory will come into play in a crucial role: as a way of reintroducing the concrete contingencies by which literature is produced and consumed. And Jauss himself was equally convinced, at one point at least, that he and the Marxists were working hand in hand—convinced enough, as we shall see, to recoil in horror against and away from his own most crucial insights.

Hans Robert Jauss and Konstanz Reception Theory

For the formalists and Chicago structuralists, the reader is essentially determined by the text. For Wayne Booth, novels "create" their inscribed readers like a sculptor molding wax. In most Marxist theory, both reader's and writer's activity are the products of ideology. But the principal theorists of the Konstanz school, Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss, perceive in the text the mutual dependence—the creative collaboration—of the composer and performer of a piece of music, a metaphor that suggests a new kind of connection between author and reader. Although the composer is clearly the primary genius whose intentions must be respected, without the per-

former, the composer would remain mute. Following the terminology of Roman Ingarden, Iser and Jauss speak of the text as being *concretized* by the reader. The vague and ideal word is made flesh in the reading process. The difference between Iser and Jauss is primarily one of perspective. Iser's interest is in the *act* of reading as it happens for each of us, and in the individual interpretations that compose that act. Jauss's concern has been with the *history* of reading and the contribution a history of reception can make to the broader concerns of literary history.

Jauss's ideas on literary history are deeply indebted to his mentor, Hans-Georg Gadamer, especially *Truth and Method* and *Philosophical Hermeneutics*.[17] Gadamer was a philosopher writing in reaction to the post-Kantian hermeneutic theories associated with Schleiermacher and Dilthey. Those theorists had suggested that the business of interpreters of texts was to clear their minds of the prejudices and the mental detritus of their own age, so as to be able to enter with a clean mental slate into the world of the author. Gadamer, to the contrary, taking his cues from his teacher Karl Heidegger and from Edmund Husserl, suggests instead that this positivistic, scientific stance is neither possible nor desirable in the humanities. To exist in the world is to perceive that world—and its texts—through the horizon of meaning that the culture of the present moment provides. Gadamer in fact inverts the usual negative attitude toward prejudice and claims that without the fore-understanding that so-called prejudices provide it would be impossible to acquire an effective historical understanding. What this means is that, for Gadamer, reading is a dialectical activity: it involves the interaction, or rather the *fusion*, of the meaning-horizons of text and reader.[18]

Jauss arrived at his method by means of a pragmatic problem. As a medievalist, he was attempting to puzzle out the medieval beast fable *Reineke Fuchs*, a strange tale because the animals behave like humans rather than as the beasts do in nature or in accord with some ideal allegorical version of their nature. He discovered that the peculiarity of the poem could be understood best by attempting to reconstruct the literary preconceptions, the horizon of expectations, of the intended audience for the poem: "With respect to the . . . expectations [the poet] evokes, he either satisfies them or disappoints them . . . by parodying the *chanson de geste*, or by travestying the casuistry of the courtly love poem. . . . Pleasure in the new genre—the comic tale of the fox—sets in when and to the degree that the reader takes its 'anthropomorphism' as an indication that he is expected to see aspects of human nature in the animal figures" (*Question and Answer* 221–23). Jauss sought through Gadamer a way of generalizing the procedure he had

successfully followed: examining the horizon of the medieval past through a contemporary horizon that was quite different. Jauss valorized issues like "the historical and literary genesis of individuation," which the medieval audience would scarcely have understood; but Jauss felt that, by means of what he calls "the dialogue of question and answer," he had managed to let the text answer his question without projecting a contemporary concern onto the past, and he decided that this was the key to literary history.

This was beyond doubt the "Eureka!" moment in the development of Jauss's ideas, when he saw that self-consciousness about our own ignorance could be used creatively to produce new knowledge of the past. And in his 1967 inaugural lecture of his professorship at the University of Konstanz, "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory" ("Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft"), Jauss aimed at nothing less than using Gadamer's hermeneutics, his theory of fusion of horizons, to bring the reader into literary history and thereby to make literary history a respectable activity once again.

Like Mikhail Bakhtin, Jauss thinks about literature in terms of dialogue. But instead of Bakhtin's polyphonic dialogue of language dialects *within* the work, Jauss views literary history in terms of the dialogue of the newly published work of literature with the audience. Any audience responds to a work of literature in terms of a "horizon of expectations" built up from its previous experience with classic and contemporary literature, on the one hand, and its experience of the real world outside literature, on the other. The new work may merely fall nicely within the horizon of expectations and be accepted as a simple consumer good, or it may challenge that horizon. Works that challenge the audience's horizon of expectations may succeed in altering the way the audience responds to literature, or may fail in doing so, and be rejected. Rejected or misunderstood works, however, may succeed in entering the literary canon later when the literary horizon has, in effect, caught up with them.

Similarly, the significance of literary works changes to successive audiences with the change in horizons of expectation. One of Jauss's most striking examples of this is his contrast of two novels that successfully attempted to titillate the audience of Paris in 1857: Ernest Aimé Feydeau's *Fanny* and Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. The novels were similar, according to Jauss, in that both were self-consciously antiromantic and avoided grandly ambitious subject matter—for the jaded public expected little in that way from the novel after the death of Balzac. Both treated provincial adultery, and both gave the trite topic a twist, Feydeau by making his lover jealous of

the husband, Flaubert by restoring the dignity, at the denouement, of the cuckolded Charles Bovary. Both, accordingly, were at least moderately successful upon their appearance—but *Fanny* was by far the more successful of the two novels; yet the flowery rhetoric and cheap irony that sold thirteen editions in 1857 have caused it to be almost entirely forgotten today.

On the other side the impersonality of Flaubert's style, which is what is largely responsible for *Madame Bovary*'s present esteem, made the novel a relatively "difficult" book in 1857 and exposed the author to a trial for obscenity. At that time Flaubert's use of the third person *style indirect libre* suggested to the prosecution that the author was glorifying, rather than merely giving exposition to, Emma's enthusiastic adulteries. Flaubert's counsel succeeded in educating the court in how to read this masterpiece of *impassibilité,* for whose innovations the public was not yet ready. Both *Fanny* and *Madame Bovary* were in a large sense products of the reading horizon for 1857; but the latter work was revolutionary in the sense that it helped to alter the horizons of expectation with which later audiences greeted new works of art.

A coherent history of literature would be based for Jauss upon the history of this pattern of interaction between artist and work and audience. Jauss is not talking about a "history of taste" of the sort that has been often attempted. Taste is by no means irrelevant to his concerns, but even a full diachronic portrait of the works and forms of art that were valorized at various moments in the past would form only a small part of the information needed to write literary history. What is needed is something far more inclusive: a history of the various preconceptions—about art, about reading, and about the cultural milieu in general—that audiences bring to the reading of literary texts.

Jauss feels that literary history is different in kind from other sorts of history simply because of the necessary existence of an audience for literature. "The *Perceval* of Chrétien de Troyes, as a literary event, is not 'historical' in the same sense as, for example, the Third Crusade, which was occurring at about the same time. . . . The historical context in which a literary work appears is not a factual, independent series of events that exists apart from an observer. *Perceval* becomes a literary event only for its reader. . . . In contrast to a political event, a literary event has no unavoidable consequences subsisting on their own that no succeeding generation can ever escape" ("Literary History" 21).

I am not sure this is right. Most of us would want to differentiate between literature and history as such, but as Hayden White *(Tropics of Discourse)* and

many other philosophers of history have argued, history is just as dependent as literature on the way it is inscribed and understood. For the events of history to be influential, they must be chronicled and perceived. It happens that my great-grandfather was killed in a riot in nineteenth-century Russia—something I know from family legends, not from any public source. An ancestor of one of my colleagues at Queens College was killed in a riot as well, but that riot was the Boston Massacre of 1773, an event of history. Both riots had unavoidable *personal* consequences for the friends and families of those killed, but only the second riot became an event of history, and it did so primarily because it had something equivalent to an audience: contemporaries who then, and their descendants who later, agreed to understand that violent human action as socially and politically significant. Events without such sponsorship are as orphaned historically as surely as a literary text that never finds an audience.

Another problem I find is with the sort of text that Jauss considers to make history: the revolutionary text. "The ideal cases of the objective capability of such literary-historical frames of reference are works that evoke the reader's horizon of expectations, formed by a convention of a genre, style, or form, only in order to destroy it step by step" (Jauss, "Literary History" 23–24). His examples are Cervantes's *Don Quixote,* whose horizon of expectations includes the old tales of knighthood that Cervantes parodies; Diderot's *Jacques le fataliste,* which parodies the "popular novelistic schema of the 'journey' "; and Nerval's *Chimères,* which "cites, combines and mixes a quintessence of well-known romantic and occult motifs only in order to produce the horizon of expectations of a mythical metamorphosis of the world only in order to signify his renunciation of romantic poetry." It seems a weakness in Jauss's historical view that the crucial texts in literary history are parodies and pastiches. These texts are indeed important, for they signal the establishment within the horizon of expectations of the audience of conventions within a literary scene—for nothing can be parodied that is not already part of the literary background. But surely many if not most of the supreme literary achievements are not parodic in this way. Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* would be one of Jauss's "ideal cases"; but most of us would feel her achievement was crowned with *Pride and Prejudice, Emma,* or *Persuasion.* Thackeray's "ideal case" would be *Barry Lyndon,* but most of us prefer *Henry Esmond.* George Eliot, nothing of a parodist, provides nothing here. The problem for Jauss is to differentiate between masterworks that bring a particular element of a tradition to its highest point without challenging the artistic premises of that tradition (like Jane Austen's *Emma,* like Hardy's

Tess), and the *Kulinärliterature,* the *Unterhaltungskunst* Jauss despises, texts that operate comfortably within a tradition without either challenging it or advancing it. While Jauss admits that "there is also the possibility of objectifying the horizon of expectations in works that are historically less sharply delineated," the methods for doing so would not differentiate sharply between the classic and the culinary, for both seem to speak to us directly, unmediatedly. It is a characteristic defect of Jauss's theory that it was seemingly only art that aspired to *change* history that addressed directly its moment *within* history.

Jauss's vision of literary history was provocative because it not only presented the exterior world as having an impact on the form and content of literature, but presented literature as making a difference, in a way that artists themselves have always hoped, in the way life is lived. Jauss suggests that Flaubert had introduced "a new *manière de voir les choses*" that "was able to jolt the reader of *Madame Bovary* out of the self-evident character of his moral judgment, and turned a predecided question of public morals back into an open problem." History would not merely be reflected in literature; rather the historian would chronicle literary evolution as a "*socially formative* function that belongs to literature as it competes with other arts and social forces in the emancipation of mankind from its natural, religious, and social bonds" (43–45).

What would Jauss's version of literary history look like in practice? In fact the recipe as Jauss spells it out may seem more than a little daunting. To write genuine literary history—as opposed to the reference books created with scissors and paste that now pass for it—one would need, in addition to knowledge of the major authors, their works, and their times, a sense of the "horizon of expectations" with which their audience responded to their works, and the audience's phenomenological modes of experiencing literature and art in general. One would need to be familiar with not only the classic works of the age but with its popular literature as well—for it is not in an age's masterworks but its page-turners that one would find the most explicit evidence of the audience's preconceptions. We may be less daunted if we realize that such a history can be written only in slow stages. One must first take a sort of "snapshot" of the literary world—production, works, reception—in a certain land as of a certain date. Then another, and another, at earlier or later dates. Finally, by comparing these synchronic portraits, by linking these freeze-frame stills, one can build up a sense of how literary change occurred.

Jauss's "Literaturgeschichte als Provokation" was clearly meant as a

provocation: it drew dozens of replies from every possible school of thought. Jauss was reproached for being too sociological and for not being sociological enough. Possibly what stung Jauss the deepest, though, was that his vision of literary history as energized primarily by works that evoke the reader's customary horizon of expectations in order to call it into question was uncomfortably similar to that of T. W. Adorno, whose *Aesthetische Theorie* was published posthumously in 1970. In Adorno's dialectic of negativity, the art that is worthy of the name, those literary texts that are autonomous, are so because they negate their origins in two senses: they negate the false portraits of the world proffered by ideology, and they negate the literary traditions out of which they spring. Though Jauss himself describes the moment differently, it seems likely to me that he recoiled as he realized that his own version of literary history (where common values were most clearly objectified when they were being ridiculed and parodied, where literature functioned by emancipating one from traditional values) was dangerously close to the Frankfurt school of Marxism. Jauss himself claimed that he recognized his own errors when he saw them through the horizon of Adorno. The objection that we raised earlier—that in "Literary History as Challenge" history is made more clearly by *Northanger Abbey* (arguably Austen's weakest novel) than by *Emma,* more by *Barry Lyndon* than by *Middlemarch*—is one that Jauss began to raise for himself. And as he did so, he decided he needed to come to terms with the fact that most literature, for most people at most times, provides comfortable pleasure and not negativity. *Don Quixote, Jacques le fataliste,* and *Chimères* are in effect special cases of a more general issue: the aesthetic experience of the reader.

So Jauss's next major essay, "Sketch of a History and a Theory of Aesthetic Experience," was both an advance and a retreat. It was an advance in the sense that he succeeded in clarifying and improving the logic of his earlier essay. His essay does full justice to the pleasure of the audience, and it renders a historical account of what Jauss calls "aesthetic experience"—that repertory of ways people respond to art.

Jauss distinguishes between three basic modes of artistic enjoyment, which he calls "poiesis," "aisthesis," and "catharsis." The first, poiesis, is the experience of art as a mode of productive activity. Once the exclusive preserve of the artist, in open works of the twentieth century poiesis is shared by authors with the readers, who must complete their creations. Jauss is talking, I believe, about the sense of accomplishment we experience in helping James create the world of *The Golden Bowl* or Joyce that of *Ulysses.* The second, aisthesis, involves the contemplative, passively receptive experience of

art. This type of experience can take the "language-critical" form of rapturous aporia—Roland Barthes's *jouissance*—of the sort that might be stimulated, say, by Robbe-Grillet's wasteland of signifiers. Or it may take what Jauss editorializes is the less alienating and healthier "cosmological" form when we observe how the world looks through another's eyes, as in Proust's *The Past Recaptured.* The third, catharsis, is the communicative function of poetry, what brings about in the reader "both a change in belief and the liberation of his mind." This is the familiar "delight and instruct" function of art, which Jauss traces from Aristotle to Brecht. For Jauss, I must stress, these three modalities of aesthetic experience are not static categories but dialectical alternatives each of which has had its own historical development.[19] Jauss's first essay in this mode of historical reception-study was a considerably more synchronic study than his piece on Baudelaire. This was a short piece called "*Le douceur du foyer:* Lyric Poetry of the Year 1857 as a Model for the Communication of Social Norms." In effect this is an examination of the literary sociology of what Americans would call the "home sweet home" theme, as it appears in lyrics of that year by poets ranging in stature from Baudelaire and Hugo down through minor figures like Damey, Lemoine, and Magnier.

The problem with the newer and more complicated model of literary reception that Jauss has been moving toward since about 1977 is that it seems to be missing a motor. In the inaugural lecture, literary history was driven by the horizontal gaps between author and audience, gaps that demanded an effort of fusion, which in turn could result in either the rejection of the text, temporarily or permanently, from the literary scene, or the transformation (at least in part) of the sensibility of the audience. But in Jauss's more recent work on aesthetic experience, the crucial issue of shifts in the horizon of expectations on the part of the audience tends to drop out of the picture: he presents a pluralistic universe in which audiences are free to make whatever use or take whatever pleasure they choose, and the choices made seem less crucial to determining the direction of literary history. As Robert Holub observed about the direction of Jauss's recent work, it seems that its revolutionary moment has passed, just as the revolutionary moment for the universities in general passed with 1968, and has been replaced with a drier, more academic, and less seemingly urgent agenda. Nevertheless, there is no need for his admirers to follow Jauss all the way into the swamp of pluralistic perspectives in which he is currently mired. With an awareness of its logical flaws and rhetorical gaps, "Literaturgeschichte als Provokation" can go on provoking us for a long time to come.

Conclusion

It thus appears that the three major holoscopic[20] modes of literary historiography of our century—Russian and Chicago formalism, Marxism, and reception theory—have shown a tendency to merge their perspectives and bridge their differences as time has gone on. Despite their practitioners' tendency to perform strong misreadings on critics of alternative persuasions, it is hard to mask the ways in which post-Althusserian Marxists have allowed the "semi-independent" causal principle of aesthetic ideology to moderate the epiphenomenal status of aesthetic forms, or in which formalists, Russian or American, have compromised any notion of pure immanent change. This is not to say that these modes of criticism and literary history have become identical except for their terminology. Chicago critics still think primarily in terms of the development of institutional forms, Marxists in terms of the influence of material conditions upon ideology, reception theorists in terms of the phenomenological act of reading and changes in the horizon of expectations. These differences affect, as we shall see in chapter 7, the distance or "focal length" at which history is viewed, and therefore the sort of history that is written. These three methods fill the gaps in one another's views, cover one another's blind spots, and so fortunately remain complementary, rather than becoming identical. The differences between Marxist, formalist, and reception histories of the Gothic novel will become clearer in practice when the results of these methods are presented in chapters 3–5.

CHAPTER THREE
The Gothic in History

Burke and Historical Allegory

The Gothic, as we shall see, was a form of the historical novel fed by a growing appetite among the British public for representations of the historical past. But of course any text represents not only the past but its own time, since it derives from and implicitly comments on contemporary life and values regardless of its Bakhtinian "chronotope." Nevertheless, literary texts are seldom simple reflections of the life of their times. As our discussion of the Marxist modes of literary historiography was designed to clarify, there are different ways of construing the ways texts function as productions of ideology, and contemporary non-Marxist ideological criticism (including but not restricted to modes that have been labeled "the new historicism") has invented even more. This chapter considers some of these methodologies as they have been or might be applied to the Gothic novel, in the hope of evaluating which modes are likely to prove most productive.

Many of the studies to which I refer at the outset tend to follow Kenneth Burke rather than Louis Althusser. In other words, the text is seen as a symbolic action, in this case a displaced version of history, where the conflict is the same but the *scene* of the conflict is different. Burke's formula begins: "Take some pervasive unresolved tension typical of a given social order (or of life in general). While maintaining the 'thought' of it in its overall importance, reduce it to terms of personal conflict (conflict between friends, or members of the same family)" (*Language as Symbolic Action* 94). This

notion of literature as a displaced representation of history seems to me one of the strongest theoretical sources of what has been called the new historicism.[1]

Like Michel Foucault, whose ideas also form part of the intellectual ground of the new historicism, Burke is often accused of having played fast and loose with the facts of history. For example, Burke once suggested in a lecture that the Ancient Mariner's water snakes were symbols of Coleridge's drug addiction, and when it was pointed out to him that "The Ancient Mariner" was written before Coleridge actually became addicted to laudanum, he claimed that in that case the poem must be prophesying Coleridge's addiction and his attitudes toward it before the fact (*Philosophy of Literary Form* 71–73). Whether this claim strikes one as absurd or profound will determine one's attitude toward Burke's method. To me it does not seem absurd that conflicts have an incipient stage before they surface in the way Coleridge's addiction did.

But whatever liberties Burke took with chronology, he always based his arguments on specific datable moments in history. In "Coriolanus and the Delights of Faction" (published originally in 1966), Burke argues that the conflict in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* is a displacement, a symbolic reworking, of the same social conflicts between Crown and Parliament that ultimately resulted in the English revolution.[2] It is hard to know how visible these conflicts would have been in 1609 to someone in Shakespeare's social position. But at least there was an English revolution and we can say roughly when and where it occurred. Similarly with Burke's reading of "Lycidas" as predicting Milton's abandonment of poetry for prose in the civil war: whether or not Milton could have foreseen his activities at the time he wrote the elegy, we at least have a good idea when Milton did what.[3]

Some of those who wrote about the Gothic novel in this vein have not made their hypotheses as easy to substantiate or refute. When Ronald Paulson tells us that the Gothic novel is about "the tensions of the French Revolution," or when Kate Ellis tells us that the Gothic is about feminine "ambivalence" about the gender construction of "separate spheres," the historical movement that the Gothic is said to replicate is relatively vague and inchoate. The fall of the Bastille or the beheading of Louis XVI can be dated with precision, but it isn't easy to say which classes of English men and women experienced what sort of tension as a result of the French Revolution. But complex as it was in event and in its reception abroad, the French Revolution is, comparatively speaking, a clear-cut event compared with the uneven and gradual transformation of the patriarchal household of the

Renaissance to the woman-centered home of the high Victorian period. To these causes any effects whatsoever can be ascribed with impunity.

With Burke, in other words, an ambiguous text is juxtaposed against a reasonably legible historical event. Here, though, an ambiguous text is read against an even vaguer movement in social history, and even the tropical relationship between the text and movement—metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche—is hard to pin down.

In Paulson and Ellis—as in so much of the new historicism—we see the scratching of the allegorical itch. Since the days of Aquinas, texts have been thought to have literal, allegorical, moral, and anagogical readings.[4] And while the Scholastic method was supposed to have gone out in the Renaissance, modes of reading are hard to kill. In particular the romance has had a long-standing tradition of allegorical interpretation. Spenser's *Faerie Queene* demands being read in more than one sense, and although it is usually the moral sense that supplies a second level to the literal, in book 1 there is assuredly a historical allegory in operation. Sidney's *Arcadia,* though surely written for a sister's amusement on the literal level, sports in addition a political allegory (McCoy 1979). Behn's *Love Letters between a Nobleman and His Sister,* without any moral level, is a coded version of a contemporary scandal, a roman à clef.[5]

But despite the time-hallowed license of allegorical readings of romance, we need to raise some questions about the limits that should be placed on this practice. Of the finding of likenesses there can be no end, because there are no two entities so disparate that resemblances cannot be found between them. The late Robert Marsh used to tell students who found desperate similarities between two texts that he could compare a boxcar with a Valencia orange. Obviously there can be no hard-and-fast rules for testing claims of analogy, suggestions that a fictional conflict is to be read as a coded version of a historical one. Like romans à clef, allegorical fictions can represent the historical world with varying sorts of infidelities and stylizations, and it would be most unlikely that the Gothic novel was a historical sport, unconnected with the major movements of its time.

Nevertheless, the Kantian categories of quantity, quality, relation, time, and space are not suspended for literary argumentation. And therefore, despite the notorious difficulty of proving a negative, we might justifiably be entitled to be at least mildly suspicious about a claim that a literary movement is a representation of a certain political or social chain of events under the following circumstances: when purported "cause" appears to have begun later than the "effect," or when the effect goes on for decades after the

proposed cause has ceased; or when a minor cause purportedly has major effects;[6] or when the cause primarily affects one country, whereas the principal literary manifestation occurs in another; or when a very specific literary development is ascribed to a general cause that operates, at least at some level, all the time; or when a social transformation that would be expected to affect different classes or genders differently is purportedly represented in similar ways by all writers, regardless of their class or gender position. These are the sorts of problems that arise variously in Paulson and Ellis.

Along with a critique of the various allegories of histories that have offered to explicate the Gothic, this chapter presents a new version of the relations between the Gothic novel and the life of its own time. They represent a different methodology too. Instead of allegorizing history, my version is neo-Marxist, out of Raymond Williams and Pierre Macherey. That is to say, it takes the position that history is coded in literature as crystallized "forms of feeling." These forms may also be coded *negatively* rather than positively—for Macherey it's not the bumps but the holes that are significant. Instead of social ideology reproducing itself in literature, Macherey argues, contradictions appear in literature that echo gaps or inconsistencies in social ideology: they occur because writers are forced by the process of literary composition to visualize and imagine what social ideologies refuse to make visible. Macherey's theory thus gives the Kantian synthetic imagination some genuine social utility. His point is that the process of forming a mental conception, coherent and detailed, of the lives of others generates cognitive dissonances as the imagined worlds conflict with those of the false consciousness of contemporary ideology. Generally this is solved by truncating the imagined world and forcing it to fit the ideologically formed picture, but the procrustean process of taming what Keats called "the truth of imagination" leaves marks on the text—even if these are only gaps and inconsistencies that mirror those of contemporary ideology.

But my own hypotheses are vulnerable to the same sort of critique that I level against others. Possibly the greatest difficulty that confronts any Marxizing historian of literature is the fact that the sort of history that finds its way into literary texts—social history, economic history, the history of people's lives in the world—is so poorly understood. A few masters have begun to scratch the surface, to help us understand which modes of behavior, which values were universal, which regional, which class linked. But much valuable evidence has been forever lost, and much is yet to be uncovered. A bit of humility is decent therefore in any form of literary historiography that presumes to speak for a vanished or altered social order.

Paulson's French Revolution

Ronald Paulson was led from his groundbreaking Hogarth studies to the revolutionary art of the last decades of the eighteenth century.[7] Since he comes to the Gothic via Goya and Fuseli, it is clear that the narrative romance (as opposed to the development of Romantic painting) lies far from the center of his interests. On the one hand, Paulson has nothing major at stake in the characterization of the Gothic and can afford to be accurate and precise in his generalizations; on the other hand, it is always tempting to roll along the high priori road. As a result, his generalizations run a strange gamut between sober disclaimers and wild leaps at conclusions.[8]

Paulson claims that "the gothic did in fact serve as a metaphor with which some contemporaries in England tried to understand what was happening across the channel in the 1790s" (*Representations* 217). Though he knows well that there is no evidence to "suggest that Ann Radcliffe or Monk Lewis was producing propaganda either for or against the French Revolution" (219), not in any conscious way, at least, Paulson goes on to suggest the contrary. He is searching for a relationship vaguer than conscious causality or even Marxist "reflection." Ultimately Paulson makes the strongest claims for causation in terms of the audience, even though he never shows that any one person in the Gothic audience ever made such a connection.

> I do not think there is any doubt that the popularity of gothic fiction in the 1790s and well into the nineteenth century was due in part to the widespread anxieties and fears in Europe aroused by the turmoil in France finding a kind of sublimation or catharsis in tales of darkness, confusion, blood and horror.
>
> However, the gothic had existed from the 1760s onward. The castle as prison was already implicit in *The Castle of Otranto* and Radcliffe's *Castles of Athlyn and Dynbayne [sic]* (1789), and it may have only been this image and this frame of mind that made the fall of the Bastille an automatic image of revolution for French as well as English writers. By the time *The Mysteries of Udolpho* appeared (1794), the castle, prison, tyrant and sensitive young girl could no longer be presented naively; they had all been familiarized and sophisticated by the events in France. (220–21)

> We are talking about a particular development in the 1790s, a specific plot that was either at hand for writers to use in the light of the French Revolution, or was in some sense projected by the Revolution and borrowed by writers who may or may not have wished to express anything about the troubles in France. (224)

One of the difficulties for Paulson's hypothesis that the Gothic novel was a

displacement of the French Revolution is the fact that so few of its practitioners were enthusiastic about that revolution. Most of the Gothic novelists, insofar as their politics can be identified, were conservatives or even reactionaries. Matthew Lewis was seated as a Whig member of Parliament, liberal but by no means a Jacobin, while Horace Walpole, William Beckford, Clara Reeve, Ann Radcliffe, and Charles Robert Maturin were all conservatives. Paulson is aware of the fact that the real revolutionary sympathizers, the English Jacobins, wrote novels of reform like Bage's *Hermsprong* and Inchbald's *A Simple Story,* novels without a Gothic bone in their bodies. So the representation is a negative one: "The gothic tended to be the form adopted by those who were either against or merely intrigued by the Revolution, or by problems of freedom and compulsion" (227).

In that case the Gothic is a displaced portrait of the French Revolution seen as nightmare. That sounds more plausible, perhaps, except that the Gothic prisons portrayed belong not to the Third Estate but to representatives of the Old Regime—feudal rulers like Montoni or institutions like the Inquisition or some monastic order. And Gothic authors, from Radcliffe to Maturin, have tended to emphasize both the excitement and the beneficial results of the civil disorders that are displaced in fiction in time and space. The politics of the Gothic novel, by the very nature of the genre, tends to be antiestablishment, because the usual situation provoking terror is the abuse of power, be that power patriarchal or political. While often the result of the resolution of the novel is to restore a previously dethroned royal or ducal family—as in *The Castle of Otranto,* where Theodore is discovered to be the true heir—the secret heir most often comes apparently from the working or petit bourgeois classes. If we were to accept Paulson's notion that the Gothic was meant as a political metaphor by its writers, we have the unusual situation of authors working against their own beliefs. The likelihood is that it was nothing of the kind.

On the other hand, if the Gothic had been consciously used as a political metaphor by the readers, it is strange that there survives so little evidence of the fact, and even stranger that the countries in which the Gothic took hold most strongly (Germany and England) were politically the most conservative, while in France itself the Gothic novel was relatively unimportant as a literary genre till the middle of the nineteenth century.

But Paulson's most intractable problem is that the vogue of the Gothic began long before the French Revolution and extended long afterward. The usual dates for the Gothic are 1764 to 1825. This is from twenty-five years before the fall of the Bastille to thirty years after the guns of

Vendemaire. Because of the priority of the Gothic, Paulson has to imply that its characteristic imagery affected that of the revolution—as though the fall of the Bastille took hold in the French public mind because the Castle of Otranto had fallen in Walpole's novel. If this were so, there ought to be documentary evidence to that effect; since he provides none, he leaves it at a hint. If the Gothic novel was not the cause but the effect of the French Revolution, however, the question is why it went on so long after the revolution was over.

Paulson quotes the Marquis de Sade as saying that *The Monk* "was the inevitable result of the revolutionary shocks which all Europe had suffered." Actually Sade says this not just of *The Monk* but of the entire Gothic "species of writing." But the reason why the Gothic is the "necessary fruit" is that the widespread misery caused by the revolution had made the novel, in its previous versions, "as difficult to write as it was monotonous to read."[9] The previous versions of the novel to which Sade alludes are the French versions of the sentimental novel, like Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* or Henry Brooke's *The Fool of Quality*. Sade's point is not that the revolution is being mirrored in the Gothic novel but that the idea of natural human benevolence and kindness had probably taken a shock from the violence of the revolution, while the strong sensations created by the revolution had raised the emotional stakes for the writer of fiction. This is a very different kind of issue, one that bears on the *reception* of the Gothic but not on its political *content*.[10] The relation between the sentimental and the Gothic is discussed later in this chapter; my conclusions differ somewhat from Sade's.

Ellis's Domestic Revolution

A second book that explicates the Gothic novel as a displaced version of revolution is *The Contested Castle*, by Kate Ferguson Ellis. Ellis's book "investigates the relationship between these two epiphenomena of middle-class culture: the idealization of the home and the popularity of the Gothic. . . . Why did [Gothic novels] become so popular just at the time when women were becoming a significant part of the reading public? What in the culture created the demand for such fare, and what were its messages to readers?" (ix–x).

Her answer is that the Gothic novel comes out at a time of social transition, when the nineteenth-century doctrine of separate spheres (the home as woman's province, the outside world as man's) was coming into being.

Ostensibly designed to protect women from violence, the doctrine in effect imprisoned women in the home. Ellis sees the cultural work of the Gothic novel as "creating, in a segment of culture directed toward women, a resistance to an ideology that imprisons them even as it posits a sphere of safety for them. . . . Displacing their stories onto an imaginary past, its early practitioners appealed to their readers not by providing 'escape' but by encoding, in the language of aristocratic villains, haunted castles, and beleaguered heroines, a struggle to purge the home of license and lust and to establish it as a type of heaven on earth. To this end, they created a landscape in which a heroine could take initiative in shaping her own history" (xi–xii).

For Ellis, the Gothic not only symbolically represents the life of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century woman, it portrays her cruelest dilemma. By taking control of the castle, she can create an Eden, but only one that patriarchal culture has already set aside for her; she can make a heaven on earth, but at the price of becoming the "angel in the house." In her introduction, Ellis seems willing to dismiss the utopian vision at the heart of the female Gothic's happy ending as one more way of containing female subversion, but by the last chapter she has changed her mind, and she views the Gothic presentation of the "female subject, individual and inviolable" as making "available to women possibilities for action outside the code of female passivity and sublime helplessness" (221).

Ellis wisely attempts to give her discussion some material basis by an appeal to the specifics of social history. Sometimes the facts support her claims, but at other times they are merely confusing. When Ellis cites the threat of rape as one of the motivating factors leading to the doctrine of separate spheres, she posits an increase in both working-class rape and aristocratic rape ("The emergence of a waged labor force, which drew working women increasingly out of the home, made those women particularly vulnerable to assault and rape. . . . In 1753 Parliament was so concerned with the rape of rich heiresses as a way of forcing them into marriage that it . . . passed a law, the Hardwicke Act, 'for the better preventing of clandestine marriages'" [xi]). While both these movements were of appalling social violence, it is not clear how they can be usefully linked; they did not threaten the same class of person nor did they occur in the same era: female factory hands emerged as a class in the 1820s and 1830s, whereas the Hardwicke Act had been passed three-quarters of a century earlier.[11] Furthermore, whatever one thinks about factory girls and heiresses, between 1700 and 1870, the most probable victim of sexual abuse—meaning enforced participation in sex tantamount to rape—was neither the heiress nor the factory worker but

the domestic servant.[12] And none of these social groups—servants, factory workers, or heiresses—included the middle-class woman, who was, by all accounts, the typical reader of the Gothic novel.

On the literary side, one must add that although the threat of rape comes up in almost every Gothic novel, it is hardly unique to the Gothic: we find it in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding. The threat of rape to a servant girl (*inside* the home) governs the action in *Pamela* and *Joseph Andrews,* while the Hardwicke Act was passed to prevent the sort of violence chronicled in *Clarissa* (1747–48) and threatened against Sophia Western in *Tom Jones* (1749). Now there were indeed social changes that had made rape especially representable in novels of the Georgian era. For one thing, working-class servant girls who had been treated as property through the Renaissance now had a "virtue" to lose. For another, upper-middle-class women like Clarissa Harlowe (with plenty of money but without a guaranteed social position based on birth) were situated between the rock of patriarchal power accustomed to selling daughters to the highest bidder in the marriage market and the hard place of a growing individualistic ethos that sanctified marriage for love. As Raymond Williams points out, Richardson invests Clarissa's virginity with a spiritual value as an emblem of "the integrity of the person and the soul" (64). Less fanatically, Fielding's Sophia Western puts forth the doctrine of the mutual veto (the child over the parent's choice, the parent over the child's) to mediate between the conflicting ideologies of patriarchal power and filial freedom.

Ellis's thesis is also weakened by her determination to read Gothic fiction—such as *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian*—as exempla in which a woman "takes the initiative in shaping her own history." Except for Cynthia Griffin Wolff, few readers from Radcliffe's day to this have questioned the almost legendary passivity of the Gothic heroine.[13] Ellis's notion that Emily cleans the villains out of Udolpho would seem a peculiar interpretation. Ellis's fantasy is current enough today, of course, in thrillers—such as *Wait until Dark*—in which a solitary woman, threatened by rapist/killers, manages to use her weakness and their overconfidence to defeat and destroy them. Major social changes lurk behind the difference between the contemporary fantasy that with courage and luck one can actively prevail over the violence bred by patriarchy, and the earlier passive fantasy—in Radcliffe's *Udolpho*—that one day the castle doors will open, as though of their own accord, and one will walk out free.

The same sorts of doubts creep into any attempt to pin down the real framework of the "domestic revolution" that underlies Ellis's central thesis.

Did the Victorian angel in the house exist as early as the Gothic novel? Were these separate spheres established as early as the 1790s to be represented in Radcliffe? It seems to me that there were really two different conceptions of the home working here and two different aesthetic representations of it.

The facts of social history are elusive, and it would take some new Lawrence Stone, more broadly and deeply read than I, to research the social history of gender in the nineteenth century, where Stone's own massive treatise stopped. But let me put forward an alternative hypothesis that I think could be more easily supported by the data we currently have available.

1. To the extent that it is a response to a social problem of domestic life, the Gothic novel of Radcliffe (and of the Brontës) is a reflection of the power relations within a residual patriarchal form of family arrangement—one whose operations are sufficiently Gothic in the Harlowe family of *Clarissa*—in which the father rules and no one else really has a voice except to agree. This is by no means what was envisioned in the ideal mid-Victorian home of separate spheres. Indeed it was not even typical of the actual middle-class eighteenth-century home, which according to Lawrence Stone had since the Restoration become far more protective of "affective individualism," the sense that each family member has the right within limits to pursue her or his ideal of personal happiness (Stone 655–58). The residually patriarchal families of the Harlowes or the Montonis essentially reflect the pattern of a feudal age. Its values may have been expounded after the Restoration (for example, in Lord Halifax's 1702 *Advice to a Daughter*), but those values were under attack throughout the eighteenth century, and by the period of the Gothic novel they are being ridiculed by conservative satirists (Stone 281). The Gothic novelists represent these residual arrangements as those of south European cultures and of earlier centuries.

2. To the extent that it represents broader socioeconomic issues, the vogue of the Gothic seems to have roots in economic and social developments that were under way even while Richardson was at work. The social history of the latter half of the eighteenth century is dominated not by industrialization but by a much less dramatic though no less heralded agricultural revolution, which substituted easily planted and harvested root crops—such as turnips and potatoes—for labor-intensive grain on marginally arable land. The beneficial impact of this revolution was that it allowed a far higher proportion of farm animals to survive over the winter, and thus made possible the widespread consumption of the "roast beef of old England" that Hogarth painted at Calais Gate and of which Henry Fielding

sang. On the other side, it displaced agricultural workers from the land just as strongly as the ever-increasing encroachments of enclosure and the substitution of sheep farming for corn cultivation. This caused widespread unemployment across the English countryside, forced thousands of men and women to wander the lanes of England, and thereby created a vast market for casual employment that lowered wages and increased the numbers of domestic servants. We see the agricultural revolution directly in Oliver Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," which presents the depopulation of the countryside as creating an emptiness, a wasteland. The people had to go somewhere, though, and the widespread social results of this displacement appear in panoramic works like *Tom Jones* and *Roderick Random,* in which half of England seems to be wandering its roads or scraping a living (sometimes by begging) on the London pavements.

Over the long run, the factories of the industrial revolution were to create jobs that eliminated the labor surplus produced by the agricultural revolution, and a "servant problem" developed by the mid-nineteenth century that gradually worsened until servants, for all practical purposes, were things of the past. There were also short periods of labor shortage in the period before factory work took up the slack (e.g., during the Napoleonic Wars). But several generations passed between the two revolutions.

Meanwhile, one of the secondary social effects of the agricultural revolution was that the increased numbers of servants created increased leisure for upper-class and upper-middle-class women, who no longer had to help out with the household tasks. Women drifted toward a supervisory role with less and less active responsibility as a "housewife." This increased the amount of time for reading, hence the increased sales in fiction, particularly romantic fiction, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This is represented *within* the Gothic novel as a situation in which women (both Emily and her aunt, Madame Montoni) are devalued and terrorized, and in which their only *active* participation in life is roaming the haunted castle, feverishly checking out what secrets lie behind the black veil. It is interesting that contemporary with the Gothic we have a more realistic vision of the dangers of inanition in Austen's *Emma,* where the heroine's idleness combined with her great social power produces the egocentric mischief-making that threatens her own and others' happiness.

3. The changes caused by the industrial revolution produced changes in family life as well. In the seventeenth century it was unusual to work outside the home (or the agricultural land surrounding the home); around the mid-nineteenth century going out to work in a factory or office was common,

especially in urban areas. Starting around 1820 and well advanced by 1850, this change produced the revolution of which Kate Ellis speaks, the split between public and private areas of life. We see both the mythology and the underside of the myth in novels like *David Copperfield* and *Middlemarch* in the destructively inane activities of wives like Dora Copperfield and Rosamond Lydgate. But, theoretically, the husband works and rules outside the home in the sphere of public life, while the wife creates the defended fortress of the home, in which the husband can take his ease. Households became smaller; men and women did not live with their parents quite so much; the nuclear family became the more typical unit. It isn't politically correct to say so, but this was probably genuinely empowering to the Victorian woman, who set the cultural tone for the private world in which art ideologically resided.[14]

It is my sense that the entrapment within the home implicit in the myth of the angel in the house had nothing much to do with the Gothic as such, and in fact occurred too late to affect the vogue of the Gothic proper.[15] But it probably had a lot to do with the most popular of the successor forms taken by romance in the 1860s, the sensation novel, discussed at some length in chapter 6. This genre features plots that turn on either (1) exclusion from the home, as in *East Lynne* and *Enoch Arden* in which an adulterous wife, in the first case, and a shipwrecked husband, in the second, find that their spouses have remarried and created a new home within which they have no place; or (2) false homes based on deceit or crime (adultery as in Mrs. Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret;* illegitimacy as in Wilkie Collins's *No Name* and *The Woman in White;* murder as in *Armadale*). The character who shines out most strongly in the sensation novel is the female villain, no longer the transparently evil countess of Radcliffe's *Italian* or the *âme damnée* of Lewis's *Monk* but the smiler with the knife who conceals her villainy beneath the cloak of respectability. In this representation of domesticity it is precisely the safety, security, and coziness of the home that are threatened, threatened not so much by violence as by a false intimacy.

This may be an oversimplified picture, but I think it may convey the general lines of the relationship between literature and the changing construction of gender more closely than Ellis has done. It takes account of the fact that any changes in the way a social situation is represented are generally going to lag behind what they represent as writers duplicate their paternal homes as well as their marital ones. In general, changes in aesthetic ideology are going to follow rather than lead changes in the economy and the society.

This is not Ellis's view of history, of course. But Ellis may not care

whether she gets the history right because she is not really interested in history as such. She is far more interested in her own ideology than in those of the writers about whom she discourses. If one looks for it, the Gothic novel presents a discourse about an enormous range of family styles: patriarchal-traditional (the Frankensteins), matriarchal (the Vivaldis in Radcliffe's *The Italian* or Monçada's in *Melmoth the Wanderer*), dysfunctional (the Colwans in *Justified Sinner*), and structureless (Falkland's in *Caleb Williams*). The notion that all this variety winds up proving a single point suggests that there can have been only one point to make in the first place. Ellis reads both the fiction and history selectively, with a severe eye toward what proves her point. As with Foucault, her philosophic mentor, history is there only as a source of moral anecdotes proving—as history always does for Foucauldians—that good Enlightened intentions lead inevitably to greater confinement and misery, and that the discourse of freedom is always at the service of the throne of power. For Ellis, these anecdotes are there to illustrate the relation between timeless patriarchal power and literary representations, subversive discourses that always control, contain, and circumscribe the rebellion they embody.

Toward Marxist Historiography: Gothic as a Mode of Ideological Production

Ultimately the Burkean method of argument by historical analogy works no better than the evidence that can be presented. If an episode of literary history is to correspond convincingly with an episode of social or political history, the times and circumstances must coincide in some plausible way. With Ellis, the domestic revolution for which the Gothic novel was a metaphor seems not to have really gotten started until after the vogue of the Gothic itself. With Paulson's candidate, the French Revolution, the vogue of the Gothic seems to have begun before the fall of the Bastille and to have continued for nearly thirty years following the guns of Vendemaire. This is not to say that the Gothic novel was not influenced by current social and political events, but that the impact of those events had to be mediated in a considerably more complex way than Ellis or Paulson have suggested and had to be produced by broader and more general social forces.

But from the first it didn't really stand to reason that the vogue of the Gothic, regardless of the fact that *The Mysteries of Udolpho* was published the same year that Louis XVI was beheaded, was going to be the textual site of a

revolutionary operation. A revolution takes a revolutionary, or at least a world-historical, author capable of seizing a moment of history to force a permanent change in the way institutions or their discourses operate. A mind like Samuel Richardson's—oozy, hypocritical, praise-mad, canting, envious, concupiscent though it was—could take such a revolutionary stand in a way that writers like Horace Walpole and Ann Radcliffe could not.

In saying this, I am assuming that by now most people have bought into the ideas of Michael McKeon that the growth of the novel itself comes out of the watershed in the seventeenth century that called radically into question the identification of truth with the received opinions of authority and of virtue with rank within a hierarchal society. In contrast with that essentially feudal view were the skeptical vision that located truth within the personal experience and understanding of the individual and the middle-class view that located moral value with personal pleasure and social utility broadly conceived. The novel is thus not merely a symbol of the conflict between these two ideologies but its battleground.

In this broad social and political context, Richardson's first two novels are, as Terry Eagleton has suggested, a radical approach to the problem of birth and worth, since they insist on the impossibility of identifying moral value with aristocratic lineage. "Richardson's novels are not mere images of conflicts fought out on another terrain, representations of a history that happens elsewhere; they are themselves a material part of those struggles, pitched standards around which battle is joined, instruments which help to constitute social interests rather than lenses which reflect them. These novels are an agent, rather than a mere account, of the English bourgeoisie's attempt to wrest a degree of ideological hegemony from the aristocracy in the decades which follow the political settlement of 1688" (*The Rape of Clarissa* 4–5). *Pamela,* as Eagleton reminds us, was "a multi-media affair . . . , preached from the pulpit and quoted in the salons" (5). The stance it took—that a pious servant girl was not only theoretically as good as her sexually predatory master in the eyes of God, but worthy to be his wife and to take a lady's place in society—jarred Richardson's society into frenzied debate, even jarred the conservative Henry Fielding, via his spoofs and inversions of *Pamela,* into becoming the next great progressive novelist.[16]

The revolutionary moment into which *Pamela* struck fire in 1740 was not comparable to the one in 1764 when Walpole published *The Castle of Otranto.* And while the odd reactionary journalist might view Radcliffe as in league with the revolutionary regicides in France,[17] the hostility to the Gothic novel in the 1790s (as we shall see in chapter 6) was primarily

aesthetic rather than political. This is not to say that the Gothic was not a vogue generated by its time and its concerns, or that the Gothic did not perform significant cultural work. We just need to be careful about what sort of work it was doing. For the rest of the chapter, I would like to go into three of the areas in which the Gothic novel was generated by the concerns and needs of its time: (1) attitudes toward history, (2) attitudes toward suffering, and (3) attitudes toward power.

Attitudes toward History

In some sense, everyone already knows that the Gothic romance was historical in ways earlier genres of fiction generally were not. With certain obvious exceptions—like Thomas Deloney's *Thomas of Reading* or Daniel Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*—most prose narrative from the Tudor era onward was set in the writer's own time and place, and such pastiches on history as had been occasionally produced earlier became increasingly rare in the two decades after *Pamela*. But starting in the 1760s and continuing for at least fifty years thereafter, romances based on history or at least set in the past become a significant feature of English narrative. *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) was one of these texts; others would include Thomas Leland's *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury* (1762), William Hutchinson's *The Hermitage* (1772), Clara Reeve's *The Champion of Virtue* (1777, reprinted 1778 as *The Old English Baron*), and *The Recess* (1783–85), by Sophia Lee. The Gothic novel of Radcliffe, Lewis, and Maturin fits directly into this growing interest in exciting and melodramatic narratives set in the remote past. All this is to underline David Punter's fertile suggestion that "the reason why it is so difficult to draw a line between Gothic fiction and historical fiction is that Gothic itself seems to have been a mode of history, a way of perceiving an obscure past and interpreting it" (59).

To say the Gothic novel *is* the historical novel at its stage of development is to go against a long-standing critical tradition. Studies of the historical novel begin with Scott, who seems to have sprung from nowhere.[18] No one would wish to deny that Scott was one of the great originals who shifted the course of literary history; in chapters 4 and 5 new testimony to that view is provided. But it is possible to lose sight of precisely what was original about him—and to forget that his achievement was a development for which the ground had been painstakingly prepared for half a century.[19]

The tradition I am going to be questioning in my Marxist approach to the

Gothic is the product of the reflection theory of the Marxist Georg Lukács. Lukács's master narrative has to begin with Scott because Scott arrives at what for Lukács is the right historical moment. In 1814 a new England is already politically victorious throughout Europe. The bourgeois revolution, so violent in France in the 1790s, is long past in England, and the country is becoming transformed socially by the industrial revolution. This age, in which the bourgeoisie are already politically empowered, already economically in the vanguard, is searching for an appropriate aesthetic form, one that will bring to self-consciousness the triumphant evolution of the emergent class. The taste and appetite for history is, for Lukács, a product of the bourgeois revolution, in which it is inevitable that "the idea of the nation becomes the property of the broadest masses" (25). Thus the historical novel will take over first in England, the most sociopolitically developed of the European nations, and the fashion and example of Scott will rapidly spread to France (Dumas, Balzac), Germany (Hauff, Fontane), and Russia (Tolstoy), as conditions permit (21–24).

Given his master narrative, Lukács had a vested interest in denying the relevance of any course of literary evolution leading up to Scott: to move the opening date of the English historical novel fifty years back to Leland and Walpole would spoil the pattern of political consolidation preceding the aesthetic embodiment of nationalism. Lukács to the contrary notwithstanding, the English fascination with medieval history and fictional versions of medieval history had begun around 1760. History had become one of the chief literary genres,[20] while literature itself had become historical. Part of the impulse was indeed nationalistic. It isn't clear that "the idea of the nation" had by the 1760s become "the property of the broadest masses"—indeed it isn't clear that this had occurred by the time of Scott's *Waverley* either. But among the middle classes an enthusiasm for land and region had sprung up that surely has a great deal to do with the research of antiquaries like Richard Hurd (*Letters on Chivalry and Romance* [1762]) and Thomas Percy (*Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* [1765]).

Indeed, the national enthusiasm for matters medieval outran the ability to unearth the genuine article, and as a result manufacturing pseudomedieval texts became a cottage industry of the 1760s. The case of James MacPherson is classic: having whetted the enthusiasm of patriotic Scots through his *Fragments of Ancient Poetry collected in the Highlands of Scotland,* which he translated from the Erse (1760), MacPherson was led to create a medieval Scottish rival to Homer in Ossian, whose work he "translated" in *Fingal* (1762) and *Temora* (1763). Thomas Chatterton of Bristol imagined the monk Thomas

Rowley and tried to pass some of his work off as genuine with other medievalists such as Horace Walpole—with varying degrees of success—before his suicide in 1770.[21]

What may be behind all this is that the contested notions of "truth" and "virtue" that Michael McKeon felt were coming together in the 1740s had begun to diverge again in attitudes toward history in the latter half of the century among the medievalist antiquarians. For some, like Bernard de Fontenelle and Horace Walpole, the attraction of the Middle Ages was a superficial matter of taste without any deeper sympathy for its values. They valued its picturesque quality, its refreshing novelties of form against a stultifying Palladian regularity; a way of refreshing the neoclassical spirit without seriously challenging it. It was in a similar vein that the architects of Stowe and Stour Head had dropped decorative Gothic ruins and grottoes among the classical temples to Apollo and Diana.

On the other side were those for whom medievalism was not "a playful relaxation" but "at once a more intensely longed-for escape and a serious model of what ought to be." According to Lionel Gossman, scholars like Joseph Ritson in England, Denis Diderot in France, and Johann Gottfried von Herder in Germany saw the medieval as "part of a more vigorously critical attitude to the society and civilization of the ancien régime as a whole"; in their hands "the Middle Ages became . . . a poetic and cultural myth directed against . . . absolutism and enlightened despotism" (Gossman 337). The division of attitudes runs right down the middle of certain individuals of the period: one thinks for example of the earlier Rousseau, for whom primitivism is primarily a playful pose, as opposed to the bitter Rousseau of the *Discourses,* for whom it is a remedy to the utter corruption of his society. This division of attitudes was typical of the late eighteenth-century British intelligentsia, and it informed not only the medieval historians of the latter eighteenth century—George Lord Lyttleton, Gilbert Stuart, John Pinkerton, and Sharon Turner—but also most other serious attempts to comprehend early English literature, like those of Samuel Johnson, Richard Hurd, and Thomas Warton.[22]

That the Middle Ages were the object of fascination simultaneously to a progressive "sans-culotte" like Ritson (Bronson 155) and to arch-conservatives like Walpole—and contemporaries of all the ideological stripes in between—seems paradoxical. The paradox can perhaps be resolved if we think of the last third of the eighteenth century as a period of rapid transition, in which the Enlightenment social compromises are under attack but no new system has yet found general acceptance. At such a time,

the Middle Ages became for people of all persuasions a medium of cultural work as an outlet for social fantasy. For the progressives, the Middle Ages are a time of the hegemony of the folk, whose voice sings to us in the ballads and the border minstrelsy. The Anglo-Saxons are often envisioned as a lost democracy or commonwealth, where the king reigns limited by the counsel of the *fyrd,* the people's army. For the reactionaries, the Middle Ages are a time when the old order is unquestioned and unquestionable: where monarchs are absolute and despots need not even profess enlightenment. For both progressives and reactionaries, the embarrassing power of money and the moneyed interest—the emerging hegemonic class of rentier capitalists—can be conveniently ignored.

It is in the context of these contradictory ideological uses of medievalism in the latter part of the eighteenth century that we need to understand a text like *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). Horace Walpole was, of course, one of the great British medievalists, but his standards of historical accuracy were not high, even for his own time. He even boasted of his ignorance: "I know nothing of barrows and Danish entrenchments, and Saxon barbarisms and Phoenician characters—in short, I know nothing of those ages that knew nothing."[23] There was even a strain of Augustan contempt for the rude manners of earlier times, when those manners could not be elided by the imagination. After inspecting John Pinkerton's histories of medieval Scotland, Walpole sneered that he himself had "seldom wasted time on the origins of nations; unless for an opportunity of smiling at the gravity of the author; for absurdity and knavery compose almost all the anecdotes we have of them" (Peardon 144).

Walpole, like Thomas Warton, delighted in the Gothic taste, but unlike Warton (who insisted on keeping his medieval and modern cultural artifacts strictly separate), Walpole thought little of combining them. Thus in *Otranto* Walpole produced a mishmash of Enlightenment motivation with medieval detail, fabricating peculiar rituals and customs out of his baroque imagination, just as in his country house of Strawberry Hill he had begun his restoration by grafting battlements made of the very best papier-mâché onto a Palladian framework. If *The Castle of Otranto* has been interpreted psychologically as a Freudian fantasy of domination in which a son dubious about his legitimacy could symbolically defeat his overbearing father, Sir Robert Walpole, and acquire his own literary domain,[24] Walpole took pains to distance the fantasy from himself and to attach it to history, though that relationship is also playfully factitious.[25]

The political structure of the text has it both ways too: it is simulta-

neously a revanchist restoration in which even the passing of four generations cannot keep the heir of Alonso from coming to his throne, and a progressive revolution that replaces the tyrannical royal family with a brave and intelligent shepherd boy. The entail of landed property is attacked through Manfred (whose warped feelings about his wife and daughter, whose hasty and cruel actions, are all driven by the need for a male heir) even as the supernatural manifestations insist even more literally and more violently on the same law of legitimate male inheritance. E. J. Clery—who sees the supernatural hand in the Gothic as an extension of the "invisible hand" of market capitalism—extends these contradictions to the realm of economics: "The concept of a harmonious identity of owner and property, self and object, takes on a demoniacal objective fatality which disrupts and dominates the lives of all the characters. The most important organizing structure in the narrative is the opposition between subject and object, between the characters with their desires, intentions and affections and the principle of property objectivised as the supernatural phenomena which obstruct their wishes at every turn" (74).

This is the sense in which the Gothic was, as Punter suggests, "a mode of history." But this transitional period was informed by two conflicting modes of historiography, Enlightenment and Romantic. The former is typified by Thomas Leland's *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury* (1762), published two years before *Otranto*. Leland was trying to make his historical sources, the *Flores Historiarum* of Roger of Wendover and the chronicle of Matthew of Paris, come alive for his contemporaries, and if the journalistic notices are any guide, he succeeded. Following the restrictions on literary probability in fiction proclaimed by Fielding, Leland stuck to probabilities, suppressing his historical sources' reliance on the impossible and the marvelous.[26] Leland's novel is shaped not only by his antiquarian's conception of history but also by the rationalistic historiography of Gibbon, Hume, and Robertson. Its reliance for plot materials and character types on the conventionalized sentimental melodrama of its own day unreflectively reproduces the dominant vision of history, in which progress is inscribed in changing manners and institutions, but in which the constant pattern is set by an unvarying human nature. Like Enlightenment history itself, Leland's historical romance can "teach private virtue and correct public policy" based on exempla that cannot grow stale because they are based upon a pattern that is everywhere and always the same.

Romantic historiography presumes that human nature has evolved as well as dress and manners, and this vision is what we find in Sophia Lee's

The Recess. To a contemporary reader, a summary of *The Recess* suggests a postmodern pastiche of history like Eco's *Name of the Rose*. The protagonists are twin sisters who discover themselves to be illegitimate daughters of Mary, Queen of Scots, by the duke of Norfolk. Matilda is secretly married to the earl of Leicester; her sister Ellinor becomes the lover of the earl of Essex. Both suffer in body and mind for their passions; in addition, Matilda's daughter gets involved with her cousin Prince Henry (the more intelligent and promising of James I's two sons) till she is poisoned by the mother of a rival in love.

The Recess carries the burden of a romantic version of history in one obvious sense—history is turned into romance, or even a soap opera—but it is also a parodic version, *avant la lettre,* of Hegel's idea of the World-Historical Individual whose will shapes the world. In *The Recess,* it is *desire* that reshapes the world. For Lee, history is 100 percent personal: it is made in the bedroom, the nursery, the court banquet, rather than in the study, on the battlefield, or in the countinghouse. It may be too easy to patronize this way of understanding history. While educated readers may think today in terms of inexorable forces, most people, when they think of history at all, think about personalities, and the Hollywood historical epic (admired films, that is, from *Birth of a Nation* through *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* to *Glory*) has dealt in little else. Certainly Lee's contemporaries were not as sure as we might be that her vision of history was lacking in verisimilitude. Her reviewers divided down the middle on just that issue. While the *English Review* fulminated that "of all the kinds of disunion, the most ridiculous and contemptible . . . is that which forces into contact the historical and the fabulous," the *Critical Review* more soothingly opined that Lee's "near approaches to romance" occurred "without trespassing on probability" and "gratify the imagination without insult to the judgment."[27]

Nevertheless, the appetite for the medieval that had been going on for a generation had populated it with people and institutions in the public mind, just as surely as the voyages of exploration of the sixteenth century had filled the blank spaces on the maps so that it was no longer possible to limn a dragon almost anywhere and annotate "Here be monsters." The monsters thus had to find an Otherwhen in which to operate. As a result, the Gothic novelists who followed Lee adopted the course of representing history *vaguely,* through atmosphere and period detail, hinting that the story told was a true-to-life narrative of an earlier time, while avoiding specific names, places, and dates that would make the story falsifiable against a historical record that through the efforts of the antiquarians was losing its dark corners.

Clara Reeve forthrightly set her *The Champion of Virtue* (1777) "in the minority of Henry the Sixth . . . when the renowned John Duke of Bedford was Regent of France, and Humphrey the good Duke of Gloucester was Protector of England."[28] However, once the story has been placed in one of the more chaotic stretches of the fifteenth century, when almost anything might happen, Reeve drops all specifics: except in the sentence quoted, no one known to history is even alluded to.[29]

The arch-creator of the Gothic romance, Ann Radcliffe, was neither an antiquary like Leland nor an unusually well-educated woman like Reeve and Lee. Without very much information on which to base a historical tale, Radcliffe usually avoided being overly particular. Her first novel, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789), has an explicitly medieval setting, but period is set only by the weaponry and the architecture (the two Gothic castles of the title, complete with moats, portcullis, sally ports, and deep and complex dungeons). Radcliffe was devoted, not to the Middle Ages per se, but to the picturesque, and her medieval and Renaissance settings allow her to forge the descriptions of scenery and architecture at which she excelled. The reader suspects that the wife of wicked Baron Malcolm of Dunbayne, for example, is allowed to hail from Switzerland (surely an unlikely venue for a Highland chieftain's consort) in order to allow Radcliffe to paint "one of those delightful vallies of the Swiss cantons" (*Castles* 143).

Radcliffe's greatest success, *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* is set in the interstices of history. It begins with a chronotopic annotation ("On the pleasant banks of the Garonne, in the province of Gascony, stood, in the year 1584, the chateau of Monsieur St. Aubert" [1]), but there is no reference to the historical events of the period, such as the momentous struggle in France in the mid-1580s, known as the "war of the three Henris," between the king, Henri III; his overmighty subject the duc de Guise; and the Protestant heir to the French throne, the duc de Bourbon, later Henri IV. Rather than move the story into the paths of momentous events, Radcliffe steers clear of them, even assuring us that the military action that permanently ends Montoni's hold on Udolpho occurs with such "celerity and ease" that it never finds "a place in any of the published records of that time" (*Udolpho* 522).

Radcliffe wants to place her story in an exotic locale and era but to avoid locating it with reference to historical movements and events. This contradictory tendency appears even more strongly, perhaps, in *The Italian,* which stresses yet vacates the historical veracity of the story. The story opens when an Englishman visiting the Convent of the Black Penitents in 1764 is given

by an Italian gentleman a manuscript based upon a sacramental confession (*Italian* 1). The circumstances seem to point to the authenticity and historicity of the tale to be unfolded, but they also point the other way. The year is that of the publication of Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (or of Radcliffe's own birth), and the claimed breach of the seal of the confession contradicts any Catholic doctrine.[30] Few of her successors and imitators worked any harder at establishing the authenticity of their portraits.[31]

The Gothic novel thus begins with *The Castle of Otranto* set in medieval history seen as a nightmare landscape where the probabilistic strictures of the present day are absent and where anything can happen, but—partly as a result of stimulating that interest in history—the Gothic soon finds the primitive past populated by genuine cultures and customs of its own. It is thus pushed out into a never-never land of vague otherness, elsewhere and elsewhen, where the drama of suffering can occur on its own terms.[32]

Attitudes toward Suffering

The Gothic has been often considered an extension of the sentimental novel (typified by Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* [1771]), in that both attempt to extract the profoundest enjoyment from the representation of human misery. While the affective power and archetypal situations of the Gothic are different in a number of significant ways, the latter form originates in the sentimental and in many ways served a similar ideological function.

Janet Todd has defined sentimental literature as designed to arouse "pathos through conventional situations, stock familiar characters and rhetorical devices"; sentimentalism "reveals a belief in the appealing and aesthetic quality of virtue, displayed in a naughty world through a vague and potent distress. This distress is rarely deserved and is somehow in the nature of things. . . . The distressed are natural victims, whose misery is demanded by their predicament as defenceless women, aged men, helpless infants or melancholic youths" (*Sensibility* 2–3). The response this is designed to call up in the reader, and does call up in the characters who function within the novels as surrogates for the reader, is sympathy, compassion, sorrow, tears. The focus of these texts is usually split between the subjects and the objects, those who demonstrate properly intense feeling and those who are the proper objects of that feeling.

The Man of Feeling is an episodic work recording the reactions of the eponymous hero, Mr. Harley, to scenes of misery like that of the young lady in Bedlam who has gone mad after the death of her lover:

> She turned [her eyes] on Harley. "My Billy is no more!" said she, "do you weep for my Billy? Blessings on your tears! I would weep too, but my brain is dry; and it burns, it burns, it burns!"—She drew nearer to Harley.—"Be comforted, young Lady," said he, "your Billy is in heaven." "Is he, indeed? and shall we meet again? And shall that frightful man" (pointing to the keeper) not be there? Alas! I am grown naughty of late; I have almost forgotten to think of heaven: yet I pray sometimes, when I can, I pray; and sometimes I sing; when I am saddest, I sing. . . . I am a strange girl; but my heart is harmless: my poor heart! it will burst some day; feel how it beats." She press'd his hand to her bosom, then holding her head in the attitude of listening—"Hark! one, two, three! be quiet, thou little trembler; my Billy's is cold. . . ." She would have withdrawn her hand; Harley held it to his lips.—"I dare not stay longer; my head throbs sadly: farewell!" She walked with a hurried step to an apartment at some distance. Harley stood fixed in astonishment and pity! his friend gave money to the keeper.—Harley . . . put a couple of guineas into the man's hand: "Be kind to that unfortunate"—He burst into tears, and left them. (33-35)

The reader will detect a certain theatrical quality here, a self-conscious display of the superiority that comes from delicate feeling and virtuous action. At his most egotistically sublime, "the sensible man feels that he is an advanced type of being, of finer clay than the rest of the world, and though he pays for his superiority by weakness and anguish, he does not find the price too high, but regards with gentle scorn the low pleasures of the unthinking world" (Tompkins, *Popular Novel* 102). The display of sensibility was, as J. M. S. Tompkins found, "a modern quality; it was not found among the ancients but was the product of modern conditions. . . . the heroic . . . virtues might be dying out . . . but modern security, leisure and education had evolved a delicacy of sensation, a refinement of virtue, which the age found even more beautiful" (92–93).

In effect the mid-eighteenth century had witnessed a redefinition of the gentleman. In the seventeenth century the gentleman had been defined in terms of the aristocratic and martial virtues: he carried a sword to defend his honor with his heart's blood, and his politeness was the politesse of the soldier who realizes that his fellows demand the same deference he does. By the time of Mackenzie the seventeenth-century version of the gentleman

had been in effect redefined as a deviant: the rake or bully. The true gentleman was defined by his restraint[33] rather than by his powers, and by feelings tender to the point of weakness.[34]

This is a basic cultural shift[35] and not merely a literary fashion, although the literature was a significant part of the cultural pattern, not just its reflection. The act of reading the texts of sensibility—sentimental novels like Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* and *Julia de Roubigné* (1777), or Thomas Bridges's *Adventures of a Bank-Note* (1770–71) or Henry Brooke's *Fool of Quality* (1764–70)—was a sort of spiritual training camp: it taught the reader the objects and forms of feeling and trained his or her responses. Texts of this sort were recommended from the pulpit by clergymen such as John Wesley as a way of reforming the reader.[36]

During the period itself the class basis of the cult of the sentimental was deeply confusing. According to Janet Todd some eighteenth-century writers "saw sensibility as equalizing since it occurred in all ranks: at other times they considered it a property more or less exclusively of the higher and more genteel orders" (*Sensibility* 13).[37] In fact, the reason for the confusion may in part have had to do with the fact that the development of sensibility was a crucial step in the evolution between aristocratic and bourgeois society. The reform in manners that exalted sensibility as the key quality of the gentleman opened the doors to genteel behavior to those on the fringes of the gentry. G. J. Barker-Benfield has argued that England had become "a mass consumer society" by 1750 as mercantile capitalism brought into the commercial capitals in quantity what had once been luxury goods by way of foodstuffs, liquors, and textiles. These consumer goods made it possible for the middle classes to ape easily the lifestyles of the aristocracy (xxv).[38] The cult of sensibility was a way not only of reforming the aristocracy but of "getting the monied interest to make itself more mannerly" (146). This "self-fashioning" through the cult of sensibility would ultimately create the bourgeois society of the nineteenth century.

In his analysis of Sterne's sentimentality, Robert Markley has put this social evolution in terms of a Marxist dialectic of class conflict.

> Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, aristocratic and mercantile classes fought, intermarried, blurred, and redefined the always unstable demarcations between old wealth and new, country landholders and urban mercantilists. In this respect, sentimentality is not a simple indication of the "rise" of a monolithic bourgeois ideology but a register of the literary complexities arising from the

> need to come to terms with class relations seemingly perpetually in turmoil. Sentimentality manifests the anxiety of a class-stratified society trying both to assert "traditional" values and to accommodate as "gentlemen" increasing numbers of economically—if not always politically—aggressive merchants, professionals, small landowners, and moneymen. In the case of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* Eagleton's "historical alliance" is effected only by the middle class's trying to outrefine the aristocracy by embracing the conservative biases of a hierarchical social system, and by actively demonstrating their claims to the same kind of innate, ahistorical moral authority that had been, for Shaftesbury, the exclusive preserve of the upper classes. (217)

Sentimentality allows the bourgeois to imitate the reformed aristocrat, but it is also implicitly hierarchical because the scene of sentiment, the tableau in which the person of sensibility confronts the pain and suffering of others and attempts to relieve it, is one that only works *de haut en bas*. And if suffering makes the poor visible to those well off, it makes them visible only as emblematic individuals, symbols of an underclass that *as a class* cannot and need not be changed. Yorick relieves the distresses of the poor but betrays "a generic lack of interest in the causes of poverty" (Markley 225).

This becomes a significant issue when we ask how the sentimental evolved into the Gothic. Here I recur to Janet Todd's remark that distress in the sentimental novel is that of "natural victims" the causes of whose victimization remain "vague." The vagueness is intentional. It has been a commonplace since Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1926) that in the eighteenth century the poor were not God's creatures as they had been in the Middle Ages; instead it was accepted that the godly would succeed in this world as well as in the next and that there must be something wrong, spiritually, with those who did not succeed.

The point is that, so long as the general causes of poverty and other forms of misery were presumed to be vice, inquiring into those general causes would be a dangerous mistake: it would deprive the tableau of suffering of more than half its moral value were the sensible man (or woman) to be viewed as in sympathy with what was most usually produced by wickedness, intemperance, imprudence. It may not be an accident that at the time that the sentimental novel began to be parodied and to go out of fashion—the late 1770s—a book had appeared that implied that wealth and poverty were the result not of virtue and wickedness (as with Hogarth's industrious and idle apprentices) but the mechanical workings of an "invisible hand" of supply and demand: Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776).[39]

I don't want to relate Smith's all powerful invisible hand to Walpole's all too visible one in armor.[40] My point is rather that Smith's enormously influential vision of economic society was of a system that worked amorally, without heroes and villains, to produce its results. This meant, rationally, that the innocent victims one saw—and the poor in their millions that one did not see—were all produced by the same system that had rewarded with wealth and ease the man of sensibility. If one accepted this vision, the classic tableau of the sentimental novel became unviewable: What moral credit, what gentlemanly self-fashioning, could lie in assisting the poverty that had made one rich?[41] In *Virtue in Distress,* R. F. Brissenden has suggested that the ultimate collapse of the cult of sensibility came out of the growing sense that widespread misery was a function of the proper working of the economic system.[42]

One result was an attempt to avoid the spectacle of poverty and ruin completely and to seek desperately for what Mrs. Barbauld called a "new torture or nondescript calamity" that could re-create for sentimental fiction the tableau of pleasing distress.[43] But after Adam Smith, the spectacle of distressed innocence required the complementary spectacle of guilt. To achieve that, one had to reinstate the villain that had been sidelined in sentimental fiction, a demonized version of the rake or the bully who had been demoted from the position of aristocratic hero. The insertion of the Bad Guy in effect created the Gothic novel of Radcliffe in place of the sentimental novel of Mackenzie. Generically the forms are related but distinct. As David Denby put it in his study of French sentimentalism, "The melodramatic and the Gothic are certainly inscribed as latent possibilities in sentimentalism: in contradistinction to sentimentalism they require, perhaps, an insistence on the threat to virtue posed by a strongly personified villain, or principle of villainy, and a heightening of the obfuscation of virtue by various narrative devices, namely peripety and deceit" (87).

But in the Gothic the principle of villainy was the old aristocratic principle: that of privilege, and the contradictory attitudes toward privilege in the ancien régime which went into the creation of the Gothic.

Attitudes toward Power: The Unguarded Door

In the last two sections, we have been working from a perspective that has been called "cultural materialism," examining what Raymond Williams called the forms of feeling that are in solution within society and that

precipitate out into literature. To discuss the contradictory attitude of the Gothic romance toward the Old Regime, we need to adopt the theoretical method of Pierre Macherey. Macherey indeed devoted several pages of *A Theory of Literary Production* to an interpretation of a French forgery of Radcliffe, and his stray remarks are of interest as a contribution to the structuralist interpretation of the mystery story (27–29). But the issue I want to raise here comes out of Macherey's essay on Jules Verne, which has become a model for post-Althusserian criticism.

In "Jules Verne: The Faulty Narrative," Macherey shows how Verne's plans for his novels went awry. *The Mysterious Island,* for example, had originated in Verne's wish to rewrite *Robinson Crusoe* more rigorously by showing how castaways with a knowledge of science manage to re-create modern technology out of nothing within an empty land. But by introducing Nemo and the crew of his submarine to this plot, Verne subverts his own plan. The book implicitly acknowledges that there are no empty lands, merely ones whose aborigines are rendered invisible by imperialist ideology, and that technology cannot arise out of nothing but pure scientific knowledge but must in fact come out of a technological social organization. In this Macherey argues that the rifts in Verne's plot are there because of preexisting rifts in the ideology of bourgeois capitalism, and that the novel itself, as an aesthetic practice whose raw materials are ideology, tends to force these rifts wider as it foregrounds them by making them visible to the reader.[44]

Applying this approach to the Gothic is not straightforward, since Macherey deals best with a single text and not an author's oeuvre, still less an entire genre. Nevertheless we must start somewhere, with a few individual exemplars, especially the ones that became models for later imitation. We should begin with *The Castle of Otranto,* which established virtually all the principal conventions—which later writers used more effectively—plus the much-imitated *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *Melmoth the Wanderer.* And the central question is Macherey's: How do these novels function in the production of ideology? Specifically, how do they foreground the *contradictions* within current ideology?

Given the dates of the Gothic, it may be tempting to view the genre as concerned, in some covert fashion, with industrialization, but in fact the social changes caused by the machine age occurred later, and many of the writers were not in much contact with technological innovation, though they undoubtedly were aware of it. (It is not really until Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* that we find a piece of fiction that turns directly on what might be called the alienation of the technological worker from the product of his

labor.)[45] Most Gothic novels are equally silent, apparently, on the great political issues of the day, and in fact they are usually set back in the past and far away—on the Continent.

But that may in fact be the key. The argument of the Gothic novel does not seem to reflect contemporary ideology but rather seems to hark back to a state earlier even than preindustrial capitalism. Indeed, the Gothic is nostalgic for the social order of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It tends to present a rigidly feudal class structure typical of the sixteenth century or earlier and a religion (Catholicism) that had not been dominant in England for nearly two hundred years. Both Paulson and Ellis note this fact but do not seem to find it significant. It seems irrelevant to their arguments in which age their figurations of eighteenth-century conflicts were set, or what dress they wore. But why should the form not have its content? To use Macherey's terms, the point is that this apparent nostalgia for the feudal appears on the level of "reflection"; on the level of "figuration" the novels are about something very different. The major Gothic novels do not come out of one mold, of course, but I think there is something equivalent to Verne's Nemo functioning as a central rift within them. Macherey himself alludes vaguely to the Gothic theme of the inside and the outside (96). What I have in mind is something much more specific: let me call it the unguarded door.

Consider the situation of Emily in *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* trapped by her hideous aunt and her husband, the mysterious, domineering Montoni, within the walls of Castle Udolpho, her lover, Valancourt, outside, powerless to enter to save her. The reader spends three hundred pages participating anxiously in Emily's tergiversations, observing her ricocheting around the castle, fearing rape and murder at every noise, always looking for a way out until finally, in the ninth chapter of the third book, she and her fellow prisoner Du Pont, together with assorted servants, do little more than simply walk out into the Tuscan countryside. "Emily was so much astonished by this sudden departure," Radcliffe tells us, "that she scarcely dared to believe herself awake" (*Udolpho* 452). It is as though the castle had always been a dream prison.

The very same situation recurs twice in *Melmoth the Wanderer,* the novel that takes some of the devices of Radcliffian suspense to their emotional end points. It is hard to forget the enthrallment of Stanton in the madhouse, or of Moncada in the monastery. The latter, especially, spends harrowing nights trapped in a tunnel in an attempted escape with a parricide monk, who ultimately betrays him to the Inquisition. Maturin makes the reader concentrate intensely on the way men can be turned into caged animals, but

ultimately both Stanton and Monçada are released: Stanton is set free without any rational explanation, while Monçada, in a moment of tumult, finds himself temporarily unguarded, and with a sense of ease that comes as a severe anticlimax, escapes his torment as though it had never been real.[46]

The origin of this pattern, as of so many others, can be found in *The Castle of Otranto,* can be found more than once, in fact. In chapter 1 Isabella escapes from enthrallment by Manfred of Otranto through the comically described inattention of her guards. And in chapter 3 the hero Theodore, under sentence of death, escapes in almost exactly the same way, when Manfred sends everyone who can be spared in pursuit of Isabella, and Theodore's guards mistakenly assume that the order supersedes their previous duties. Matilda, Manfred's daughter, informs Theodore that she has saved him, but her feat consists primarily in supplying the information that there is no one at all in the castle except the two of them.[47]

In an era that had produced the complex plot machinery of *Tom Jones,* the inattention to the means of these characters' escape from their various imprisonments is striking. Surely if they wished, Walpole, Radcliffe, and Maturin could have invented elaborate machinery for delivering their respective victims of persecution as ingenious as Jacques Futrelle's contrivances for delivering his detective from Cell 13. That they did not do so suggests that the prisons were unreal in the first place, prisons of the mind from which one finds oneself freed when one no longer considers oneself bound.

We can understand the historical significance of the Gothic novel while avoiding allegory entirely if we conceive of it as a production of ideology appropriate for the age of the French Revolution, an age in which the chains of feudal authority were snapped less by the violent fury of the people than by an equally sudden deflation of belief in the source of that authority. England, in what was surely less violent a manner and over a longer period than France, was experiencing the same crisis, in which the authority of the feudal aristocracy, based on tenure of land, gave way to the less centralized authority of the bourgeoisie, based on commerce and manufacturing. In both cases, however, the imagined hegemony of the ruling class proved to be a myth whose source of power was simply temporary inability to see it as myth. Ideology in one of Althusser's senses—the structure that life in society gives to thought—turns into ideology in the other sense: false consciousness, palpably false and arbitrary. The dungeon door that had been imagined so solid and impassable turns out, upon inspection, to be open and unguarded; the autocratic authority of the prince turns out to conceal a

genuine power vacuum. From within the prison Prince Manfred or Signor Montoni seems to be omnipotent; from outside, he seems an incompetent and petty tyrant. And the Theodores and the Emilies, once imprisoned within the walls, eventually succeed legitimately to their estates.

I am not suggesting that Walpole, Radcliffe, and Maturin were revolutionaries—far from it. According to the biographical information we have, all three were almost as far from sympathy with Jacobinism as one could get. Nor do I think that there was any conscious encoding of politics in the Gothic novel. In fact, the Gothic was on the surface an evasion of contemporary politics and a repudiation of the radical use of political fiction by such writers as William Godwin and Robert Bage. So what I am talking about is the political unconscious and the role of literature in the "return of the repressed." However sincere the sympathy of the novelists with established authority, their plots invest the tyrants with a power so great and so absolute (as it is seen from within) that no mechanism can be found for circumventing it; it can be evaded only by treating it as a dream of oppression from which one happily wakes up.

In chapter 5 I develop the notion that the Gothic novel sits astride a major rift in aesthetic ideology, a shift away from reading for pleasure and instruction toward *aisthesis,* toward reading for imaginative play and escape. It cannot be a mere accident that the structure of suspense of the Gothic demands a more empathic identification of the reader with the protagonist, and it cannot be an accident that both the reader and the protagonist of the Gothic novel share an intense need to escape. In a sense the experience of the reader, however, is the obverse of the hero's: while the hero finds his or her prison a nightmare from which the unguarded door permits an apparently unlicensed escape from the imaginary into a less fraught and terrifying reality, the reader of the Gothic finds reality itself a prison of vacancy and seeks an escape into an imaginary closer to the world of desire.

CHAPTER FOUR
The Progress of Romance: The Gothic as an Institutional Form

From Marxism to Formalism

The Marxist literary historiography I have been developing in the last two chapters allows one to understand some of the preconditions allowing the vogue of the Gothic to flourish and affecting in some sense its generic form. There was clearly a growing ideology of affective individualism, a sense that individuals had the right to autonomy, which clashed with residual forms of control imposed by families, organized religion, and other social institutions. One outgrowth of this was sentimentalism; the Gothic, with its themes of imprisonment and deprivation, control by unnatural beings and forces, was the nightmare underside of the same development. But there are a number of questions that it cannot begin to answer, about the way the Gothic developed as a genre within the contemporary literary system, how and why it presents the sort of pattern of growth and decay that it did. For this we must turn to the formalist literary history shaped by my own neo-Aristotelian forebears, Ronald S. Crane, Wayne Booth, Sheldon Sacks, and Ralph Wilson Rader.

Chicago formalism's version of literary history has already been discussed above, in chapter 2. Briefly, the novel was identified by R. S. Crane with an action structure that induces, develops, and finally cathartically resolves in the reader an active concern for a protagonist that results from the tension between what the reader is led to believe will happen to the character (his or her fate) and what the reader is led to think ought to happen (his or her desert). In *Fiction and the Shape of Belief,* Sheldon Sacks extended Crane's model to include two alternative fictional models, those of the apologue and the satire, two didactic forms popular in the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. Crane and Sacks were able to use this model to analyze the novels of

Richardson, Fielding, and Austen, among others, and a number of their students have used the model effectively with certain fictions from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To my present way of thinking, there are a number of weaknesses with the Crane-Sacks model. One is that it presumes that novels have a single protagonist and a single plot, and hence the model fails to deal with such important forms as the Victorian multiplot novel. The model also fails to account for a number of fictions that are unequivocally registered as novels but that fail to fit into the action model, including among others the novels of Defoe, written before the action model came into existence, and the novels of Joyce and Woolf, in our own century, which do not fit the pattern of "objective fantasy" that the action model requires.

Most important, especially for the present subject, the Crane-Sacks model implicitly presumes that literary texts are written and interpretable entirely within the confines of one or another generic model. For Crane, mimetic novels were by definition not didactic. Sacks, who was more explicitly aware of the role of messages implicit in novels of action, was nevertheless convinced that a novelist's beliefs, indeed, his explicitly didactic intentions—such as Fielding's intention "to recommend goodness and innocence" in *Tom Jones*—could be integrated with seamless perfection into his objective fantasy. As Ralph Rader has put it, Sacks had an almost structuralist faith in fixed and finite genres without which he was afraid we would be unable to explain some of the common facts of our literary experience; this faith, however, blinded Sacks to some of the other equally elementary facts of experience. One obvious fact is that mixed forms combining an action with satirical or didactic elements, like *Humphry Clinker*, *Amelia*, and *The Vicar of Wakefield*, are considerably more frequent within the literary canon than masterpieces of comic form like *Tom Jones* and *Emma*. Authors may try to create unified works, but they have multiple motives, which may or may not be well integrated with one another. Rader has suggested that the Crane-Sacks model of the "action form" would be "explanatorily more useful if we think of it as an abstract and in practice malleable one which can accommodate (at an affective price) many extraformal intentions which the creative freedom of writers may bring to it."[1]

Starting with Pamela

It has long been recognized not just by formalists but by every other sort of critic as well, that the Gothic romance stems, like so much of English

fiction, from the pioneering work of Samuel Richardson. I argue in this chapter that *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and other novels of its ilk were reinscriptions of *Pamela,* revisions of it that were designed to eliminate one form of internal conflict that Richardson had intentionally installed within that text, but that inadvertently created other forms of internal conflict that were far more difficult aesthetically to resolve. Some critics of the Gothic like Coral Ann Howells have suggested that the first Gothic novel is *Clarissa* and that Radcliffe rewrote Richardson by giving *Clarissa* a happy ending. I think that it is far more plausible to suggest that what Radcliffe did was to rewrite *Pamela* in such a way as to separate structurally two elements of Richardson's first predatory male character.

In *Pamela,* Mr. B. has a dual function: he is at once the hero and the villain, the threat to her virtue and its eventual reward as her husband, and this dual role is registered almost simultaneously within Pamela's first-person narrative. "I pulled off my stays, and my stockings, and all my clothes to an under-petticoat; and then hearing a rustling again in the closet, I said, Heaven protect us! but before I say my prayers, I must look into this closet. And so was going to it slipshod, when, O dreadful! Out rushed my master in a rich silk and silver morning gown" (59–60). The tension between love and fear that the reader experiences vicariously throughout *Pamela* is essentially implicit in Mr. B's dual role. And if this duality produces a tight and economical framework of events, it also helps to produce an uncomfortably sleazy moral atmosphere that was, from the outset, noted by many readers of the story, readers such as Henry Fielding, who wrote *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews* in response. Part of this sleazy aura derives unavoidably from Richardson's puritanical identification of virtue with sexual inviolateness and of ethical excellence with worldly success. But part of it is an unintended consequence of the point of view. Richardson wrote the novel in the form of letters and diary entries for the sake of the nearly unbearable intensity with which he could render his heroine's self-recorded plight. There is also, however, an unintended consequence that appears in the quotation above. Because the wealth and luxury in which any future Mrs. B. will live must be rendered for us by Pamela herself, and because these silky and silvery facts are presented without being registered by her as relevant to the ultimate fate we foresee for her, Pamela is inadvertently represented as a hypocrite.

For the eighteenth-century reader, there was yet another problem with the dual threat and reward in the structure of *Pamela,* for it is clear that, the more seriously we take Mr. B. as a threat to Pamela's virtue, the less willing

we are to accept him as a potential husband for her. One reason the second half of *Pamela* reads more comfortably than the first half is that by a sleight of hand Richardson has succeeded in transferring the role of threat to Mr. B.'s proxy, the sexually disgusting Mrs. Jewkes, a trick that cleverly allows the novelist to sanitize Mr. B. in time for his repentance and his final, sincere proposal of marriage.

While *Pamela* was a celebrated and much imitated novel in its own time, its effect as an influence, as both a positive and negative model of fictional structure, extended for decades. One could claim in its line of descent not only the sentimental fiction of the 1770s and later but also the morally serious comedies like *Evelina* and *Pride and Prejudice,* the latter written over half a century later. This is in effect what Ralph Rader has done in his essay "From Richardson to Austen," which traces the line of morally serious comedy from its beginning to its conclusion.

The Incoherence of Gothic Conventions

I would comprehend one major strand of the Gothic novel in this pervasive skein of influence, and I would like to suggest that the Gothic romance is a way of reinscribing the basic *Pamela* situation, in which a young lady is cut off from the controlling and protecting influence of her parents, is threatened (in life, limb, and virtue) by a villain; partly by good fortune and partly by the skillful use of her own native resources, the young lady is ultimately able to overcome and surmount the threat and is rewarded by being married to a young man of good family, wealth, and ethical standing. As I will show later, a great many of the most famous Gothic romances take either this form or an easily recognizable variant of it.

But given the textural and ethical problems attendant on using a single character as simultaneously threat and reward, hero and villain, the Gothic novel refused that option. Starting with *The Castle of Otranto* and continuing in the work of Radcliffe, Lewis, and their epigoni, these fictions featured separate heroes and villains of contrasting moral nature. Such structural changes have always the defects of their virtues, and this change started the Gothic romance on the road toward incoherence.[2]

One cause of this incoherence is the fact that, in effect, the threat is (however credible) unrelated to the protagonist's character or actions. As an innocent, exemplary character, the protagonist has not, and indeed cannot have, done anything to deserve the lengthy torment the novel chronicles.

Although the villain's motivations vary from book to book, in some deep sense they are never fully rationalized.

Let me give one example of this feature. In *Melmoth the Wanderer,* Melmoth's first victim, an Englishman named Stanton, is imprisoned in a madhouse by a cousin who hopes thereby to inherit Stanton's fortune. This fails to connect, however, with the Stanton the reader knows, who has been represented as a sensible and sympathetic gentleman of sufficient means to be traveling throughout Europe, but certainly not as either particularly wealthy or eccentric. Both Stanton's cousin and his enviable fortune have apparently been conjured out of nowhere as mere contingencies of plot. Nor are we told why someone would go to the immense trouble of kidnapping and wrongfully imprisoning another, when having him murdered would probably have been cheaper and easier as well as no more felonious in Restoration England. Nor is the resolution of the story any clearer or more rational: Stanton, after rejecting Melmoth's bargain of life, freedom, and power in exchange for eternal damnation, is simply released from his private Bedlam. Maturin never tells us how or why.

The irrationality of the persecution and the equally irrational release from persecution form a fascinating feature of the Gothic romance. The result is to give the narrative a dreamlike quality, in which emotional states are experienced vividly without any consequences and without the circumstances attendant upon the emotion making coherent sense.

Thus in *The Castle of Otranto,* Isabella is pursued and imprisoned by Prince Manfred of Otranto in order that she might bear him a son and heir, though it is not clear why any other bride would not have done as well, or why a more willing bride of noble birth could not have been found. Isabella does not, through her own ancestry, shore up Manfred's title to Otranto, the defects of which are precisely what all the supernatural manifestations in the novel have been hinting about. Thus in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* Emily is imprisoned by Montoni for reasons that are never made rationally clear. Ambrosio, who has gazed on Antonia once in a crowd during one of his penitential sermons (in *The Monk*), pursues, imprisons, rapes, and finally murders Antonia as a result of his insatiable lust—despite the fact that this lust is presented as already satiated, and indeed more than satiated, by his affair with the beautiful Matilda. In Radcliffe's *The Italian* Ellena is pursued, imprisoned, and nearly murdered by Schedoni to prevent Vivaldi from soiling his family name by marrying her—even though it is not clear how wiping Ellena out of existence would prevent Vivaldi from concluding another equally degrading misalliance. Since an exemplary heroine by definition can

never do anything that would merit the threats posed against her, there must always be something accidental or incidental about the central tension of these stories.

On the other side, in those novels in which the threats are unrealized, the heroine's romantic rewards seem to be equally problematic. Theodore's relationship to Isabella is essentially forced by circumstances: she is, in fact, very much a second choice, his first being Manfred's daughter Matilda, who delivers him from prison but who is accidentally stabbed to death by her father. The concluding lines of *The Castle of Otranto,* which imply that Theodore and Isabella spend their marriage alternately mourning the loss of Matilda, suggest at best a marriage of convenience and at worst a tying up of loose ends by a novelist at a loss to know what to do with his less menacing characters.[3]

Similar problems plague Emily from *Udolpho,* whose shadowy, inexplicit attraction to Montoni sometimes seems more intense and real than her theoretical attachment to her lover, Valancourt. The plot of *Udolpho* in fact depends upon her refusal to agree to marry Valancourt before her abduction to Udolpho; the cause of her reluctance is certain rumors about Valancourt's morals. At the end of the novel, we are told that those rumors are found to have been exaggerated, which allows what many readers have felt a very perfunctory happy ending. Only the marriage between Vivaldi and Ellena seems made in heaven rather than in a novelist's commonplace book. But even so, there is no connection made between the various plots. Vivaldi tries—but fails—to get Ellena released from her confinement (ultimately it is Schedoni who releases the girl, who has turned out to be his niece); and when Vivaldi himself is picked up by the Inquisition, there is no connection between Ellena and his deliverance.

Thus even in the most canonical of the Gothic romances, the threat against the heroine seems arbitrary, and the romantic reward—the marriage to a noble gentleman—is achieved for reasons unrelated to the bravery and self-possession with which the heroine meets the threat. When I say that such plots are not coherent, I do not mean that they fail to make any sense at all—though indeed some Gothic plots have gaps and holes that have long puzzled their commentators. But what is produced is the sort of plot Aristotle would have called *epeisodic:* a series of events whose linkages operate without an organically coherent plan (*Poetics,* chaps. 6, 15). A threat is posed for one reason and is later dismissed for another; a marriage with an attractive young man is postponed for one reason and later celebrated for another. Aristotle explained two thousand years ago how such

plots can be made to seem more rational by the cunning use of thematic coincidence, and the Gothic novelists have taken these devices very much to heart, but there is nevertheless a difference between these ragged machineries and the clarity and economy that characterize the plots that Coleridge admired, those of *Oedipus the King, Tom Jones,* and *The Alchemist* ("Table Talk" 437).

Instead of clarity and economy, the Gothic romance developed a progressively more baroque proliferation of complications. We cannot blame this sequel upon Richardson, for despite his prolixity, which even his admirer Clara Reeve thought intolerable, Richardson had employed an almost classical directness and simplicity of action as a plot maker in both *Pamela* and *Clarissa.* Our impression of complexity in Richardson stems from the endless elaboration of analysis and sentiment. Mr. B. and Lovelace generally know what they want and use whatever means are available to attain their ends, plotting intrigues that the heroines meet with their own steadfast fortitude and equal invention.

But in the Gothic romance the plots become both complex and vague. David Punter credits "Radcliffe's skill" for keeping us mystified by the "many and terrifying dangers" that threaten Emily at Udolpho (67), but in fact we never learn whether Emily is being threatened with a forced marriage to Murano, with attempted rape, with supernatural spirits, or (most plausibly) with being forced to make over her estate to her villainous uncle. All these dangers percolate around Emily, producing a global atmosphere of terror so thick that we never discover precisely how much danger she is in, and from what. When Radcliffe allows Emily to escape from one haunted castle, at Udolpho, she is forced to immure her in another, at Le Blanc, with another set of specters in order to keep the narrative going for another volume. *Udolpho* is a model of unity, however, compared with *The Monk,* in which Matthew Lewis installed two plots running in parallel: in the main plot, Ambrosio rapes Antonia, and murders both her and her mother, Elvira, while in the subplot, the love of Agnes and Raymond is threatened by banditti, by a spectral Bleeding Nun, and then by an evil prioress.[4] In addition to multiple threats and multiple plots, the Gothic romance employs, as many observers have noted, multiple narratives, all nested like Chinese boxes. Perhaps the most famous instance is that of *Melmoth the Wanderer,* in which "The Tale of Guzman's Family" appears within "The Tale of the Indians," copied out by Juan de Monçada from "The Spaniard's Tale," all within the framing story of John Melmoth and his spectral inheritance.

Multiple threats, multiple plots, multiple narratives: What was the purpose of these complications? Well, one obvious motive was to keep the story going, to keep it within what Peter Brooks calls the realm of the narratable, for when we run out of instabilities, the story has to come to an end. To say this is to suggest that Gothic novelists were paid by the word, but there was a far more rational reason than that. In the majority of Gothic romances, which were structured as serious suspense stories, there was always a danger of anticlimax: as each episode involving threat to the protagonist was surmounted, the audience would begin to discount the threats, or, even worse, would begin to develop expectations appropriate to a comedy. Like addicts, audiences become acclimated to a particular cause of suspense; one must escalate the situation merely to maintain a given level of tension. If Cary Grant is pursued by villains in cars at the beginning of *North by Northwest,* he must be chased by a homicidal airplane in the middle of the film, and by the end he must be hanging by his fingernails from Mount Rushmore.

Genuinely baroque exemplars of the Gothic novel, like Mary-Anne Radcliffe's *Manfroné, or, The One-Handed Monk* (1809) might have taught this principle to Hitchcock: here the heroine, Rosalina, is subjected to "four kidnappings, two imprisonments, two attempted rapes and four miscellaneous attacks" before she is rescued by her lover, Montalto (Tracy 138). The supernatural aspect of the Gothic (which I have not emphasized here, as it is not central to the form as I have defined it) developed primarily out of Radcliffe's use of the explained supernatural, as a quick and cheap way of creating suspense without the necessity of manufacturing genuine plot complications requiring resolution.[5] It is my impression—and it can only be an impression—that the Gothic plot becomes progressively more baroque, complicated, multifarious, and incoherent in the decade after Radcliffe's best work, with the apogee coming somewhere around 1809. At this point the Gothic is at the peak of its popularity, but the authorship has passed from the canonical authors (Walpole, Radcliffe, Reeve, Lewis) into the lesser hands who wrote for William Lane's Minerva Press.

Johnson's Rule

If we were to ask why the eighteenth-century audience that so prized elegance, form, and unity tolerated the degree of discontinuity that seems to have been inevitable within the Gothic plot, we might suggest that the

reason stems from what Ralph Rader has called Johnson's Rule (see "From Richardson to Austen"). Rader refers to an axiom of eighteenth-century aesthetic ideology that held not only that virtue must be rewarded and vice punished but also that both the hero and the heroine should if possible be exemplary characters. As Johnson said in Rambler no. 4, "In narratives where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit we shall never imitate, but the highest and the purest that humanity can reach, which exercised in such trials as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it may, by conquering some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform" (qtd. in Richter, *Critical Tradition* 227–28).

This stricture became part of the literary scene. It is intensely present in *The Progress of Romance,* a pioneering history of the novel published in 1785 by Clara Reeve, who was also, as the author of *The Old English Baron,* one of the pioneers of the Gothic novel. *The Progress of Romance* is written in the form of a dialogue in which three polite readers, one male and two female, examine the history of narrative from the time of the Alexandrian romance to that of their contemporaries. Reeve's chief spokesperson, Euphrasia, is a lively and unprejudiced guide to the varieties of opinion about the art of fiction prevalent in England at the historical moment when the Gothic novel was about to flower, and a very reliable indicator of what Terry Eagleton would call the aesthetic ideology of the age.

Euphrasia is particularly down on novelists like Henry Fielding, whose "writings are as much inferior to Richardson's in morals and exemplary characters as they are superior in wit and learning.—Young men of warm passions and not strict principles, are always desirous to shelter themselves under the sanction of mixed characters, wherein virtue is allowed to be predominant.—In this light the character of Tom Jones is capable of doing much mischief. . . . On the contrary no harm can possibly arise from the imitation of a perfect character, though the attempt should fall short of the original" (*Progress of Romance* 139). But if characters like Tom Jones and Booth offended Johnson's Rule, so too did characters like Mr. B. and Robert Lovelace, who were sufficiently attractive and sharply drawn to serve as ambiguous models for young men. Indeed, as we learn from one of Richardson's letters to his Dutch translator Stinstra, Richardson created the character of Sir Charles Grandison to be the exemplar that his predatory male characters could not be, and a counterpoise against them.[6]

The Johnsonian formula of a perfect character "conquering some

calamities and enduring others" was imported into the Gothic romance in the construction of the heroine. The difficulty, for the formation of a fully coherent plot, was, as I have already shown, the fact that there can therefore be no rational reason for the heroine's torments. Being exemplary, she can have done nothing to warrant persecution; she is thus in some sense an arbitrary victim of others more powerful and wicked than she. And given another feature of eighteenth-century aesthetic ideology, the belief in distributive justice, with the good ending happily and the evil unhappily, the threat cannot ultimately be carried out. Few novels violated this rule.[7] The result was that the reader could not help becoming aware that, whatever the intensity of the heroine's sufferings, they must be temporary, and that the hero will receive her intact in mind and body. Enormous threats may be explicitly or implicitly made, and the heroine made to suffer in the most intense agonies of suspense, but the blow never falls.

Nor does the suffering experienced by the protagonists generally produce any consequences to their character. The Isabellas and Matildas, Emilies and Ellenas whose torments we have experienced vicariously remain emotionally as well as physically virginal. They are not hardened, deepened, or changed in any other way by the experience. Again, Johnson's Rule may be responsible here. A flawed hero like Fielding's Tom Jones could be made more prudent by his frightening stay in Newgate; a flawed heroine like Austen's Emma could be made less self-centered by her own *éclaircissements*. But for the heroines of the Gothic romance such transformations are not in the cards. Because they are exemplary in their innocence to begin with, any change in character must be for the worse, and therefore none occurs. The lack of consequences to the Gothic plot gives that plot a dreamlike quality. I shall have more to say about this quality later.

Keeping the plot of the Gothic romance free of any permanent consequences for the hero and heroine occasionally took some doing. One of the problems Walpole ran into with *The Castle of Otranto*, for example, had to do with the fact that he had made Manfred the hereditary prince, and a prince can be a very powerful character when he turns his hand to villainy. Theoretically he has only to say "Off with his head" and his servants will make ready the block and sharpen the ax for the unfortunate prisoner. As a result, Walpole must either represent Manfred as dithering constantly—so that he never gets his intentions clear to his menials—or he must represent those menials as endlessly frustrating Manfred's design through their incompetence and folly. The result of either choice, though, is comedy, for perhaps nothing is funnier than the impotence of the powerful. Later writers

tended to avoid the problem by making the principal villain less powerful in status. Montoni in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is a mere condottiere, and better still was making the villain a monk or a friar, as Lewis and Radcliffe did in *The Monk* and *The Italian:* the villainy was more surprising in a clergyman, and much of it would have to be exercised secondhand by persuading secular personages to act for him. (By the time of Mary Anne Radcliffe's *Manfroné, or, The One-Handed Monk* [1809], the convention of both princely and monkish villains had become so well established that we quickly recognize the prince in disguise beneath the monk's cowl, which he wears "as a cloke to the forwarding of his unfathomable schemes" [97].)

Isabella's Tale and Manfred's Tale

Before I go any further, I had better make a distinction between those Gothic novels where, structurally speaking, the protagonist is an exemplary woman or man and those novels where the protagonist is a morally reprehensible villain. Using the characters in *The Castle of Otranto,* I would like to call the former "Isabella's Tale" and the latter "Manfred's Tale." Isabella's Tale is a serious action—like *Pamela*—a melodrama arousing sympathy and suspense through the unwarranted persecution of an innocent; Manfred's Tale is a punitive tragedy—like Richard III or Macbeth—in which we are made both to desire and to expect the condign punishment of the central figure. The first subgenre includes *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian,* among so many others; the second includes the main plot of *The Monk,* sections of *Melmoth the Wanderer,* and *Confessions of a Justified Sinner.* These subgenres exist in relatively pure form, but as the names I have given them suggest, some Gothic novels, including the very first one, have incorporated both plots into a mixed form whose focus shifts in different parts of the narrative.

In effect, *The Castle of Otranto* gives rise to both plots. One of the interesting features of that novel is the difficulty of locating the protagonist as the point of view shifts among Manfred, Matilda, Isabella, and Theodore. The result is a highly dramatic texture, with constantly shifting narrative focalization, but one suspects that the origin of the texture was less Walpole's admiration for Shakespeare than the difficulty he found in deciding whom the story was to be about. Walpole was not the only novelist to suffer from the problems of focus attendant on conflict of interest between his good and his evil characters. Though the structure of *The Italian* seems

designed to feature Ellena and Vivaldi as joint protagonists, Radcliffe's quasi-independent development of the villain Schedoni—arguably the best-drawn character in her corpus of work—shifts the novel toward the shape of a tragedy of deterioration, like *Macbeth*. Similarly, James Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* starts out as a tale of the persecution and murder of George Colwan by his younger half-brother Robert Wringham, then suddenly shifts point of view to the fanatically religious Robert, whose conviction of unquenchable holiness leads him from one murder to another and finally to a desperate suicide.

Logically, Manfred's Tale is a development from Isabella's Tale, a way of evading the incoherence of that version of romance. Given the fact that Manfred is automatically the most interesting character in Isabella's story, the temptation is to reshape the story around the antagonist. The problem with this approach is that the antagonist is only the most interesting character from *within* the heroine's tale: he is fascinating because the evil he represents is (as it must be) incomprehensible to her. But from the perspective of evil, evil itself is necessarily banal.

The banality of evil seems evident enough in *The Monk*. Ambrosio's hypocrisy and lust generate a good deal of *action:* between acting out his relatively ordinary sexual impulses and struggling to keep his good name, a great deal can happen that is narratable. But as a character he is finally seen as pathetic and—hard as it may be to believe—passive. In the last signature of the novel, at the cost of all dramatic consistency, Lewis presents Ambrosio not as genuinely evil but as a flawed creature manipulated by demons to his damnation. The dramatic inconsistency has to do with the character of Matilda. In the first half of the novel she appears to be a woman who is irrationally but plausibly in love with Ambrosio, masquerades as a monk to be near him, and ends by seducing him; in the second half of the novel she is revealed to have been in reality all along an *âme damnée*. There is something psychologically appropriate about this—since women often appear to be demons to men—except that Lewis yielded several times in the first half to the temptation of presenting psychological views of Matilda genuinely concerned about Ambrosio that make her reinscription as a demon impossible.

Similarly, the multiple murderer Robert Wringham in *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* is made to seem at least as much a victim as a villain: tempted, then betrayed, then taunted and hounded to his death by the demonic Gil-Martin. The most puzzling question Hogg's novel raises is, of course, whether it is to be taken as canny or uncanny: whether Gil-Martin is to be taken as a literal demon exterior to Robert, the devil who possesses the

"unco guid"—or whether it makes more sense to see Gil-Martin as a part of Robert as Hyde is a part of Jekyll, and to view Robert as a victim of what today is called multiple-personality disorder. Whichever way the reader decides—and the novel leaves the question open—Robert has been turned into an object of pity. Horrible as he is at the beginning of the novel, he seems in his final flight and death a creature who experienced more suffering than he ever caused.

As we can see, many of the most celebrated authors of Gothic romance found Manfred's Tale a tempting alternative to the more common Gothic romance of victimization, but they were unable to present a fully effective villain as the protagonist. It is not entirely clear why not, but one problem they faced was distance. Renaissance dramas like *The Jew of Malta* and *Richard III* could focus effectively on genuinely evil characters because the exterior nature of drama made it easy to show the fascination of evil without moral ambiguity. Use of the soliloquy in *Macbeth* made it possible for Shakespeare to portray the moral collapse of a man who nevertheless possesses admirable and even sympathetic traits. But most of the novelists of the eighteenth century were unable to keep a proper distance from a villain-protagonist. There is a strong tendency for the narrative focalization to collapse the distance between the character and the implied author, to view the villain as justified in his own mind, or, more often, as himself a victim.

In *The Monk* Lewis made a good start but ultimately lost heart and turned Ambrosio from a devil incarnate to a mere pawn of devils. Maturin couldn't do it either. In some technical sense, what holds the various stories contained within *Melmoth the Wanderer* together is Melmoth himself, the doctor angelicus who has sold his soul to the devil and wants to evade the consequences by trading his bargain to some other mortal. Melmoth thus seeks for individuals in the ne plus ultra of misery, for only those in bitter torment will be likely customers for his bargain. Given his need to witness and exploit human suffering, Melmoth is indeed a demon. But the point of view does not begin with Melmoth, nor does it stay with him for long. (In the section of the novel called "The Tale of the Indians," Melmoth appears, speaks, and acts at length and in propria persona, and falls in love with the ultimately innocent Immalee. But once Immalee returns to Spain from her island and is rechristened Isadora, the point of view shifts from Melmoth to Isadora (or even to other members of her family), and we have what we had in "Stanton's Tale" or "The Spaniard's Tale" or the two tales intruded within "The Tale of the Indians," in other words, a version of Isabella's Tale, in which a victim is targeted for reasons hard or impossible to rationalize.

The Power of the Gothic Romance

To say that the Gothic novel is incoherent is not to say that it was ineffective. In *The Failure of Gothic* Elizabeth Napier conjectures that the strong sensations felt by the heroines were not communicated to the audience.[8] Whatever today's reader of Walpole and Radcliffe may think—and we are jaded on even stronger sensations than Walpole and Radcliffe provided—I don't think, on the basis of the evidence of contemporary reception, that the Gothic was in any sense disappointing to its actual readers.[9] Surely the Catherine Morlands and Isabella Thorpes of this world—and the Eleanor Tilneys as well—were transported, their feelings ravished; they even became addicted to the sensations. And even those who attacked the Gothic novel—and their name was legion—never questioned its power to carry the reader into its own realm. Indeed, this was precisely what was alleged against these works: that they were *too* effective. Unlike the morally serious comedies of the latter part of the eighteenth century, which according to Rader pay an affective price for their subservience to Johnson's Rule, the Gothic paid the price elsewhere: in structure rather than affect, in aesthetic form rather than emotional content.

And it would be a mistake to deny or degrade that emotional content, which kept the Gothic romance the most popular genre of its time. The first major source of its power is in the doubled situation of the heroine (in Isabella's Tale), which duplicated that of the family romance of its readers. One need not be a member of an analytic institute to recognize that most of Mrs. Radcliffe's readers were women who began their postadolescent lives, like Emily in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, at the mercy of a powerful and coldly incomprehensible older man who had shaped, without understanding and without meaning to do so, their notions of sexual desire. The most successful Gothic villains, the Montonis and Schedonis, are dark fathers, images of the demon lover or the destroying angel.

Within the plot structure of the romance, these figures are frequently the heroine's uncle—a displacement from literal fatherhood that underlines the incestuous basis of the fear and love they exact while making more probable the heroine's terrors of violation or murder. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Count Murano, attempting to account for the dismissal of his suit, accuses Emily of rejecting him because she hopes to replace her aunt in Montoni's bed. The accusation is repulsive and ludicrous but, as the reader must recognize, not completely irrelevant.

This is not to say that the Gothic novel literally represents the female Oedipus and figures forth the feelings daughters cherish for their fathers.

On the contrary, as Coral Ann Howells has noted, "There is no overt acknowledgement of sexual feeling in the novel at all; there is merely the recognition of a nameless power which is a frightening, potentially destructive force capable of assaulting both the body and the will" (52). In Gothic romances like *The Monk* and *Melmoth the Wanderer,* written by and largely for men, the Oedipal agon often takes the appropriately opposite form, with the male victim in thrall to a maternal woman. The female equivalent of the demon lover is found in Ambrosio's Matilda—whose description significantly highlights her voluptuous breasts—and that of the destroying angel in Juan de Monçada's mother, who, trading on his filial devotion, coldly consigns her son to be buried alive in a monastery to expiate her sins.

Compared with the passion of the daughters for the father figures, or the sons for the mothers, it is strange how tepid are the feelings between the youthful coevals, the heroines and the heroes whose rapprochement and subsequent marriage so often conclude the Gothic romance. In their reconciliation at the end of *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* Emily greets Valancourt with the following impassioned words:

> Valancourt! I was, till this moment, ignorant of all the circumstances you have mentioned [he had been slandered by the Count de Villefort]; the emotion I now suffer may assure you of the truth of this, and that, though I had ceased to esteem, I had not taught myself entirely to forget you. . . . Is it necessary that I should say—these are the first moments of joy I have known since your departure, and that they repay me for all those of pain I have suffered in the interval? (668)

Emily's felicity, in Radcliffe's denouement, is characterized not as rapturous but as "tender and pensive" (670). Perhaps the safe harbor of marriage is always a bit flat after the intense struggle with the father: perhaps Emily even fears becoming in the long run as slight an object to Valancourt as her aunt had been to the demonic Montoni.

There are two other significant psychological sources of narrative power in the Gothic. One stems from the perplexity and subsequent revelation of secrets and mysteries—a sort of rudimentary version of the pleasure we seek and find today in the detective story, which stems from the so-called phallic phase of the pre-Oedipal period. The other seemingly rather perverse pleasure has to do with the motif of imprisonment that runs through most of the important Gothic texts. The motif of confinement in the pleasurable anticipation of release, the intolerable pressures of being held in, and the incomparable pleasure of being let go, seems to be a defended form of anal eroticism.

Probably the least well-understood and most embarrassing source of power in the Gothic romance is the stimulation it gives to the sadomasochistic desires of the implied reader. Like some of the more decadent works of the later nineteenth century, the Gothic stands in what Mario Praz called "the shadow of the divine Marquis."[10] Some of the Gothic writers were reasonably aware of the pathology of their product and included in their tales some inkling of the source and significance of the pleasure they were providing. As the parricide monk in *Melmoth the Wanderer,* for example, tells Juan de Monçada:

> I was anxious to witness misery that might perhaps equal or exceed my own, and this is a curiosity not easily satisfied. It is actually possible to become *amateurs in suffering.* I have heard of men who have travelled into countries where horrible executions were to be daily witnessed, for the sake of that excitement which the sight of suffering never fails to give, from the spectacle of a tragedy, or an *auto da fe,* down to the writhings of the meanest reptile on whom you can inflict torture, and feel that torture is the result of your own power. It is a species of feeling of which we never can divest ourselves,—a triumph over those whose sufferings have placed them below us. (207)

We distance ourselves from the parricide monk who recounts this joy in the suffering of others, but it is harder to distance ourselves from the feelings of Juan de Monçada, the narrator, as he describes his sensations fifty pages later watching a Spanish mob beat that same monk to death: "It is a fact, Sir," he tells John Melmoth, "that while witnessing this horrible execution, I felt all the effects vulgarly ascribed to fascination. . . . I echoed the screams of the thing that seemed no longer to live, but still could scream. . . . I actually . . . believed myself the object of their cruelty." And he concludes: "The drama of terror has the irresistible power of converting the audience into its victims" (256–57). This is the psychological key to *Melmoth,* and one of the keys to horror Gothic as a whole.[11]

But perhaps the most strongly marked source of pleasure in the Gothic romance, particularly Radcliffean terror Gothic, is the pleasure of passivity and irresponsibility. Gothic novels tend to be filled with events, but the events are ones that *happen to* the protagonist; they are seldom ones in which characters *choose* one course of action over another.

It has long been remarked that the traditional Gothic heroine is a passive creature,[12] but we need to be clear that this passivity does not take the form of immobility but of indecisiveness, and her choices, once reached, tend less

to be decisions than abdications of the right to decide. In that locus classicus of the Gothic, *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* Emily St. Aubert is entirely under the tutelage of her wise and kind father for the majority of the first volume. Upon his death, her guardianship passes to his sister, Mme de Cheron, who is vulgar and selfish. Emily recognizes this, yet feels as constrained by duty to obey her aunt as to obey her dying father's request to burn his private papers. Perhaps her one significant point of decision comes at the end of volume 1, when she declines to elope with her lover, Valancourt, despite her aunt's decision to carry her away from him into Italy and despite her suspicions of her aunt's new husband, Montoni. With eminent propriety, Emily decides that elopement would be precipitate and imprudent, while on the other side, her aunt is in loco parentis, and Montoni, however suspicious, has not yet been proved a villain. Her decision, in short, is to accede, however reluctantly, to the course of action that has been provided her by her elders; in effect it is no decision at all. This is the pattern Emily continues to follow: When her chateau at La Vallée is rented out, she thinks of protesting, mentions "some prejudices . . . which still linger in my heart" (196), but again accedes. To further Montoni's plans for Emily, she is removed to Venice, then to Udolpho. There indeed she, like Pamela, resists all attempts made against her person, her virtue, and her fortune. This resistance is overlaid, however, upon a sense of her own powerlessness that is almost total, and an equally exaggerated sense of the omnipotence of her captor, Montoni.

During the central section of the novel, Emily is not in the strict sense inactive: she nightly explores the castle, finding other prisoners, coming upon blood and arms that convince her (mistakenly) of the violent death of her aunt, and most memorably uncovering the horrendously, hideously anticlimactic mystery of the black veil. But she never takes responsibility for herself or her predicament.

The reader spends three hundred pages participating anxiously in Emily's hesitations, observing her nocturnal explorations around the castle, fearing rape and murder at every noise, always looking for a way out until finally, in chapter 9 of book 3, she and her fellow prisoner Du Pont, together with assorted servants, do little more than simply walk out into the Tuscan countryside. "Emily was so much astonished by this sudden departure," Radcliffe tells us, "that she scarcely dared to believe herself awake" (452). If Udolpho was a phony prison, so is Montoni a paper tiger: his fall from apparent absolute power, related in chapter 3 of book 4, is accomplished with such "celerity and ease" that it is unnoticed "even . . . in any of the published records of

that time" (522). This is another regressive aspect of the Gothic. Neither the moral nor the pragmatic vision of the focal characters is trustworthy; like children they tend to exaggerate enormously the power of their opponents, and like children they tend to see adults in black and white. The pleasures of the Gothic novel include a return trip to one's childhood, to a simpler if occasionally terrifying world.

Emily St. Aubert in her indecisiveness and irresponsibility about her predicament is merely a typical heroine of the Gothic romance. Even more striking abdications of responsibility could be chronicled, of victims who have it in their own power to resist their tormentors and control their own fate but who fail, until what is nearly the last moment, to do so—such as Juan de Monçada in the monastery in *Melmoth,* or Maud Ruthyn at Bartram-Haugh in Sheridan Le Fanu's *Uncle Silas.*

Without belaboring this point further, it should be clear that the emotional participation in the Gothic is regressive. As a result of our involvement with the innocent heroines or heroes, we become like children, not just in the sense that we believe the unbelievable—the fairy-tale aspect of the Gothic—but that we take the moral perspective that our misery is never our own fault: it is always something wished upon us by persons more powerful whom we must obey. In the next chapter I quote a number of contemporary critics and journalists who attacked readers of the Gothic, especially female readers, for using reading as a way of running away from their responsibilities. While they probably meant that reading was taking time that could better be devoted to the pressing engagements of this world than to the fantasy world of fiction, they were right to emphasize this aspect of the Gothic. So although the turn taken by Walpole and Radcliffe—the separation of the hero and the villain, the reward and the threat—had the effect of insulating the Gothic romance from the sleazy moral atmosphere of *Pamela,* it also kept that genre from ever attaining the moral grandeur of *Clarissa.*

Perhaps one might mention that the primary function of the Gothic as a theme in *Northanger Abbey* is contrastive. Catherine Morland is between childhood and adulthood, not quite ready to take responsibility for her actions. Her attraction to the Gothic does not in itself constitute a moral flaw (the Tilneys read Mrs. Radcliffe as avidly as Catherine does), but her willingness to apply it to life suggests that she is not quite ready for life as a grownup. Attraction to the Gothic is associated with thoughtlessness and irresponsibility in the character of Isabella Thorpe. On the other side, Catherine's prompt rejection of John Thorpe's fib to get her out of her prior engagement to take a walk with Eleanor Tilney suggests that there is a firm

core to her character as well as possibilities for growth, possibilities that are further proved by her fortitude in making her own way back home after being rudely thrust out of the abbey.

Extrinsic Evidence for the Model

Any theory of the Gothic novel would be incomplete if it did not attempt to explain some of the peculiar features of the genre and its place in literary history. The first and most obvious feature is the fact that, while the Gothic was immensely popular in its own time (roughly 40 percent of the works of fiction published between 1795 and 1820 would be classified as Gothic novels), it was never esteemed. Reviewers for both highbrow and popular publications generally gave the back of their hand to the Gothic. Part of the reason for this has to do with what Ina Ferris has called gendered reading. As a genre the Gothic was considered female reading and for that reason considered inferior to other genres of fiction, such as the historical novel, which were considered either masculine or neutral *(Achievement of Literary Authority).* This reason alone does not, however, fully account for the low reputation of the Gothic, since other forms of "female reading" such as the social comedies of Burney and Austen were rapidly granted something approaching canonical status, insofar as the novel, always more resistant to the process of canonization than the poetical genres, was capable of achieving such status.

For that matter, one would have to say that, from its own time until the very recent past, there have been no genuinely canonical Gothic novels. Although Walpole and Radcliffe, Lewis and Maturin were reprinted often during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, none of the quintessentially Gothic novelists has achieved the canonical status of, say, Smollett and Sterne. The single exception to this, and it is a very recent exception, is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein,* which has become a canonical novel in the last twenty years or so. Until the 1970s, that is, the Gothic novel was uncanonical, however interesting as a topic for literary historians and collectors of old volumes. Aside from a few pioneering studies by Edith Birkhead and the mad antiquarian Montague Summers, very little had been written about the Gothic. In the last twenty years, however, the Gothic has become fashionable. Over five hundred articles have appeared in the MLA Bibliography on Gothic topics since 1980. Why this should have been is worthy of some discussion.

The second feature of the Gothic romance is that it is one of the few

literary genres in which the fragment has flourished as a form. It is not merely Jane Austen's joke in *Northanger Abbey* that Gothic novels operate by means of fragmentary manuscripts. One of the most frequently reprinted, imitated, and parodied pieces of the period was "Sir Bertrand," either by Anna Laetitia Aikin, afterward better known as Mrs. Barbauld, or more likely by her brother John Aikin. "Sir Bertrand" is a Gothic tale about a knight confronting mysterious dangers to free a woman from a magical spell that begins in the midst of a confusing situation and breaks off, without any coherent explanation, in mid-sentence. Connected with this, as George Hagerty has pointed out in *Gothic Fiction/Gothic Form,* is the fact that the Gothic operates as much as a "tale" as it does as a "novel"; Gothic fiction is in at the creation of the short story in English, which seems to derive, at least in part, from the interpolated Gothic stories in Scott and the short horror tales of Poe.

I would like to propose that it is no accident that it was in our own day, a period whose aesthetic ideology has jettisoned the ideal of organic unity and substituted *différance,* that the Gothic novel has become valorized as it had never been since the last years of the eighteenth century, and that a Gothic novel, *Frankenstein,* has become one of the canonical texts of pre-Victorian fiction. But in fact I would like to claim even more: that the Gothic novel of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was radically incoherent, and that one can begin to account for the history of the Gothic novel as a form only when one begins to see that history as a search for form it never achieved.

The End of the Gothic Romance

In eighteenth-century terms, the word *progress* is ambiguous. It looks forward to a modern sense of development, improvement, gradual perfection, but it also looks backward to an earlier sense of a circular procession—the moving from one site to another of the royal court—ever onward and elsewhere but ultimately returning to its point of origin. The "progress of romance," in other words, was a progress primarily in the older sense of the term. From its beginnings in the novels of Walpole, Radcliffe, and Lewis, the Gothic novel does not rise to ever-greater heights. Rather it becomes in plot more and more baroque and fantastic, and in language more and more operatic, as the sources of stimulation pioneered by the founders wear ever thinner. In its last years, it throws out three magnificent specimens, still read-

able today as most of the works of its 1809 heyday no longer are: *Frankenstein, Melmoth,* and *The Confessions of a Justified Sinner,* but by this time the knell of the Gothic has already been rung. The ringer, of course, was Walter Scott.

Scott had already come to prominence as a poet in the first generation of Romantics when he turned to the novel, which has been the most lasting part of his fame. Beginning with *Waverley,* published anonymously in 1814, and continuing for two decades, Scott began to explore a vein of romantic fiction that abutted onto the Gothic novel—it even featured the superstitions and legends of the border country between Scotland and England. But within all the romance of Scott's fiction, the banditti, the Highland chiefs, and their clans, there was always an attention to concrete and accurate detail, to probability, to historical forces and causality, that was designed to appeal to a different sort of public. As the researches of Ina Ferris have shown, the reviewers of *Waverley* in contemporary magazines told its potential audience quite explicitly that the novel was designed for a *masculine* fancy, as opposed to the *feminine* reading demanded by the Gothic.

The popularity of Scott and historical romances like his was immense, because in effect Scott had, by his use of historical detail, licensed male readers to enjoy the romance, which otherwise they had despised—or pretended to despise—as a feminine aesthetic experience. But even as males were joining enthusiastically the ranks of the readers of romance, romance itself had been forced to change, to leave the realms of fantasy for the concrete and the historical. Publishers turned down the pure Gothic novel, with its principally female readership, for the historical romance, whose mixed appeal was wider and therefore more profitable. In granting a new and even wider audience to romance, Scott had given the Gothic as such its deathblow.

Scott's relation to the romantic and fantastic tenor of the Gothic novel is complex and not easy to define. Relative to the historical novels of Maria Edgeworth, Scott's main plots tend to be more adventurous and stirring while still keeping within the broad framework of naturalistic probability. One reason the relatively romantic main plots seem to be more-or-less realistic, though, is that within the novels, intruded as digressions, are included short narratives entirely of a piece with the Gothic romance, and it is by comparison with these that the main plot appears to accord with the strictest naturalistic probability. In effect the reader is the more willing to excuse Scott's elaborate use of chance and coincidence in the main plot because we are spared the far grosser suspension of disbelief that would be required to

credit the supernatural digressions. Edith Birkhead considered *The Bride of Lammermoor* "the only one of Scott's works which might fitly be called a 'tale of terror'" (153); and while there are links there, I would agree with David Punter's argument that that novel does not belong in the Gothic genre (164).

One can see how Scott characteristically uses Romance themes and structures of probability in one of his typical historical novels, *Redgauntlet*. *Redgauntlet* (1824) was Scott's third novel about the Jacobite rebellions. As in *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*, it is about a romantic English gentleman, Darsie Latimer, who is accidentally caught up in a treasonous plot to put the Pretender on the throne. Unlike the Fifteen in *Rob Roy* and the Forty-Five in *Waverley*, the plot in *Redgauntlet*, set in the summer of 1765, has no basis in fact.[13] Alan Fairford and Darsie Latimer, the dual protagonists, represent the two sides of the young Walter Scott: the hard-working man of sense and the irrepressible romantic.

The events of the main plot are—abstractly considered—precisely of the sort one would expect in a plot by Radcliffe. The protagonist is kidnapped and is in the power of a nobleman of enormous power and ambiguous morality. Even his identity seems to shift as he moves furtively but easily around the picturesque landscape, linking up with outlaws and condemned traitors at every turn. The protagonist is becoming inexorably inveigled into a series of events that could easily lead to a violent and ignominious death. At the same time, the prospect is broached of a romantic attachment to an enormously attractive character of the opposite sex; the Other makes what seems to be unambiguous sexual advances, to the protagonist's shame and disgust: ultimately the relationship between them is revealed (with a shudder at the incestuous feelings the protagonist harbored) to be that of brother and sister.

But anyone who has read *Redgauntlet* will recognize that the tone of the novel entirely belies this Gothic summary. The fact that the kidnapped protagonist is a young and adventurous male himself running away from the longueurs of legal education (and getting a bit more adventure than he had bargained for) suggests at once that the emotional keynote of the Gothic—terror—is not a significant part of this novel. Even the romance of Darsie Latimer's involvement in the Jacobite plot, and of his attraction to the mysterious woman of the Green Mantle is tempered by the jocularity and realism of Scott's matter-of-fact narration, and the serious, almost melodramatic pursuit of Darsie by his alter ego, Alan Fairford, is balanced by the counterpursuit of solicitor Fairford by his ubiquitous legal client Peter Peebles, which moves this version of Gothic romance in the direction of farce.

The Gothic tale proper appears instead as a single intruded narrative, the justly famous "Wandering Willie's Tale" of Steenie Steenson's encounter with the ghost of Sir Robert Redgauntlet.[14] Briefly, Steenie has fallen behind in his rent, borrows the necessary cash on the last possible day, and brings it to the laird, who is thought to have made pacts with the devil. Redgauntlet, in the midst of a carouse with his familiar (a hideous and malevolent pet monkey) takes the silver but dies of a sudden fit, screaming and wailing, before he can give Steenie a receipt. When the heir, Sir John Redgauntlet, takes over the estate, he finds no record of Steenie having paid his rent. Steenie explains what happened, but his lack of any receipt or witness to the payment leaves Sir John incredulous. All seems about to be lost when the despondent Steenie encounters in a forest a strange horseman who offers to help him. Immediately Steenie finds himself at the door of Castle Redgauntlet (though he knows the house to be miles away), enters, and finds his late master carousing once more, this time with a host of dead Scottish patriots (from Lauderdale to Claverhouse). Following the horseman's advice, Steenie refuses food and drink, and he also evades playing on the bagpipes in homage to the demon (Steenie notes just in time that the chanter is white-hot with hellfire) and escapes with his receipt, which he takes to the living heir. Sir John is amazed by the receipt, clearly genuine though dated the previous day, but gives his own credit after he finds Steenie's silver in an old disused turret of the castle, which Sir Robert's ape had apparently been using to hide objects he had purloined in the hall.

But "Wandering Willie's Tale" is not merely intruded into the main action of *Redgauntlet;* it recapitulates its themes. Sir Robert, like the Young Pretender, is determined to have his own again; like Charles Edward Stuart, he has an unbreakable attachment to drink and women that ultimately proves his undoing; and he is associated with the whole band of Scottish patriots whose private morality clashed with their stern devotion to Scottish freedom and independence. Even the Scottish national attachment to papers, receipts, and dry legalities appears both in "Wandering Willie's Tale"—as the central nexus of the story—and in the main plot with the Peter Peebles case and with Alan Fairford's legalistic attempts to discover his friend Darsie. Formally, then, *Redgauntlet* inverts the situation of *Northanger Abbey:* instead of presenting a pseudo-Gothic situation whose absurdity is demonstrated by exposure to the matter-of-fact of quotidian life, here the Gothic tale—in its chilling apparent plausibility—exposes the absurd otherworldliness underlying Scottish revanchism.

The Brontës and the Gothic Aftermath

It would be wrong, however, to conclude this chapter with the notion that the Gothic novel never found a mode of coherence, never succeeded in arriving at a plot form that could simultaneously allow the play of feeling and the unity of wholeness. It found both, but only a generation after the heyday of the genre. The last Gothic novel, as has long been recognized, was *Jane Eyre.* In *Jane Eyre* Charlotte Brontë was able to restore coherence to the Gothic by recombining the hero and the villain, the threat and the reward. Both are embodied in the Byronic Edward Fairfax Rochester, who both terrifies and fascinates Jane, who attempts to inveigle her into a bigamous marriage, but finally, blind and punished for his hubris, as much for his virtues as his sins, calls to her and appears to her second sight to implore her to his side. Even more easily than in Mrs. Radcliffe, we can recognize in *Jane Eyre* a Gothic reinscription of *Pamela,* in which the part of Mrs. Jewkes, the sexually disgusting creature who threatens the heroine, is played by Rochester's mad first wife, Bertha Mason, and in which the fanatical missionary St. John Rivers plays the part formerly assigned to Parson Williams (as the Apollonian alternative whose value the heroine must acknowledge, though it is an alternative she must decline in favor of her more Dionysian fate).

One reason *Jane Eyre* could have been written in 1847 but not in 1797 or in 1817 is the passing of Johnson's Rule as an element of aesthetic ideology. By 1847 it was no longer required that either Jane or Rochester be perfectly virtuous, nor were the virtuous any longer required to detest the wicked. Rochester could offer Jane a bigamous marriage, and Jane come close to being willing to live with Rochester outside marriage without foreclosing the possibility of an essentially happy ending for them as a couple. The mixed state of sublunary nature, which Johnson had admired as the secret of Shakespeare's realism, had finally become a feature of the heroes and heroines of romance.

Furthermore, and as a consequence, desirable moral change, such as Austen had introduced into *Emma,* had become an important feature of the complex plot, so that, although Charlotte Brontë is supposed to have disliked Austen as a novelist, she nevertheless advanced her version of the female bildungsroman. The effect is that we witness Jane turning from a merely willful and rebellious girl to a woman of spirit and dedication, unlike the traditional Gothic heroine, swooning or pert, in that Jane takes the measure of her own life and assumes full responsibility for it. Like many a Gothic

heroine, she aspires to a life that is simultaneously virtuous and happy. Her vision of virtue, however, is not a passive avoidance of sin but a life doing good in the world for others. The romance of her meeting with Edward Rochester resides less in any immediate attraction she forms for his Byronic countenance than in her own active part in helping the man, lamed by a fall from his horse, to recover himself. "The incident . . . marked with change one single hour of a monotonous life. My help had been needed and claimed; I had given it: I was pleased to have done something; trivial, transitory as the deed was, it was yet an active thing, and I was weary of an existence all passive" (116–17). The other mainspring of Jane's existence is, of course, that others live to love her. This it is that makes her prefer the hardships—and companionship—of Lowood to life with the Reeds, and to restlessly advertise for a position as governess after her friend at Lowood, Miss Temple, marries and leaves.

The former value, developed at the Lowood School but most memorably expressed when Jane on the rooftops of Thornfield restlessly imagines "a power of vision" that will make her present to those "other and more vivid kinds of goodness" than she has experienced in her limited life, forces Jane to give up Rochester when she discovers that he can offer her only the life of a kept mistress at Marseilles. It is significant that she is tempted by his offer and rejects the life she would thus lead not merely for its immorality but for the desuetude and inanition it promises, which would destroy her self-respect. And it is equally significant that she is tempted by the life offered her by St. John Rivers as a Christian missionary in China and rejects that life, not because of its hardships or risk of death, but because, on the terms he insists are necessary, it will require her to violate her deepest self by marrying a man who cannot love her.

If Brontë has kept some of the traditional plot devices of the Gothic romance—ghosts, gytrashes, mysterious warnings, along with a plot that places a mystery about the heroine's birth that leads to discoveries of previously unrealized wealth—the ending of her novel is something genuinely new. Far from restoring the hero to the heroine as he was, Brontë presents Jane and Rochester as both changed not just materially but psychically by the experiences they have undergone after their parting, so that their union reinforces the protagonist's dedication to a virtue that is not merely rewarded but determined and achieved. It was from that new beginning—really a return with a difference to the form of *Pamela*—that the new Gothic novel took shape; and the romances published by Mills and Boon in England, or by the house of Harlequin in America, have tended to

be reinscriptions—the names and places changed to protect the innocent—of *Jane Eyre.*

It is also no accident that Charlotte's sister Emily's less often imitated masterpiece of Gothic epigonism, *Wuthering Heights,* was the fully formed Manfred's Tale neither Lewis nor Maturin succeeded in writing. Emily Brontë's bold step was in portraying her hero/villain as the heroine's truest lover, and revealing that the manifest cruelties he commits after her death (which operate primarily against her daughter and two nephews) are enacted as the tangible signs of the intense suffering he felt at her death and continues to feel during the years of separation from her. We understand that Heathcliff's rage at his separation from Catherine is as transcendent as his love for her, and we recognize his feeling as the heroic expansion of that impatience and envy of the untroubled that comes to us all in states of grief and loss. It is significant that we do not react to Heathcliff's machinations as betokening a change in character, but only a shift in his object relations. Rationalists like Arnold Kettle who see the bourgeois need to amass and concentrate capital in Heathcliff's conduct when he engrosses the landed and personal properties of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, strike one as essentially irrelevant to the case. Heathcliff amasses money and power not for the sake of gain but in order to become a combination of the Hindley Earnshaw who had beaten him and the Edgar Linton who had taken his Catherine, and we also understand that money and power are ultimately useless to the man who "cannot live without his life . . . cannot live without his soul."

What differentiates *Wuthering Heights* from other punitive tragedies of lost souls like *The Monk* is, of course, the denouement representing the transcendent love of Heathcliff and Catherine as fulfilled and completed, as it were, beyond the grave. "They's Heathcliff and a woman, yonder, under t' Nab . . . un' Aw darnut pass 'em," the shepherd-boy tells Lockwood, and despite Nelly Dean's conventional skepticism about this ("The dead are at peace, Mr. Lockwood, and it is not right to speak of them with levity"), our satisfaction with the novel would be very different if we could not identify with certainty the unspecified woman with whom the ghostly Heathcliff haunts the Heights, and if we were not satisfied that they were as fulfilled in their spiritual union as the earthly lovers, Hareton and the younger Catherine, can be in their mortal life. Like her sister's novel, *Jane Eyre, Wuthering Heights* violates Johnson's Rule with a vengeance, combining the roles of the villain and hero and achieving in its complex and unique form a unity and coherence the Gothic novel itself never found.

CHAPTER FIVE
The Reception of the Gothic Novel in the 1790s

The Gothic Reader

If the method of Chicago formalism is able to give us an account of where the Gothic form came from and why it "progressed" as it did, with no major writer able to transcend the incoherence and contradictions entailed by its defining parameters and aesthetic ideology, it has no way of discussing why the vogue of the Gothic came to an end. Institutional forms may be created and used as models, but there is no easy way of discussing why it is that people *stop* writing them, or reviewing them favorably, or publishing them. For this we have to move to a species of literary historiography that takes account of consumption rather than production, the reception theory of Wolfgang Iser and (particularly) of Hans Robert Jauss, already outlined and discussed in chapter 2.

One of the characteristic problems raised by Jauss's system is identifying the reader whose shifting interests and psychology are the principal causes of historical change. In reading Jauss one must be aware that *reader* is a potentially ambiguous word. On the one hand there is an ideal reader immanent in each text: the so-called *implizierte Leser* of Jauss's colleague at Konstanz, Wolfgang Iser. On the other hand, there are actual readers, contemporary with the author or later, whose characteristics may or may not be identical with those the author projected onto his text. In the case of successful popular literature, the distinction between the contemporary audience and the implied reader may be one without a difference. But important books help to mold and shape the audience just as much as the audience shapes the literary canon, and many novelists—such as Flaubert and Joyce—have by this

process of projection helped to bring into being audiences that were largely absent when they lived and wrote.

To complicate the picture slightly further, reading for Jauss occurs not in the mass but in different *strata* of the audience, and he discusses reception on three levels: (1) a *Gipfelsebene* of readers who are also creative writers that contribute directly to production, (2) a *mittelere Ebene* of writers who influence the general public but are not directly involved in creativity (e.g., reviewers), (3) and a *präreflexive Ebene* of general readers who merely consume texts and provide the potential market for their production ("Theses on the Transition" 138–46).

From all this, you would expect that Jauss's practical criticism would consist of studies of the real audience's reaction to various texts at various times throughout history. If so, you would be disappointed. Jauss had been vague in "Literary History as Challenge" about whether the prior commitment of the historian of reception was to the ideal reader immanent in the text or to the real reader who spent real money to acquire the book. But it became clear by the late 1970s that for him the fact that "it is easier to grasp the implied rather than the explicit reader's role" meant that "the role of the implied reader deserves methodological preference."[1] In fact Jauss's preference for the implicit over the explicit reader is not merely a hermeneutical priority. A survey of his own practical criticism suggests that he is less than enthusiastic about examining, in the messy and difficult ways such historical research requires, how actual readers have responded to texts. Though he gives plenty of lip service to the need to broaden the notion of reading, Jauss has published no examples of the pragmatic influence of the second and third levels of the audience. Instead he prefers to study the authors on the peak reading each other.[2]

One could apply that method to the Gothic without much difficulty. One could create a reception-study concentrating on how Matthew Lewis excitedly read Radcliffe's *Udolpho* and produced *The Monk,* or how Radcliffe read *The Monk,* was horrified in both senses of the word, and retorted with *The Italian.* But such a result is not going to differ very much from old-fashioned influence studies. What makes Jauss worth taking up, though, is not any greater precision of terminology that he might lend to influence studies but rather his implicit notion that literature changes at least in part from the bottom up. The study that follows, an investigation of the reception of the Gothic novel in the decade from 1795 to 1805, takes its impulse from Jauss's "Literary History as Challenge," but as will become

apparent, my approach is more pragmatical than Jauss's own practical criticism has been thus far.

The Gothic and the French Revolution

One practical use of looking at how actual readers responded to the Gothic is to warn you off theories that are attractive but empty. For example, the Gothic seems *not* to be connected with politics in some of the facile ways critics have suggested. Any simplistic notion of the Gothic as a metaphor for the French Revolution runs aground on the ways in which critics during the most exciting phases of the revolution fail to make such conscious connections.[3]

The only exception my researches turned up was one that needs to be read very carefully. Here R.R., writing in the *European Magazine*—one of the most chauvinistic periodicals of the day—was willing to condemn Matthew Lewis's *Monk* as a revolutionary document in the following terms:

> Though we readily acknowledge the genius and talents manifested in various parts of this unequal production, yet what good purpose is to be answered by an *oblique attack* upon *venerable establishments,* we are at a loss to conjecture. We know that the presses of the Continent teemed with compositions of this character while the Revolution was preparing in France; yet what have the *infidels* who produced it substituted in the place of the *religion* they have banished. The question agitated by the philosophic Bayle on the *comparative mischiefs* of *superstition* and *atheism* must now *rest* for ever; for surely there is no page in the history of *bigotry* to parallel the enormities that have been perpetrated in the present day by *democratic enthusiasts* and *atheistical devotees.* (114–15)

This review is what football fans might call a "late hit"—the February 1797 date is eight months after the publication of the book—and the issue here is clearly religious rather than political. The brief diatribe does not make clear precisely what aspect of *The Monk* is objectionable, but one plausible reading is that Lewis's representation of hypocrisy and cruelty in his Monk and his Abbess is treated as a general "*attack* upon *venerable establishments*"; the implication is that anyone who, like Lewis, would attack the Church established in Spain would attack the Church established in England. And after all, French writing of this infidel sort had caused the

revolution over there, and that same sort of thing might cause a revolution here in England.[4]

To put this review into context, one needs to take a glance at the same *European Magazine* in June 1794, during the Great Terror, when the moderates like Danton had already been guillotined and the government was in the hands of Robespierre and the Committee of Public Safety, when France was already at war with England and the German empire. At this stage the magazine's Domestic Intelligence column approvingly mentions the arrest (by an entire company of light dragoons) of three Sheffield men accused of having made "pikes of near seven feet";[5] and the London mob's breaking of windows in the town houses of those gentry who were *not* celebrating with bonfires Admiral Howe's victory over the French navy on the "Glorious First of June." But meanwhile that selfsame issue contains a glowingly favorable review of Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho,* and the second installment of a Gothic tale titled "The Nun" imitative of Diderot. No suggestion is made at that time that the Gothic novel had anything to do with the revolution.

What had happened between June 1794 and February 1797 was a temporary accession of political paranoia like the McCarthy era in the United States. After mass meetings in London protesting the war, followed by an attempt on the life of George III late in 1796, Pitt's coalition government passed two bills on Treasonable Practices and Seditions Meetings that severely curtailed personal liberty. No one was ever prosecuted under them, but the government—and those who supported it—were terrified of any threat to "venerable establishments." One is surprised that R.R.'s review of *The Monk* was a unique event. The *European Magazine* did review Mrs. Radcliffe's *Italian* unfavorably in their January issue—but that was not quite so unusual.[6]

The Shift to *Aisthesis*

Let us now turn, then, to some results of a baseline study I have been making of the reception of the Gothic novel in the decades bracketing the turn of the nineteenth century. The hypothesis that I am following up, and that seems tentatively warranted by the data I have collected, is that the Gothic novel sits astride a major shift in the response of readers to literature, a shift (in Jauss's terms) from *catharsis* to *aisthesis,* or in basic English, a shift from reading for information, and for the sake of entry into a verisimilar world

otherwise inaccessible to the reader, toward reading as an escape from the world one inhabits into an inner site of fantasy.

My research thus validates Q. D. Leavis's ideological argument, in *Fiction and the Reading Public,* that the reader of fiction has changed in character and motivation since the days of Fielding and Richardson, with the result that much of the modern public is baffled by Woolf and Joyce (135–50). Leavis assigns various dates to this shift—between 1770, with Charles Jenner's *The Placid Man,* and 1845, with the novels of Bulwer-Lytton—because for her own political point, the exact date doesn't matter. I would date the significant shift in response within these parameters, close to the turn of the nineteenth century. For my purposes, however, Leavis's categories of reader response are too narrowly judgmental and too simplistic. Her distinction is merely between active and passive reading—with the former evaluated as good and the latter as bad; Leavis does not discriminate between one mode of activity or receptivity and another. From Jauss's point of view, however, *aisthesis* is as valid a mode of aesthetic experience as any other. In his framework, the active modes of reading demanded by *Tom Jones* and by *Ulysses* or *Mrs. Dalloway* are not identical (as in Leavis's scheme) but different. Joyce and Woolf demand the reader's engagement in helping to *create* their narratives (Jauss's *poiesis*), whereas the engagement of the implied reader of Fielding has a very different *cathartic* function.

Despite these cavils, Leavis is surely correct that something happened to the British reading public. What happened could be exemplified in the contrast between the review of Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* by the anonymous critic for the *Monthly Review* for 1794 and by Thomas Noon Talfourd in the *New Monthly Review* for 1820. In the former, Radcliffe is praised for her "correctness of sentiment and elegance of style," for her "admirable ingenuity of contrivance to awaken [the reader's] curiosity, and to bind him in the chains of suspense," and for "a vigour of conception and a delicacy of feeling which are capable of producing the strongest sympathetic emotions, whether of pity or of terror" (279). These very same criteria of excellence are applied to *Udolpho* by the *Analytical Review* and *British Critic,* which praised the novel, as well as by the *Critical Review,* where the young S. T. Coleridge attacked it for *hyper*-ingenuity of contrivance (361–62).

Contrast Talfourd: "When we read [Mrs. Radcliffe's romances], the world seems shut out, and we breathe only in an enchanted region where . . . the sad voices of the past echo through deep vaults and lonely galleries" (8). With Talfourd stands William Hazlitt, who in 1818 stated that Radcliffe

"makes her readers twice children, and from the dim and shadowy veil which she draws over the objects of her fancy, forces us to believe all that is strange and next to impossible. . . . All the fascination that links the world of passion to the world unknown is hers, and she plays with it at her pleasure; she has all the poetry of romance, all that is obscure, visionary and objectless in the imagination" (195). It is not just the style of writing that is different here: the reviewers of 1794 are standing outside and evaluating a pretty fiction, while the later Talfourd and Hazlitt have entered inwardly into an imagined world.[7]

Their implicit notion that the object of literary art might be to move the reader to a state of ecstatic transport had been announced considerably earlier than *Udolpho,* when the Gothic vogue was just getting under way. Anna Laetitia Aikin (later known as Mrs. Barbauld) in "On the Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror" (1773) explains the effect of the tale of horror in the following terms:

> A strange and unexpected event awakens the mind, and keeps it on the stretch; and where the agency of invisible beings is introduced . . . 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. (125)

Years later, in 1810, Mrs. Barbauld makes such claims in favor of reading for the sake of escape and imaginative play, not merely for the Gothic but for novels in general:

> The humble novel is always ready to enliven the gloom of solitude, . . . to take man from himself (at many seasons the worst company he can be in,) and, while the moving picture of life passes before him, to make him forget the subject of his own complaints. It is pleasant to the mind to sport in the boundless regions of possibility; to find relief from the sameness of everyday occurrences by expatiating amidst brighter skies and fairer fields; to exhibit love that is always happy, valour that is always successful; to feed the appetite for wonder by a quick succession of marvellous events. ("On the Origin" 58)

This sense of the Gothic as demanding an inward projection, as carrying the reader toward states of transport and escape, appears not only in writers who favor and relish the state but in those who do not.[8] A close examination of the periodical literature in the latter decades of the eighteenth century, supplemented by the sources collected in John Tinnan Taylor's *Early Oppo-*

sition to the English Novel, has led me to the conclusion that, where those attacking the promiscuous reading of fiction had tended to suggest, in the 1760s and 1770s, that indiscriminate reading was likely to erode the moral principles, especially those of women, by providing poor examples of conduct, in the period after 1795 the antifiction pamphleteer was more likely to attack reading as something whose pernicious tendency acted by sapping strength of mind, wasting precious time, and calling the female reader into a world whose attractions would lead her to neglect the duties and pleasures of mere sublunary existence.

This change must be seen as a tendency rather than a revolution: nothing abruptly occurred in 1795. We can find moralists like John Bennett warning in 1789 that a passion for literature "is dangerous to a woman. It . . . inspires such a romantic turn of mind, as is utterly inconsistent with the solid duties and proprieties of life." Nor was this change permanent. In a generation or two, the pendulum was to swing back, for as Robert Colby has shown, the hostile reaction of the clergy to the sensation novels of the 1860s was a matter of their supposedly unwholesome influence on conduct rather than for sponsoring an evasion of the quotidian world in favor of an imaginary one.[9]

But it is clearly at the height of the Gothic vogue that "castle-building," the use of literature as material for fantasy, becomes the moralist's chief complaint. For example, one "Arietta," a self-styled castle-builder, writes in to *Literary Leisure* to confess that she was in her youth "a great reader . . . , so, what between studying Novels and inventing Moral tales for Magazines, my head was stored with marvellous adventures and hair-breadth 'scapes, such as I trusted to become the heroine of myself when time should have matured the grains still folded up in the bud of youth." Now having wasted that youth, she finds herself "at forty-seven, filling presently the same situation in the same family." T.H., in *Lady's Monthly Museum,* writes about her daughter that she "reads nothing in the world but novels. I am afraid she will read herself into a consumption. . . . These time-killing companions monopolize every hour that is not devoted to dress or sleep. . . . I am afraid," she concludes, "that the girl will never get a husband," and she hopes the editor will suggest the name of a man willing to wed a beautiful and well-off young lady with the defect of an addiction to fiction. On a more hysterical note, a "Letter" in the *Sylph* for 6 October 1795 claims to have "actually seen mothers, in miserable garrets, *crying for the imaginary distress of an heroine,* while their children were *crying for bread.*" And one "Rimelli," writing on "Novels and Romances" for the *Monthly Mirror,* insists that "Romances . . . serve only to estrange the minds of youth (specially of females) from their

own affairs and transmit them to those of which they read: so that, while totally absorbed with lamenting and condoling with the melancholy situation of . . . a Matilda . . . they neglect both their own interests and the several duties which they owe to parent, friend or brother."[10]

These are typical complaints from the last five years of the eighteenth century. Before the advent of the Gothic novel, in the 1760s and 1770s, the chief complaint of antinovel preaching concerns fiction that, it was feared, would excite the amorous propensities of the young or provide them with poor examples of moral conduct—in short, the verdict of Johnson's *Rambler* no. 4, Johnson's Rule, whose formal consequences we examined in the previous chapter.[11] Such moral objections do not entirely die out in the heyday of the Gothic: indeed the moralists were out in force at the appearance of *The Monk*.[12] But we begin to hear with increasing frequency a new cause of disapproval—distrust of the power of fiction to seduce the reader into an inward world. Around the turn of the nineteenth century this issue begins statistically to supersede those raised by Johnson.

The notion of such seduction by fiction appears, naturally enough, in the fiction of the period as well. The most famous fictional victim of the Gothic novel is Catherine Morland, the heroine of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (written in some form by 1803, though revised much later and not published until 1817, after Austen's death). It is Catherine who, after reading *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* mistakes a laundry list for a fragmentary manuscript and takes General Tilney for a uxoricide, when he is in fact only the average snobbish and mercenary man of the world.

But Catherine is only one of a multitude of such victims of romance, whose pedigree goes back earlier in the eighteenth century to Charlotte Lennox's Arabella in *The Female Quixote* (1752) and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's Lydia Languish in *The Rivals* (1775). Among the less well known is Sophia Beauclerc, of Mary Charlton's novel *Rosella, or Modern Occurrences,* published in 1799 by the same Minerva Press that furnished such Sophias and Catherines with their favorite reading. Sophia "could think and dream only on wild rocks and mountains, tremendous precipices, fringing woods, gushing cataracts, romantic cottages placed on acclivities and declivities, lovely Jacquelinas, Clarentinas, Rosinas, Emmelinas, and more humble Joannas, Susannas, Cicelies and Annas who inhabited them . . . , gazing at the pale moon which never fails to dart its silver beams through their humble casements with such uncommon brilliancy as to allow them to chuse by its pale light a favored poet from their libraries." After yielding to this elaborate fantasy—and the sentence I have been quoting in fact goes on

for several pages—Sophia drags herself and her unacknowledged daughter off on a jaunt through Scotland and Wales "to explore the realms of romance." There in the boondocks, they are constantly making mistakes of the sort with which we are familiar, of losing touch with reality because their inner light sees only Gothic romance (1:281–84).

Yet another example, probably read by Jane Austen, since she may be echoing the book at the beginning of *Northanger Abbey,* is *The Heroine, or the Adventures of Cherubina,* by Eaton Stannard Barrett (1813). Here Cherry Wilkinson, unhappily "doomed" as she says "to endure the security of a home, and the dullness of an unimpeached reputation" (1:14–15), rechristens herself Cherubina de Willoughby and elopes to London in quest of the misfortunes and adventures that are the inevitable lot of the heroines of the romances to which she is addicted. Fortunately for this particular female Quixote, a young man who happens to be her father's choice for her husband is willing to play Sancho Panza and he eventually manages to shock her back into sanity again.

These fictions—to which we could also add Mary Brunton's *Self-Controul*—are obviously exaggerated portraits, but equally obviously they have to be based upon something real or the satire could not have been so common or current. I suspect that they were based upon something very real indeed. One reason why, around the turn of the nineteenth century, the female Quixote reappears again and again as a reader of the Gothic novel has to do with the feelings demanded of readers by the Gothic itself. I would claim that the implied reader of the Gothic novel is a somewhat different being than the implied reader of (say) Fielding and Smollett, and that the Gothic demands for its full effects—effects not only of terror but of sublimity—a less skeptical or self-contained mind-set and a more empathetic attitude than does comic realism.

These demands are implicit in the structure of suspense in Gothic novels. The implied reader of *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* for example, is expected to retain strong suspense about the secret concealed by the celebrated Black Veil, despite the fact that Emily, after her initial swoon, is not actively threatened by it. The implied reader of *The Monk* is expected to develop strong tension over the fate of Raymond at the hands of the Bleeding Nun—despite the fact that Raymond himself is narrating the story of the Nun and the Wandering Jew in a self-conscious fashion that continually advertises to us that he has lived to tell the tale. These structures of suspense presume an identification between the reader and the focalizing character that goes well beyond what serious narratives earlier in the century

demanded. In a novel like, say, *Tom Jones,* suspense is aroused only by episodes that directly touch the plot's central instabilities, while digressions off the main narrative line are structured not as suspense stories but as semi-independent apologues.

These demands are also implicit in the verbal texture and point of view typical of the Gothic novel. Coral Ann Howells has finely analyzed a passage from volume 3, chapter 6 of *Udolpho,* showing how the objective narrator, technically always present, disappears from view so that the reader is forced to accept the ultimately vacuous imaginings and suppositions of Emily at face value. And even Radcliffe's style contributes to the effect: "While the passage is cast in the form of reasoned argument, with one sentence depending on and balancing the other, it has really only the *appearance* of judiciousness; what we have in effect is the dramatisation of a process very close to obsession, going round and round the same point and finding no escape or release from the central anxiety" (Howells, 54–55).

To be sure, one could claim that an empathic mind-set tightly focused upon the heroine's obsessions was nothing new. Something of the kind had been demanded of readers since mid-century, by Richardson's *Clarissa* and by some of the novels of the sentimental school, which were surely in some sense emotional sources of the Gothic. And yet if differences in quantity eventually make for differences in quality, if you would expect there to be a difference between the effects of *occasionally* watching a soap opera on television and watching soaps as a steady diet, then perhaps the Gothic novel had such an effect on a major segment of the British reading public.[13] That the addiction existed seems clear, not only from cautionary letters to women's magazines but from documents like receipts from circulating libraries, which show one celebrated bluestocking going through fifty-five volumes of romance in the space of a month.[14]

The shifts in reading patterns I have marked here have been noted by other scholars, but they have not always been interpreted in the same way. For example, Robert D. Mayo, in his immensely learned volume *The English Novel in the Magazines,* concluded that

> the criticism of prose fiction in the miscellanies, . . . appears to be based not on compromise, but on contradiction. Motivated by an obvious desire to please the greatest number of potential readers, editors, directly or by implication, embraced all opinions on the English novel without worrying too much about consistency. The new fiction . . . was a serious threat to an ordered society . . . ; it was also a

> delightful and profitable companion in idle hours, a useful guide to the social virtues, and part of the necessary equipment of every person of parts. (271–72)

Mayo has closely observed the chaos and contradiction of opinions, but he seems to feel that the chaos is without any more significance than the editors' understandable desire to pander to their readership. I think to the contrary that the split in the readership of magazines indicates something very significant, a shift in motives and in response. The grinding of moral and aesthetic gears that Mayo views as a meaningless noise signals to me—as gear grinding sometimes does—the uncomfortable transition between two stable states.

We can explain Mayo's contradictions by positing that in the 1790s there were two very different readers for whom writers wrote: the first, whom clergymen and journalists of the age personified as older and male, who read primarily for factual information, for the reinforcement of ethical values, and for the pleasure of recognizing the persons and things of his world; a second, personified as younger and female, receptive rather than critical, and eager to indulge in what Akenside had lauded as "the pleasures of the imagination."

What I am suggesting is that the Gothic novel came in simultaneously with a new wave in reader response. In answer to the inevitable question—What caused what?—I would reply that the vogue of the Gothic probably functioned as both cause and effect. That is, the Gothic was able to develop as a genre owing to the ready-made presence of an audience segment already partially prepared, by Richardson, Prévost, and the sentimental novelists, to read for imaginative play and escape. But the demands of the Gothic text upon the reader, not merely for suspension of disbelief but for an empathic participation in the perils and plight of the protagonists, reinforced the already growing shift in response. Furthermore, the Gothic vogue was partly self-generating, in that its popularity began to draw in new classes of reader that had not formerly been a significant part of the market for literature.

One major result was to pave the way for the reception of Romanticism in poetry as well as fiction, with the result that English bards—Wordsworth, Byron, and Scott, at least—despite a bit of rough handling from Scottish reviewers, were able to stir without conspicuous resistance a public that already looked to literature for the play of fantasy, dream, and desire. The second result was in the Gothic itself, which after 1810 tended to abandon the historical themes of Radcliffe and the German *Schauerromantik* in favor

of the more explicitly fantastic imaginative worlds of Mary Shelley and Charles Robert Maturin. By then the Gothic wave itself had already begun to recede, leaving in its ebb two masterpieces, *Frankenstein* (1818) and *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820). By 1830, certainly, the genre had been temporarily exhausted from oversupply by professionals and amateurs alike. But the sensibility that it had created would carry over into the new historical romances of Scott and Bulwer-Lytton, Ainsworth and Reynolds, as well as the more contemporary romantic novels of Dickens and the Brontës. When the Gothic resurfaced once more in late Victorian times, it would be against a very different literary and social backdrop.

Methodological Issues

By now we must all have a number of questions about both the facts I have been using and the theoretical superstructure that would turn those facts into data. Some of these questions have satisfactory answers, but others unfortunately do not.

At the lowest level of theoretical interest are questions about the facts: what they mean and whether they mean anything. We need to ask how many facts it takes to make a proof, whether we should allow ourselves to be convinced by circumstantial evidence about how people read two hundred years ago, and how we can make a couple of trends add up to a cause-and-effect relationship.

The first issue turns on what the social scientists would call statistical significance. I have presented what amounts to a series of impressions suggesting a shift in the motives for reading in the late eighteenth century. But how does one measure such a trend? How much evidence is enough? I have here presented quotations from perhaps a dozen eighteenth-century sources and in the notes from a couple of dozen more; I have examined in New York and London perhaps a few hundred additional sources. This is a fair sample size, but I would have no idea when these impressions would acquire statistical significance. The sampling of sources I have located may also have been subtly skewed in ways I cannot allow for. The reader responses I have cited are certainly unusual in at least one respect: all of them managed to find their way into writing, and most into print, as most receptions surely do not.

A second issue, or set of issues, turns on what counts as a source. The Murphy's law of reception theory is that the most naive readers are the least likely to leave evidence of their response to texts. In many weeks of search-

ing at the British Museum I was able to turn up only a handful of diaries and letters in which the real-life counterparts of Catherine Morland gave some sense of the motivation and experiential value of their reading. Most diarists and correspondents never mentioned their reading; a few listed it; even fewer expressed the feelings that their reading inspired in them or the desires that inspired them to pick up a volume in the first place. But circumstantial evidence is still acceptable even in a court of law, and I feel reasonably confident that when we find a trend among moralists to attack novel reading as an activity that unfits young ladies and gentlemen for real life rather than as a mirror of depraved manners, it suggests a real change in the way real people read novels. But one has to be cautious about drawing conclusions, for we could account for this trend in a number of other plausible ways—such as an upward valuation of sloth relative to lust as a deadly sin.

If we prefer to look for a direct expression of response to fiction, the most obvious source would be the book reviews, especially the *Analytical, Critical,* and *European Reviews,* as well as the *British Critic* and the *Anti-Jacobin.* All these publications reviewed Gothic fiction at least from time to time, and I have read and collected most of these notices. As it happens, however, the sensibility that I hypothesize grew in the 1790s finds virtually no expression in these publications. The reviewers differ considerably in their taste and tolerance for Gothic fiction, but all of them alike tend to discuss the novel in neoclassical or Johnsonian terms, with an emphasis on the probability, generality, and ethical probity of the narrative.[15] This is a blow to my hypothesis, and it may be that the trend toward *aisthesis* that I have discussed was a wholly factitious artifact of my data-collecting methods. But there are two alternative explanations.

One is that the trend toward *aisthesis* was unevenly spread among Jauss's levels of the audience—that it was visible on the top level of authors and the bottom level of common readers but not on the intermediate level of reviewers. It may sound implausible that such a revolution should have bypassed this quasi-elite group of *Kulturträger,* but there are two good reasons why it might *appear* that way. One has to do generally with the stance of the reviewer from that time to this. Briefly, the requirement that one evaluate for a mass publication with rapid-fire deadlines a heavy pile of fiction is not likely to encourage a stance of revery and escape. The reviewer is not escaping the workaday world in reading: reading *is* the reviewer's workaday world.[16]

The second reason has to do very specifically with the structure and function of book reviews in magazines in the late eighteenth century. Anyone

who peruses these reviews will be struck by how much space is devoted to lengthy summaries of the plot and even lengthier quotations from the books in question and how little to serious analysis of the works' attractions and deficiencies. The cause is spelled out by Robert Mayo: owing to a peculiarity of the copyright law of 1710, magazines "claimed, and were more or less accorded, the right to abridge, or print extracts from, any literary work irrespective of copyright. For more than a hundred years, consequently, British miscellanies enjoyed a kind of legalized piracy" ("Gothic Romance" 766–67). The implication is that reviewers of Gothic fiction understood their critiques as valuable less in themselves than as they constituted a license for the lengthy semipiratical extracts that constituted most of the article. Such reviewers would be more likely to do the fast-and-dirty hack job that their editors would be satisfied with, evaluating the novel in terms of traditional but irrelevant issues like probability (even the historical and topographical accuracy of the novels), rather than exploring with difficulty, and without much prior basis in critical theory, any shifts that may have occurred in their own sensibilities.

An alternative explanation, and the one I lean toward, is that the trend may have been limited, in the 1790s, to the middle-class women who made up much of the market for the Gothic novel, though it later spread across the gender gap to men, as my examples from Talfourd and Hazlitt suggest. Ina Ferris has given good reason to believe that one primary agent of the contagion—though by no means the only one—was the publication of Scott's *Waverley* in 1814.

Ferris argues that the rhetoric of the reception of *Waverley*, including (among others) the highly influential notices in the *Edinburgh Review* by T. H. Lister and Francis Jeffrey, stressed the manliness of Scott, his accuracy and truth to life (connecting his novels with the genre of history, which was gendered as male reading), and in so doing legitimized for men the play of fancy in reading fiction.

> For these first male readers, Waverley reading offered a compelling alternative both to female reading and to feminine writing. In particular, in this period of conservative reaction, evangelical revival, and the domestic-didactic novel, *Waverley* and its successors licensed a nostalgic male-inflected romance of history that offered the satisfaction of emancipation from the necessary restraints of civil society even as it effectually absorbed male subjectivity into those restraints. . . . With their outdoor adventures, their battles, and their political intrigues, the Waverley Novels swerve outside the "flat realities" of genteel daily life. At the

> same time, they work within those realities, and the masculinity that these narratives helped to construct absorbs the purity that marked femininity. (*Achievement of Literary Authority* 91–92)

It is Ferris's boldest claim that the vogue of *Waverley* in significant ways redrew the boundaries between masculine and feminine behavior in the early nineteenth century. The claim is consistent with Jauss's thesis that the general ideology of an era would affect its aesthetic productions—and vice versa.[17]

To return to the Gothic as such, its inscription in what were perceived as female modes of reading might also account for the reviewers' inability to respond to the Gothic with a sensibility appropriate to romantic fiction. We cannot be sure why women should have been especially sensitive to this mode of aesthetic experience, though we might guess that increased leisure time without opportunities for useful work might conduce toward ennui, lassitude, and desires for escape.[18]

In addition to the quantity and quality of the evidence, there is a question about which way the causal arrow points, if it points at all. To me it seemed most reasonable to suppose that it pointed both ways, that the eighteenth-century reading public had been to an extent prepared for Radcliffe by Richardson, but that the Gothic novel itself had largely induced the trend toward *aisthesis* that we find everywhere by 1815. It might be argued—though with difficulty—that the emphasis should be reversed: that the Gothic was more the effect of a change in sensibility than its cause. But a skeptic might claim that no causal relation has been demonstrated at all, that I have merely made a post hoc argument about two trends, neither of which can even be placed in time with precision.[19]

Reassessing the Probabilities

After my theses about the reception of the Gothic in the 1790s—and its impact on the course of the Gothic novel and on Romanticism in general—have been qualified by the methodological questions I have just raised, the results may seem disappointingly tentative. One of the obvious difficulties about this method of establishing historical relationships is that, like most other sorts of historical research, it leads to a reassessment of probabilities and connections rather than to absolute certainties. That is because reception theory is not based upon an a priori theory, an ideology that is

guaranteed to reconstitute the facts of the world according to its dictates. It is instead a pragmatic method attempting to relate circumstances and actualities within the world—the world that consists of "everything that is the case"—and what is the case is never a matter of mere logic.

Nevertheless, the suggestive probabilities that reception theory can provide are weakened somewhat by the undeveloped state of that method. It is true that the theorists have had their say over the last twenty years, as Jauss's theory has been attacked by Marxists and formalists, and it has emerged refined and tempered from the fire of philosophical analysis. After twenty years, in fact, "Literary History as Challenge" no longer seems a revolutionary document; it has become a paradigm of the humanities. But it is just beginning to generate research analogous to what Thomas Kuhn called "normal science."

Because this is just beginning, each individual researcher, working through piles of printed and manuscript evidence of literary reception, is forced to grope in the dark, inventing methodology along the way. And while it is salutary for researchers to be forced to give some thought to what their findings mean, this stage in the growth of a research paradigm is necessarily slow and painful. Only as more studies of reception reach the stage of publication will the fragments begin to connect with one another and to build up a coherent diachronic portrait of the reading public. At times (as with Q. D. Leavis's study and my own), we should expect scholars to disagree on principles of explanation, which will need to be debated and clarified before a consensus will emerge. At other times—as with my work and that of Ina Ferris cited above—two researchers will uncover complementary materials, where each holds part of the key to the other's problem.

Given the wide range of obscure sources that need to be consulted, it will be hard for any individual scholar to complete a broad and general study of reception. Each researcher will be able to comprehend only a carefully delimited area of audience response. Thus, in the long run, the most difficult problem may be that of synthesizing fragmentary studies of reception into a picture large enough to be informative on a scale that we would call literary history—that is, not just a history of the Gothic novel but a history of the literature of a single nation—or, better still, of a continent of nations that have mutually influenced one another. But though a familiarity with literary theory will be required for such a task, this is work, not for professional theorists as such, but for practical critics who will solve these massive problems in the course of trying to say something true about the imaginative life of the past.

CHAPTER SIX
Ghosts of the Gothic

The Gothic as Genre, the Gothic as Mode

At this point I have in effect told the same story three different ways, the story of the rise and fall of the Gothic novel from Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* to the final generation of Maturin and Shelley. These literary-historical narratives cover much the same ground and discuss many of the same texts; their explanations are convergent, though not identical. Like the three Hindu gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, their provinces are creation, maintenance, and destruction. The Althusserian Marxist version of the Gothic was in effect a story about origins, of how the ground was laid for a literary form by a perversely accurate vision of authority. The formalist version was essentially a story of how the Gothic novel continued; how and why it had become effectively entrapped within a literary form that spun ever more baroque and outlandish variations on a standard plot line, but perversely kept it from the full artistic achievement that ultimately became possible for it in a later era. And the Jaussian analysis of the Gothic is by and large an explanation of the Gothic's decline, how it began by creating a series of appetites for visionary escape that it ultimately could not maintain.

And now the story is over. Or is it? It is in one sense, but not in another. As an episode in literary history, the vogue of the Gothic from its beginnings in Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* to its demise in the early 1820s is indeed a story with closure, since, as a genre, the Gothic is to all intents and purposes dead by 1822.[1] But like the revenants that haunted its pages, the Gothic has continued to lead a subterranean counterlife as a "mode" until the present day. That is, once the Gothic had become part of literary history it became accessible as a source, not merely of spare parts—characters, plot elements, and devices of disclosure—that could be borrowed and used at will, but also of emotional resonances that could be put to other ends.

In a text like *Bleak House* (1852–53), for example, the Gothic influence is pervasive as a system of allusions that envelops Dickens's representation of the High Court of Chancery, London as a whole, and finally all of England. In effect Dickens took the elements of the Gothic novel and put them forward as a "romance of familiar things" (v). The ruined castle that pervades the Gothic from *Otranto* on appears in *Bleak House* as the tottering slum tenement, Tom All-Alone's, haunted by its ruined owner. The mysterious warnings of the Gothic appear in the ghost that walks in Chesney Wold that sparks Lady Dedlock's flight. The midnight prowlings and secret persecutions appear as Guppy and his friends harass Esther and Lady Dedlock. The vampire appears as the lawyer Vholes, and the witch as Miss Flite. And the death of Krook from "spontaneous combustion" is as mysterious and supernatural as any Gothic manifestation—down to its cindery and slimy aftermath.

One could write a chapter about the Gothic qualities of *Bleak House*—and yet they remain mere qualities, aspects of a text whose central motivation and significance have very little to do with the Gothic in a historical sense. Historically, the Marxist would have to insist that the social relations of the industrial age, whose dysfunctions stand at the heart of all Dickens's late masterpieces, were in their infancy when *Otranto* and *Udolpho* were written. Historically, the reception theorist would note that the implied reader of *Bleak House* is required, not to escape from reality into dream, but to participate in constructing a coherent sense of mid-Victorian England out of Dickens's fragmentary satirical representations. Historically, the formalist would have to argue that even the melodramatic plot of *Bleak House* differs immensely from the melodramatic plots of the Gothic novels. If like Ellena Rosalba in Radcliffe's *The Italian,* Esther Summerson has a vague history that conceals her mysterious and sinister origins, origins that the plot of the novel will eventually bring to light, Dickens's plot places that discovery in the service of his more general revelation: of the characteristic irresponsibility of mid-Victorian people, agencies, and institutions.

My point is not to argue that *Bleak House* is Gothic or that it is not Gothic. Instead, it is that, like *Bleak House,* every text subsequent to the Gothic vogue is going to bear some relationship (even if only a negative one) to the phenomenon.[2] But the analogical relationships of one text to another text or set of texts are not history, in the way we have been using the term. Can we talk about the history of the Gothic as a mode? In the strict sense in which I have been considering literary history up to this point, it cannot have a history as such, any more than there can be a "history" of all

the novels that have had a heroine named Sarah or of all the poems that have begun with the word *When*.

Nevertheless, there are three aspects of the Gothic as mode that present questions of more than passing historical interest. (1) As the novel evolved through the nineteenth century, it developed in loose overlapping generic groupings that operated in a dialectical relationship to one another.[3] At any given time, there was usually one of those generic groups that was significantly more "romantic" and thus more closely related to the Gothic than the others. In this sense the locus of Gothic influence on mainstream nineteenth-century fiction shifted over the course of the century in ways and for reasons that can be traced. (2) Around the end of the nineteenth century the Gothic underwent some sort of revival. What I term the neo-Gothic of the 1890s did not have the same immense impact on the fictional field that its predecessor genre of a century ago had, and the texts are, needless to say, extraordinarily different from the earlier set. But this is the point at which the literature of terror and horror reached its closest contact with the so-called great tradition, and engaged the talents of canonical novelists like Henry James. (3) During the twentieth century, the split between popular fiction and fiction with some pretension to aesthetic merit became stabilized as a split between fiction that can be generically categorized (as romance, mystery, fantasy, and so on) and fiction that cannot.[4] Most of the categories of genre fiction derive, in ways that can be followed, sometimes directly, sometimes through intermediate forms, from the Gothic novel. This chapter briefly and at times schematically takes up these three issues.

Gothic Modalities in Nineteenth-Century Prose Fiction Genres

The Gothic genre, which I considered from my Chicago formalist perspective as an institutional form on its own, was of course part of a complex literary scene. From the perspective of a historian like Yuri Tynyanov, the Gothic novel proper came into existence as part of a dialectical system of genres: specifically as the successor-form (the nephew or grandson) of the novel of sensibility, in an era otherwise dominated by two other fictional forms. The first was the realistic novel of manners, often shaped as a bildungsroman or as a comedy of fulfillment. Such novels originate with Richardson and Fielding half a century before; their most canonical author in the Radcliffe period is Frances Burney, whose *Cecilia* and *Camilla* may stand for the type. The other major form was the didactic novel of social

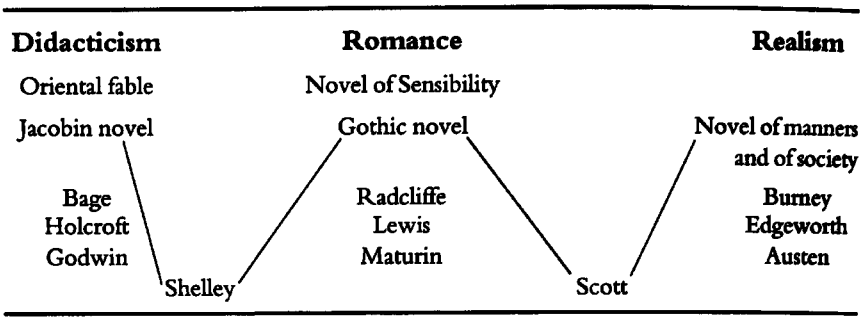

FIGURE 1

criticism. During the revolutionary period, many of the major practitioners were radicals with Jacobin tendencies or their polemical opponents. Works like Robert Bage's *Hermsprong, or Man as He Is Not,* Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story,* and Robert Holcroft's *Anna St. Ives* are typical of the form in the period. The arrival of the Gothic novel in succession to the novel of sensibility—the only one to hark back to the exciting romance tradition—continued a trifurcated literary system for fiction, as shown in figure 1.

This chart illustrates some of the ambiguities of literary history, especially for the novels that straddle two genres. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* needs to be seen simultaneously in relation to the Gothic novel and the didactic novel; it is at once a horror story and a moral fable investigating the relationship of man in nature to man in society. On the one side, Shelley's novel had its impetus from the storytelling contest at the Villa Diodati (at which Mary, Percy Shelley, Byron, and the physician John Polidori each told hair-raising tales), and the structure of emotion in the novel is clearly related to the Gothic. But like *Caleb Williams,* by her father, William Godwin, *Frankenstein* is an examen of "things as they are," of the roles of "nature" and "nurture" in the development of the individual, and of the question of how man might develop as a solitary rather than a socialized individual as the Monster is forced to do. To call *Frankenstein* a Gothic novel is to do it only half justice. It is a genuine amalgam, and some of the contradictions that various critics have pointed out over the years have their origin in the mixed nature of its affiliations. Like many hybrids, *Frankenstein* had vigor—it was a successful novel at the time—but it did not have progeny, at least not immediately, not for a great many years.

I have placed Scott too in an ambiguous position relative to the realistic novel and the Gothic, but as you would expect from my analysis of *Redgauntlet* in chapter 4, the relation of Scott to realism and romance is not

precisely the same as Shelley's ambiguous position relative to Gothic romance and didactic fable. Scott's impulse was essentially realistic: his primary ambition was to present the truth about historical moments with the immanent clarity that might come from following the fate of a sympathetic fictional character (rather than that of a world-historical individual) during a moment of major historical change.[5]

Between the death of the Gothic in the early 1820s and its revival in different form in the 1890s, the romance modality was carried along by a number of successive fictional genres as the literary scene evolved over seventy years. The following is a schematic rendering of that history, which would take another book in itself to present fully.

The Generation after Scott

For the first generation after the vogue of the Gothic, roughly the era 1825–40, a rather different map of the dominant genres of fiction has to be set up, as the historical romance of Scott, a hybrid form at the outset, becomes itself one of the most imitated forms, shifting the dialectical relations between the other literary genres.

The 1820s and 1830s is a dark age of the novel, often ignored in literary histories, partly because there is no strong canonical novelist except Scott at work, partly because it was a period of experimentation in which versatile novelists tried on various genres to see what suited their temperaments. In this period it is hard to say just what the single dominant genre of prose fiction is: the list of best-sellers includes wild comedy like Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* and atrocious penny-dreadful versions of melodrama like G. W. M. Reynolds's *Mysteries of London.*

Probably the dominant form is the historical romance, and this genre is healthy enough to split (along lines of probability) into two related subgenres corresponding to the split within Scott himself: one group of novels descending from Scott's *Waverley* (of which Bulwer-Lytton's *The Last Days of Pompeii* is perhaps the best known today) emphasizes the factual basis of history; the other, descending from *Kenilworth* and *The Talisman,* uses a detailed historical backdrop primarily for the purpose of weaving a melodramatic plot of the sort that bears a strong resemblance to that of the Gothic novel. None of these works is currently canonical, and only a few have been reprinted in this century. William Harrison Ainsworth's *The Lancashire Witches* (1844) is a strong exemplar readable today. Like Scott himself, Edward Bulwer-Lytton wrote in both historical forms, and also

wrote "Newgate novels" like *Paul Clifford* and domestic novels of society, like *Pelham*. Another case is Dickens himself, who began like Thackeray in the "humorous sketch" genre of journalism with *Sketches by Boz* (1833), developed a novelistic version of this genre in *Pickwick*, then shifted to the Newgate novel genre for his second novel, *Oliver Twist;* he was soon to try on the historical romance in *Barnaby Rudge*.

Other major genres of this period display the same hybrid characteristics as historical romance. While there is a minor group of elegant comic novels (usually known as the "silver fork" school) that descends directly from the work of Burney, Edgeworth, and Austen, there also grows up a less trivial "novel of society," which is a hybrid between that subgenre and the Jacobin didactic novels of Godwin, Holcroft, and Bage. Set formally as a social comedy within the upper reaches of English society, the "condition of England" novel (the most famous of which is Disraeli's *Sybil, or The Two Nations*) takes up the debate over reform and the other political and social questions of the day.

Concerned with the social questions of the day, and yet as resolutely attached to low life as the condition of England novel was attached to high life, was the Newgate novel, begun (like so much else) by Bulwer-Lytton and continued by William Harrison Ainsworth, Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, and (of course) other minor hands. Ideologically the Newgate novel characteristically took the side of the criminal against the propertied classes, insisting at least that criminals were driven to crime by social conditions that were by no means in their control. This was a popular but not a long-lived genre or one with an enormous number of exemplars; even its historian, Keith Hollingsworth, admits that only "eight or nine titles claim special attention" (15). The only one we read today is Dickens's *Oliver Twist,* unless one is willing to admit *Vanity Fair* as a late and unusually complex version of this genre. (See table 1.)

The Gothic in Eclipse (1840–1860)

During the 1840s and 1850s, the genres collaterally related to the Gothic are spread out rather than concentrated in a single genre of fiction. It primarily surfaces within "mainstream" literature as an "element" within what Ernest Baker refers to as the "romantic" novels by canonical figures like Dickens and the Brontës. At the same time, the Gothic begins also to surface on its own as a short fictional form. Possibly taking off from exemplars like "Wandering Willie's Tale" in *Redgauntlet,* along with chapbooks from the earlier

TABLE 1
Gothic within Historical Romance in the 1825–1845 Period

Newgate Novel	History-Romance	Satiric-Comic Sketches	Novels of Society
Jack Sheppard (Ainsworth)	*Waverley* (Scott)	*Nightmare Abbey* (Peacock)	*Granby* (Thomas Lister)
Paul Clifford (Bulwer-Lytton)	*Lancashire Witches* (Ainsworth)	*Sayings and Doings* (T. E. Hook)	*Sybil* (Disraeli)
Valentine Vox (Cockton)	*Last Days of Pompeii* (Bulwer-Lytton)	*Yellowplush Papers* (Thackeray)	*Pelham* (Bulwer-Lytton)
Oliver Twist (Dickens)	*Darnley* (G. P. R. James)	*Pickwick Papers* (Dickens)	*Mothers and Daughter* (Gore)
Mysteries of London (Reynolds)	*Masterman Ready* (Marryat)	*Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities* (Surtees)	*The Widow Barnaby* (F. Trollope)

Gothic era, the ghost and horror story is pioneered by writers like Dickens, Collins, and Bulwer-Lytton, and of course by Poe in America. There are few texts that certainly seem Gothic in any recognizable sense today, including ones by novelists who had been experimenting with various romance forms in the earlier period. Bulwer-Lytton's supernatural manifestations, the ghosts of *The Haunter and the Haunted* and the spirits of *Zanoni,* are not spooks to frighten but physical truths that science was temporarily unable to explain.

Of the two historical forms that Scott had pioneered, the romance based on history (e.g., *Kenilworth*) and the historical novel (e.g., *Waverley*), both continued to be written, but the former was in severe decline. Though novelists like Ainsworth and G. P. R. James continued to publish romantic melodramas placed in historical settings, the novel-reading public was acquiring a stronger sense of what was history and what was not.[6] Instead the most prestigious versions of the historical novel became attached to facts and to documentation—so much so that readers occasionally wondered whether there was much difference between historical narrative written by an imaginative author like Carlyle and Macaulay and the documentary novels of Bulwer-Lytton, like *Harold, Last of the Saxons.*

A fourth genre that came into existence in the later 1840s and flourished in the 1850s, the domestic saga, is discussed primarily in the next section,

TABLE 2
The Gothic Underground in the 1840s and 1850s

Romantic Realism	"True" History	Didactic Fantasy	Domestic Saga
Jane Eyre	*Harold*	*Zanoni*	*The Caxtons*
Wuthering Heights	*Rienzi*		*My Novel*
Mary Barton		*Water-Babies*	*The Heir of Redclyffe*
North and South			
David Copperfield	*Barnaby Rudge*		*The Athelings*
Bleak House			
The Warden	*Henry Esmond*		*John Halifax, Gentleman*
Barchester Towers	*The Virginians*		

since it laid the groundwork for the themes—if decidedly not the values—of the sensation novel. (See table 2.)

I have already discussed in chapter 4 the way the Brontë sisters (in *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights,* both 1847) created well-formed versions of Isabella's Tale and Manfred's Tale. It is probably worth repeating in this context that *Jane Eyre* gains enormously from being assimilable to the bildungsroman. This is also true of Dickens's *David Copperfield* and even his *Bleak House,* discussed above, which carry the Gothic impulse in a very different shape than the Brontës' work did.

A very different version of early Victorian Gothic is the now-forgotten *Zanoni,* by Bulwer-Lytton (1842). Like *Bleak House, Zanoni* is a work whose power is split among a number of didactic and affective intentions, but the overarching theme is metaphysical rather than social. As Tennyson was to do in *In Memoriam,* Bulwer-Lytton attempts to argue the consistency of faith and reason, art and science, at a time in which the scientific view of the world was beginning to drive a wedge between the categories. Society is seen as at the mercy of demagogues inspired by an overreaching version of science and reason and out of sympathy with those whom their new order may crush.[7] But the literary form Bulwer-Lytton chose was not the historical novel, in which he excelled, but something closer to Godwin's *St. Leon* and (in a way) Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* with its Faustian protagonist: a fable in which a character whose occult science has made him effectively

immortal ultimately sacrifices himself for the woman he loves and the unredeemed humanity she represents.[8]

Mid-Victorian Fiction and the Sensation Novel (1860–1880)

Around 1860 the dominant form of fiction is "domestic realism": stories of characters working out their destinies within a contemporary provincial or London setting. The setting signifies that society as a whole, if not the protagonist of the novel, becomes a sort of "character" whose limited moral and spiritual views (in the form of "public opinion") have an impact on the outcome of the story. Currently canonical examples would include Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1861), George Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859) and *The Mill on the Floss* (1863), Trollope's *He Knew He Was Right* (1869), Gaskell's *Cousin Phillis* (1865) and *Wives and Daughters* (1866), and George Meredith's *Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859) and *The Egoist* (1871). The form was also practiced by some of the prolific and popular producers of Victorian fiction who are still hovering at the edge of the literary canon, such as Dinah Maria Mulock (*John Halifax, Gentleman* [1856]) and Margaret Oliphant (*Miss Marjoribanks* [1866]).

The period is also characterized by the efflorescence of epic novels: realistic works structured as serious actions with dozens of important characters and multiple plots and protagonists, set in the present or the recent past, and designed to (at least metaphorically) characterize English society as a whole. Dickens's late epics (like *Little Dorrit* [1857] and *Our Mutual Friend* [1865]) are usually baroque complications of domestic novels whose simple versions run something like the bildungsroman *Great Expectations* (1867). That is, the center of the tale is usually occupied by a young man or woman whose uneven moral development or lack of stable social position (or both) provides the primary instability of the plot. Other typical examples are Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871–72) and *Daniel Deronda* (1875) and Trollope's parliamentary novels (1864–80) and the satirical *The Way We Live Now* (1875).

The historical novel, dominant earlier in the century, is at this point in a severe decline. It is still, of course, attempted by major novelists, occasionally with enormous success, as in Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities* (1859) and Eliot's *Romola* (1863). Charles Reade's *The Cloister and the Hearth* (1861), though atypical of his output, is probably the most canonical text of this nearly forgotten novelist. And below this level this vein continues to be

mined by prolific word-spinners like Charlotte Yonge (in works like *The Prince and the Page: A Story of the Last Crusade* [1866]).

The strikingly successful new genre in this period—and the one in which the Gothic mode is brought home and up to date—was the sensation novel. Collins's *Woman in White* (1860) is archetypal of the form. Other important examples include Collins's *No Name* (1862), *Armadale* (1866), *The Moonstone* (1867), Charles Reade's *Hard Cash* (1863), *Griffith Gaunt* (1866), *Foul Play* (1868), Le Fanu's *Uncle Silas* (1864) and *Wylder's Hand* (1864), Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) and *Aurora Floyd* (1863), and Ellen Price Wood's *East Lynne* (1861). Dickens himself started (but did not finish) one in *Edwin Drood* (1870).

Though the sensation novel provided most of the huge sellers in the period, it was a controversial form, like the Newgate novel of the 1830s, preached against and attacked in the popular as well as the educated press.[9] These works of sensation, according to their historian, Winifred Hughes, share "a general affinity with the eighteenth-century gothicism of Ann Radcliffe and 'Monk' Lewis, the historical romances of Sir Walter Scott . . . , as well as with the more recent and somewhat more suspect performances of the Newgate novelists." These earlier texts, for Hughes, are similar to one another in being set in remote places and times, or among people of a very different class from the ordinary middle-class reader: in this sense their subversion is contained and may be read in comfort. What differentiated the sensation novel is that it was "an everyday Gothic, . . . a middle-class Newgate: its romantic and horrendous events were, in addition, narrated in a style of the most detailed and scientific realism" (Hughes 16).[10]

The sensation novelists prided themselves not merely on realism but on assiduous attention to factual detail. When a reviewer complained that the time scheme of *The Woman in White* had gotten muddled at the crucial point of Count Fosco's intrigue to place Laura Fairlie, Lady Glyde, in a private asylum under the name of her (dead) double, Anne Catherick, Collins made sure to correct the problem in the next edition. Charles Reade subtitled *Hard Cash* (1863) a "matter-of-fact romance" and insisted that his fiction was "built on truths . . . gathered by . . . systematic labour." Probably the truths the English most wished were mere fictions were Reade's revelations about private madhouses, which function as the Castle Udolpho in this text. Reade's hero, Alfred Hardie, is kidnapped by attendants on his wedding day and signed into a private asylum by his father in order to keep control of his son's fortune. He endures months in Dr. Baker's snake pit, where order is kept with opiates, blisters, and restraining hardware, before being trans-

ferred to Dr. Wycherley's more humane institution. In a letter to the London *Daily News,* an asylum director named Bushnan questioned the contemporary possibility of the abuses Reade had chronicled. Reade was ready for this response: he had in fact based this plot line of *Hard Cash* on the 1851 court case of *Mathew v. Harty,* and he cited that and other cases to show that it was Dr. Bushnan and not he who was ignorant about the workings of the private asylum system (Reade 3:361–69).

What was the relationship of the sensation novel to the other genres of the literary system? Against what was it juxtaposed? Nicolas Rance suggests that the sensation novel was dialectically opposed to a genre of fiction that flourished during the decade or so before 1860 and that he calls "the domestic saga." These were (as one might expect) the least sensational fictions possible, the plots waning to the near-vanishing point, but with strong didactic interests (Bulwer-Lytton tellingly referred to one of his own domestic sagas as a "series of Essays"), primarily in support of the values of the Victorian home and hearth.[11]

The domestic saga Rance refers to is a subgenre of what I have called "domestic realism." The titles of some of the exemplars are well known, though the texts are largely unread today. The genre begins (according to Rance) with Bulwer-Lytton's *The Caxtons* (1848–49) and *My Novel* (1852–53), and would include works like Charlotte Yonge's *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853), Dinah Mulock's *John Halifax, Gentleman* (1856), and Margaret Oliphant's *The Athelings* (1857). Rance cites Wilkie Collins's review in the *Leader* of *Cleve Hall* (1853), an anonymous domestic saga, to indicate what the father of sensation thought about this mode of fiction.

> The latest in a long series of stories of the moral and religious sort, which have sold freely in the moral and religious market, but which, as it appears to us, are for the most part utterly destitute of any literary merit whatever. The especial sermon in fiction now before us is full of good pattern characters (appropriately set off, of course, by the bad); full of long, prosy dialogues which lead us to nothing but moral conclusions and pious truisms—full of everything, in short, but interest, fancy, invention, and fair observations of life as it is. (45–46)

If Rance is right, the sensation novel arose out of the domestic saga in a sort of Bloomian "swerve": not a matter of direct influence but of reaction-formation.

What made the sensation novel sensational was a violent plot narrated with moral ambiguity. As Winifred Hughes puts it, "The plight of Lady

Dedlock, a subplot in Dickens's *Bleak House,* becomes the mainspring of the typical Sensation Novel. . . . If Braddon or Collins had written *Bleak House,* Lady Dedlock would probably have married her original lover, committed bigamy, and then patched things up with Sir Leicester. Or else she would have been an out-and-out villainess, doing away with both lover and blackmailer before she got caught" (ix–x). These alternatives delineate two different subgenres of sensationalism, an Isabella's Tale of guilty suffering and a Manfred's Tale of villainy followed by nemesis.

These alternatives are not only formally different; they have an ideological component as well. Nicholas Rance posits a dialectical split between *radical* sensationalists, like Collins and his disciple, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, who questioned the morality of Victorian England, and *conservative* sensationalists, like Dickens and Ellen Wood, for whom sensation is stimulated by the process of justified retribution that society takes upon those who break its rules (Rance 4). (See table 3.)

Rance and Hughes both begin their discussion of the sensation novel with *The Woman in White* (1860), which seems to have been the successful model to which writers less talented than Collins aspired. Anthea Trodd, however, traces the major theme of Satanic rebellion within the household back to Bulwer-Lytton and his novel *Lucretia, or Children of the Night* (1847), whose title character, more like the Borgia than the Roman matron, successively eliminates her guardian, her husband, and her son. But of course many of the facets of the sensation novel, including the melodramatic, fast-moving plots, hark back to the historical romance of Ainsworth and Bulwer-Lytton, but others—the emotional cruelty of the suspense and tension in the plots—seem to look back to the Gothic novel of Radcliffe and Maturin.

Rance claims that the recurrent allusions within sensation novels to the older Gothic fiction are there precisely "to mark a distinction. . . . If ghosts in Gothic fiction signified a past as liable to erupt into an enlightened present, Collins substitutes the present for the past as a source of dread. As . . . a challenge to the early Victorian orthodoxy . . . Anne Catherick is more disturbing than any mere ghost" (53). Rance's point, I think, is that mere ghosts can be exorcised, but the varieties of evil chronicled in the sensation novel need more than mere bell, book, and candle to eliminate them. The novels turn on two interlocking sorts of evil: institutions that don't work or (like private asylums) lend themselves to abuse, and the straitjacket of respectability itself, which drives members of the middle class to murderous violence in order to protect their names or incomes.

TABLE 3
Mid-Victorian Genres of Fiction

Epic Novel	Historical Romance	Novel of Sensation
Little Dorrit	*A Tale of Two Cities*	*The Woman in White*
Our Mutual Friend		*Armadale*
		The Moonstone
Middlemarch	*Romola*	
Daniel Deronda		
		Edwin Drood
Palliser novels	*Hereward the Wake*	
The Way We Live Now	*The Cloister and the Hearth*	*Hard Cash*
		Foul Play
North and South		
		East Lynne
Harry Richmond		
Beauchamp's Career		*Lady Audley's Secret*
		Uncle Silas
		Carmilla

The Radcliffean strain in the sensation novel may best be seen in Ellen Price Wood's *East Lynne,* the story of Lady Isabel Vine, who marries a lawyer, is tempted into adultery, elopes with her lover, is divorced, and disappears onto the Continent. Morally dead, written off by society, Lady Isabel returns to East Lynne as the governess for her own and her successor's children (improbably, no one at all recognizes her), is torn to pieces emotionally at the death of her own son, and finally herself dies like her son of consumption, unwept, unrecognized, and unforgiven. The emotional tensions of *East Lynne* recall the Spanish convent scenes in Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* or the imprisonment of Emily in Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho;* in fact they return us to genesis of the Gothic novel in Richardson. Unlike Clarissa, Lady Isabel is guilty and morally stained, but Wood portrays her temptation as beyond anything the average reader is likely to feel immeasurably superior to, and the pathos of Lady Isabel's living death wrung the hearts of a generation of Victorians.

The other side of the sensation novel—the Manfred's Tale, the radical romance of guilt—is seen in Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862). Lucy Audley's secret is bigamy, committed in ignorance but de-

fended with violence. When her first husband, whom she had thought long dead, turns up in England, Lucy impulsively arranges for him to fall into a disused well on the Audley estate. For the rest of the novel, her nephew, once suspicious, runs his step-aunt inexorably down. The cat-and-mouse game between them is excellent fun, though it is one-sided, since his mental and physical resources are beyond anything Lucy can command. Novels of this sort seem to be at the beginning of the tradition of the crime novel.[12]

The novel that set the pattern for sensation was also one that managed to combine Isabella's Tale with Manfred's Tale. The success of *The Woman in White* was partly owing to Collins's ability to combine intense interest in his persecuted heroine with at least equal attention to a pair of genuinely credible villains. Laura Fairlie would be almost entirely uninteresting in herself, but her version of Isabella's Tale can be told to good effect by the man and woman who love her best. Collins brilliantly solved the problem of the villain of the novel by splitting the role in two. In his Italianate love of machinations and hypocrisy, Count Fosco is a worthy heir to Ambrosio and Melmoth, and in his cleverness (and his vanity about his cleverness) a distended mirror image of Collins himself. So shrewd and ruthless is Fosco that, were he the only villain, Collins would have needed to invent some improbable accident to explain why his plot did not succeed. But Fosco's plot is formed to enrich himself only indirectly, through the enrichment of Sir Percival Glyde, and it is the latter villain, cruel but mean-spirited, cowardly and indecisive, whose weaknesses can be exploited to release Laura from her living death in the asylum in which she is entrapped.

Within the matter-of-fact probability scheme of the sensation novel, the use of supernatural elements was bound to be incidental. We must remember, of course, as I have argued in chapter 4, that even in the heyday of the Gothic novel, the use of the supernatural was more often than not merely incidental—more frequently a way of providing factitious threats to the hero or heroine, reasons for acting or failing to act, than of directly influencing the plot. In *The Woman in White* it is used to invest the events of the story with uncanny vibrations. It is extremely improbable but hardly supernatural that the "woman in white" who engages the kindness and gallantry of Walter Hartright on the Avenue Road in London should be the illegitimate half-sister of the "woman in white" with whom he falls in love, the next day, at Limmeridge House in Cumberland.[13] In fact the family resemblance between Anne and Laura is not supererogatory but necessary for Count Fosco's plot to substitute the latter for the former in the private madhouse in which Anne has been kept. Nevertheless, Collins insists on a meaning be-

yond the natural of Anne Catherick's life and death: "Through what mortal crime and horror, through what darkest windings of the way down to Death, the lost creature had wandered in God's leading to the last home that, living, she never hoped to reach! . . . Like a Shadow she first came to me, in the loneliness of the night. Like a Shadow she passes away, in the loneliness of the dead!" (232–33). As the vogue of the sensation novel continued, however, ways of creating the necessary thrills had been milked till most of the legitimate ones were dry, and writers began to use the supernatural in other ways. It seems likely that the most important transitional text between the school of sensation and the rather different revivification of the Gothic in the 1890s was a now forgotten novel titled *Called Back* (1884), by "Hugh Conway" (pseudonym for Frederick John Fargas). This novel concerns a young man suddenly gone blind, the ear-witness to a horrible murder, who must try to call back from the amnesia to which it has fled the mind of his beloved, a mind destroyed by being eye-witness to the very same murder; the resolution of Conway's plot requires the sort of supernatural interventions that would lead to a reopening of the issues out of which the Gothic sprang. Out of this side of the sensation novel, I think, the second phase of the Gothic was reborn in the Purple Nineties.

This dialectical succession of genres over about a century can be kept straightest with the aid of the combined chart in figure 2.

The Neo-Gothic of the Decadence (1880–1900)

In the late 1880s and 1890s, the sensation novel takes a new turn back into the supernatural, and in effect the Gothic novel that had begun over a century before with *The Castle of Otranto* is reborn. Reborn, though, with a difference: whereas most of the Gothic novels of the late eighteenth century had been structured as suspense actions, as melodramas, the neo-Gothic is more typically a supernatural morality tale.[14] Some of the most important texts of this period are Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), George du Maurier's *Peter Ibbetson* (1892), Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), H. G. Wells's *Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896),[15] and Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* (1898).

The generic backdrop against which the neo-Gothic emerges is another transitional period, like that of Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Gregory Lewis. Most of the major Victorian novelists are dead but the major modernists are

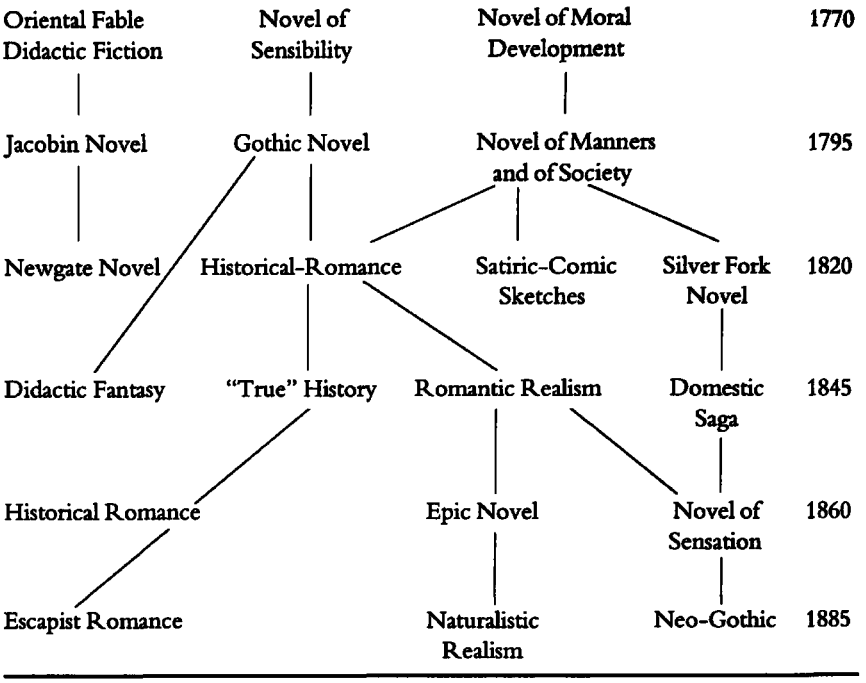

FIGURE 2

not yet quite at work. The novel itself is in transition: three-volume novels and sagas are still being produced, but the monopoly of the "three-decker" has already been broken, and shorter forms are much on the rise. New popular magazines are experimenting with short fiction of various kinds, and this has become a new way for writers to break into print. Conrad will begin his work with *Almayer's Folly* in 1895. The important novelists canonical today are Hardy and James; other writers popular at the time include naturalistic writers like George Gissing, George Moore, and John Galsworthy. There is also a distinct aroma of romance in the air, though—exotic tales like the novels of Stevenson, Rider Haggard, and Kipling; historical fiction by Doyle such as *The White Company* and *Micah Clarke;* and Ruritanian swashbuckling like Anthony Hope's *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1894).

This is another experimental period, and the neo-Gothic was one of the forms in which experimentation was carried out. Indeed, few writers specialized in the neo-Gothic; instead it was usually a sideline to some other more traditional form of writing: comic drama for Wilde, psychological re-

TABLE 4
Genres of the 1890s

Naturalistic Realism	Neo-Gothic	Romance
The Man of Property	*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*	*Treasure Island*
Esther Waters		*Prisoner of Zenda*
	Dorian Gray	
New Grub Street		*Allan Quatermaine*
	Dracula	
Tess of the d'Urbervilles		*The White Company*
	Island of Dr. Moreau	*The Time Machine*
The Princess Casamassima	*The Turn of the Screw*	
	Peter Ibbotson	

alism for James, melodrama for du Maurier, and historical adventure stories for Stevenson. Of the group I am going to discuss, only Bram Stoker wrote horror stories exclusively, but for Stoker writing itself was for most of his career a sideline from his management of Sir Henry Irving's theatrical company. Oddly, the neo-Gothic was the most "serious" version of romance in the 1890s, engaging challenging intellectual and moral themes rather than serving as mere escape literature, as Ruritanian romances did.

It was an important form, in the sense that many of these texts are by canonical authors and are themselves canonical. But—one needs to stress this strongly—the neo-Gothic was not as quantitatively important a movement within popular culture as the first Gothic vogue had been. (See table 4.)

Around the time Freud was beginning his anatomy of the unconscious, neo-Gothic works like *Peter Ibbotson* and *Dorian Gray* explored the paradoxes of the dreaming self. Du Maurier's fantasy is constructed precisely on the pleasure principle. Peter Ibbotson, incarcerated for life in a prison for the criminally insane after the murder of his uncle, "sleeps" away his sixteen hours of waking life in order to "awaken" into dreams where, together with his soul mate, Mary Duchess of Towers, he can at will dine in the salon of a Parisian countess or walk under the pines of Yosemite. Tragedy briefly intrudes with the death of the duchess, but in a final dream she with difficulty returns to let him know that soon they will be reunited forever beyond the grave. In du Maurier the rejection of Victorian materialism and the split between the real and the ideal become almost total. It would be hard to overstate how alienated du Maurier's stance is from real life with its

pleasures and pains—and in particular from *work* and its sense of conflict and achievement.

Wilde's novel is also remote from life; here the dualism took its cue from our earliest fantasies about guilt. We remember that our mothers could read our secrets in our faces, and there is a secret pang that this doesn't continue into adult life, when the world remains ignorant about our peccadillos unless we are foolish enough to reveal them. The fantasy that there must exist some such secret record of sin, that our guilty experience can be read in our face, is what feeds *Dorian Gray.* Dorian himself is granted a magical exemption from this rule: painted as a beautiful and innocent youth, he finds that as he grows older and more self-indulgent, cynical, and evil, it is the painting, rather than his face, that bears the marks of his corruption. If the representation of Dorian's soul is horrifying, it is also reassuring to an age losing touch with the traditional basis of religious faith, since in effect it asserts that we each *have* a soul separate from our perishable bodies and immortal as not even art can be immortal.[16]

The same reassurance consoles in James's *The Turn of the Screw,* even as the plot turns and twists on the problem of whether it is better to have two children alive and well but haunted by the immoral ghosts of Peter Quint and Miss Jessel, or one child in a nervous breakdown and the other dead, "saved" by the exorcism performed by the nameless governess. Much ink has been spilled on the various reasons why the governess may or must be an unreliable narrator and the ghosts phantoms of her wayward imagination or repressed unconscious. Such explanations appeal to members of the MLA, but common readers rightly resist such explanations as destroying the point of the story. The real trick of the narrative, as George Haggerty has aptly pointed out, is that it puts the evaluating reader into the same position with respect to the evidence provided by the governess's story, as the governess is with respect to the evidence she says she sees, and we thus cannot attack her good faith without attacking our own.

Good faith, of course, does not necessarily guarantee good works, and we are left with the fact that the governess inadvertently kills Miles by her dispossessing intervention. But if the ghosts are presumptively real, then the child, like the ghosts, has a soul that survives separation from the mortal body, and dying dispossessed, little Miles goes directly to heaven.

The thematics of *Dracula* seem social or political as much as psychological. Dracula's invasion of England may dramatize contemporary fears of foreigners from Eastern Europe—here the invader is a southern Slav—bringing chaos to the calm scientific order of Western Europe. Or the evil count him-

self may typify a landed aristocracy with its fixation on blood, blue or otherwise, and the past triumphs of its race. Dracula is immortal as peasants must once have felt about the baron in the great house for whom they toiled: immortal in his title and his possessions if not in the body.[17] And he is opposed and ultimately defeated by two thoroughly middle-class and commercial married lovers, Mina and Jonathan Harker (who even keep their diaries in Pitman shorthand), and by two doctor/scientists (Van Helsing and Seward) who bear the intellectual ideology of bourgeois progress (Punter 260).

Nevertheless, the secret of the mythic success of this often crudely written adventure story is the sexual symbol at its heart: the vampire's contagious love-death. More explicitly than in Byron's "Fragment" (1819) or John Polidori's *The Vampire* (1819), Stoker's Dracula attracts the respectable women of the story with a supernal but mortal sexual embrace, just as his brides (the three in Castle Dracula and Lucy in England) tempt the men with a sensuality denied to the Victorian virgin:

> The girl went on her knees and bent over me. . . . There was a deliberate voluptuousness which was both thrilling and repulsive, and as she arched her neck she actually licked her lips like an animal, till I could see in the moonlight the moisture shining on the scarlet lips and on the red tongue as it lapped the sharp white teeth. . . . I closed my eyes in languorous ecstasy and waited, waited with a beating heart. (52)

There is, of course, a material component even to this symbolic enactment of the *Liebestod* that runs through nineteenth-century literature so insistently (see Praz and Fass). The connection between love and death, which today reminds us of AIDS, was then even more common as the end effect of syphilis, in the days before salvarsan and penicillin essentially incurable. Stoker himself probably died of the disease in 1912.

The earliest of these neo-Gothic texts, Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* has also been viewed as a subterranean allegory. Stevenson's moral, fittingly for the last decades of the Victorian era, seems to be that it is the need for respectability itself, the need to show forth in exemplary perfection, that generates the bifurcated soul of Jekyll/Hyde out of elements that are present in us all. The duality, that is, preexisted Jekyll's drug, which was capable merely of isolating one phase of it. It seems beyond an accident that the last important text of the Gothic period—Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824)—and this first important text of the neo-Gothic should both be by Scots writers, and that both should center on the spiritual separation

between the evil and the good side of a man, expressed in the form of a multiple personality disorder, visited as a punishment upon a person who would be "unco guid." The moral is, in a way, an immoral one: we are better off as fallen creatures, mixed bags of evil and good as the Lord created us, than attempting to separate out the elements of the mixture even to create a saint on earth.

One of the fascinating aspects of *Jekyll and Hyde* is not only the way it combines qualities of the masterpieces of the neo-Gothic but also the way it looks forward to the important romance-derived genres of the twentieth century: the detective story and science fiction. The novel chronicles the solution to a murder—of Sir Danvers Carew—by a criminal whose violence stems from a hypothetically possible splitting of the self. This does not mean that one must in fact read *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* as either a mystery story or science fiction. But the temptation to read it *as* genre fiction suggests that a certain historical point has been reached in the development of the Gothic romance. The new flowering of nineties neo-Gothic was not as pervasive as that in the previous century, but it marks an end point nevertheless. From this point on, the split between serious and popular fiction, growing since the 1870s, becomes a nearly unbridgeable gap, and the Gothic strains essentially become detached from the development of the serious modern and postmodern novel and instead become wedded to the forms of popular fiction. Instead of propagating as in the nineteenth century, as an element in the historical romance, the Newgate novel, or the sensation novel, the Gothic impulse becomes the site of what is today called "genre fiction"—novels that are sold and often bought not as individuals but as exemplars of a formulaic subgenre.[18]

The Gothic as Genetrix: Twentieth-Century Genre Fiction

There is a sense in which the Gothic is the genetrix of five major genres of twentieth-century genre fiction: the detective story, the horror story, science fiction, adult fantasy, and the Harlequin (or in England, Mills and Boon) romance. These are genre fiction in the most literal sense: novels that people buy in bulk, often without thinking about who the author is, or tales available in collected generic forms.[19] These subliterary texts are commodities in the strict sense and are referred to in terms of their manufacturer.

When people speak of "Harlequin romances" the identifying noun is that of the most successful publisher.[20] Similarly, much science fiction is known by its *editor*—as when people speak generically of "Gernsbach," referring to the stories and novellas published in the periodicals edited in the 1930s by Hugo Gernsbach, *Amazing Stories* and *Astounding Stories*. Today one speaks of subgenres like "cyberpunk," again without an author's name.

The late twentieth century is, as we are all well aware, an age in which the sales of generic fiction of no particular literary import far outstrip the sales of "serious" fiction (I am here designating by that term any works of sufficient literary pretensions to be reviewed separately in a publication as middlebrow as the *New York Times Book Review*—a journal with separate columns to deal quickly with superior mystery novels and science fiction). I think it fascinating that a chart of the descendants of the Gothic novel includes most of what is published today. The lineages of these commodified forms are tolerably complex, but it can be simplified into the graphic pattern in figure 3.

There are in fact only a few genres of these commodified texts, what the German reception theorists sneer at as *kulinärliteratur,* that are *not* represented here. One is what might be termed "money-porn," perhaps a degenerate descendant of the silver fork novel or of Balzac's *Comédie humaine* —but far more likely of naturalistic texts like Theodore Dreiser's *The Financier* and *The Titan*. This is a class of novel dealing with the temporary pleasures and desperate maneuvers of the wealthy and corrupt (of the sort written by Harold Robbins, Jacqueline Susann, Irving Wallace, Arthur Hailey, and lately Judith Krantz); *Dallas* was its television-series version. The other is the saga, a historical novel tracing the development of a single region of a country over several generations, often using a single family or set of families, to illustrate social trends.[21]

Science Fiction

Brian Aldiss defines science fiction as "the search for a definition of mankind and his status in the universe which will stand in our advanced but confused state of knowledge (science), and is characteristically cast in the Gothic or post-Gothic mode" (Aldiss and Wingrove 25). Did the genre begin in 1818, with *Frankenstein,* as Aldiss thinks, or in 1871, with Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* and Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* (Suvin 325)? Or still earlier with Cyrano de Bergerac's *Voyage to the Moon*? None of these texts belongs to the

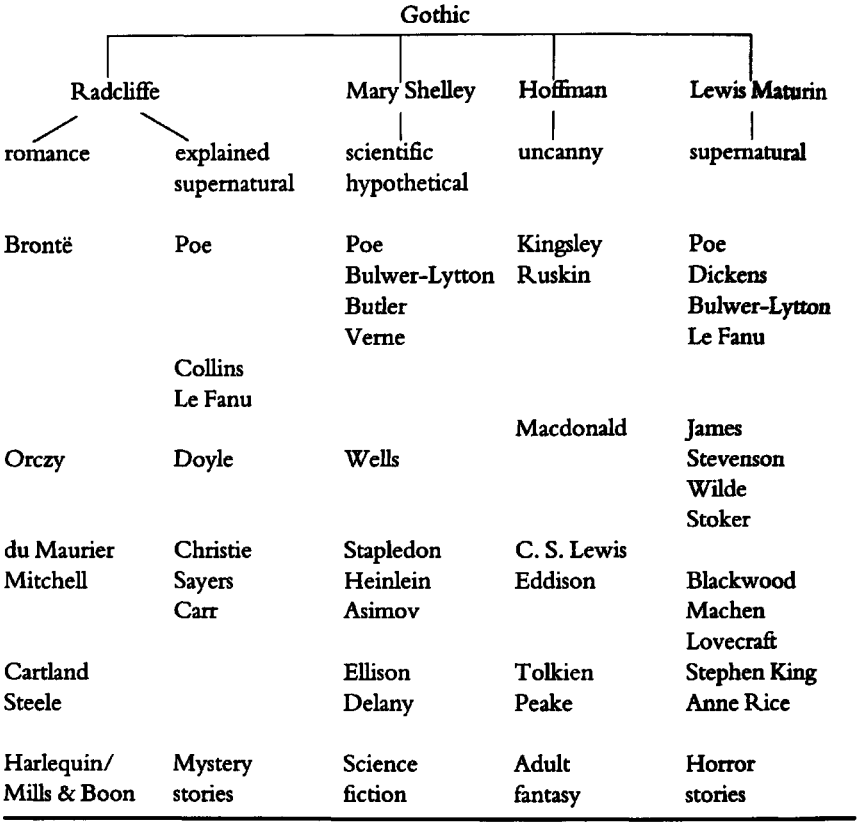

FIGURE 3.
The Gothic as Genetrix of Twentieth-Century Generic Fiction

genre we know today, whose pioneers were Jules Verne and H. G. Wells.

The socioeconomic impulses behind both Verne and Wells were industrialization and imperialism, and both authors were ambivalent about the ideology of late nineteenth-century capitalism. Verne's heroes are masters of the machine but not captains of industry: they are scientists, travelers, naturalists—loners all. The archetypal Verne hero is the alienated leader Captain Nemo of *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (1870), who takes untold wealth from the sea but finds it dross compared to the sea's wonders, which are being exploited and destroyed by national navies. Wells's *War of the Worlds* (1897) takes a similarly jaundiced view of imperialism; the novel

"is saying in effect to his fellow English: 'Look, this is how it feels to be a primitive tribe and to have a Western nation arriving to civilize you with Maxim guns'" (Aldiss and Wingrove 120–21). Wells's best science fiction novel is also the closest to the Gothic: *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) is a retake on *Frankenstein,* in which Moreau attempts to create a new humanity by vivisecting the bodies and brains of animals. He succeeds in part, producing various combinations of animals with quasi-human intelligence, but when Moreau is killed on a forest hunt, the mutated beings revert to savagery. "Before they had been beasts, their instincts fitly adapted to their surroundings, and happy as living things may be. Now they stumbled in the shackles of humanity, lived in a fear that never died, fettered by a law they could not understand; their mock-human existence was one long internal struggle, one long dread of Moreau—and for what?" (93). The obvious moral is that God made men no better than Moreau made his half-men, that we too were better off as beasts than as aspiring angels. The narrator, like Gulliver among the Yahoos, returns to an England whose human population—in its sheeplike conformity, its doglike fawning, its simian chattering of meaningless maxims—reminds him all too often of the Beast-Men of Moreau's Isle.

Adult Fantasy

Literary fantasy, defined by Cyril N. Manlove as "a fiction evoking wonder and containing a substantial and irreducible element of supernatural or impossible worlds, beings, or objects with which the reader or the characters within the story become on at least partly familiar terms" (10–11), is clearly a post-Gothic genre dominated by Charles Kingsley, George MacDonald, C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Mervyn Peake.[22] Gothic novels themselves are eliminated—their affect is terror or horror, expressing "the revolt of a purely human subconscious against reason" (Manlove 6), not primarily the wonder of fantasy—but it seems clear from Manlove's analyses not only that the Gothic vogue lies in the filiation of fantasy but that fantasy represents a certain *refinement* on the general structure of the Gothic. The lovingly created worlds of Tolkien and (even more) Eddison and Peake are themselves objects of contemplation in ways that the worlds of Gothic romance and science fiction are not. The world of Ursula LeGuin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* was created as a hypothetical answer to the question: What would it be like if our sexuality were unstable, if we mutated from male to female

and back again? The story has resonance—or fails—according to whether we view her answer as plausible or not. The whole point of a supernatural world is that it operates by quite different and particular laws, creating a world—often a world with its own chronicle history given within the text—whose workings must be endlessly explained.

The atmospheric world of adult fantasy varies a great deal, but one could say rather roughly that it is compounded of three simples mixed in varying degrees: the epic, the fairy tale, and the Gothic. Tolkien's world is primarily a compound of epic and fairy tale, quest myth and beast fable; Eddison's is a mixture of epic and Gothic; while the dark and morbid world of Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast trilogy (1946–59) casts an ironic underglance toward the Gothic itself. As in many of these genres, one is struck by the enormous gulf in quality between the few genuinely imaginative, original, even profound works of romance published in this century, like C. S. Lewis's Perelandra trilogy, E. R. Eddison's *Worm Ouroboros* and his Zimiamvia books, and Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast novels and Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* (1954–55), and the endlessly churned out "sword and sorcery" books that are generally sold on science fiction revolving bookracks. The market for quality is apparently stable—Peake's trilogy was recently dramatized in London—but (aside from *Lord of the Rings,* which had an immense vogue in America some twenty years after its first publication) neither the quality nor the junk has had any really big sellers. It's not clear to me precisely what the audience of the sword and sorcery books is, but it would appear to be an even more deeply alienated group of the same class of people who read science fiction.

The Mystery Story

The mystery story, or detective fiction, descends from the Gothic in a relatively direct route. In the same sense that Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* provided the first usable model for science fiction (which continued to provide various versions of a Faustian story in which pushing the scientific envelope leads to unforeseen disasters), Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* belongs to the necessary prehistory of the mystery story. In particular, Radcliffe suggests that the strange events at Udolpho that Emily interprets as supernatural are in fact fully rational signs of criminal activity. But Radcliffe's resolutions are grotesquely disappointing and anticlimactic, and come so far after the thrill that they seem an afterthought. William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* is

also part of this prehistory. There is no mystery in the usual sense, since the reader is never kept in doubt as to the murderer's guilt, but at least the central interest is in a crime, Falkland's murder of Tyrrel, and his persecution of the servant, Caleb Williams, who discovers his guilt.[23]

The detective story and the mystery novel begin their real history around mid-century with Edgar Allan Poe's Dupin stories (1841–44) and Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* (1867), and the tradition is massively influenced by Poe's concomitant interest in the horror-Gothic and Collins's pioneering of the sensation novel. The crime in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" may be solved by pure ratiocination, but the story itself is Gothic in atmosphere, from the crumbling chateau that the narrator and Dupin inhabit, emerging like bats after sundown, to the hideously mutilated corpses of the victims.[24] Collins too emphasizes the exotic and bizarre qualities of the Hindu travelers who trail the Moonstone, the melancholy suicide of Roseanna, the uncanny efforts of the ill-fated Doctor Candy in exploring the mystery of Franklin Blake's drug-induced trance, and ending with the hideous death of its actual thief. If *The Woman in White* is a crime novel with stronger characters and a richer plot, *The Moonstone* seems to have invented all the paraphernalia of the detective story (including a genuine detective, Sergeant Cuff of the Metropolitan Police, in addition to various amateurs).

The twinning of mystery novel with sensation is clearest when one looks at the four Sherlock Holmes "novels" of Conan Doyle. Three of them—*A Study in Scarlet* (1887), *The Sign of Four* (1890), and *The Valley of Fear* (1914)—are split between a longish detective story and a novella-length sensation story, set respectively in Utah among the Mormons, in India under the raj, and in a mining valley in Pennsylvania. Only *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1902) is a unified story. Here the sensation novel can be left behind only because Doyle's Gothicism in this case reaches further back than Collins, to the seventeenth-century curse on the Baskerville family and the spectral hound that pursues their heirs. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* became an instant classic of the murder mystery partly because the motivation of Holmes's intervention is more to *protect* Sir Henry Baskerville, the vulnerable baronet from Australia (and the lonely "sister" of the naturalist Stapleton) rather than merely to avenge Sir Charles. It is this and not just the lonely haunted atmosphere of Dartmoor that brings the emotional tessitura of *Hound* close to that of the "love, misery and mystery" of the Gothic novels of the previous century.

Conan Doyle was not the inventor of the detective story, but he was its

Mozart: he brought the form to a classic pitch that was subsequently imitated by lesser hands. Starting in the 1890s through the 1930s, trailing off through the next two decades, there developed a so-called golden age of the detective story as a genteel and literate puzzle, in which the writer "played fair" by covertly revealing clues to the solution, and readers had the pleasure of guessing and, perhaps, asserting their intellectual superiority by solving the mystery before the author revealed it at the denouement. The artificiality of this motive evolved equally artificial plots, characters, and writing. Some of its best practitioners, like Dorothy L. Sayers, tried to humanize and naturalize the form, but the puzzle novel was by its very nature resistant to change.[25]

Beginning around 1930, the mystery began to split off into a variety of other, more "realistic" forms. In Britain the "crime novel" (pioneered by Francis Iles) kept the intense interest of the murder plot but eliminated the detective with the standard plot pattern. In America, the hard-boiled detective story took the murder mystery away from country houses and cathedral closes and put it among the people who actually commit crimes. Eventually this form too hardened in its conventions and lost its verisimilitude as well—particularly the convention that private detectives (who in real life trail erring husbands and do industrial espionage) spend their time trading shots with underworld figures and solving murder mysteries for the police. George Simenon developed the *roman policier* centering on a police detective (Maigret) and his investigation of violence (usually within stuffy and repressed middle-class families), and later hands in Holland, France, Sweden, Britain, and America developed a more-or-less realistic police novel that focuses neither on the victim nor on the killer but on the police and their investigative methods.[26]

Yet one more way of bringing genuine affect back into the mystery is through the thriller. As in the spy novel, murder is merely a means to an end, but the ultimate ends are mere McGuffins, pretexts for action.[27] The familiar international form involved men and women innocently caught up in international intrigue, usually saved (in the conservative ideology of the plots) by the professionals of the CIA.[28] At present writing, the best-selling (and hideously written) novels of John Grisham (*The Firm, The Pelican Brief,* etc.) constitute an attempt to bring affect back into the crime novel by returning to the Gothic in yet another way, by placing an innocent character at the center of a pervasive criminality within the power elite of American society, and searching desperately for a way out of the "castle."[29]

The Horror Story

Perhaps the most obvious modern descendant of the Gothic novel is the horror story, which began with the chapbooks and shilling abridgements of the classic Gothic romances. Nevertheless, as Jack Sullivan claims in *Elegant Nightmares,* "the modern ghostly tale is as much a reaction against the Gothic as an outgrowth of it" (130). Sullivan's point is that most Gothic ghosts, like the Bleeding Nun and the Wandering Jew in *The Monk,* have a tendency to display moral purpose—the achievement of revenge upon their enemies and of repose for their spirits—while the novels themselves take place in a comfortable Christian framework (which guarantees that, at least in heaven, our fates and our deserts will be equated) and in an aesthetic ideology that demands poetic justice in this world. Many Victorian ghosts, like Marley's in Dickens's *Christmas Carol,* behave the same way: they punish vice and reward virtue. But Sullivan claims that the most influential Victorian ghost stories, such as those of the Dublin-based sensation writer Sheridan Le Fanu, are much less comforting. Sometimes the supernatural is never explained, not convincingly. More important, the ghost-story genre itself, far from demonstrating moral purpose, "moves us toward an ever-darkening vision of chaos in a hostile universe" (130).

Le Fanu's ghost stories lead on to the tradition of Arthur Machen, M. R. James, and Algernon Blackwood, lyrical, quiet-voiced tales, in which typically an innocent individual naively lifts the corner of what separates the spirit world from our own, releasing horror upon himself and others. The lyricism, like that of fantasists like Lewis and Eddison, is akin to the childlike revival of romanticism we see in Georgian poetry and is most visible in the prose of Machen's "The White People." But other influential horror stories were written in prose of unsurpassed ugliness, such as those of H. P. Lovecraft, purveying in pulp magazines visions of Cthulhu and his mythic kin, Nylarathotep and Yog-Soggoth, dreaming in an Antarctic city "of no architecture known to man or to human imagination, with vast aggregations of night-black masonry embodying monstrous perversions of geometrical laws."[30]

About the only thing Machen and Lovecraft had in common was being completely unfit for life in the modern world. This may not be a mere coincidence: the world of the modern horror story may be deeply disturbing, but it is disturbing in a very different way from the England and America that developed after World War I. The horror in their tales represents the revenge

taken by old archetypal forces of the universe against (quintessentially) scientists or other more-or-less comfortable inhabitants of the modern world who are bent on understanding and dismissing them. The motivation of the stories is thus deeply reactionary, a way of rejecting and destroying the modern world in one's fantasies. The readership of texts like these is likely to have this sort of alienation in common with the writers.[31]

Contemporary horror stories are invariably pulp, but a few works, like those by James Herbert in England (*The Rats* [1974], *The Fog* [1975], and so on) or in America by Ira Levin (*Rosemary's Baby* [1975]), or Anne Rice (*Interview with the Vampire* [1976]) and Stephen King (*Salem's Lot* [1976], *The Shining* [1977], and many others) can still become best-sellers. Nevertheless, the genre of horror has declined since the 1930s, partly because the horror film—with its ability through special effects to provide the graphic experience of monstrous beings and their gory victims—has superseded all horror fiction.[32]

Romance

The generic term with which we started, Gothic romance, has probably the least prestigious descendants. Eileen Fallon, editor of the first reference guide to the genre *(Words of Love),* was astonished to find that there were over forty reference books about mystery novels, horror fiction, and science fiction, but nothing about what may be the single best-selling category of fiction for at least the last generation. One possible reason for this is intrinsic to the genre itself. Centering on a courtship hindered by both interior and exterior obstacles, the romance ends, traditionally and unexceptionally, with marriage. The sort of sequelae that have become commonplace for mystery and science-fiction writers are impossible for the romance, for their plots end happily ever after. This may mean that a romance author has a somewhat harder time developing a following than a mystery writer without continuing characters to develop audience familiarity.

Although there are best-selling romance authors, such as Barbara Cartland and Danielle Steele, the marketing of romance novels, indeed, has tended to stress the genre more and the unique qualities of particular authors less. Readers tend to acquire loyalty to "brand names" of romance fiction, such as Harlequin, Dell Ecstasy, Second Chance at Love, Silhouette, and Silhouette Desire, which promise a particular sort of experience.[33] As Janice Radway discovered in researching *Reading the Romance,* her group of readers had a very well-defined sense of precisely what sort of love story they

wanted to read, and they were very wary of surprises: in particular how restrained or sensual should be the reader's participation in the lovers' ecstasies. The various brand names of romance constitute a guarantee that the romance will not be too torrid or too tepid for the reader. But naturally the quality of writing for brand-name fiction is not going to be high, not even as high as the imitative Gothic romances that so exasperated literary critics of the early nineteenth century.

The sort of proliferation with which we are now concerned has never really been addressed by the Russian formalists, and it is difficult to find adequate terms to describe it. Metaphorically, the process we have seen occurring to the Gothic since the vogue ended in the 1820s is less like the inheritance of a grandfather's traits in his grandson than like the division process of the most primitive single-celled or colonial animals. As the animal divides, some of its substance goes into one of the offspring, some into another; the offspring themselves grow, subdivide, and clone daughter organisms with lives and histories of their own.

The Gothic had never been one univocal thing, even during its vogue. The most popular form had been the terror-Gothic of Ann Radcliffe, with the stronger horror-Gothic solidly in second place; there were also hybrid forms like the didactic-Gothic of William Godwin and Mary Shelley. The straightest and least involved descent is that of the horror-Gothic of Lewis and Maturin, which descends directly through the ghost stories of Dickens and Collins to the more refined ghost and horror stories of Le Fanu. Starting in the 1890s after the neo-Gothic of Stevenson, Wilde, and Stoker, the horror-Gothic finds its most elegant expression in the ghostly tales of M. R. James, Algernon Blackwood, and David Lindsay before descending a notch in class to the popular pulp fiction of Ira Levin, Stephen King, and Anne Rice. The descent from Shelley to today's science fiction is equally direct. Adult fantasy seems to derive less directly from the Gothic, partly because its roots go back even further, and like the uncanny tales of E. T. A. Hoffmann and Hans Christian Andersen, returns to some of the oldest romance traditions (including the Icelandic sagas; the matter of France, the stories of Charlemagne and his paladins; and the matter of Britain, the Arthurian legends).

The most complex derivation is from Mother Radcliffe herself. The aspect of mystery in Radcliffe—mystery solved through the "explained supernatural"—is rationalized and reshaped the mystery novel, which begins contemporary with, indeed as an aspect of, the sensation novel. Poe, Collins, Le Fanu, and minor writers like Israel Zangwill are important in the

creation of this new form, which in the 1890s is codified by Conan Doyle into a popular fiction form that has maintained its popularity for over a century. By now the mystery novel itself has subdivided into various subgenres: the standard private-inquiry agent form, the *roman policier,* the hard-boiled detective story, the crime novel, and further developments and cross-cousinly forms in the thriller and the spy novel. But in a totally different line of descent from Radcliffe, the terror-Gothic is back-crossed with Richardsonian plot forms to create the romances of the Brontës, which then become the model for the intensely romantic love stories grace-noted with other Gothic themes, which we see in Daphne du Maurier and her degenerate, nearly anonymous descendants of the houses of Harlequin and Mills and Boon. All these forms are dark daughters of the Gothic novel, which died around 1825 but which looks as though it will be with us, in its avatars, the various genres of popular fiction, for the foreseeable future.

CHAPTER SEVEN
Historiographical Speculations

Causality and Historiographical Focus

At the time I began writing this book, the Gothic had begun to get quite popular as a topic of criticism, and at the early stages of writing I used to have twinges of terror at the thought that my ideas would be anticipated by other critics. Despite the burgeoning of the new historicism, despite the echoes of Fredric Jameson's watchword, "Always historicize," and despite the outpouring of interpretations of writers of romance from Walpole to Maturin and after, very few students of the Gothic seemed to be interested in literary history in any usual sense. Indeed, literary history is something people just aren't doing any more it seems, for a variety of reasons, some of them ideological. But one of them is clearly a distrust of the historiographic genre itself.

There are good and bad reasons for this distrust, but one of the good reasons is that none of the theoretically grounded modes of literary history is able to provide us with a story that is adequate at every level, and that, in turn, is because historical explanations have a preferred "depth of focus." As with a camera, when one focuses on objects near the lens, the background gets blurry, whereas when one focuses on "infinity," whatever is close to the lens loses detail. This is not just a rhetorical issue. It has to do with the fact that history is not merely a narrative but one that depends in the first instance on the topos of causality. And the historiographical equivalent of the problem with focal depth arises from the differing forms of causality that operate in our explanations of phenomena.

As a rhetorical topos, *causality* is not a simple one: we use the word *cause* all the time in entirely different ways, without one being identifiable as the normal case. In historical discourse, cause is usually a question of agency; it answers the question, Who brought a particular state of affairs about? and

corresponds to what Aristotle in the *Metaphysics* calls the efficient cause. But there Aristotle lists three other varieties of cause that we also regard as significant: the material cause, what unformed matter was there in the first place, the means that were at hand for the efficient cause to act upon; the formal cause or shaping principle needed to produce an artifact; and the final cause, the *telos* or purpose, the end at which all means are aimed. Any of these may enter into our general sense of what brought something about. We may question at times whether a *telos* or purpose is always necessary, since sometimes we do things without intending to, or intending the opposite of what we actually accomplish. Inanimate objects and geological processes accomplish great feats without anything describable as intent, although the language we use to describe phenomena is so laced with the teleological that we often attribute purpose to inanimate objects.[1]

We also understand the differences between necessary and sufficient causes. Anoxia (for example) is sufficient to cause the death of a living organism, but it is not a necessary cause of death, in that death can surely occur in the presence of plenty of oxygen. And on the other hand streptococcus bacilli are necessary causes of rheumatic fever, but they aren't sufficient causes, as many people harbor the bacilli without having that serious disease or, indeed, even feeling ill. And we also understand the differences between precipitating causes, which rapidly trigger some violent change, and predisposing causes, which provide the conditions or factors that induce a change to come about.[2]

We all recognize each of these forms of causality in different aspects of daily life, and depending on our purposes, we appeal to different forms, shifting between the various causal mechanisms in ways that seem completely natural. When I worry about my nine-year-old son watching too many violent programs on television, I am not afraid that he is going to pick up a steak knife and use it on his little sister, but I do fear that violent stimuli of a certain sort could desensitize his spirit to others' pain: here what I care about is a predisposing cause. When I want to know how my aunt Harriet's favorite lamp got broken, I don't want to hear a lecture on the friable qualities of Meissen porcelain or the law of gravitation. I want to know about the precipitating cause: who pushed it off the table?

In daily life we are forced to have recourse to any and all of these in rapid succession, driven by our shifting concerns. In remoter matters, however, like the writing of a literary history, it is possible to have a marked preference for one form of causality over another. The controversy mentioned in chapter 2 between Michael McKeon and Ralph Rader on the origins of the

English novel is illustrative of this. It isn't just that McKeon and Rader disagree over what caused the English novel, it's that they don't agree on what should count as an explanation. For McKeon any real explanation of the novel's origins is to be found in the predisposing factors: his explanation ends when he has elucidated what made society change in such a way as to make meaningful the notion of a narrative that made significant the domestic struggles of individuals, and was at the same time "realistic," *like* the truth but not historically veracious. The peculiar concerns and intents of the authors of these novels are less important: for McKeon, if Richardson had not written the first English novel, someone else would have, and the course of literary history would have developed almost precisely as it did.

But for Rader, it doesn't count as an explanation of the novel to be able to say how society got to the state where it could support fictional narrative as a literary genre. For Rader the predisposing causes are less interesting, and he is willing to take them for granted. Instead the novel begins when a particular individual—Samuel Richardson—tells a story about a virtuous servant who marries a well-born landowner, and tells that story in a way that was unique at the time. What was original about *Pamela* was that the events recounted had to be understood in two different ways at once, on a narrative plane and on an authorial plane. That is, the reader is forced to take the story as autonomously "real," in the sense that we understand Pamela's world as operating by the laws that obtain in our own world and therefore independent of our desires about her; and as "constructed" in that we understand the novel in terms of Richardson's creative intention, forming expectations and desires respecting the protagonist that shape our sense of the whole. For Rader the crucial moment is the construction of a form that operates on both levels—autonomous narrative and authorial construct—at once. Once that had been done, others could imitate the achievement, bring to it new sorts of meaning and structure.[3]

These preferences over what counts as an acceptable explanation of the origin of a genre have further consequences. Rader is not deeply concerned with the predecessors to Richardson's formal achievement, as they belong to strands of literary history that did not initiate world-historical change;[4] and in a similar way, Michael McKeon loses much of his interest in the history of the novel once the genre has gotten fully started, as though its embryology rather than its history were of primary concern.[5]

Well, which of them is right? Is the origin of the English novel to be found in its predisposing or its precipitating causes? Clearly both—and neither. Surely each answer is only one element of what would be a totally

satisfying solution, and rationally, we ought to reject the either/or quality of the question. But while we can reject the disjunction as undesirable, it is harder to come up with a method of historical research that does not enforce it. As Johnson's Imlac cautioned Rasselas, one cannot at the same time fill one's cup from the mouth and the source of the Nile. And the systematic study that provides us with a sense of all that was crucially *necessary* to produce an artifact will never tell us about the moment of invention that went beyond the necessary to the *sufficient*. When the focus is upon the individual genius engaged in constructing something new out of materials that are available to hand, we see the foreground with clarity, but the background—including how those materials came to be available to hand—recedes into a blur. Conversely, when it is the ground that occupies our attention, we must take the figure for granted. Indeed those who investigate the background may even assume that the foregrounded individual's contribution is ultimately not very important. In areas like technological invention parallel work is so common that most of us accept that, if Edison had not invented the lightbulb in October 1879, someone else would have done so a few months or years later, that we would be lighting our homes and offices in similar ways, though without paying our bills to Consolidated *Edison*. But in any case, as with the cognitive psychologists' pictures that require us to focus on either figure or ground and that show two different faces depending upon which we choose, we cannot focus upon both at once. Histories, including literary histories, are thus necessarily unsatisfying: the more satisfying the explanation with a particular range of focus, the more visible are the defects of its virtues.

The Widening Circle

In the first place, texts are formed by the very forms they inhabit. The tyrannies of genre are obvious enough: a sonnet demands fourteen lines, not thirteen or fifteen, and a tragedy demands a sympathetic protagonist progressing toward a doom. But even if we think of texts as divorced from generic considerations, as completely sui generis, beginnings make demands upon endings. Raymond Chandler, who was certainly in sufficient resistance to the tyranny of the genteel generic conventions of the English mystery story, also found himself in a different sort of trouble of his own making in his own refulgent novels, a prisoner of story elements that, having been introduced, insisted upon being developed and complicated, completed before they

could be closed off. As he put it to James Sandoe, "With me a plot, if you could call it that, is an organic thing. It grows and often it overgrows. I am continually finding myself with scenes that I won't discard and that don't want to fit in. So that my plot problem invariably winds up as a desperate attempt to justify a lot of material that, for me at least, has come alive and insists on staying alive" (129–30). With Chandler's desire to choke off a text that refuses to let itself be finished we get a strong sense of the text as having an intentionality that transcends the human intentions of the author.

At one remove from the text is the writer as the efficient cause of the texts she or he writes. Thus the popularity of literary biography, which, despite the proclamation of the "death of the author" from the devotees of Barthes and Foucault, continues to dominate literary criticism and to receive the lion's share of grants from major foundations. The historiographical implication of literary biography is the romantic supposition that writers express some inner substance into the text. But whatever is within was once outside.

At one remove beyond the writer is the literary scene: the other texts to which writers respond, which constitute a backdrop against which their originality plays. Today Anne Tyler writes (at least in part) in response to Joyce Carol Oates. It is well known that Thackeray situated himself against Dickens. And in the Gothic heyday Matthew G. Lewis wrote *The Monk* in response to Mrs. Radcliffe, and, to repay the compliment, Radcliffe wrote *The Italian* partly in response to *The Monk* (Conger, "Sensibility Restored"). But it would be making a mistake to assume that writers situate themselves exclusively against their contemporaries. A writer's literary scene is partly made up of the texts of that day, partly of the canon of "required reading" against which all texts are measured. Furthermore, within that literary scene are other vaguer outposts that combine to give a sense of the aesthetic ideology of the day: what novels and other imaginative texts were supposed to aim at or avoid. All these things are not "efficient" causes, but they predispose the writer to write one way rather than another, to make certain sorts of choices rather than others. And beyond the literary scene is the artist's society as a whole.

Society is an enabling cause of the text in several senses at once. (1) Any mimetic work reproduces in some sense the world outside, in the sense that it must be what that age would consider a possible world, and even works of fantastic fiction, containing impossibilities, must reproduce at least that age's vision of how agents of a certain age, class, gender, living at a certain time, behaved to others so specified. What ghosts do when they haunt you

depends on when they do it. There are norms in each age for what ghastly behavior entails, and while authors are always free to violate such norms, they do so at the risk of being misunderstood. Historical fictions are created by the notions of history current in a particular era, and they are not mistakable for those of some other age: Scott's medieval bumpkins are creatures of a Romantic imagination and not to be confused with the peasants that might be created by a late twentieth-century novelist. (2) More vaguely, any texts will incorporate some subset of beliefs and values possible for that age, including the question of which things were thought to be solvable and decidable, and which others were thought of as endlessly problematic.

These vaguely cultural norms are produced at least partly by the material conditions of the age. Again this is true in several senses: technological changes make certain artistic forms possible that had been impossible before,[6] and the different forms of the circulation of texts (as well as their creation) are a function of the culture as well. Movies are circulated not merely in movie theaters and film societies but are shown on television and sold or rented for home viewing by videocassette stores. One of the appeals of the Gothic novel was its availability in the early nineteenth-century equivalent of the videocassette store: the circulating library. Rental libraries had come into being in the eighteenth century, but the vogue of the Gothic created a new wrinkle in circulation. William Lane, proprietor of the Minerva Press, pioneered the franchising of libraries circulating its own product—to which consumers early in the nineteenth century had become "addicted"—for tradesmen seeking comparable profits in the provinces.

Genre vs. Mode in Literary History

The various causes that operate upon a given literary text are thus at a variety of degrees of remove from the text itself, and selecting one level of causation as the focus of one's discourse tends to remove the others to a position in the background. The result is that Marxist, formalist, and reception theories are going to produce different sorts of histories, with somewhat different focal lengths. Marxist history tends to resemble the product of a camera's widest-angle lens; detail gets lost in the general sweep, and the factors tend to be long range and very general. Reception history tends to focus on the literary scene (while admitting larger-scale factors). It can get down to the individual-influence study (Radcliffe's reception of Lewis) but operates in its most characteristic way when considering the influence of audiences on

the circulation and therefore the production of texts. Formalist studies tend to focus on the individual texts and their attempts to solve general problems, to struggle with materials and techniques within the general zeitgeist. Focus is definitely on the individual author, although collective issues can be raised, and are definitely raised when the question of genre conventions is brought in.

But all three forms of historical explanation will tend to converge, as they have done in this essay. My third, fourth, and fifth chapters, written from three different theoretical perspectives, nevertheless all present histories that follow the story that precedes all histories, which has similar starting and ending points and focuses on similar historical tropes (particularly those of evasion and betrayal).

One question is whether this convergence continues indefinitely as one continues on in time, and here we can definitively say that it does not. For each of these ways of looking at the history of the genre, the Gothic expires as a literary movement around 1825. For the neo-Marxist, the explanation is complete with the gravamen of their explanations—with the response to the Old Regime in the novels of Walpole, Radcliffe, Lewis, and Maturin. For reception theory, the interesting issues in the Gothic conclude around the same time, with *Frankenstein* and *Melmoth,* or rather with the change in the attitude to Radcliffe that occurs around the time the Romantic sensibility, Jauss's *aisthesis,* becomes a typical response to these fictions. For the formalists, there are interesting issues concerning the Gothic aftermath, particularly the reasons why the Brontë sisters were able to solve aesthetic problems that the core texts of the Gothic had found insoluble. And as I have argued in chapter 6, the "gothic" works that follow the "gothic"—even what I have called the neo-Gothic of the 1890s—turn out to be very different in scope and find themselves solving very different problems. Furthermore, late Gothic works are often "gothic" in very different senses: Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!* is not Gothic in the same way as Dinesen's *Seven Gothic Tales,* and neither of these is Gothic in ways similar to Stephen King's *The Shining.*

My point is that, after 1825 or so, one begins to use the term *gothic* modally, which is to say, metaphorically. But metaphor means "change of place," and precisely which aspect of the Gothic it is that gets transferred—the original Gothic of 1764–1825—cannot be predicted in advance of the critical observation. It may be character or plot, it may be the formal affect (terror or horror), it may be scene and atmosphere, it may be merely an operatic use of language and dialogue—or some unpredictable combination of

these. Histories like David Punter's *Literature of Terror* ultimately find themselves grasping at desperate resemblances between the texts they want to discuss and the themes and structures they find in the core texts of the Gothic. This is not to deny that the resemblances will not always be there, because even postmoderns are still post-Romantics, and the Gothic—as the chief fictional form Romanticism took—became pervasive in fiction. The fact is that, by the middle of the twentieth century, just as there were few modes of popular or genre fiction that did not originate, one way or another, in the Gothic of the pre-1825 period, there are few important or rich texts that aspire to canonical status that might not be thought of as embodying one or another aspects of the Gothic. Once we think of the Gothic as a mode rather than a genre, the history of the Gothic becomes nearly coterminous with the history of literature as a whole.

The other question I raised in my introductory chapter was whether these three explanations constitute a braided strand that defines the single master narrative providing something like the whole truth. I think I have created *a* master narrative of a sort, but surely not *the* master narrative. While the historical narratives using Chicago formalism, phenomenological reception theory, and Marx via Williams and Macherey seem to fit together well—each taking up the story where the other leaves off—any number of critical systems (including those not yet invented) could surely generate historical narratives that could be set into a mutually reinforcing dialogue with one another. To do this properly, they would need to focus on complementary loci of causality: on predisposing as well as precipitating causes, on the necessary as well as the sufficient, on ends as well as middles and beginnings. The explanation I have created used the tools I had at hand, made available by my personal history, but other explorers will have different toolboxes.[7] I cannot help imagining other master narratives crafted by different minds, though I cannot know yet what they will tell me, what other questions they will surprise me with, or how they will answer them.

Problematics of Period and Genre, or Lumpers vs. Splitters

Another issue that leads us to an impasse in any consideration of literary history has to do with the status of universals—in this case the universals of period terms and isms (the Renaissance, the Augustan Age, Romanticism, modernism, and so forth) and genres (the novel, the Gothic). The debate between those who essentially accept (with reservations, however serious)

and those who essentially reject (however reluctantly) the use of period and genre universals goes back to the medieval scholastic debate between the realists and the nominalists, and even further, to the disagreements between the Platonists and Aristotelians in antiquity.

In a topic so old, most of the essential maneuvers have already been made many times.[8] As far back as 1924, A. O. Lovejoy was preaching that Romanticism was not one but many, that one can speak usefully only of Romanticisms, "heterogeneous, logically independent, and sometimes essentially antithetical to one another" (232). To this René Wellek had replied that, in splitting Romanticism into sets of warring elements, Lovejoy had deprived it of its historical utility. Wellek did not have the same sense Lovejoy had of the internal contradictions within Romanticism, of course. He claimed "a profound coherence and mutual implication between the romantic views of nature, imagination and symbol" and a "view of the world" that was "all-pervasive in Europe" (*Concepts of Criticism* 197). But his disagreement with Lovejoy went deeper than facts to principles of explanation. Wellek rejected out of hand the nominalist assumption that history is "a discontinuous, meaningless flux," arguing that without universal norms of some sort to which individual texts of a period can be compared, there will not only be no historical knowledge worth having but an impoverished literary criticism as well:

> One meets . . . with the objection that there is no history of literature, but only of men writing. According to the same argument we should have to give up writing a history of language, as there are only men uttering words, and a history of philosophy, since there are only men thinking. Such extreme "personalism" must lead to anarchy, to a complete isolation of every individual work of art which in practice would mean that it would be both incommunicable and incomprehensible. ("Periods and Movements" 84)

At the moment, one of the most interesting proponents of Lovejoy's version of nominalism is Eric Rothstein, whose article "Diversity and Change in Literary Histories" argues forcefully against the utility of historical universals. For Rothstein people are dependably real (readers as well as authors) and texts too are real enough, despite postmodern problematizing of the self and the word. He also conceives it possible for an author to read text A and have this register on text B, which he produces. But universals—periods and genres—have real existence only in the sense that, as chimeras believed in by authors, they may have an influence on the way writers write. For the

historian to place any credence in them is not merely futile but intellectually cowardly, a way of suppressing "differences, using entities whose raison d'être is to normalize and reduce multiplicity."[9]

I happen to share Rothstein's resistance to what he calls the "platonic" notion of genre—an entity that is definitive, in a sense more real than the individual texts of which it is composed. I too am a little frightened by critics who think they are privy to essences and occult substances like the Spirit of the Age—the Renaissance World-Picture, and things of that sort. Our *own* age, after all, has no such univocal spirit, is made up of multiple voices in dialogue and debate with one another, without any hegemonic vision of the sort that Ira Wade or E. M. W. Tillyard found, respectively, in the worlds of Voltaire and Shakespeare. It isn't easy to see why those ages should have possessed what ours surely has not, and it is easier to presume that the fit has been forced by the old procrustean method of ignoring or distorting whatever isn't conformable.

Rothstein envisions the primary practitioners of essentialism as the sauropodean segment of the professoriat, despondent, fearful of new developments in literary studies. He characterizes them as being in desperate search for a comfortable place to rest their cerebral cortices, for an illusory sense of firm control over the complicated past. If the Enlightenment is the "age of reason," we can assimilate all texts to that unitary idea, ignoring and distorting the passion and the madness that don't fit in. As Rothstein argues, historians who "like history only when they can lump it" are motivated by a species of bad faith: "Such simple tales appeal to a wish that, deep down, order exists, and that the discomfiting confusion of the past need not permanently disturb us, overburdened and unsure of rapport with that which we study" (133).

But of course this brand of essentialization is rife in many other segments of academe as well. As Nina Baym has rightly complained, the idealized characterization of the Great Tradition of the American novel as Man against Nature on the Frontier, which came in after World War II, reshaped American literary history so as to exclude all the many talented American women who wrote through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[10] Baym sees this distortion charitably, as stemming from a patriotic motive and only incidentally misogynistic: an attempt to define American literature in terms of what was most characteristically American instead of which literary texts written by Americans were the best.

Today much of the essentializing is done with precisely the same motive, mutatis mutandis, *by* rather than *against* marginalized groups. About *The*

Norton Anthology of Literature by Women, edited by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Gail Godwin complained that the selection was biased by political motives in an effort to make the texts by the best and most "representative" women authors as explicitly feminist as possible. Henry Louis Gates, editor of the *Norton Anthology of Afro-American Literature,* argues that what is most characteristically African American about African American literature involves oral motifs (songs, blues, riffs, signifying, doing the dozens) going back to African roots.[11] Whatever value there is in this argument, it surely implicitly lowers the value of texts by African Americans whose literary style was more assimilationist. Houston Baker's "Generational Shifts and the Recent Criticism of Afro-American Literature" argues that anthologists of African American literature from the 1920s on have premised their collections on different, but equally exclusive, essentialistic criteria. Similarly, Louis Owens has attempted—fortunately without much success—to define normatively what the Native American novel should be about in terms of necessary themes, mode of narrative technique, and values (see Weidman). In general, wherever identity politics has become a significant motive in literary study we find similar versions of Platonic essentialism in the definition, not of periods or genres but of national or minority traditions.

But Rothstein claims to be equally frightened of what he calls the "Aristotelian brand" of universals, which he equates roughly with René Wellek's notion of a period as "a time-section dominated by a set of [empirically discovered] literary norms . . . whose introduction, spread, diversification, integration, decay, and disappearance can be traced" (Wellek, "Periodization," qtd. in Rothstein 134). Rothstein is worried that this sort of universal "relies on the shaky hunch that one set of norms need dominate or that dominant norms need form a set or, in fact, that norms retain a traceable identity" (134).

Parts of this indictment are more worrisome than others. It is indeed fatally easy, as Rothstein suggests, to overstate the dominance of any set of norms, particularly those that are used to define a period rather than a genre. Wellek's insistence that Romanticism constituted a "view of the world" that was "all-pervasive in Europe" seems more Platonic than Aristotelian. (One thinks of Woody Allen's line—playing a medieval jester—that "soon it will be the Renaissance and we'll all be painting.") What we have agreed to call the Romantic era had more than its share of anti-Romantics: for every Wordsworth there was a Crabbe, for every Shelley a Peacock. The naming is a shorthand, indicating a prominent feature of the landscape, like calling the latter half of the seventeenth century the "era of Louis XIV." It

could as easily be called the era of successful opposition to Louis XIV—or, bypassing politics altogether, the era of Newton.

Statistically, no set of norms ever takes over to the point of dominance that would allow it to form a government in Great Britain or pass legislation in America. That there was a vogue of the Gothic novel seems hardly in doubt, but even at its height, perhaps 40 percent of the novels published in England were centrally or marginally assimilable to one or another of the various forms of the Gothic novel—which means that at least 60 percent were not.

Similarly, as Brian Corman has amply documented, no single model can account for the variety of comic drama created in the fifty years following the Restoration. Any univocal sense we may think we possess of Restoration comedy has been produced by ruthless oversimplification.[12] But as Corman also shows, the variety of mixed forms that dominates comedy after the Restoration also shifts its mix markedly over the half-century, leaving English comedy under Anne a very different institution from what grew up under Charles. To prove this requires a conceptual Same against which the Different can appear, and Corman needed to begin with a crude sense of both comedy and of the Restoration in order to bring out those complications that are needed to make the best sense of both the genre and the period. Unlike the Platonic notion of genre, the Aristotelian notion is one of institutional forms that change over time.

In arguing that norms don't necessarily "form a set" (whatever that might mean),[13] Rothstein is probably rejecting the sort of claim Wellek makes that there was "a profound coherence and mutual implication between the romantic views of nature, imagination and symbol" ("Concepts of Criticism" 197), or, in terms of genre, against Eve Sedgwick's notion that the various Gothic conventions are all versions of one vague superconvention.[14] But these ways of thinking are profoundly Platonic rather than Aristotelian: they presume a dialectic in which each of the lower levels of being reflects and reduplicates the higher levels, as body does spirit or matter idea. An Aristotelian would argue that norms always do form a set, but as an aggregate rather than a totality. We need all the rules of the game to play that game, but if the rules were different (if kings in chess could jump three squares in any direction, say), we would be playing a different game (not chess any more but something else).

I have been defending an Aristotelian view of genre and period, but to do so one has to examine the anti-Platonic alternative: what an extreme nominalism would entail not just in theoretical but in operational terms.

Rothstein seems, at least at the outset, to argue in that way: he opens by suggesting that we might substitute for genre and period universals a sort of intertextual network. Each individual author and text is seen in terms of its multiple intertextual affiliations, which branch out something like the neuronal net of the brain, in which each of our billions of neurons forms hundreds or thousands of synapses (connections) with others. The attraction of this is to avoid privileging one bit of data over another, making some world-historical texts into primary subjects for history while demeaning others into mere background. It is clean and tidy—and utterly futile.

The problem is that (as Wellek pointed out in one of his less Platonistic moods) without universals of some sort we have no historical knowledge worth having. History may not be true in the "lump" but it may not be meaningful when split into microscopic particles either. Rejecting everything save a concatenated network of individual influences would provide a large set of tiny knowledge-fragments—so large a set, in fact, that it would be unknowable save by the mind of God. Any group of n texts generates $n!$ permutations of influences of the earlier on the later.[15] Thus the interactions and mutual influences of (say) the 200 Gothic novels Ann Tracy located—a small fraction of what was published in the 1760–1825 period—would generate 200! such interactions. This is a number somewhat larger than a one with four hundred zeros after it, or considerably more than the number of subatomic particles in the universe.[16]

Thus any atomism of this sort would be thoroughly hopeless at providing meaningful historical information. The only thing that could save it are the universals that Rothstein had wanted to reject in the first instance, universals that take an overwhelmingly numerous set of possible relationships (n-factorial connections for n terms) and group things together tentatively, at least, as a way of cutting through the statistical jungle.

So in addition to the "individuals" (texts and authors) Rothstein envisions "strands," each representing "at least one hypothetical population to which a given individual might belong." Meanwhile "strands" and "populations" are "defined in terms of a core of acknowledged members, often with more dubious members around these" (136). And indeed, once Rothstein gets beyond the reality of "people and texts" as objects of historical knowledge and has progressed to acknowledge the reality of "populations . . . with some assured members and some dubious ones" (137–38), he has reached out to objects of knowledge delimited by normative universals, whether he likes that or not, and his "ideal model" of historical scholarship goes a great deal deeper into the realm of "the Aristotelian brand" of universal:

> One might codify a number of actual works into a set to achieve a sensitive enough instrument to calibrate a conceptual space. . . . When, for example, two novels of the 1840s, two of the 1860s, and two of the 1880s are used to chart changes over those years, the novels chosen must be convertible into types (or tokens of hypothetical types), and what then happens to their inconvenient, idiosyncratic parts? A safer course would be to make the hypothetical types, the ideal models, explicit, and to show how the two novels of each decade resemble and differ from the rationalized form exhibited in these models. Procrustes and his cutler would weep, but that is quite all right. (139)

Using individual texts to calibrate a conceptual space is the right idea, but one has to be skeptical about the notion that literary history is always going to move by decades, or any other grouping of years dividing evenly into five or ten, and somewhat more skeptical about the idea that two novels of the 1860s can represent the period. Are we going to choose Mrs. Oliphant's *Miss Marjoribanks* or Mrs. Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret,* Trollope's *Can You Forgive Her?* or Le Fanu's *Uncle Silas*? And what sort of "model" can be assimilated to all four of these novels? Rothstein does not go into details, but if he were to produce them, Procrustes and his cutler might instead have Mona Lisa smiles on their faces.[17] Two novels chosen as a sample of a decade may sound more objective than a genre delimited by norms, but without a prior theory ordering it, any such procedure must be a stab in the dark. What the literary historian needs more than a model or a procedure of any sort is a set of intuitions already trained by experience in recognizing what is and what is not typical, and two ideational faculties, one for generalizing and one for throwing generalizations out the window when they aren't ratified by experiences broader than those that produced them.

One can sympathize with Rothstein's sense that the worst thing a literary historian can do is to force texts into the procrustean bed of genre and period categories. But despite the opposing ways in which they are presented, there may not be much in the way of operational difference between what Rothstein rejects as "the Aristotelian brand" of procrusteanism and the brand he winds up advocating. Tragedy, in Aristotle's *Poetics,* is a genre that functions precisely like what Rothstein calls a core population, a set of texts with a family resemblance generated by different authors within a time frame, and what Aristotle thinks he knows about them is not deduced from foreknown general principles of aesthetics but is rather inferred from common features in the texts and their reception. Whenever such "norms" of the population are "empirically discovered," that is, not defined into exist-

ence but inferred from (for example) features of earlier works that were most persistently imitated by later ones, those norms constitute a hypothesis about the population, a hypothesis that can be interrogated in terms of earlier, later, and non-core works,[18] a hypothesis that could be rejected, modified, or (tentatively, until a better one came along) accepted.[19] This is all Aristotle's method really entails, rightly understood, though it is not easy to understand him rightly, and more tempting to read him in calcified form as he has been throughout the last five centuries through the distorting lens of Platonic dialectic.[20]

Foucault, New Historicism, Historical Futilitarianism

But what makes Rothstein's version of nominalism a cause worth pursuing—in however strange a manner—is the resurgence of a different form of nominalism bearing a postmodern battle dress in the form of the new historicism. The principal spokesperson for the new historicism, Stephen Greenblatt, continually insists that new historicism is not a theory or a set of doctrines but a practice ("Toward a Poetics of Culture" 1), but of course it is a practice based on a theory or a set of theories.[21] H. Aram Veeser identifies the following "key assumptions" that "continually reappear and bind together the avowed practitioners" of new historicism:

1. That every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices;
2. that every act of unmasking, critique, and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risks falling prey to the practice it exposes;
3. that literary and non-literary "texts" circulate inseparably;
4. that no discourse, imaginative or archival, gives access to unchanging truths nor expresses unalterable human nature;
5. . . . that a critical method and a language adequate to describe culture under capitalism participate in the economy they describe. (xi)

The fascinating thing about this list is that it engages the past without any actual appeal to the methods of history. Perhaps this will be less surprising when we recall that the principal philosophical doctrine of this program is that of Michel Foucault.[22] There is a sense in which Ian Hacking is right to call Foucault a proponent of "an extreme nominalism" (39), referring to Foucault's sense that there are not only no ideas governing reality, but we

cannot know the reality of the past as such, only representations purporting to map the real, nor is there a unitary self doing this mapping, only a subject constituted by society as an effect of its repressive social and economic structures. Foucault views history not only as a mode of knowledge that is obsolescent, tied to the modern épistème that he feels is on its way out, but as itself as one of those methods of repression. For Foucault, history embodies

> the various . . . aspects of the will to knowledge *[vouloir-savoir]:* instinct, passion, the inquisitor's devotion, cruel subtlety, and malice. It discovers the violence of a position that sides with those who are happy in their ignorance, against the effective illusions by which humanity protects itself, a position that encourages the dangers of research and delights in disturbing discoveries. The historical analysis of the rancorous will to knowledge reveals that all knowledge rests upon injustice (that there is no right, not even in the act of knowing, to truth or a foundation for truth) and that the instinct for knowledge is malicious. ("Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" 162-63)

For obsolescent history, Foucault wishes to substitute "genealogy" in Nietzsche's sense of a study of "emergences" that "rejects the metahistorical deployment of ideal significations and indefinite teleologies," that "opposes itself to the search for 'origins'" (140).

Yet although Hacking calls Foucault a nominalist, no Platonist could be more rigidly totalizing in his periodization than Foucault is in *Les mots et les choses*. As Clifford Geertz has put it, Foucault

> sees European history crosscut by three great fault lines . . . traversed by mere chronology. . . . In the first period, that of Paracelsus and Campanella, things are related to one another by intrinsic sympathies and antipathies . . . that God has stamped onto their faces for all to read. In the second, that of Linnaeus and Condillac, things are related to one another through the use of types and taxonomies—species and genera, speech parts and grammars—directly given in the presented arrangement of nature. [After the second *coupure*, in the third period] things are related to one another narratively—seen as foreshadowings and outcomes, causes and consequences. "History" rather than "similitude" or "order" becomes the master category of experience, understanding and representation. [And the gap between the third period and the fourth] which we are right now trying to find some way to live through, marks the beginning of the end of this temporalized consciousness and its replacement by some new strange form of existence not yet completely in view. (4)

The four epochs into which Foucault divides Western history, normally called the Renaissance, the Age of Reason, the modern age, and the postmodern future, are each separated by a *coupure,* or rupture, forcing a complete break with the mode of thought of the past. These epochs are viewed as entirely discontinuous, each integrated by an *épistème,* a mode of power/knowledge with its own discursive practices, methods of expression that are also methods of oppression.

The rapidity with which Foucault's notion of historical change was accepted in great parts of the academic community is symptomatic of the way in which our ideas of change, historical and otherwise, themselves change historically. It is interesting to note a parallel shift in the scientific community. As recently as the 1960s there was general acceptance of a version of Charles Darwin's original idea of evolution: slow but continuous and progressive change in organic life forms arising out of natural selection and the struggle for existence and reproduction. Today there has been a growing shift toward the notion (argued by, among others, Stephen Jay Gould)[23] of biological *coupures:* times of rapid catastrophic change, with worldwide replacement of one set of dominant species by another set, events precipitated by a random, climate-altering occurrence, punctuating long periods of relative stasis. The scale of the catastrophe would be rather different—biological *coupures* would go on for hundreds and thousands of years—but the shape of change, stasis, and catastrophe, is strikingly similar.[24]

In any event, Foucault's version of the genealogy of ideas involves linking up discursive practices with one another—often through similitudes and catachreses[25]—"in order to establish those diverse converging, and sometimes divergent, but never autonomous series that enable us to circumscribe the 'locus' of an event, the limits to its fluidity and the conditions of its emergence."[26]

Within each of Foucault's genealogies—his stories of the emergence of new methods of punishment, new modes of treatment for mental illness, new attitudes toward the body and sexuality—his treatment of change is more or less coherent.[27] The self-contradiction only appears when one places the various genealogies against one another. Then it becomes evident that changes in each of the discursive formations occur within a *coupure,* a fissure between épistèmes, but that all the changes do not occur at or even around the same time, the posited moment of the rupture between separate épistèmes.

The beginning of the regulation of the lives of imprisoned criminals by

timetables and rules, for example, starts about a century after you would expect it should, given Foucault's general vision of the Enlightenment with its fascination with types and taxonomies. Geertz complains that "the strata of the various 'sites' he has so far 'excavated'—insanity, medical perception, linguistics, biology, economics, punishment, and . . . sex—are, like those of 'real' archaeology . . . only approximately coordinated with one another in time" (4). Foucault does not attempt to disguise this fact. As he says in *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* "We must not imagine that rupture is a sort of great drift that carries with it all discursive formations at once. . . . The idea of a single break suddenly, at a given moment, dividing all discursive formations, interrupting them in a single moment and reconstituting them in accordance with the same rules—such an idea cannot be sustained. The contemporaneity of several transformations does not mean their exact chronological coincidence: each transformation may have its own particular index of temporal 'viscosity' " (175). But if discursive formations may linger for more than a century because of their "temporal viscosity," the notion of an épistème as a coherent historical formation begins to seem empty.[28]

The other issue that needs to be made clear is the basic break Foucault has made on causality: the aim of both his archaeologies and his genealogies is not to lay bare the nexus of conditionality and contingency, of what was necessary and what sufficient for one state of affairs to transmute itself into another. As he says,

> The old question of the traditional analysis (What link should be made between disparate events? How can a causal succession be established between them? What continuity or overall significance do they possess? Is it possible to define a totality, or must one be content with reconstitution of connexions?) are now being replaced by questions of another type: which strata should be isolated from others? What types of series should be established? What system of relations . . . may be established between them? What series of series may be established? And in what large-scale chronological table may distinct series of events be determined? (*Archaeology of Knowledge* 3–4)

Like Foucault, Stephen Greenblatt explicitly rejects the notion of causality as the principal focus of his genealogical investigations. In the course of relating Shakespeare's theatrical representations of women who dress up as boys (like Viola in *Twelfth Night*) to a story of cross-dressing by Marin le Marcis in Montaigne's *Travel Journal,* to Jacques Duval's story of a woman

married to a hermaphrodite (*De Hermaphroditis* [1603]), and to Galen's and Paré's various misconceptions about the male and female sexual organs, Greenblatt hastens to assure us that he realizes that it was unlikely that Shakespeare had studied Galen and Paré, and almost inconceivable that he had heard about the cases of cross-dressing and hermaphroditism mentioned by Montaigne and Duval. These are not sources or even intertexts. "The relation I wish to establish between medical and theatrical practice is not one of cause and effect or source and literary realization. We are dealing rather with a shared code, a set of interlocking tropes and similitudes that function not only as the objects but as the conditions of the representation" ("Shakespearean Negotiations" 86).

There is nothing intellectually dishonest at all about what Greenblatt is doing in this chapter—though I have to say that he appears to be more comfortable or less defensive when the cultural text against which he reads Shakespeare is, like Samuel Harsnett's *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures,* a book Shakespeare is likely to have read, or like William Strachey's account of storm and shipwreck near Bermuda, a text Shakespeare probably saw in manuscript. In a sense, there is in many ways nothing very new about it either. Since the beginnings of modern philological studies a century ago, literary scholars have been pursuing analogues of important literary texts to supplement whatever direct sources and influences might be found. What may be confusing may reside primarily in the fact that the name that has stuck to this sort of research—the new historicism—is a grotesque misnomer, given that it is neither new nor a historicism but is based instead on an explicit repudiation of the basic foundations of historical knowledge.[29]

The new historicism has made the strongest showing in Renaissance studies and in approaches to what we still call the Romantic period. Part of this may stem from the influence of two of its most prestigious practitioners, Stephen Greenblatt and Jerome McGann, who have each organized what amounts to a cottage industry in their respective fields. But a more important reason may be that so many of the masterworks of literature of these periods, such as the plays of Shakespeare and the odes of Keats, have been considered *sub specie aeternitatis.* It has come late to eighteenth-century studies for the converse reason: the major works of the 1660–1800 period, from "Mac Flecknoe" through "The Rape of the Lock" to "The Deserted Village," have always needed to be read as social, indeed topical, texts and have never been abstracted from history.

The first new historical attempt to approach the Gothic via Foucault's

genealogical principles appears in Robert Miles's very recent *Gothic Writing, 1750–1820: A Genealogy*. For Miles the Gothic is not "romance" but "writing"; it names not a genre but a "discursive site . . . for representations of the fragmented subject" where competing ways of talking about the self and the other, nature and culture, sexuality and parenthood, contend for mastery (4). Thanks to this vast but vague thematics, Gothic writing—as opposed to the mere Gothic novel—embraces a large set of the discursive practices that bridge the age of sensibility and that of Romanticism. Drawing a line about the Gothic would be an arbitrary procedure. Miles reads various texts of the period—primarily fiction, criticism, and philosophy—to search out connecting threads of intertextuality, except that in Miles's thematics the art is not one of finding similarities but of demonstrating equivalent confusions and evasions within parallel texts, mediating a semantic breakdown, a rhetoric of difference, during a period in which Foucault had located a major *coupure*.

In the process Miles reads both canonical and dimly remembered texts in ways that enhance our sense of the "gaps" and incoherences that made for tension within the popular writing of the late eighteenth century. But afterward, one feels unmoored, as far as ever from a sense of the Gothic's place within history. The difficulty may in part stem from the structure of the book, which moves from cloudy theoretical overview into the dense thickets of intertextual reading. But it must also derive from the genealogical method of Foucault itself, which rejects teleology outright and the sense of shape, order, and hierarchy that comes only with causality. Indeed, there is something deeply unsatisfying, willfully blind, in Foucault's very notion of historical change, a vision of epistemic ruptures that drive our discursive practices from one siting of power/knowledge to another, but that come whenever they come, ineffable and uncaused, apparently random movements, as earthquakes might seem had we no science of tectonics to explicate the slow inexorable convections of brute matter churning beneath the almost instantaneous disasters on the surface.

To say this is by no means to deny that what Robert Miles, Stephen Greenblatt, and the legion of other new historicists have been producing—namely, cultural studies of literature in its synchronic relationship to other discursive and nondiscursive cultural practices—have genuine value. Even if one's interest is exclusively in literary texts as aesthetic objects, cultural studies provide deep background, background one can only derive from immersing oneself in the distant period, absorbing from matters relevant and

apparently irrelevant an intuitive sense of its texture of life. Unless one believes, with Foucault, that history—and indeed all narrative generally—embodies an obsolescent mode of thought doomed to disappear with the modern épistème, there is no reason cultural studies should not coexist in a large world of scholarly practices with literary histories in all their various sorts. But they shouldn't be confused with literary history either.[30]

Historical Pluralism

My final answer to the question posed by David Perkins, "Is literary history possible?" is that it is possible, necessary, but that any particular history is always going to draw complaints, no matter how complete it may attempt to be, because there is no way for any single coherent history to operate on the various focal lengths needed to answer the very different sorts of questions readers are going to raise. Chicago critics think primarily in terms of the development of institutional forms, Marxists in terms of the influence of material conditions upon texts as productions of ideology, while reception theorists think in terms of the phenomenological act of reading and changes in the horizon of expectations. Every history, no matter how complete in its own terms, will inevitably seem part of the story; none will be the whole story. I deduce the need for histories written from different theoretical perspectives to complement one another and provide the vision otherwise lacking.

To some extent, as I have suggested in chapter 2, there is a sort of syncretic approach implicit in historical writing generally, a move within a critical school to find a way of accounting for causal forces more centrally in view from a different perspective. (Terry Eagleton's differentiation of "aesthetic ideology" and "literary modes of production" as semiautonomous features of textual production might be seen as ways of enlarging his post-Althusserian Marxist perspective to cover issues more central to formalists and reception theorists.) Such syncretic moves co-opting the "opposition" make better sense in historical writing—where one is expected to tell the "whole story"—than in the critical interpretation of particular literary texts, where there is no presumption that the writer will be giving anything but a single partial view.

These moves would be less necessary and less uncomfortable, however, if we could agree on the necessity for a historical pluralism, something a bit

more structured than the relativistic notion that "I will tell my version of the story while you tell yours." As I suggested in chapter 6, the three versions of literary historical narrative, though convergent, were not identical. The Althusserian Marxist version of the Gothic was in effect a story about origins, of how the ground was laid for a literary form by a perversely accurate vision of authority. The formalist version was essentially a story of how the Gothic novel continued; how and why it had become effectively entrapped within a literary form that spun ever more baroque and outlandish variations on a standard plot line, but perversely kept it from the full artistic achievement that (perversely) became possible in a later era. And the Jaussian analysis of the Gothic was by and large an explanation of the Gothic's decline, of how it began by creating a series of appetites for visionary escape that it ultimately could not maintain. As a first hypothesis, it might be worth investigating whether Marxist explanations tend in fact to be better at dealing with origins than continuations and ends, given the systematic emphasis on predisposing causes, on the tidal forces of technology and political economy that underlie shifts in more dependent ideological formations like literature. Formalist explanations tend to begin their narratives later in time, with precipitating causes, with those necessary provocations, innovations that make possible (or choke off) further developments. The point is that each mode of historical narrative has a unique role to play, a role it can play well or badly, but can only with awkwardness extend beyond its means. To find different narrative systems appropriate for different tasks is not a mere relativism or syncretism but a genuine pluralism of sorts. I don't know if what I suggest would qualify by James Battersby's rather exclusive definition,[31] but it might by Hayden White's definition of *historical pluralism* as presupposing "either a number of equally plausible accounts of the historical past or, alternatively, a number of different but equally meaningful constructions of that indeterminate field of past occurrences which by definition we call 'history'" ("Historical Pluralism" 484). It does not presume that history is some solid essence on which literary interpretation should be based, but rather that the choice of worldview one makes in choosing a poetics is inevitably implicated in the sort of historical narrative one is going to write.

Pluralism currently has been getting a pretty terrible press. An issue of *Critical Inquiry* incorporating the proceedings of a March 1984 conference titled "The Foundations of Critical Pluralism" was retitled "Pluralism and Its Discontents" by the editor, Tom Mitchell, when it became clear that the

panelists were treating pluralism "as an object of critical scrutiny from the standpoint of assumptions which are hostile to pluralism" ("Introduction"). The arguments were not primarily epistemological—as in Stanley Fish's suggestion that it is incoherent to claim to be able to stand outside one's own system of beliefs, to find a neutral corner at which one can dispassionately evaluate ideas written from a different perspective than one's own. The arguments were primarily political.

Of those writers, the most directly hostile is Ellen Rooney, who objects not to pluralism's means but its goal: a dialogue of mutual understanding between adherents of rival theories. For Rooney what is wrong with pluralism is precisely that it excludes "the possibility of exclusion"; she instead "would explicitly and theoretically exclude some group, class, or school from her audience, in the sense that she would *not* seek to persuade them to the 'truth' of her view. The anti-pluralist marks exclusions and only thus escapes the problematic of general persuasion."[32] Rooney's approach bears comparison with that of Stanley Fish. Fish presumes that "you will agree with me (that is, understand) only if you already agree with me": those who already belong to the same interpretive community will automatically agree, and others who do not will automatically find that the interpretation fails to explain ("Interpreting the *Variorum*" 485). Rooney feels it important to exclude outsiders and explicitly limit her audience to the already convinced. The sociology of discourse she seems to value is that of the party meeting, to which only card-carrying members are invited, ones who never ask awkward questions or demand good reasons for what they are asked to believe.[33]

Mitchell himself, in "Pluralism as Dogmatism," argued that we need to recognize that "pluralism is an ideology as well as a dogmatism," one that adopts a rhetorical strategy of "pure, unconscious appropriation of power," taking "the moral high ground by designating itself as the philosophy uniquely devoted to liberal generosity and tolerance," thus deluding us "into thinking that we occupy a position from which critical decisions can be made on the basis of pure, disinterested standards of value" (500). Bruce Erlich takes a related but more explicitly political view, more interesting in its implications, that pluralism not only is capitalist in ideology (using "the model of [Adam Smith's] invisible hand using the self-advantage of each producer for the common good" but *requires* for its operation a "liberal" world of generosity and tolerance. Arguments among rival positions take place, Erlich insists, not merely in an abstract world of ideas, like Richard McKeon's multidimensional vector space of methods, operations, principles,

and modes of thought, but in a world of social power. Erlich concludes that "pluralism lacks means to confront the influence of social power upon the encounter of voices. . . . Pluralism limits its own ability to define and to work for a utopia of free inquiry because [it] mistakes what society is and evades the authoritarianism denied in words but practiced in deeds by market societies and their apologists. . . . Rhetoricians only interpret the world, and that to control it; the point is to change it" (541, 543, 545).[34]

What my ear detects in Rooney, Mitchell, and Erlich is a common sense, differently put with different degrees of intensity, that pluralism is the epistemology of political liberalism. Pluralism's instrumentalist view of discourse is one way of recuperating the pragmatic vision underlying liberalism and capitalism, particularly John Stuart Mill's notion that a free marketplace for ideas gives mankind the best chance of finding truth and avoiding error. But political liberalism was tainted in the 1980s by its association with neoconservativism, with Milton Friedman's monetarist economics and with William F. Buckley's brand of exclusionist politics. It is little wonder that Mitchell found pluralism under attack. It is hard to believe he found as many defenders—Wayne Booth, Nelson Goodman, Hayden White—as he did.

It would be naive to argue that methodological pluralism is ideologically neutral: we know that nothing is. But history moves on, and today, having moved past the infuriating dishonesty of the Reagan-Bush years at home and the doctrinaire obfuscations of the cold war abroad, it may be easier to view political liberalism and its discursive formations with less rancor. After the rejection by plebiscite, all over Eastern Europe, of socialist economic and social systems, it has become a little harder to think reflexively of Marxism as inevitably providing utopian solutions and easier to imagine liberalism as something people of goodwill would choose if it were available. In this sense the political attacks upon pluralism seem caught in the backwash of history.

My own personal commitments to the elements of the pluralistic historiography I have been defending could be equally seen as ideological, reflections of the odyssey of this subject through history. My attraction, unsteady and flickering though it is, to the Marxist literary historiography of chapter 3 is probably a peculiar expression of solidarity with the working class from which I sprang and for which I continue—despite long immersion in the academy—to retain some feeling. The formalism of chapter 4 reflects my long hermetic training at the University of Chicago under Elder Olson and Norman Maclean of the first generation of neo-Aristotelians and Sheldon Sacks and Wayne Booth of the second generation—even though ultimately

its view of history owes most to the ideas of Ralph Rader, who never studied there at all.[35]

But as James Battersby has put it, the fact that everything is ideological shouldn't privilege ideological explanations any more than the fact that everything is geometrical should privilege geometrical explanations: "Every ideology permits—because it cannot exclude or preclude—many diverse, even conflicting formulations, expressions, and practices" (251). As a formalist by training, I could have made formalist literary history the master discourse, to be complemented as necessary by Marxist and reception histories. One can indeed write history this way, and as I pointed out in chapter 2, each mode of literary history has been making accommodations that would allow it to incorporate some of the insights of alternative modes without marking any break, or even any dangerous declaration that one's chosen mode of discourse is in need of a supplement. But as Walter Davis suggests, it is arbitrary to designate one mode of explanation as the "master" and the others as the "servants." (Another theorist of literary history could then choose another master.)[36] To me it seemed that, looked at in practice, the three modes of historical explanation whose contribution to a history of the Gothic I have examined reinforce one another (overlap) in places and contradict one another (compete) in others. In addition there are topics on which one speaks and the rest are silent—issues that lie in the blind spots of the others' assumptions. They are differently focused but essentially complementary explanations, different stories trying to tell the same story. This dialogue between partially competing explanations is more interesting than any single explanation could be.[37]

Nor does my own creation of a dialogue exhaust the possibilities, even for the limited event under scrutiny. I have to agree with Hayden White that "narrative accounts of real historical events . . . admit of as many equally plausible versions in their representation as there are plot structures available in the given culture for endowing stories . . . with meanings" ("Historical Pluralism" 489).

In the end, beyond or beneath ideology, pluralism is a pragmatic response to the limitations of the human mind that, understanding its limitations, builds different tools to accomplish different tasks. Man has no microscopic eye—but can build a microscope to view the smallest elements of matter. No telescopic eye—but can build telescopes to view the most distant luminaries of the universe. What we cannot build is a micro-telescope, a single instrument that can accomplish both tasks at once. The intellectual tools we build, including our critical theories and historical methods, can do what

they are constructed for, have their own ways of mapping the world, idiosyncratic areas of blindness and insight. We can see most clearly through a single lens, but it is at the cost of the wholeness of vision. To see more or from other angles we must be content to relinquish a monocular vision, to use different tools ourselves, or, what may be easier, to help each other see.

NOTES

Preface

1. See my *Fable's End,* where I make this suggestion.

Chapter 1

1. Horace Walpole, letter to Rev. William Cole, 9 March 1765, quoted in Bleiler xi.

2. Republished the following year under its better-known title, *The Old English Baron.*

3. Edith Birkhead's *The Tale of Terror* is solidly researched and well balanced. Eino Railo's *The Haunted Castle* is marred by a thematic organization: one chapter is devoted to the avatars of the Gothic castle, another to those of the criminal monk, and so on, which makes the historical relations of texts in this unindexed book nearly impossible to follow. Railo is also devoid of literary taste, analysis, and judgment, a fault shared with Montague Summers, whose unqualified enthusiasm for scores of forgotten and forgettable fictions makes *The Gothic Quest* a bibliophile's dream and a critic's nightmare. Chapters 6 and 7 of J. M. S. Tompkins's *The Popular Novel in England 1770 to 1800* is written with her customary good sense and clarity, though she takes the story only halfway. The first cycle of criticism fittingly ends with Devendra Varma, *The Gothic Flame,* which is (as David Punter has aptly pointed out) "largely a collation of earlier critics, sometimes with attributions, sometimes not" (Punter, *The Literature of Terror* 10).

4. Hayden White distinguishes between the forms of annals, chronicle, and true historical narrative. The annals form, exemplified by the *Annals of Saint Gall* from the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica,* consists only of "a list of events ordered in chronological sequence." The chronicle "often seems to wish to tell a story, aspires to narrativity, but typically fails to achieve it. More specifically, the chronicle usually is marked by a failure to achieve narrative closure. It does not so much conclude as simply terminate" ("Value of Narrativity" 5). With the chronicle (exemplified by Richerus of Rheims's *Histoire de France 888–995*), events are presented in order of their occurrence "and cannot, therefore, offer the kind of meaning that a narratologically governed account can be said to provide."

5. See Neuburg, *Popular Literature.*

6. This work was a version of her dissertation and long precedes her noted antihomophobia project of cultural criticism.

7. See Moers, *Literary Women;* and Fleenor, ed., *The Female Gothic.* Related books and articles exploring various aspects of the female Gothic include Doody, "Deserts, Ruins and Troubled Waters"; Holland and Sherman, "Gothic Possibilities"; Kahane, "Gothic Mirrors and Feminine Identity"; Roberts, *The Gothic Romance;* Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction;* and DeLamotte, *Perils of the Night.*

8. Gilbert and Gubar have followed up with *No Man's Land* and *Sexchanges,* carrying their study into the twentieth century.

9. See *The Anxiety of Influence* and its follow-up volumes, *A Map of Misreading* and *Agon.*

10. Though *The Madwoman in the Attic* has inspired a generation of feminists, skeptics included other feminists, such as Mary Jacobus, who attacked the book's "unstated complicity with the autobiographical 'phallacy' whereby male critics hold that the female text *is* the author." Toril Moi is unhappy with the hermeneutics of the "cover story," since the result is that everywhere in literature by women one can uncover nothing but either overt or disguised versions of the author's "constant, never-changing feminist *rage.* This position . . . manages to transform *all* texts written by women into feminist texts" (51).

11. These are not critiques of the Gothic based upon historically founded myths or folk motifs (such as the Cupid-Psyche legend or the descent into Hades), but ones that take the Gothic novel to be essentializable as a single story or a set of related stories.

12. See, e.g., Collingwood, *The Idea of History;* Crane, *Critical and Historical Principles of Literary History;* Perkins, *Is Literary History Possible?* and other skeptical formulations about literary history, including Japp, *Beziehungssinn;* and Wellek, "The Fall of Literary History." Nevertheless, a number of monographs reconsidering the relationship between literature and history have begun to appear in recent years, of which a few of the more important are those of Gossman, *Between History and Literature;* Wright, *Fictional Discourse and Historical Space;* Budick, *Fiction and Historical Consciousness;* Reiss, *The Meaning of Literature;* Lindenberger, *The History in Literature;* Harvey, *Literature into History.*

13. The issue of essentialization here is discussed further in chap. 7.

14. See Derrida, *Limited Inc ABC,* about the endlessness of context.

15. Contemporary computers employing parallel processing have suggested to neuronal psychologists how the brain too may be organized to make sense of competing logical frameworks and sensory inputs.

16. Corman cogently argues a similar line in *Genre and Generic Change in English Comedy, 1660–1710* in discussing the nature of comedy in the Restoration. Tradition provides the useful distinction between comedy of humor and comedy of intrigue, comedy based on Jonson and comedy based on Fletcher as exemplars, but tradition is incoherent, since it ignores the fact that most comedy was a mixture of these forms. But Corman also argues that coherent theories of comedy, such as that of Elder Olson, fail to explain because they cover too few cases. Ultimately Corman relies on a formalist conception of "institutional forms" discussed in the following chapter together with its founder, Ralph W. Rader.

17. The clearest example of what I mean by "differently focused but essentially complementary explanations" is from economics. An event, like the inflationary spiral we experienced in the late 1970s, might be explained differently by different economists as primarily the result of (1) increased costs to producers ("cost-push" inflation), or (2) increased demand by consumers ("demand-pull" inflation), or (3) too much money in the economic system ("monetary" inflation). In fact the explanations are convergent, since all three symptoms will tend to occur at the same time; but as a result of their disparate ideologies, different schools of economics will explain the event differently, each explanation taking a single symptom as the driving force of the event and the other forces as subordinate and secondary manifestations.

18. See my introduction to *Falling into Theory* 1–23.

Chapter 2

1. Perkins, *Is Literary History Possible?;* Collingwood, *The Idea of History;* Crane, *Critical and Historical Principles of Literary History* (see also n. 10 below).

2. Many if not most encyclopedic histories certainly offer articles on movements and genres as well as bio-bibliographies. But the habit is ingrained, even when grouping, say, all the writers of Restoration comedies together, of presenting some general strictures then going sequentially through the major figures (Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve) in a life-and-works fashion.

3. I must confess that I have yet to figure out precisely what "the numinous" means.

4. Were I rewriting this chapter today—and I suppose there isn't any reason I couldn't, except that the book would never get done if I kept on revising it—I would include Pierre Bourdieu's Marxist vision of cultural production, in addition to Williams, Eagleton, and Frow. See especially his essay "The Field of Cultural Production, or The Economic World Reversed."

5. Russian formalism begins around 1916 as a circle surrounding S. A. Vengerov; by 1929 it is at odds with the prevailing aesthetic ideology of the Soviet Union, and its members are forced to recant, like Shklovsky, or to emigrate, like Jakobson. Explicit consideration of literary history begins in the last third of this period with Tynyanov's "The Literary Fact" (1924).

6. The idea of evolution in literary history can be traced back further than the Russian formalists, of course. In his *L'évolution des genres de la littérature,* Ferdinand Brunetière insists that the laws of literary change rest upon an "analogue à cette 'différenciation progressive' qui, dans la nature vivante, fait passer la matière de l'homogène à l'hetérogène, et sortir constamment, si j'ose ainsi parler, le contraire du semblable" (9). Brunetière believed in a literary evolution that was very closely analogous to biological evolution: that oratory in the eighteenth-century sermon was replaced, in the struggle for existence, by Romantic poetry (which had a similar "evolutionary niche" in the sense that it expressed the transcendent spirit behind the immanent and the everyday). See also Wellek, *Concepts of Criticism* 37–46.

7. An interestingly psychoanalytic version of the process Tynyanov has outlined

appears in a book by Colin Martindale, *Romantic Progression*. Martindale argues that the pressure on the individual artist to "make it new" requires on the merely verbal level that each metaphor a poet comes up with be more unusual and distant, or psychically "regressed," than ones that have arrived in the literary tradition. "In a vacuum, poetry would be predicted to move away from the classical and rational through deeper and deeper levels of regression until it reached some hypothetical point beyond which regression and metaphor distance could not be pushed" (40). Outside this vacuum, audiences also force artists to be original, and thus to move to greater levels of regression, but their intolerance for ambiguity and too great originality has the opposite effect. The result is a sort of zigzag. At first a genre begins at a high degree of formal elaboration (logical coherence, formal precision) and moves toward greater regression (primary process content). At a certain point, the pressure from the audience forces a decrease of regression, which is accommodated by a stylistic change to a lower level of elaboration; the style system can then operate with greater and greater regression until again a reaction sets in (and so on). In painting, the movement toward greater regression might be embodied in the sequence Classic→Pre-Raphaelite→Decadent Academic→Surreal Pictorial; a zigzag movement would be Classic→Romantic→Impressionist→Expressionist (then shifting to shallower regression with lower elaboration)→Cubist→Surreal Nonpictorial. Martindale's analysis is primarily of poetry (and of visual art), but it would apply also to music and to prose fiction. And it would in the case of the Gothic predict roughly what occurred: that the Gothic romance moved toward rawer fantasy and more decomposed narrative technique until (with the convulsive shift in style system) the historical romance replaced it.

8. Quotation is from pp. 79–80 in the translation by Matejka and Pomorska (see Works Cited).

9. Michael Sprinker suggests that Crane's formalism and historical ideas resemble, not so much those of the Russian formalists, as those of the Czech structuralists of the Prague circle, like Jan Mukarovsky and Felix Vodicka, and the reception theorists of Konstanz.

10. Crane's "Critical and Historical Principles of Literary History" was originally published the year before his death as an essay in the two-volume collection *The Idea of the Humanities and Other Essays* (1966). According to Crane's colleagues, the essay had been written much earlier, around 1952, at about the same time as *The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry*. In 1971 the essay was published separately as a book, with a foreword by Sheldon Sacks.

11. And see also my own *Fable's End* for a discussion of the similarities and differences of didactic fiction in the earlier and later periods.

12. See Rader, "The Emergence of the Novel in England"; McKeon, "Reply to Ralph Rader"; and Rader's restatement of the issue in "The Novel and History Once More."

13. Gerard Barker's study of the Grandisonian hero from Sir Charles himself to late manifestations like Fitzwilliam Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* suggests the same dating.

14. The historical novel is not today a canonical form, but it was throughout the

nineteenth century. I am suspicious of any history of the novel that has nothing to say about the period—more than a generation—between Austen's *Emma* (1816) and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847).

15. See Hicks, *The Great Tradition*. Hicks's history of American literature presents a picture of literature riding over a more general social frame of rising industrialism. None of the major literary figures is approached historically: Hicks never asks why Hawthorne would choose to write about seventeenth-century Salem or contemporary Italy rather than about the life of his own times. The vulgarity of this vulgar-Marxist approach is less in its predictable and valueless aesthetic judgments than in its evasion of the really interesting historical questions.

16. For example, in the peroration of *Rethinking Intellectual History*, Dominick LaCapra stresses "*the importance of close reading of texts* and a careful investigation of their relations to discursive contexts" in order to enable "a mutually challenging interaction between social and intellectual history on what should be a matter of mutual concern: a better understanding of the actual relations between 'elite' and 'popular' culture in the past and a better standpoint for judging their desirable relations in the present and future" (346, italics added).

17. Jauss discusses Gadamer most directly in "The Limits and Tasks of Literary Hermeneutics."

18. See especially *Truth and Method* 238–74.

19. Michael Sprinker finds similarities (within differences) in this aesthetic historicism and Althusser's notion of the relative autonomy of aesthetic practice. See *Imaginary Relations* 102ff.

20. In Richard McKeon's sense of "grasping the universe of discourse as a whole rather than by parts."

Chapter 3

1. The theory behind the "new historicism" is considered more generally in chap. 7.

2. *Language as Symbolic Action* 81-97. Burke begins by referring *Coriolanus* to "the unrest caused by the Enclosure Acts" (89), but later enthusiastically adopts William Frost's suggestion that "the tension should be located rather as anticipatory of the later Civil Wars than as reminiscent of earlier disturbances. . . . Crown vs. parliament rather than . . . landowners vs. peasants" (95).

3. "'Lycidas' was the symbolic dying of [Milton's] poetic self. It was followed by a . . . prose period [when], except for the occasional sonnet, he 'hid the one talent which it is death to hide.' . . . In 'Lycidas' he testifies that he is holding his dead self in abeyance, and that it will rise again. . . . So the poet remained, for all his dying; and at the Restoration . . . he would be reborn. *Paradise Lost* is the fulfillment of his contract" (Burke, *Attitudes toward History* 1:86–87n).

4. See Dante's letter to Can Grande della Scala for the clearest exposition of these modes of reading, in Richter, *The Critical Tradition* 118–21.

5. Whether this should count as allegory is a question. *Love Letters* is more properly a roman à clef like Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men;* the code is merely a matter of replacing one name with another.

6. The reverse should not be surprising.

7. Paulson, *Hogarth's Graphic Works* (1970), now swollen to 496 pages in the third (1989) edition; his *Hogarth: His Life, Art, and Times;* and *Rowlandson: A New Interpretation.* His more recent work includes *Representations of Revolution.*

8. Paulson is willing to state as a fact that when Henry Tilney of Austen's *Northanger Abbey* speaks of "a mob of three thousand men assembling in St. George's Fields; the Bank attacked, the Tower threatened, the streets of London flowing with blood," Jane Austen "was thinking of history: the Gordon Riots of 1780 and the French Revolution of 1789, as well as the crowd of 150,000 that gathered at the meeting of the London Corresponding Society in Copenhagen Fields in 1795 (and the 200,000 cheap copies of *Rights of Man* sold in 1793), the riots of 1794–95 with their death toll, and the naval mutinies at Spithead and the Nore in 1797" (*Representations* 216). Lucky critic to be privy to authors' thoughts in such specific detail.

9. What Sade actually says is more interesting than that: "Ce genre, quoi qu'on en puisse dire, n'est assurément sans mérite; il devenait le fruit indispensable des secousses révolutionnaires dont l'Europe entière se ressentait. Pour qui connaissait tous les malheurs dont les méchants peuvent accabler les hommes, le roman devenait aussi difficile à faire que monotone à lire; il n'y avait point d'individu qui n'eût plus éprouvé d'infortune, en quatre ou cinq ans, que n'en pouvait peindre, en un siècle, le plus fameux romancier de la littérature. Il fallait donc appeler l'enfer à son secours, pour composer des titres à l'intérêt" (*Oeuvres complètes* 10:71). [The genre, whatever one can say about it, is assuredly not without merit. It became the necessary result of the revolutionary shocks which all Europe experienced. For anyone who knew all the evils that wicked men could perpetrate on their fellows, the novel became as difficult to write as it was monotonous to read. There was no one at all who had not experienced more misfortune in four or five years than could be painted in a century by the most famous novelist of literature. One had to call in Hell itself to help in creating texts that would be interesting.]

10. While Paulson's notion of the Gothic novel as a metaphor for the revolution is questionable, particularly in the case of the most canonical texts (Radcliffe, Lewis, Maturin, and so on), there were certainly minor Gothic novelists interested in aspects of the French Revolution as a theme of terror. Marie Roberts, in *Gothic Immortals,* has amassed a good deal of information about how certain secret societies like the Rosicrucians, despite their Enlightenment ethos, became in the popular mind after the Revolution "dark spectres haunting the mass movements of Europe, . . . agencies for those dark mysterious forces which dethroned kings, dismounted generals and toppled governments" (59).

Paulson's metaphorical principle, in which Gothic horror is viewed as a literary representation of what England found most horrid in actuality, is given its crudest extension into the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Martin Tropp's *Images of Fear.*

According to Tropp, the industrial revolution is portrayed in *Frankenstein* (where the Monster is seen as a "mechanical" assemblage of parts), the London poor in *Bleak House,* Jack the Ripper in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* and so forth.

11. Women had been working at trades *in* the home since the Middle Ages but were late to join the factory workers. "It was only in 1820, when industrialization had been under way for over forty years, that employment opportunities for women increased, and then only in the cotton trade" (Stone 662).

12. Lawrence Stone points out that the *Pamela* situation mirrored so often in the Gothic novel remained descriptive of women's lives into mid-Victorian times, partly because the industrial revolution changed men's lives more than it did women's. "Far into the nineteenth century it remained true that the single largest occupation for single women was in domestic service. This was the group most exposed to sexual abuse, and least economically capable of resistance" (646).

13. Wolff's unusual position has recently become fashionable among feminist critics who find it embarrassing that women addictively read (and still addictively read the successors of) the Gothic novel. Anyone comparing the Emilies and the Ellenas of Radcliffe with the heroines of the Brontë sisters, however, will quickly be cured of the notion that the swooning Gothic heroines could be role models for the women of any day other than their own.

14. Certainly women's legal position improved enormously in the mid-Victorian period, with the passage of the Married Women's Property Acts giving women full personhood under the law.

15. Joan Perkin states that "by the 1850s the middle-class housewife was acknowledged mistress of her own sphere; that sphere was subordinate to that of her husband, but it had become 'her kingdom where she exercises entire control'" (187). This suggests that the "doctrine of separate spheres" to which Kate Ellis refers is a development of the middle third of the nineteenth century, since texts designed to train wives in their proper duties and talents, such as the domesticity manuals of Sarah Ellis (e.g., *The Wives of England* [1843]), are being written for a social movement only getting under way.

16. McKeon sees Fielding and Richardson as moving ideologically to a common ground by 1750. *Joseph Andrews* was part of the conservative reaction to *Pamela,* but McKeon views the eponymous hero of *Tom Jones* as "industrious and active . . . a rogue figure who makes good" and thus "much closer to the model of the progressive protagonist than anything Fielding had previously attempted." McKeon also sees *Clarissa,* relative to *Pamela,* as evincing "the darker conservative apprehension that the essence of utopia is that it is not to be found in this world" (*Origins* 418). Eagleton presents the Richardsonian solution to the horror of moneyed power and predatory masculinity as the bourgeoisified aristocrat Sir Charles Grandison, nonviolent, considerate, and altruistic. It is hard to doubt that the Grandisonian hero was a success for Richardson, who was prouder of his last novel than its worthier predecessors; and it is equally difficult to doubt the success of *Grandison* as a myth, since (despite his being a monster of propriety and boredom) he could be domesticated, and in a process chronicled by Gerard Barker,

various versions of Grandison dominated the genres of the novel for the next five decades. The question remains, though, whether the bourgeoisification of the aristocracy Eagleton confidently assumed was something that really happened or an artifact of ideology. As Lawrence and Jeanne Stone have demonstrated, the "country families" that made up the aristocracy of England were remarkably un-open to the entry even of the wealthiest new blood—upstart clans like the Harlowes were the stuff of fiction rather than fact—and the assimilation was rather of the "middling sort," the professional classes, to the values of the aristocracy than the other way around (see *An Open Elite* 402–7). A few well-known exceptions—like the immensely wealthy James Brydges, who became duke of Chandos—may, according to the Stones, be responsible for the prevailing myth of an aristocracy open to colonization from below.

17. Only the journal *The Anti-Jacobin* did so.

18. Avrom Fleishman begins his study of the historical novel with Scott, and though he gives mention to the earlier historical fiction in English beginning with Thomas Nashe and Thomas Deloney, and to the importance of the social realism of Maria Edgeworth and John Galt, there is no question in his mind that Scott was doing something genuinely new. Similarly, Richard Humphrey tells us that his "comparative study of the historical novel will begin . . . not with Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (c. 370 B.C.) but with Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814)" (1–2). And in choosing that date, he is following a long tradition. For Humphrey, the impact of *Waverley* was to create "generic awareness": to set up a model that could be followed not only in Britain but across Europe and in America as well.

19. Scott himself may have been the last to see himself as a great original, since he viewed his own efforts at prose romance in medieval setting as very much in the tradition of Walpole. His description of Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* as presenting "a picture of domestic life and manners, during the feudal times, as might actually have existed, and to paint it chequered and agitated by the action of supernatural machinery, such as the superstition of the period received as a matter of devout credulity" is, as David Kerr suggests, a "strong misreading" rather than an accurate assessment of Walpole's achievement: it "tells us a great deal about Scott's own attitude towards the past, about his own sense of his motives for using what he calls 'supernatural machinery.'" See Walter Scott, preface to *The Castle of Otranto* in Walpole 8; and Kerr, *Fiction against History* 6.

20. It is perhaps significant that we still read Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* as literature, long after its ideas about Roman history have been superseded.

21. This is not to say that no one cared whether Ossian or Rowley were genuine. Samuel Johnson was exercised enough about MacPherson to go to considerable trouble to expose the latter's story about transcription of medieval manuscripts. On the other hand, one of the great contemporary medievalists, Thomas Tyrwhitt, who helped expose the Rowley hoax, thought enough of the poems to publish them, seven years after Chatterton's death, in 1777. The truth didn't settle the matter: both were read and enjoyed enthusiastically long into the nineteenth century.

22. See such representative works as Lyttelton, *A History of the Life of King Henry the Second*; Stuart, *A Historical Dissertation concerning the Antiquities of the English Constitution*;

Pinkerton, *An Enquiry into the History of Scotland preceding the Reign of Malcolm III;* and Turner, *The History of the Anglo Saxons from the Earliest Times to the Norman Conquest.* For Johnson, see "Preface to Shakespeare" in Richter, *The Critical Tradition,* 245–55. For Hurd, see *Letters on Chivalry and Romance.* For Thomas Warton, see *History of English Poetry.*

23. Walpole to John Cole, 27 April 1773.

24. Harfst, *Horace Walpole and the Unconscious,* suggests that *The Castle of Otranto* had its psychological origins in Walpole's response to the rumors that he was fathered by Sir Carr Hervey.

25. In his introduction to the first edition, Walpole gives the pseudosource for *Otranto* as an incunabulum "printed at Naples, in the black letter, in the year 1529" (Walpole 17). On the story itself, Walpole as editor becomes both vague and coy: since the character "Frederic of Vicenza" is a crusader, the action must be laid "between 1095, the era of the first crusade, and 1243, the date of the last." On the other hand, the Spanish names of the servants indicate a period when "the establishment of the Arragonian kings in Naples had made Spanish appellations familiar in that country." That would imply a date after 1443, when Alfonso the Magnanimous brought Naples under the crown of Aragon (and later of united Spain). These two specifications are thus self-evidently in conflict.

But while the dates vouched for are inconsistent and the events impossibly supernatural, the names, which the first preface calls "evidently fictitious," are for real. Most of the male agents—Manfred of Otranto, his weakling son Conrad, the challenger Frederic, and the ancestral spirit Alfonso—are drawn from the history of the kingdom of Naples and the Two Sicilies. The historical *Manfred* (1232–66) was an illegitimate son of the Hohenstaufen Emperor *Frederick,* whose father made him prince of *Taranto* and regent for southern Italy on behalf of his half-brother *Conrad* and the latter's infant son Conradin. After false rumors of the death of Conradin reached him, Manfred in 1258 usurped the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, which he ruled till he was defeated and killed by Charles of Anjou at the Battle of Benevento. *Otranto* itself, a town in Apulia, lies within the kingdom Manfred ruled, though it is only a near-anagram of his principate of Taranto.

I read Walpole as dancing with issues of historical accuracy, as he presumed was fair play in a text he had called "a matter for entertainment" (17), and I do not suspect him of trying, even in the first edition, to impose a fraud on the public. I thus disagree with E. J. Clery, whose otherwise brilliant study *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762–1800* suggests the contrary, making a great deal of the two notices of *The Castle of Otranto* in the *Monthly Review,* the first a favorable review taking the novel at its word for a genuine translation, the second outraged when the second edition (with its additional preface by "H.W.") revealed that it had been hoaxed (Clery 56–67). I think there is less here than meets the eye, particularly since other notices took the tale as a fictional entertainment, and since the notices for other historical fiction (such as Leland's *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury* [1762]) had been highly favorable.

26. An escape from shipwreck attributed by Roger to the intercession of the Virgin.

27. See the reviews of *The Recess* in *English Review* and in *Critical Review.* The review

in the *Gentleman's Magazine* seemed prepared to argue both briefs: that Lee's version of history is sufficiently true to life, but that the practice of mixing truth with falsehood might be *generally* dangerous—however well the danger is avoided in this case.

28. Clara Reeve, *The Champion of Virtue* 7. The novel is more generally known as *The Old English Baron,* as Reeve retitled it for the second edition the following year.

29. Reeve herself devotes some space in the preface to the second edition to the theory behind this amalgam: "This Story is the literary offspring of the Castle of Otranto, written upon the same plan, with a design to unite the most attractive and interesting circumstances of the ancient Romance and modern Novel, at the same time it assumes a character and manner of its own . . . ; it is . . . a Gothic Story, being a picture of Gothic times and manners" (*Old English Baron* 5).

30. Similarly, the plot of *The Italian* depends on the Inquisition having a degree of power it had lost by the mid-eighteenth century; see *The Italian* 418n. Whether Radcliffe knew these things and ignored them or was simply ignorant is not clear.

31. Absent a systematic survey of the thousands of Gothic novels published between 1790 and 1820, it seems that the majority of the Gothic novels of the post-Radcliffe period are atmospheric period works without any explicit relation to history whatsoever. Some examples: Matthew G. Lewis's *The Monk,* almost as canonical as Radcliffe, is set in Madrid but at no particular date; even the Wandering Jew fails to mention how long his tormented life has lasted. Mary-Anne Radcliffe's *Manfroné; or, the One Handed Monk* is set in Italy during a remote but entirely unspecified period in the past. Maria Regina Roche's *Clermont* is set in an equally vague France, though noble names like "De Sevigné" and "Montmorenci" suggest the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. *Confessions of the Nun of St. Omer,* by Charlotte Dacre, writing as "Rosa Matilda," is a generally "continental" novel in which the heroine, daughter of an Italian marquis by an English gentlewoman, travels, seeking love and adventure, to Germany, France, and Italy.

In fairness one should mention that Eleanor Sleath's unusually witty romance *The Nocturnal Minstrel* is an exception to the pervasive vagueness about period and even locale. It is precisely set just after the period of the "feigned boys"—the pretenders Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, who troubled the reign of Henry VII—and located in a barony in the north of England ruled by the widow of a Yorkist partisan. And Charles Robert Maturin's early horror stories are set carefully by date.

32. I am suggesting that there is a "moral chronology" as well as what John Mullan has called a "moral geography" at work in eighteenth-century British fiction. Mullan claims that Italy was "a convenient place of projection—a location for the excesses of feeling. It is where we find 'enthusiasm'—the overflowing of passions and affections beyond the bounds which in England . . . are so properly established" (112).

33. Richardson's archetypal Sir Charles Grandison (1751) sets the tone of the age by skillfully avoiding a pointless duel even when intentionally insulted. His Robert Lovelace and Hargrave Pollexfen created equally powerful archetypes for his era of the rake and the bully.

34. In *The Fool of Quality* (1765), Henry Brooke insists that the gentleman is not

defined by birth, breeding, or jealousy of his honor but by Christian qualities: "One quality of a gentleman is that of charity to the poor. . . . Another . . . is a delicacy of behaviour toward that sex whom nature has entitled to the protection and . . . the tenderness of man. . . . Another . . . is the giving place, and yielding to all with whom he has to do. . . . Another capital quality of the true gentleman is, that of feeling himself concerned and interested in others. . . . Again, the gentleman never envies any superior excellence but grows himself more excellent by being the admirer, promoter, and lover thereof" (159–61).

35. Basic and basically permanent: my own working-class parents enjoined me as a child to "be a gentleman" by giving up my seat on a bus to an elderly person. Being a gentleman thus meant not any specific sign of breeding but relieving the wants of others at the expense of one's own comfort.

36. According to G. J. Barker-Benfield, John Wesley himself did an abridgment of Brooke's *Fool of Quality* by which the book became best known in its age (149). *Adventures of a Bank-Note*—like *Tristram Shandy*, of which it is an imitation—is satirical as well as sentimental, though the episode of Miss St. Vincent in volume 3 kills the cow as well as any text of the time.

37. Todd cites Hannah More as denying "sentimental pensiveness to the vulgar" and James Cobb as presenting sentimental generosity as "a losing trade" for the middle-class tradesman.

38. Barker-Benfield quotes Mackenzie in *The Lounger* (1785) that "the influx of foreign riches and of foreign luxury, which this country has of late experienced, has almost levelled every distinction but that of money among us" (146).

39. John Mullan sees Smith's *Theory of the Moral Sentiments*—published 1759, just before the height of the cult of sensibility—as giving philosophical grounding to that cult by arguing that the social system depends upon the moral spectacle of suffering. Mullan argues, as I would, that the wind had changed by 1776: "In *The Wealth of Nations*, the race may be the same still, but no such . . . restraining spectatorial judgment is necessary to the workings of society. In this work interests are arranged and organized according . . . to the concept of 'the division of labour' and are described in a writing which divorces itself from an allegiance to any of the 'orders of civilized society. . . .' Benevolence and sympathy have no place in this text. The relations enacted in patterns of exchange . . . are in excess of 'friendship' or 'benevolence. . . .' Fellow-feeling might ornament such a society but would not be intrinsic to its proper functioning" (53–54).

40. As does Clery.

41. If this were the case, then one would expect the chief focus of the traditional sentimental situation in the years after *The Wealth of Nations* to be the novels of the radical Jacobins—the only ones who could then conceive of a society based on a principle other than hierarchy. This is precisely what Chris Jones argues in his book *Radical Sensibility*.

42. "As the spirit of humanitarianism spread . . . , it was accompanied by a deepening realisation . . . that individual acts of benevolence could not alter a general social condition that was fundamentally unjust; and also that there was perhaps something suspect in

being able to derive pleasure from feeling pity and acting charitably in a situation which was irremediable; indeed that real pleasure—one with which sadness was inextricably blended—came from the awareness of the final hopelessness of it all" (Brissenden 82).

43. See Anna Letitia Aikin, aka Mrs. Barbauld, "Inquiry into Those Kinds of Distress Which Excite Agreeable Sensations," in Aikin and Aikin, *Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose* 192. Mrs. Barbauld insists that "Poverty, if truly represented, shocks our nicer feelings . . . ; the rags, the dirt, the squalid appearance and mean employments incident to that state must be kept out of sight, and the distress must arise from . . . the shock of falling from higher fortunes" (203).

44. Terry Eagleton puts it this way: "The mutual confrontation between those divergent meanings in the text signals a certain *incompleteness:* the work is not closed on itself, a 'totality' turning around a concealed centre, but radically decentred and irregular, unachieved and insufficient. Yet this incompleteness or 'hollowness' of the artefact is not one which criticism can correct by adding something to it; it is, rather, a *determinate* incompleteness which cannot be altered. The text is, as it were, complete in its incompleteness, unachieved by virtue of the very reality it is. *What is lacking to it—its absence—is precisely what constitutes it as an object"* ("Macherey and Marxist Literary Theory" 14).

45. This is argued about *Frankenstein,* not terribly convincingly, by Martin Tropp in *Images of Fear.* Marx's notion of the alienation of the worker from the product of his labor applied within a factory system where the worker does not make the entire product by hand. Victor Frankenstein's labors are pure handwork, and his loathing of the product has nothing to do with any loss of artisanship.

46. See Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer.* Stanton's release is never even circumstantially described: all we learn is that "the manuscript told no more of Melmoth, but mentioned that Stanton was finally liberated from his confinement" (58). Monçada's escape: "The archway of the court opposite to us gave way, and sunk in ruins at our feet. . . . There arose such a blinding cloud of smoke and dust that it was impossible to distinguish the face or figure of those who were next you. . . . A space lay open before me. The thought, the motion, were simultaneous—no one saw—no one pursued; and hours before my absence could be discovered, or an inquiry be made after me, I had struggled safe and secret through the ruins, and was in the streets of Madrid" (242–43).

47. Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* 32, 71. Perhaps the ultimate source of this is *Clarissa,* where the heroine, after the failure of all her contrivances to escape from Lovelace, simply walks out the door of Mrs. Sinclair's into a shower of rain, her face concealed in Mabel's mantua, and disappears into the streets of London.

Chapter 4

1. Rader, "The Literary-Theoretical Contribution of Sheldon Sacks" 189. Rader

later put it that we should "think of literary works not as embodiments of a priori principles of form but as constructions in which the author's attempt to realize his aesthetic and allied aims may produce conflicts which leave on the works the marks of their solutions" ("From Richardson to Austen" 465).

2. See my comments in chap. 1 on Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*. As will be clear as we go on, this essay could have been titled "The Incoherence of Gothic Conventions."

3. The problem with the ending of *Otranto* is paralleled by a similar problem with the beginning of *The Monk,* in which Lorenzo, Antonia's lover, who spends much of the second half of the novel looking for her, seems to have had scarcely any communication with her during the few chapters at the beginning when their names are introduced together: he sees her once or twice in church, and little more.

4. The only link between the plots is the character of Lorenzo, who is Agnes's brother and the professed lover of Antonia.

5. The Gothic novel as I have defined it here is not primarily a novel about the supernatural; that feature is not even central to its form. While most of us think of the Gothic as a genre with supernatural beings, the fact is that fewer than 10 percent of the 208 Gothic novels whose plots are summarized by Ann Tracy appear to contain notionally "real" ghosts, vampires, and demons who affect the plots of the novels in ways that require genuine resolution; the vast majority of the "supernatural" machinery are either imagined specters or mysterious warnings that, like the specters of the murdered Plantagenets in Shakespeare's *Richard III,* point the way to the denouement without tangibly affecting the outcome.

6. Grandison is to represent "the Example of a Man acting uniformly well through a variety of trying scenes" (*Richardson-Stinstra Correspondence* 23).

7. Lewis's *Monk,* with the rape and murder of Antonia by Ambrosio, seems an obvious exception. It may be so considered, but it is perhaps more coherent to assume that Ambrosio, not Antonia, is the protagonist of the plot, and the main plot of *The Monk* falls under the variant organizing plan I call Manfred's Tale below. The subplot of *The Monk,* the story of Frederick and Agnes, has the normal pattern, and the lovers, minus their illegitimate offspring, are reunited at the end.

8. To the present-day reader, the Gothic heroine's frequent inability to express the misery or tension she feels seems suspicious, a cop-out on the part of the writer. In the coding of sentiment during the late eighteenth century, though, it was clarity that was suspicious. As David Denby puts it, "Sentimentalism is intimately persuaded of the ineffability of sentiment, of the impossibility of exhausting through language the full depth of emotion as it is felt experientially. . . . Elision operates in the sentimental text as a figure of some inaccessible reality; an absence on the page . . . points to meanings which are absent at the immediate level of communication but must, by implication, be present on another, less directly available plane" (83).

9. Reception of the Gothic in the 1790s is discussed in chap. 6.

10. See the discussion of the sadomasochistic character of Gothic and later postromantic texts (Baudelaire, Lautreamont) in Praz 97–195.

11. Within *Melmoth the Wanderer,* this thematization of the way in which a vicarious masochism operates within Gothic texts has the effect of alerting the audience to the peculiar impact of its own addiction to strong sensations.

12. Cynthia Griffin Wolff, in her essay "The Radcliffean Gothic Model," asserts the contrary, but her psychoanalytical method implicitly relies upon the paradox of the passive-aggressive disorder: that passivity and indecisiveness are a way of getting others to do what one cannot do oneself.

13. The historical events that most resemble Scott's fantasy of a renewed attempt to set Charles Edward Stuart on the throne occurred around 1750–52; the displacement to the late 1760s may reflect Scott's attempt to bridge the gap between the Jacobite adventure and his own youth as an Edinburgh law student in the late 1780s and early 1790s.

14. Birkhead calls the tale "a masterpiece of supernatural terror," attributing its power primarily to its narrative technique, particularly the voicing by Wandering Willie, who begins in a matter-of-fact way and begins to be stirred by his own story as he tells it (151–52).

Chapter 5

1. Jauss, "Theses on the Transition" 142–43. Jauss had suggested earlier (with vacuously circular logic) that the explicit reader might be inferred from the implied reader within the text: "There is also the possibility of objectifying the horizon of expectations in works that are historically less sharply delineated. For the specific disposition toward a particular work that the author anticipates from the audience can also be arrived at, even if explicit signals are lacking, through . . . familiar norms; through . . . the implicit relationships to familiar works of the literary-historical surroundings; and . . . through the reflective function of language" ("Literary History as Challenge" 24).

2. For example, how Valéry read Goethe's *Faust* or how Gautier, Huysmans, Valéry, and Walter Benjamin read Baudelaire's "Spleen." See Jauss, "Goethe's and Valéry's *Faust*" and "The Poetic Text within the Change of Horizons of Reading," in *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception.*

3. See my discussion of Ronald Paulson, *Representations of Revolution,* in chap. 4.

4. Lewis was an easy target. In addition to the early accusations of obscenity raised by the *Critical Review,* the *Monthly Review,* the *British Critic,* and the *Scots Magazine,* he was attacked by Thomas J. Mathias for blasphemy in the passage in which Ambrosio sees Antonia reading the Bible and wonders how, with the many episodes involving sexuality, she can have remained so ignorant (Mathias 366).

5. Sheffield was a major center of the Corresponding Societies, Englishmen who were in touch with the French Jacobins. See Hunt 335.

6. Radcliffe's *Italian* (1797) was generally received less favorably than *Udolpho* by

reactionary publications like *European Magazine* and by radical/liberal ones like the *English Review,* which ordinarily hoped that a little of the French Revolution would rub off on England.

7. The response to fiction that we see in Talfourd and Hazlitt was nevertheless available to readers in the mid-eighteenth century. A glance at Henry Fielding's letter to Richardson after completing the first two parts of *Clarissa* demonstrates that the author of *Tom Jones* was capable of projecting himself psychically into Richardson's fiction with an intensity unrivaled by the Gothic-besotted heroine of *Northanger Abbey* (for the letter, see Dudden 2:719–20). But it is interesting that the novel that calls up that heated response in Fielding is the very one from which the Gothic novel derived much of its emotional tone. See Howells 8, 26.

8. For example, Coleridge in *Biographia Literaria* says of the devotees of the Gothic novel: "I dare not compliment their *pass-time,* or rather *kill-time* with the name of reading. Call it rather a sort of beggarly daydreaming, during which the mind of the dreamer furnishes for itself nothing but laziness and a little mawkish sensibility; while the whole *materiel* and imagery of the doze is supplied *ab extra* by a sort of mental *camera obscura* furnished in the printing office, which *pro tempore* fixes, reflects and transmits the moving phantasms of one man's delirium so as to people the barrenness of an hundred other brains afflicted with the same trance or suspension of all common sense and all definite purpose" (7:i:48).

9. Bennett 136. Robert A. Colby's work was presented as an MLA talk on the Victorian Gothic ("Victorian Gothic: Echo and Transformation") at the 1985 Annual Meeting. His evidence involves works like the Reverend Francis Edward Paget's *Lucretia, or The Heroine of the Nineteenth Century* (1868), whose postscript insists that every decent person help "preserve the purity of the young by putting them on their guard against the perusal of writings which sedulously pander to the worst passions of our nature" (307).

10. For similar reports, see the letter of "Sylvester Hawthorne," and "On the Terrorist System of Novel-Writing." On the other side, however, an article in the *Monthly Mirror* entitled "Novel-Reading a Cause of Female Depravity" takes the position that a woman whose mind is "enervated" by a course of novel reading is likely not to be unfitted for life but to be seduced by any languorous young man. The immoral consequences of *weakness of mind* produced by reading is a favorite theme of the 1780s. We find it in Vicesimus Knox's 1784 *Essays: Moral and Literary* (2:189), where Sterne's sentimental imitators are blamed for lack of moral self-control among the young. Such a theme is not to be confused with the later attacks on castle-building.

11. See Chapone, who insists great care be given in the selection for children's reading "of those *fictitious stories* that so enchant the mind, most of which tend to inflame the passions of youth" (143). But Chapone also fears that the immoderate reader will become a female Quixote. See also Taylor.

12. The moral reaction to *The Monk* was very intense. For a full survey of the contemporary attacks and defenses of Matthew G. Lewis and his novel, see Parreaux.

13. The reading public's access to the Gothic was enhanced around 1791 by the

enterprising William Lane's innovation of franchising his Minerva Press circulating library to tradesmen seeking comparable profits in the provinces. See Blakey 114.

14. See, e.g., Lestrange 1:34. Thomas Babington Macaulay also used to frequent regularly the Minerva Press's circulating library, and it is suggestive that (as a letter from his sister Hannah records) he read at least one romance closely enough to have kept a tally of how often the various characters fainted (which was pretty often). See Cruse 101–2.

15. Critiques of Gothic fiction based on factuality abound; see among dozens of possible examples: (1) review of Mary Robinson, *Walsingham, or, the Pupil of Nature,* in *Anti-Jacobin Review;* (2) reviews of *Isobel, or, the Orphan of Valdarno; a Florentine Romance, founded during the Civil Wars in Italy,* which is attacked for its improbability in *Annual Review and History of Literature* and praised for its fidelity to fact in *Flowers of Literature;* and (3) review of *The Captive of Valence; or the Last Moments of Pius VI* in *Eclectic Review.* Clearly some readers must have cared: Elizabeth Carter wrote in 1794 to Mrs. Montagu that she found Tschink's *Herman of Unna* "very dull, but it is interesting from giving what I suppose is a true account of that most horrid institution the Secret Tribunal" (letter #283, 3:341). And authors themselves sometimes felt it necessary to explain or justify their departures from fact; Francis Lathom's introduction to *The Unknown; or the Northern Gallery* distinguishes for the audience between the imagined and the real events that his romance mixes together. See review in *The Cabinet.*

16. In "Confessions of a Book Reviewer," George Orwell discusses the "prolonged, indiscriminate reviewing of books" as a "thankless, irritating and exhausting job" whose practitioners will say any nonsense to be rid of the work of inventing reactions to a pile of ill-assorted books that actually arouse in them no reaction whatever: nevertheless, right at deadline "all the stale old phrases . . . will jump into their places like filings obeying the magnet, and the review will end up at exactly the right length and with about three minutes to go" (4:181–84).

17. See Ferris, *Achievement of Literary Authority.* Ferris's book originated in a paper on the reception of the Waverley novels read in April 1986 at the Conference on Narrative Poetics, in Columbus, Ohio; an earlier version of my chapter was read at the same session. Since so many conferences have become places to show off one's new intellectual fashions, it is interesting that this session witnessed two people with the keys to each other's problems.

I find myself in disagreement with the conclusion Ferris briefly appends to her narrative of Scott's rise at the expense of the Gothic novel. Her claim that Thomas Carlyle's 1838 essay on Scott in the *London and Westminster Review* "set in place the terms in which Scott's critical decline later in the century (and virtual erasure in our own) would be registered" (248) is one I find less compelling. I am not convinced that Scott's "manufacture" of fictions under financial pressure put them "under the sign of female reading" (252) once more, nor that (in the days of Dickens and Trollope) such manufacture would make his novels ipso facto less valuable to the Victorian audience.

As I have argued in chap. 3, the historical sense, like gender roles, developed historically, and the Waverley novels, whose seeming accuracy buried the medievalism of the

Gothic romance, were themselves found hopelessly inadequate by a later generation. Not only was Scott's prosiness of style no longer in fashion, but his notion of the Middle Ages seemed to have the surface—the armor and the tapestries—without the substance and spirit. In 1820 readers of *Ivanhoe* were in no position to question Scott's assumption that "Norman" and "Saxon" in the 1190s represented two castes like whites and Negroes in the antebellum South. A generation or two later, Pre-Raphaelite writers of the later Victorian period like Rossetti and Morris had produced a vision of the Middle Ages that recuperated its hieratic social texture, the violent tenor of its common life, and its religious ecstasies; with this vision Scott's did not match up. It is perhaps ironic that the author of *Waverley*, by stimulating (as we know he did) the developing historical sense of historiographic innovators like Carlyle, Macaulay, and Marx, helped to ensure his own obsolescence.

18. I have suggested that at least the *bourgeois* reader was affected, but controversy persists over how far down in the social scale the addiction to Gothic fiction went. Sources like James Lackington's memoirs suggest that the reading of fiction was nearly universal. On the other hand, the price of books, or of subscriptions to the circulating libraries, was very high (the guinea charged by the Minerva Library for a subscription would be a good fraction of a footman's annual wage). Still, Altick reminds us that "if we are to believe the constant burden of contemporary satire, domestic servants attended [circulating libraries] in great numbers on their own account, not merely to exchange books for their mistresses" (62).

19. My argument rests on usual dating of the beginning of the vogue of the Gothic in the early 1790s, rather before the series of attacks on castle-builders and Quixotes begins in the late 1790s and 1800s. But not only is my dating of the trend toward *aisthesis* necessarily vague, so is any dating of the vogue of the Gothic. See Mayo, "How Long Was Gothic Fiction in Vogue?" for some of the problems in making such estimations. Mayo's conclusion, by the way, that the Gothic novel was essentially passé by 1814, seems questionable in the light of Tracy's *The Gothic Novel, 1790–1830*. If we date the 208 novels analyzed and summarized in Tracy's volume, we find that there was a short hiatus during 1813–17, but that the trend picked up again in the period 1818–22 before declining once more toward 1830. Mayo picks up the hiatus but, since he ends his study in 1820, misses the brief recrudescence of the Gothic a few years later. See my "The Gothic Impulse" 287.

Chapter 6

1. This is not to say that one cannot find literary genres spawned within the Gothic tradition which have a continuous history. The "ghost story," which is so important within German Gothic fiction (particularly Bürger, Tiekh, and Hoffmann) and reappears as an element in the 1790s in England (as in the Bleeding Nun episode of *The Monk*), has a long and well-defined tradition throughout the nineteenth century in texts by (among

others) Poe, Gautier, Maupassant, Dickens, Le Fanu, Collins, Doyle, Machen, Dunsany, Blackwood, Lovecraft, Lindsay, up to the present day of Stephen King. But the ghost story—fiction creating terror through plots involving the supernatural—is (as the last three chapters should suggest) only a small and not utterly essential element of the Gothic. For various attempts to historicize the ghost story, see Praz, Punter (chap. 12), Aguirre, Tropp, and Grixti. An excellent formal analysis is in Sullivan.

2. See Judith Wilt's *Ghosts of the Gothic: Austen, Eliot, Lawrence,* from which I have stolen my chapter title. Wilt's ingenuity allows her to wring interesting Gothic resemblances from such unpromising novels as *Emma, Middlemarch,* and *Women in Love,* which suggests that there are bound to be intertextual connections between *any* text chosen at random and the central novels of the Gothic period if only we are devious enough to see them.

3. See my discussion of generic change in chap. 2.

4. Crossover texts, such as Joyce Carol Oates's romance *Bloodworth,* are exceptions that prove the rule.

5. On Scott's ambivalent approach to accuracy in the historical novel, see my essay "From Medievalism to Historicism."

6. The development of something like the present-day historical sense is discussed in chap. 3. Harrison Ainsworth in particular long survived his public. By the 1860s he had become poor, wandering the streets of London. Dickens's friend Forster, meeting him in his rounds, was astonished that he was still alive, so attached did he seem to an earlier literary era.

7. Robespierre is the prime villain of the last half of the novel, and it is likely that, along with Carlyle's, Bulwer-Lytton's representation of the Reign of Terror and Zanoni's self-sacrifice inspired and influenced Dickens's version of these events in *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859).

8. *Zanoni* was seen by at least one reviewer as a direct descendant of Shelley's *Frankenstein.* See Robert Hengist Horne [pseud. of Richard Henry], *A New Spirit of the Age.*

9. Trodd, in *Domestic Violence in the Victorian Novel,* cites the articles by Mansel in the *Quarterly Review* for 1863 and Margaret Oliphant's series of articles in *Blackwood's* in the 1860s.

10. See also, on the Gothic roots of the sensation novel, Alison Milbank *(Daughters of the House),* whose feminist perspective unfortunately restricts her to the heirs of the "female Gothic" of Radcliffe, the versions of what in chap. 4 I have called Isabella's Tale, neglecting such important innovations as we find in the novels of Mrs. Braddon.

11. A follower of Raymond Williams, Nicholas Rance reads the short-lived vogue of sensation as a "form of feeling," a literary response to "a decade labouring under economic depression and, fairly strictly connected, campaigns for an extension of the franchise" (4). But it isn't very clear how all the *other* literary forms of the period are connected with this same political and economic shift, which must underlie all of them.

12. See Symons. For the social construction of the audience for this form, see Watson.

13. The plot is filled with weird coincidences, i.e., that Anne Catherick's mother should become the sharer of Sir Percival Glyde's guilty secret—forging the marriage record of his parents.

14. In the only full-length monograph exclusively devoted to the subject, Edwin F. Block, Jr., refers to the neo-Gothic as "the Victorian Psychomythic tale." He discusses other texts of the 1890s such as *Hauntings* by "Vernon Lee" [pseudonym of Violet Paget], Walter Pater's "Apollo in Picardy," W. B. Yeats's "Rosa Alchemica," Stevenson's "Olalla," and Arthur Symons's "Extracts from the Journal of Henry Luxulyan" (1905). Block is right, I think, that the neo-Gothic was a way of exploring (using the imagery of myth and folk tale, ghost story, and Gothic novel) the aspects of the mind that would early in the twentieth century be understood through Freudian psychology: repression, the unconscious, wish fulfillment, the truth of dreams.

15. Wells is discussed under "science fiction" below.

16. Similarly in Stoker's *Dracula,* the "undeath" of the vampire, however terrifying and disgusting, is a guarantee that the soul is immortal and separable from the body. Van Helsing's "science" thus recapitulates and confirms the truths of religion: (as was insisted in Leviticus) the chosen of God may not eat of the blood, since "the blood is the life," and (as St. John promised) those who die in grace shall sleep in peace till the Resurrection and then awaken to bliss.

17. The Irish Stoker, born 1847 in Clontarf during the Great Hunger, may have inherited this complex of feeling about the absentee landowners.

18. This is not to say that we cannot speak of Gothic elements in the work of William Faulkner, Carson McCullers, or Flannery O'Connor, or that Isak Dinesen's *Seven Gothic Tales* cannot be profitably read against the Gothic tradition. But more than in the nineteenth century, the gap between realism and romance became difficult to bridge, and the allusions to the Gothic romance in mainstream serious fiction became more and more self-conscious, exploiting a common cultural experience rather than milking a built-in system of responses.

19. Bulk is the operative word: the British Library contains tens of thousands of collections of ghost stories, mystery stories, and science fiction published since 1975 alone.

20. In England as well, the generic commodity is known by its major publisher, Mills and Boon.

21. John Cawelti refers to both of these types as "best-selling social melodrama," which he defines in terms of a plot that interweaves "patterns of melodrama with a particular set of current events or social institutions, the result being a complex double effect. The social setting is often treated rather critically with a good deal of anatomizing of the hidden motives, secret corruption, and human folly underlying certain events and institutions; yet the main plot works out in proper melodramatic fashion" affirming distributive justice (*Adventure, Mystery, Romance* 261). A generation ago, the main practitioners were Herman Wouk, Grace Metalious, and James A. Michener, and the genre continues to flourish today.

22. Eric Rucker Eddison is a lesser known but equally talented practitioner, whose

Worm Ouroboros, Mistress of Mistresses, and *A Fish Dinner in Memison* briefly went from rare books to paperback in the late 1960s.

23. Julian Symons agrees that "the Gothic novel . . . often poses a mystery to be solved [though] the solution is never in itself of much interest. . . . The characteristic note of crime literature is first struck in *Caleb Williams*" (28).

24. The revelation that the "criminal" is an orangutan practicing monkey-see-monkey-do with his owner's razor is—after the buildup—rather disappointing.

25. See Dorothy Leigh Sayers's essay-postscript to *Gaudy Night* and her attempts to make the mystery problem (of harassment in a women's college at Oxford) into a human problem for her detectives as well.

The reason it was so hard to import verisimilitude and real emotional power to the "classic" murder mystery has something to do with the form itself. The "puzzle" plot requires a victim and a clutch of suspects of whom one is the murderer. If the victims are sympathetic, it is unlikely that a large number of their acquaintances will be plausibly motivated to murder. If the victims are unsympathetic, the sort of people who "need killing," the search for the killer asserts the demand of law without asserting that of natural justice. The only way of keeping that conflict out of the picture is to make all the characters rather vague and flat—which was the problem.

26. See the works of Nicolas Freeling, Mai Sjowall and Per Wahloo, Ruth Rendell, and Ed McBain (among many others). The blind alley inherent in this most realistic variant of the form is that scientific criminal detection as actually practiced by police forces all over the Western democracies is of limited human interest. Increasingly it has come to depend either on the use of paid (or protected) informants or on the deadening analysis of bits of fiber and hair at the crime scene. Hence the emphasis either on a brilliantly intuitive police detective in the Maigret mold, or on the camaraderie of the detective cadre themselves (as in Ed McBain's outré and humorous "87th Precinct" stories), or both, to sustain audience appeal.

27. The spy novel is usually an adventure story rather than a mystery, though there commonly is a secret relationship of betrayal within the novel's plot, and occasionally the sympathetic hero (e.g., John Le Carré's George Smiley) is as much a detective as an operative. See John Cawelti and Bruce Rosenberg's *The Spy Story,* where they discuss the appeal of the spy story as originating in "the alienation of the individual from the large organizations—corporations, bureaucracies, professions—which dominate our lives . . . and the deep feeling of conflict between the individual self and social role that engenders" (32).

28. The thriller has been analyzed by Jerry Palmer in *Thrillers* as stemming in its appeal from the conflict between individualism—so important to the American ideology—and the demands of complex social organizations produced by late capitalism. The fantasy fiction takes shape as the conflict between a competitive individualist and a conspiracy intended to disrupt the social order. The hero then resolves the ideological conflict by defeating the conspiracy. Palmer is correct that most thrillers employ foreign or extralegal antagonists; he did not anticipate the best-sellers of John Grisham, who has taken the

ideological conflict to its extreme point by situating the conspiracies within white-glove law firms and corporate headquarters, with cooperation from governmental organizations like the FBI and CIA.

29. In terms of the "political unconscious" involved in these best-sellers, one might apply the analysis Fredric Jameson employed in the sequel to Coppola's *The Godfather,* in which the allegorical use of the Mafia as a metaphor for corporate business breaks down as the Corleone family becomes a more-or-less legitimate business operation, losing along the way the utopian significance of the close ethnic family ("Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture").

30. Lovecraft, *At the Mountains of Madness, and Other Novels.* Brian Aldiss suggests that Lovecraft's unpronounceable names for his mythic beings recall breakfast cereals spelled backward.

31. In *Terrors of Uncertainty,* arguably the most sensitive work ever to be devoted to pulp horror, Joseph Grixti argues that "the assumptions and conceptual frameworks underlying the conventions of horror fiction often derive from half-baked processes of secularization. It is precisely because these conventions are uncertainly . . . positioned between superstition and (poorly digested) science that the only mode within which they can adequately function is the magical. . . . There is, in other words, a desire to retreat from the uncertainties created by dislocations endemic to change, but not at the expense of the comforts and titillations which have been made accessible by the technological advances underlying that change" (182).

32. There is of course a sense in which cinema and television have superseded *all* fiction as mass entertainment, in the sense that audiences for films and television run in the tens of millions, whereas even a pulp best-seller seldom sells more than a million copies. But the audience for science fiction films and television programs centers on the strong and loyal print audience for the genre, fans whose shifting responses are largely responsible for the evolution in its themes and forms over the past five decades. This is not true for horror films and books. Many millions of Americans are addicted to horror films who would never pick up a horror novel.

33. Equivalent brand names exist in Great Britain. This is in addition to the subdivision of the romance genre by subject matter—contemporary vs. historical romances, and within historical romances, divisions between medieval, Regency, and Edwardian chronotopes.

Chapter 7

1. It feels right to say that an object whirled about our heads attached to a string "wants" to fly off on a straight-line tangent to the circle but is "restrained" by the string. Often teleological ideas are at odds with scientific fact. Students of physics asked to estimate the tension in two ropes, one stretched between two horses pulling away from each other, the other stretched between a horse pulling away from a tree (assuming the three horses are exerting identical quantities of force) will usually say that the tension in the first

rope should be twice that in the second. Actually the tension in the two ropes would be identical, by Newton's third law. What throws us off is the teleological notion that trees don't pull the way horses do.

2. On the literary-historical workings of these varieties of causality, see Crane, *Critical and Historical Principles of Literary History* 57–61.

3. Rader ("Emergence") places much weight on the fact that *Jonathan Wild,* Fielding's first large-scale attempt at fictional narrative, probably written before the publication of *Pamela,* fails to provide a fully dramatic narrative standing independent of authorial construction, but that *Joseph Andrews,* his second, published after and (in part) in response to *Pamela,* succeeds in this.

4. To the extent that Rader cares about what happened earlier, it is in terms of predecessor *forms* such as that shaping Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (which Rader calls an imitation of "naive incoherent autobiography"), forms that died out after the novel as such appeared, though they were influential much later upon the "simular" novel which (in a very different way) imitates autobiography.

5. "The claim [to historicity] and its subversion end in the triumph of the creative human mind, a triumph already prefigured at the moment of the novel's emergence: in Richardson the triumphant mind is that of the protagonist; in Fielding it is that of the author. The implications of the formal breakthrough of the 1740s are pursued with such feverish intensity over the next two decades that after *Tristram Shandy,* it may be said, the young genre settles down to a more deliberate and studied recapitulation of the same ground, this time for the next two centuries" (McKeon, *Origins of the English Novel* 418–19). One hopes that McKeon is joking here, since his expressed belief that the novel spends the entire period from 1760 to 1960 without moving past the dialectical space represented by Richardson and Fielding in effect reduces the history of the English novel to the history of its origin, and, in a sense, is a reductio ad absurdum of his dialectical method and his vision of history written from the topos of the predisposing cause.

6. Cinema and television, most obviously; but certain expressive techniques in painting were possible only after aniline pigments changed the substance of oil paint.

7. David Punter's long-breathed history of the Gothic, *The Literature of Terror* (1980), hints at the very different logics by which syncretic "master narratives" could be constructed. His toolbox is an eclectic blend of Marx and Freud, and his theories make no ready distinction between genre and mode. So some of his chapters take a genre from one era to another nearly a century later; others explore various texts from a single decade. I admire his book but couldn't have written it; nor could he have written mine.

8. See Parker, "Measure and Countermeasure." The principal texts Parker discusses are Lovejoy, "On the Discrimination of Romanticisms" 232; and Wellek, "Periods and Movements in Literary History."

9. Rothstein's principal arguments, with which I agree wholeheartedly, are directed primarily against Foucault and the new historicism, against the reification of authors and texts seen as agents in literary history. I shall come back to those arguments in the next section of this chapter.

10. The characterization also excluded many male writers sufficiently distant in space and temperament from the frontier, as may be indicated by the recent decline of the Boston Brahman tradition (Whittier, Holmes, Howells, et al.).

11. See Gates for a justification of this practice.

12. See Corman, who argues that even such subgenres as "comedy of humour" and "comedy of intrigue" are idealizations that fail to explain representative texts of the period, which were mixed forms of various kinds.

13. If Rothstein isn't arguing this, then I don't know what he is saying. In mathematical terms, sets are nothing special: the random things in my pants pocket—two pens, sixteen coins, a bunch of keys—form a set.

14. See my analysis of this theory in chap. 1.

15. The mathematical expression $n!$ is read as n-factorial, a function defined as n times n-1 times n-2 times n-3 times . . . times 1. This is a function that increases almost exponentially as n increases.

16. For the skeptical, here is the math. There are fewer than 10^{27} subatomic particles in a gram of matter, fewer than 10^{25} grams of matter in the solar system, fewer than 10^{11} solar systems in the galaxy, and fewer than 10^{11} galaxies in the universe. To multiply this out you add the exponents, making the number of subatomic particles in the universe fewer than 10^{74}. Compared to 200!, which is more than 10^{400}, the number of subatomic particles in the universe is tiny, minuscule, not worth talking about.

17. It is noteworthy that Rothstein doesn't propose the procedure with respect to his own field, Caroline and Restoration drama, where it would be at least as hard to represent an era by a pair of plays, no matter how judiciously chosen.

18. One would have to call works not in the core of the population marginal, would one not, despite the politically incorrect connotations of that term? The problem, from Rothstein's point of view, with terms such as "central" and "marginal" or "assured" and "dubious" members of a population is that they are ineluctably normative.

19. The method of inductive modeling made Aristotle a possible source of scientific method, as Plato and Platonism could not be. See Lakatos.

20. Abuse of this method is unfortunately rife. I can witness the Platonistic calcification of Aristotelian method at work whenever I give an undergraduate assignment to "discuss how Aristotle would have revised the *Poetics* if he had known Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*." Perfectly literate students are tempted—perhaps by the belief that systems are less flexible than texts—to read the question backward: they explain what parts of *Death of a Salesman* are inconsistent with the norms of the *Poetics* rather than revising those norms to accommodate twentieth-century tragedy—just the procedure Rothstein is afraid of, since it imposes a conceptual grid on the text.

21. Greenblatt is very coy about the source of his ideas, and while he admits that a key fact in the development of the new historicism was "the presence of Michel Foucault on the Berkeley campus in the last five or six years of his life" (Veeser 1), he has a tendency to cite postmodernists from whom he has to differentiate himself rather than those with whom he feels allied. Nevertheless, he makes some generalizations that make clean

the source of his ideas: "Capitalism has produced a powerful and effective oscillation between the establishment of distinct discursive domains [art and politics] and the collapse of these domains into one another" (Veeser 8). Or: "The work of art is not itself a pure flame that lies at the source of our speculations. Rather the work of art is itself the product of a set of manipulations, some of them our own . . . , many others undertaken in the construction of the original work. That is, the work of art is the product of a negotiation between a creator or class of creators, equipped with a complex, communally shared repertoire of conventions, and the institutions and practices of society. In order to achieve the negotiation, artists need to create a currency that is valid for a meaningful, mutually profitable exchange. . . . The process involves not simply appropriation but exchange, since the existence of art always implies a return . . . measured in pleasure and interest. I should add that the society's dominant currencies, money and prestige, are invariably involved" (Veeser 12).

22. In addition to his stimulus of the new historicism, Foucault has commented directly on the Gothic novel. In his essay "Language to Infinity," Foucault says that

> writing, in our day, has moved infinitely closer to its source, to this disquieting sound which announces from the depths of language—once we attend to it—the source against which we seek refuge and toward which we address ourselves. Like Kafka's beast, language now listens from the bottom of its burrow to this inevitable and growing noise. To defend itself, it must follow its movements, become its loyal enemy, and allow nothing to stand between them except the contradictory thinness of a transparent and unbreakable partition. . . . From this moment, a work whose only meaning resides in its being a self-enclosed expression of its glory is no longer possible. The date of this transformation is roughly indicated by the simultaneous appearance at the end of the eighteenth century of the works of Sade and the tales of terror. It is not their common predilection for cruelty which concerns us here; nor is it the discovery of the link between literature and evil; but something more obscure and paradoxical at first sight: these languages which are constantly drawn out of themselves by the overwhelming, the unspeakable, by thrills, stupefaction, ecstasy, dumbness, pure violence, wordless gestures, and which are calculated with the greatest economy and precision to produce effects (so that they make themselves as transparent as possible at this limit of language toward which they hurry, erasing themselves in their writing for the exclusive sovereignty of that which they wish to say and which lies outside of words)—these languages very strangely represent themselves in a slow, meticulous, and infinitely extended ceremony. These simple languages, which name and give one to see, are curiously double. (60–61)

Foucault goes on to discuss the unreadability of Sade's novels, while conversely the Gothic novels were precisely designed to be read, indeed were read, he claims, by everyone who could read. One Gothic text, *Coelina, or The Child of Mystery* (1798), is said to have sold 1.2 million copies from 1798 to 1814, a number that Foucault claims is equal to the total number of literate individuals in France.

23. See inter alia Gould, *Ever since Darwin: Reflections in Natural History*, and *Time's Arrow, Time's Cycle*.

24. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century, there appears to have been a tendency to minimize the degree to which any form of change actually occurred: the ideal was to present a steady-state vision in which tokens changed but types remained as far as possible the same. In biology it was presumed that the organisms God formed on the fifth and sixth days of creation were all still with us, while in politics the magistrates were descended from exemplars—kings, counselors, judges—to be found in classical and biblical literature. Nevertheless, by the mid-eighteenth century the notion of slow, steady, progressive change can be found in texts such as Pope's *Essay on Man*, and catastrophic change in texts like Vico's *Scienza nuova*.

25. Hayden White, who is given to classifying historians according to their dominant tropes, considers Foucault's to be the *catachresis* (or play on words); Foucault considers language to be catachretic by nature, since any signifier refers to more than one signified, and no two signifieds can be identical in every particularity (White, "The Historiography of Anti-Humanism" 116). Hilary Putnam, on the other hand, thinks of Foucault less as a historian than as a satirist who, like Swift, presents mankind as essentially irrational in its pursuits and beliefs (*Reason, Truth and History* 155–62).

26. Foucault, "The Discourse on Language," in *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language* 230.

27. Many reviewers complain about Foucault's high-handed treatment of the facts, of his presenting as original ideas that have been long circulated, or of his making extreme generalizations about the availability of certain discursive formations in particular eras that are easily disproven. George Steiner, for example, suggests that Foucault's notions about the Renaissance were anticipated by Frances Yates (in *Theatre of the World* and other works), while H. C. Erik Midelfort has contested in general and in detail Foucault's claims about the incarceration of lepers and madmen in early modern Europe; see Steiner, "The Mandarin of the Hour"; and Midelfort, "Madness and Civilization in Early Europe." These complaints are widespread, but they are objections primarily to Foucault's practice of his own method and not to the method itself.

28. See Geertz 5; Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* 175.

29. Greenblatt confesses to have named "the new historicism" offhandedly. "A few years ago I was asked by *Genre* to edit a selection of Renaissance essays, and I said OK. I collected a bunch of essays and then, out of a kind of desperation to get the introduction done, I wrote that the essays represented something I called a 'new historicism.' I've never been very good at making up advertising phrases of this kind; for reasons that I would be quite interested in exploring at some point, the name stuck" (Veeser 1).

30. Perhaps the most depressing use of Foucault is not by cultural critics but by apostles of "negativity" such as Paul Bové who view Foucault's repudiation of history as a step toward the overthrow of "humanism" and "the dominant regimes it supports." See *Intellectuals in Power*.

31. My explanation here might not be sufficiently coherent for James Battersby, whose wise and witty *Paradigms Regained* more strictly defines the "incommensurable

worlds" in which different theories of literature have their dwelling. My sense is a bit looser than Battersby's, that different theories answer each other's questions badly, or miss each other's points, rather than being radically "incommensurable." See *Paradigms Regained* 119–30.

32. Rooney, "The Politics of Pluralism." See also her *Seductive Reasoning*. One political motive of Rooney's very angry book is the adoption of the term *pluralism* by conservative American politicians as synonymous with a politics of contending interest groups, and *totalitarianism* as synonymous with Marxist governments. Rooney's own use of "pluralism" as coextensive with various literary theories from semiotics to deconstruction to Stanley Fish's metatheory of "interpretive communities" shows an equally cavalier approach, as their "pluralism" consists in nothing except the desire to exclude no one from the audience, to persuade all comers.

33. The internal contradiction of this philosophy is that, given Rooney's beliefs, it is not clear why she should have gone to the trouble of publishing them as a book, circulating them to the academy in general, except to achieve tenure or promotion.

34. Erlich's ultimate argument is utopian socialist: that pluralism (read as a metaphor for liberalism, read as the ideology of capitalism) allows the real-life oppression of Central Americans by the United Fruit Company, whereas "something else" (represented by quotations from Vanzetti and allusions to Marx) can produce the New Jerusalem. The naïveté of the argument as argument is striking, but the trope—comparing the evils liberalism permits in real life with the utopia that socialism will in theory create—is a commonplace in the academy. This point of view, taken by children of privilege with nothing of their own at risk, has survived learning that those who lived with real-life socialist governments in Eastern Europe, when they had a chance to continue or change, with their lives and the lives of their children at stake, preferred to take their chances with liberal capitalism.

35. There must be some outer limit to biographical connections. I am quite unable to fathom why the literary-historical ideas of Hans Robert Jauss, half a century ago in the Waffen-SS, should appeal to someone many of whose cousins died in the Holocaust, unless it has to do with the clarity and persuasiveness of those ideas.

36. But see Davis, *The Act of Interpretation*. Davis, presenting an approach to critical pluralism, argues that, while each of several modes of criticism may be able to account for the elements of a particular text, there may at least at times be a "correct" matching of a text with a mode of criticism. For him, the matching between method and object may not be entirely arbitrary. See also my review of *The Act of Interpretation*.

37. Of course, there probably is an arcane sociological explanation for my attraction to my own issue—"institutional loyalty," filial piety to pluralists like Richard McKeon, Ronald S. Crane, and Wayne Booth, or something even more discreditable, like a naive utopian hope that there might be more genuine dialogue and less ideological posturing in my profession.

WORKS CITED

Anonymous contemporary reviews are listed separately, at the end of the Works Cited.

Adorno, Theodor W. *Ästhetische Theorie.* In *Gesammlete Schriften,* vol. 7, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970. Translated by C. Lenhardt. London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984.

Aguirre, Manuel. *The Closed Space: Horror Literature and Western Symbolism.* Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990.

Aikin, J., and A. L. Aikin. *Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose.* 1st ed. London: J. Johnson, 1773. 3d ed., 1792. (Includes the Gothic tale "Sir Bertrand.")

Ainsworth, William Harrison. *Jack Sheppard.* 3 vols. London: R. Bentley, 1839.

———. *The Lancashire Witches: A Romance of Pendle Forest* (1849). London: George Routledge and Sons, 1878.

———. *Rookwood: A Romance.* London: R. Bentley, 1834.

———. *Tower of London.* London: R. Bentley, 1840.

Akenside, Mark. *The Pleasures of Imagination.* 3d ed. London: R. Dodsley, 1744.

Aldiss, Brian, and David Wingrove. *Trillion Year Spree: The History of Science Fiction.* London: Victor Gollancz, 1986.

Althusser, Louis. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays.* Translated by Ben Brewster. London: Verso NLB, 1972.

Altick, Richard. *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800–1900.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Anderson, James. *Sir Walter Scott and History.* Edinburgh: Edina Press, 1981.

"Arietta." Letter in *Literary Leisure, or The Recreations of Solomon Saunter, Esq.* 1, no. 42 (10 July 1800): 129–40.

Armstrong, Nancy. *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Austen, Jane. *Emma* (1816). New York: Penguin, 1966.

———. *Northanger Abbey* (written 1798–1803; pub. 1818). New York: Penguin, 1972.

"The Author of *Schabraco.*" Letter in *Ladies' Monthly Museum* 1 (1798): 467–70.

Bage, Robert. *Hermsprong, or Man as He Is Not.* 2 vols. Dublin, 1796.

Baker, Ernest. *The History of the English Novel.* 11 vols. London: H. F. and G. Witherby, 1924–39.

Baker, Houston A., Jr. "Generational Shifts and the Recent Criticism of Afro-American Literature." *Black American Literature Forum* 15 (Spring 1981): 1–16.

Balibar, Etienne. "The Basic Concepts of Historical Materialism." Pp. 199–308 in Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading Capital,* translated by Ben Brewster. New York: Pantheon Books, 1970.

Bann, Stephen, and John E. Bowlt. *Russian Formalism: A Collection of Articles and Texts in Translation.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1973.

Barbauld, Anna Laetitia. "On the Origin and Progress of Novel-Writing." Preface to *The British Novelists.* 50 vols. London: F. C. and J. Rivington, et al., 1810.

———. "On the Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror" (1773). In J. Aikin and A. L. Aikin, *Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose.* 3d ed. London, 1792.

Barker, Gerard. *Grandison's Heirs: The Paragon's Progress in the Late Eighteenth-Century English Novel.* Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1985.

Barker-Benfield, G. J. *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain.* Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Barrett, Eaton Stannard. *The Heroine, or the Adventures of Cherubina* (1813). 3d ed. 3 vols. London: Henry Colburn, 1815.

Battersby, James. *Paradigms Regained.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991.

Bayer-Berenbaum, Linda. *The Gothic Imagination: Expansion in Gothic Literature and Art.* Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982.

Baym, Nina. "Melodramas of Beset Manhood." *American Quarterly* 33 (1981): 123–39.

Behn, Aphra. *Love-Letters between a Noble-man and His Sister.* 5th ed. London: D. Brown, 1718.

Benedict, Barbara M. *Framing Feeling: Sentiment and Style in English Prose Fiction, 1745–1800.* New York: AMS Press, 1994.

Bennett, Rev. John. *Letters to a Young Lady* (1789). 7th American ed. Philadelphia: Anthony Finley, 1818.

Bennett, Tony. *Formalism and Marxism.* London: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 1979.

Berington, Joseph. *The History of the Lives of Abeillard and Heloisa.* 2 vols. London: M. Swinney, 1787.

Birkhead, Edith. *The Tale of Terror.* London: Constable, 1921; New York: Russell and Russell, 1963.

Blakey, Dorothy. *The Minerva Press: 1790–1820.* London: Bibliographical Society at the University Press, Oxford, 1939.

Bleiler, E. F. "Horace Walpole and *The Castle of Otranto.*" Introduction to *Three Gothic Novels,* edited by E. F. Bleiler. New York: Dover, 1966.

Block, Edwin F., Jr. *Rituals of Dis-Integration: Romance and Madness in the Victorian Psychomythic Tale.* New York and London: Garland, 1993.

Bloom, Harold. *Agon: Toward a Theory of Revisionism.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

———. *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

———. *A Map of Misreading.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.

Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Field of Cultural Production, or The Economic World Reversed." Pp. 29–72 in *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993.

Bové, Paul. *Intellectuals in Power: A Genealogy of Critical Humanism.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

Bower, Anna Catherina. *The Diaries and Correspondence of Anna Catherina Bower.* London: Bickers and Son, 1903.

Braddon, Mary Elizabeth. *Lady Audley's Secret.* 3 vols. London: Tinsley Bros., 1862.

Braudy, Leo. *Narrative Form in History and Fiction.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.

Breisach, Ernst. *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern.* Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Bridges, Thomas. *The Adventures of a Bank-Note.* 4 vols. London: T. Davies, 1770–71.

Brissenden, R. F. *Virtue in Distress: Studies in the Novel of Sentiment from Richardson to Sade.* London: Macmillan, 1974.

Bronson, Bertrand. *Joseph Ritson, Scholar-at-Arms.* Vol. 1. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938.

Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre* (1847). Edited by Margaret Smith. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights* (1847). Edited by William M. Sale, Jr. New York: Norton Critical Editions, 1972.

Brooke, Henry. *The Fool of Quality* (1764–70). Ed. Ernest A. Baker. London: G. Routledge and Sons, 1906.

Brooks, Peter. *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

Brown, David. *Walter Scott and the Historical Imagination.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979.

Brunetière, Ferdinand. *L'évolution des genres dans l'histoire de la littérature: Leçons professées à l'École normale supérieure.* Paris: Hachette, 1890.

Bruns, Gerald. *Inventions: Writing, Textuality and Understanding in Literary History.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982.

Brunton, Mary. *Self-Controul* (1811). New York: Pandora Press, 1986.

Budick, Emily. *Fiction and Historical Consciousness.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

Bulwer-Lytton, Edward. *Eugene Aram: A Tale.* 3 vols. London: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1832.

———. *The Haunted and the Haunters, or The House and the Brain.* Boston: Dana Estes, 1849.

———. *The Last Days of Pompeii.* 3 vols. London: Chapman and Hall, 1850.

———. *Lucretia, or Children of the Night.* London: George Routledge and Sons, 1897.

———. *Paul Clifford.* 3 vols. London: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1830.

———. *Pelham.* London: Walter Scott, 1895.

———. *Zanoni.* 3 vols. London: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1842.

Burke, Kenneth. *Attitudes toward History.* 2 vols. New York: New Republic, 1937.

———. *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966.

———. *The Philosophy of Literary Form.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1941.

Burney, Frances. *Camilla.* 5 vols. London: T. Payne, T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1802.

———. *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress* (1782). London: Virago, 1986.

Carter, Elizabeth. *Letters from Mrs. Elizabeth Carter to Mrs. Montagu 1755–1800.* 3 vols. London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1817.

Cawelti, John G. *Adventure, Mystery, Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.

Cawelti, John G., and Bruce Rosenberg. *The Spy Story.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Chandler, Raymond. *Selected Letters of Raymond Chandler.* Edited by Frank MacShane. London: Jonathan Cape, 1981.

Chapone, Hester Mulso. *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind* (1773). Boston: James B. Dow, 1834.

Charlton, Mary. *Rosella, or Modern Occurrences: A Novel.* 4 vols. London: Minerva Press, 1799.

Clery, E. J. *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762–1800.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Collected Works.* Edited by James Engell and W. Jackson Bate. 16 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.

———. "Table Talk." Pp. 399–439 in *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism,* ed. Thomas Middleton Raysor. London: Constable, 1936.

Collingwood, R. G. *Essays in the Philosophy of History.* Edited by William Debbins. New York and London: Garland, 1985.

———. *The Idea of History.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1946.

Collins, Wilkie. *Armadale.* New York: Harper and Bros., 1866.

———. *The Moonstone* (1868). New York: Viking Penguin, 1986.

———. *No Name.* 3 vols. London: Samson and Low, Son & Co., 1862.

———. *The Woman in White.* New York: Harper and Bros., 1860.

Conger, Syndy McMillan. "Fellow Travelers: Eighteenth-Century Englishwomen and German Literature." *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 14 (1985): 109–28.

———. *Sensibility in Transformation: Creative Resistance to Sentiment from the Augustans to the Romantics: Essays in Honor of Jean H. Hagstrum.* Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1990.

———. "Sensibility Restored: Radcliffe's Answer to Lewis's *The Monk.*" Pp. 113–49 in *Gothic Fictions: Prohibition/Transgression,* edited by Kenneth Graham.

Corman, Brian. *Genre and Generic Change in English Comedy, 1660–1710.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.

Cornwell, Neil. *The Literary Fantastic: From Gothic to Postmodernism*. London and New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990.

Craig, J., ed. *Account of the Life and Writings of John Millar, Esq.* Edinburgh, 1806.

Crane, Ronald Salmon. "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of *Tom Jones*." Pp. 616–47 in *Critics and Criticism*, edited by Ronald Salmon Crane. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952.

———. *Critical and Historical Principles of Literary History*. Foreword by Sheldon Sacks. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.

———. *The Idea of the Humanities and Other Essays*. 2 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967.

———. *The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953.

Cruse, Amy. *The Englishman and His Books in the Early Nineteenth Century*. London: George G. Harrap, 1930.

Dacre, Charlotte ["Rosa Matilda"]. *Confessions of the Nun of St. Omer* (1805). New York: Arno Press, 1972.

Davis, Walter. *The Act of Interpretation: A Critique of Literary Reason*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

Day, William Patrick. *In the Circles of Fear and Desire: A Study of Gothic Fantasy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.

Defoe, Daniel. *Moll Flanders*. London: W. Chetwood and T. Edling, 1722.

DeLamotte, Eugenia C. *Perils of the Night: A Feminist Study of Nineteenth-Century Gothic*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Denby, David J. *Sentimental Narrative and the Social Order in France, 1760–1820*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Derrida, Jacques. *Limited Inc ABC*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988.

———. *Of Grammatology*. Translated by Gayatri Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.

Dickens, Charles. *Bleak House* (1852–53). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970.

———. *Hard Times* (1854). Edited by George Ford. New York: Norton, 1972.

———. *Sketches by Boz* (1836). London: Oxford University Press, 1957.

———. *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859). London: Penguin, 1970.

Dinesen, Isak [Karen Blixen]. *Seven Gothic Tales*. New York: Hamson Smith and Robert Haas, 1934.

Disraeli, Benjamin. *Sybil, or The Two Nations*. 3 vols. London: Henry Colburn, 1845.

Doody, Margaret Anne. "Deserts, Ruins and Troubled Waters: Female Dreams in Fiction and the Development of the Gothic Novel." *Genre* 10 (1977): 529–72.

Doyle, Arthur Conan. *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes: The Four Novels and Fifty-Six Short Stories Complete*. Edited with notes by William S. Baring-Gould. 2 vols. New York: C. N. Potter, 1967.

Drake, Nathan. "Observations on Objects of Terror." Pp. 191–95 in *Drake's Literary*

Hours, or Sketches Critical and Narrative. London: Cadell, 1800. Originally published in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1798.

Dudden, F. Homes. *Henry Fielding: His Life, Works, and Times* (1952). 2 vols. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966.

Du Maurier, George. *Peter Ibbotson, with an Introduction by his cousin Lady ***** ("Madge Plunket")* (1892). London: Victor Gollancz, 1969.

Duncan, Ian. *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: Gothic, Scott, and Dickens.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Eagleton, Terry. *Against the Grain: Essays 1975–1985.* London: Verso, 1986.

———. *Criticism and Ideology.* London: Verso, 1976.

———. "History, Narrative and Marxism." Pp. 272–81 in *Reading Narrative,* edited by James Phelan. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1988.

———. *Literary Theory: An Introduction.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

———. "Macherey and Marxist Literary Theory." In *Against the Grain.*

———. *The Rape of Clarissa: Writing, Sexuality and Class Struggle in Samuel Richardson.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982.

Eco, Umberto. *The Name of the Rose.* San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983.

Eddison, Eric Rucker. *The Worm Ouroboros: A Romance.* London: Jonathan Cape, 1922.

Eikhenbaum, Boris Mikhailovich. "Literature and Literary Life" (1927). In *Moi vramennik.* Leningrad, 1929.

Eikhenbaum, Boris Mikhailovich, and Yuri Tynyanov. *Russian Prose.* Translated and edited by Ray Parrott. Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis Press, 1985.

"Eliza." Reply to "Tell-tale" in *Ladies' Monthly Museum* 1 (December 1798): 471–73.

Ellis, Kate Ferguson. *The Contested Castle.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.

Ellis, Sarah. *The Wives of England: Their Relative Duties, Domestic Influence and Social Obligations.* London: Fisher, Son & Co., 1843.

Erlich, Bruce. "Amphibolies." *Critical Inquiry* 12 (1986): 527–45.

Escarpit, Robert. "The Sociology of Literature." *International Encyclopaedia of Social Science* 9 (1968): 417–25.

Fallon, Eileen. *Words of Love: A Complete Guide to Romance Fiction.* New York: Garland, 1984.

Fargas, Frederick John ["Hugh Conway"]. *Called Back.* Bristol: Arrowsmith's Christmas Annual, 1883.

Fass, Barbara. *La Belle Dame sans Merci and the Aesthetics of Romanticism.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1974.

Ferguson, Adam. *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic.* 6 vols. Basel: J. J. Tourneisen, 1791.

Ferris, Ina. *The Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History and the Waverley Novels.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991.

———. "Re-Positioning the Novel: *Waverley* and the Gender of Fiction." *Studies in Romanticism* 28 (1989): 291–301.

Fielding, Henry. *Joseph Andrews* (1742). Edited by Martin C. Battestin. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

———. *Tom Jones: The History of a Foundling* (1749). Edited by Fredson Bowers. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.

Fish, Stanley. *Doing What Comes Naturally: Change, Rhetoric and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990.

———. "Interpreting the *Variorum*." *Critical Inquiry* 2 (Spring 1976): 463–85.

Fisher, Benjamin Franklin. *The Gothic's Gothic: Study Aids to the Tradition of the Tale of Terror*. New York and London: Garland, 1988.

Fleenor, Juliann E., ed. *The Female Gothic*. Montreal: Eden Press, 1983.

Fleishman, Avrom. *The Historical Novel from Scott to Woolf*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971.

Forbes, Duncan. "The Rationalism of Sir Walter Scott." *Cambridge Journal* 7 (October 1953): 20–35.

Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*. Translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith. New York and London: Pantheon and Tavistock, 1971.

———. *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*. Edited and translated by Donald F. Bouchard. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1977.

———. "Language to Infinity." Pp. 60–66 in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*.

———. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" (1971). Pp. 139–64 in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*.

Frank, Frederick S. *Guide to the Gothic: An Annotated Bibliography of Criticism*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1984.

Fremantle, Anne, ed. *The Wynne Diaries*. 3 vols. London: Oxford University Press, 1940.

Frow, John. *Marxism and Literary History*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1986.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method*. Translated by Garrett Barden and John Cumming. New York: Seabury Press, 1975.

Gallie, W. B. *Philosophy and the Historical Imagination*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1964.

Garber, Frederick. "Meaning and Mode in Gothic Fiction." *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 3 (1974): 155–69.

Gaskell, Elizabeth. *North and South* (1855). Edited by Dorothy Collin. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1970.

Gates, Henry Louis. "Canon-Formation, Literary History, and the African American Tradition: From the Seen to the Told." Pp. 14–50 in *Afro-American Literary Study in the 1990s*, edited by Houston A. Baker, Jr., and Patricia Redmond. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

Geary, Robert F. *The Supernatural in Gothic Fiction: Horror, Belief, and Literary Change*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1992.

Geertz, Clifford. "Stir Crazy." *New York Review of Books*, 26 January 1978, 3–6.

Gibbon, Edward. *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–83). 8 vols. London: Folio Society, 1990.

———. *Memoirs of My Life* (1796). London: Nelson, 1966.

Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.

———. *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987.

———. *Sexchanges.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.

Ginzburg, Lev. "An Attempt at a Philosophical Lyric." *Poetica* 5 (1929): 91–104.

Godwin, Gail. Review of *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women,* edited by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar. *New York Times Book Review,* 28 April 1985.

Godwin, William. *St. Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century.* London: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1831.

———. *Things as They Are, or The Adventures of Caleb Williams.* 3 vols. London: B. Crosby, 1794.

Goldsmith, Oliver. *The Vicar of Wakefield.* 2 vols. London: F. Newbery, 1766.

Gossman, Lionel. *Between History and Literature.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.

———. *Medievalism and the Ideologies of Enlightenment: The World and Work of La Curne de Sainte-Palaye.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968.

Gothic Stories. London: S. Fisher, 1804. (Contains "Sir Bertrand," "The Story of Fitzalan: The Adventure James III of Scotland had with the Weird Sisters," "The Story of Raymond Castle," "Vildac, or The Horrid Discovery," etc.)

Gould, Stephen Jay. *Ever since Darwin: Reflections in Natural History.* New York: Norton, 1977.

———. *Time's Arrow, Time's Cycle: Myth and Metaphor in the Discovery of Geological Time.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987.

Graham, Kenneth W., ed. *Gothic Fictions: Prohibition/Transgression.* New York: AMS Press, 1989.

Green, Thomas. *Extracts from the Diary of a Lover of Literature.* Ipswich: John Raw, 1810.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

———. "Toward a Poetics of Culture." Pp. 1–15 in *The New Historicism,* edited by H. Aram Veeser.

Grixti, Joseph. *Terrors of Uncertainty: The Cultural Contexts of Horror Fiction.* London and New York: Routledge, 1989.

Habermas, Jürgen. *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity.* Translated by Frederick Lawrence. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987.

Hacking, Ian. "The Archaeology of Foucault." Pp. 27–40 in *Foucault: A Critical Reader,* edited by David Couzens Hoy.

Haggerty, George. *Gothic Fiction/Gothic Form.* University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989.

Harfst, Betsy. *Horace Walpole and the Unconscious: An Experiment in Freudian Analysis.* New York: Arno Press, 1968.

Harvey, A. D. *Literature into History*. London: Macmillan, 1988.

Harwell, Thomas Meade. *The English Gothic Novel: A Miscellany in Four Volumes*. Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Americanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1986.

Haweis, Rev. Hugh Reginald. Introduction to Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*. London: George Routledge and Sons, 1886.

Hazen, Helen. *Endless Rapture: Rape, Romance and the Female Imagination*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983.

Hazlitt, William. *Lectures on the English Comic Writers* (1818). London: J. M. Dent, 1890.

Henderson, A. T. *A Nut between Two Blades: The Novels of Charles Robert Maturin*. New York: Arno Press, 1980.

Hennessy, Brendan. *The Gothic Novel*. Harlow: Longman, 1978.

Hernadi, Paul. *Beyond Genre: New Directions in Literary Classification*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1972.

Heron, Robert. *History of Scotland*. Perth and Edinburgh: R. Morison and Son, 1794–99.

Hicks, Granville. *The Great Tradition: An Interpretation of American Literature since the Civil War*. New York: Macmillan, 1935.

Hillhouse, James H. *The Waverley Novels and Their Critics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1936.

Hogg, James. *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824). New York: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Hohendahl, Peter Uwe. *The Institution of Criticism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982.

———. "Introduction to Reception Aesthetics." *New German Critique* 10 (1977): 50.

Holcroft, Robert. *Anna St. Ives*. London: Shepperson and Reynolds, 1792.

Holland, Norman N., and Leona Sherman. "Gothic Possibilities." *New Literary History* 8 (1977): 279–94.

Hollingsworth, Keith. *The Newgate Novel, 1830–1847: Bulwer, Ainsworth, Dickens, Thackeray*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1963.

Horne, Robert Hengist ["Richard Henry"]. *A New Spirit of the Age*. 2 vols. London: Smith, Elder, 1844.

Howells, Coral Ann. *Love, Mystery and Misery: Feeling in Gothic Fiction*. London: Athlone, 1978.

Hoy, David Couzens, ed. *Foucault: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.

Hughes, Winifred. *The Maniac in the Cellar: Sensation Novels of the 1860s*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.

Hume, David. *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Accession of Henry VII*. 6 vols. London: A. Millar, 1757–62.

Humphrey, Richard. *The Historical Novel as Philosophy of History: Three German Contributions: Alexis, Fontane, Döblin*. London: Institute of Germanic Studies, University of London, 1986.

Hunt, William. *History of England from the Accession of George III to the Close of Pitt's First Administration (1760–1801)*. New York: AMS Press, 1969.

Hurd, Richard. *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762). Edited by Hoyt Trowbridge. Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1963.

Hutchinson, William. *The Hermitage*. York: C. Etherington, 1772.

Idman, Nilo. *Charles Robert Maturin: His Life and Works*. Helsingfors, 1923.

Inchbald, Elizabeth. *A Simple Story*. Dublin: W. Wilson, 1791.

Ingarden, Roman. *The Literary Work of Art*. Translated by George G. Grabowicz. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.

Jackson, J. R. de J. *Historical Criticism and the Meaning of Texts*. London: Routledge, 1989.

Jacobus, Mary. Review of *The Madwoman in the Attic*, by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar. *Signs* 6 (1981): 520.

James, Henry. *The Turn of the Screw*. London: W. Heinemann, 1898.

Jameson, Fredric R. "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture" (1979). Pp. 1–36 in *Signatures of the Visible*.

———. *Signatures of the Visible*. New York: Routledge, 1990.

Japp, Uwe. *Beziehungssinn: Ein Konzept der Literaturegeschichte*. Frankfurt: Europäische Verlaganstalt, 1980.

Jauss, Hans Robert. *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

———. "*Le douceur du foyer:* Lyric Poetry of the Year 1857 as a Model for the Communication of Social Norms." Pp. 263–93 in *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*.

———. "The Identity of the Poetic Text in the Changing Horizon of Understanding." Pp. 146–74 in *Identity of the Literary Text*, edited by Mario Valdès and Owen Miller. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.

———. "The Limits and Tasks of Literary Hermeneutics." *Dialogue* 14, no. 1 (1982): 92–119.

———. *Literary Communication and Reception*. Edited by Zoran Konstantinovic, Manfred Naumann, and Hans Robert Jauss. Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität, 1980.

———. "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory." Pp. 3–46 of *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*. Originally presented in 1966 as a lecture, "Literaturgeschichte als Provokation zu Literaturwissenschaft."

———. *Question and Answer: Forms of Dialogic Understanding*. Translated and edited by Michael Hays. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

———. "Sketch of a Theory and a History of Aesthetic Experience." Pp. 3–151 in *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*.

———. "Theses on the Transition from the Aesthetics of Literary Works to a Theory of Aesthetic Experience." Pp. 138–46 in *Interpretation of Narrative*, edited by Mario J. Valdès and Owen Miller. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978.

———. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*. Translated by Timothy Bahti. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

Jenner, Charles. *The Placid Man, or Memoirs of Sir Charles Belville*. 2 vols. London: J. Wilkie, 1770.

Jones, Chris. *Radical Sensibility: Literature and Ideas in the 1790s.* London: Routledge, 1993.

Kahane, Claire. "Gothic Mirrors and Feminine Identity." *Centennial Review* 24 (1980): 43–64.

Keats, John. "Letter to Benjamin Bailey." Pp. 318–19 in David Richter, *The Critical Tradition.*

Kermode, Frank. *Poetry, Narrative, History.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990.

Kerr, David. *Fiction against History: Scott as Storyteller.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Kiely, Robert. *The Romantic Novel in England.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973.

Knox, Vicesimus. *Essays: Moral and Literary* (1784). 2d ed. 2 vols. London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1789.

Kramer, Dale. *Charles Robert Maturin.* Boston: Twayne, 1972.

Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.* 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.

LaCapra, Dominick. *History, Politics and the Novel.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987.

———. *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1983.

Lackington, James. *Memoirs of the Forty-Five First Years of the Life of James Lackington.* 13th ed. London: printed for the author, 1791.

Lakatos, Imre. *The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

Leatherdale, Clive. *Dracula: The Novel and the Legend.* London: Aquarian Press, 1985.

Leavis, Q. D. *Fiction and the Reading Public.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1932.

Lee, Sophia. *The Recess: A Tale of Other Times.* 3 vols. London: T. Cadell, 1783–85.

Le Fanu, Joseph Sheridan. *Uncle Silas: A Tale of Bartram-Haugh* (1864). Edited by W. J. McCormack. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

LeGuin, Ursula. *The Left Hand of Darkness.* New York: Ace Books, 1976.

Leland, Thomas. *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury.* London: W. Johnston, 1762.

Lennox, Charlotte. *The Female Quixote; or, The Adventures of Arabella* (1752). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Le Roy Ladurie, Emmanuel. *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error.* New York: Braziller, 1978.

Lestrange, A. G. K., ed. *The Life of Mary Russell Mitford; Told by Herself in Letters to Her Friends.* 2 vols. New York: Harper and Bros., 1870.

"Letter." *Sylph,* no. 5 (6 October 1795): 35–38.

Levine, Joseph M. *Humanism and History: The Origins of Modern Historiography.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987.

Lewis, Matthew G. *Ambrosio, Or, The Monk* (1796). New York: Grove Press, 1952.

Lindenberger, Herbert. *The History in Literature: On Value, Genre, Institutions.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.

Locke, John. *Second Treatise on Government* (1690). Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966.

Logue, Christopher. *War Music.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1988.

Lovecraft, H. P. *At the Mountains of Madness, and Other Novels.* London: Victor Gollancz, 1966.

Lovejoy, Arthur. "On the Discrimination of Romanticisms." *PMLA* 39 (1924): 229–53.

Lowes, John Livingston. *The Road to Xanadu: A Study in the Ways of the Imagination.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927.

Lukács, Georg. *The Historical Novel* (1937). Translated by Hannah Mitchell and Stanley Mitchell. London: Merlin Press, 1962.

Lyttelton, George, Lord. *A History of the Life of King Henry the Second.* London: J. Dodsley, 1767–71.

MacAndrew, Elizabeth. *The Gothic Tradition in Fiction.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.

Macaulay, Thomas Babington. *History of England.* Edited by Sir Hugh Trevor-Roper. New York: Penguin English Library, 1979.

Machen, Arthur. *Tales of Horror and the Supernatural.* London: Richards Press, 1949.

Macherey, Pierre. "Jules Verne: The Faulty Narrative." Pp. 159–240 in *A Theory of Literary Production.*

———. *A Theory of Literary Production* (1966). Translated by Geoffrey Wall. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.

Mackenzie, Henry. *Julia de Roubigné: A Tale.* 2 vols. London: W. Strahan, 1778.

———. *The Lounger.* Edinburgh: W. Creech, 1785–87.

———. *The Man of Feeling.* 2d ed. London: T. Cadell, 1771.

Macpherson, James. *Fragments of Ancient Poetry collected in the Highlands of Scotland.* Edinburgh: G. Hamilton and J. Balfour, 1760.

Manlove, C. N. *Modern Fantasy: Five Studies.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Markley, Robert. "Sentimentality as Performance: Shaftesbury, Sterne, and the Theatrics of Virtue." Pp. 210–31 in *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature,* edited by Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown. New York and London: Methuen, 1987.

Martindale, Colin. *Romantic Progression: The Psychology of Literary History.* Washington: Hemisphere Publishing, 1975.

Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. *The German Ideology.* In *Collected Works.* 5 vols. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1976.

Massé, Michelle A. *In the Name of Love: Women, Masochism and the Gothic.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992.

Mathias, Thomas J. *The Pursuits of Literature, A Satirical Poem.* 4th ed. rev. London: T. Becket, 1797.

Maturin, Charles Robert. *The Albigenses.* London: Hurst Robinson, 1824.

——— [as "Dennis Jasper Murphy"]. *The Fatal Revenge, or, The Family of Montorio.* 3 vols. London: Newman, 1807.

———. *Melmoth the Wanderer: A Tale* (1820). Edited by Douglas Grant. London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Mayo, Robert D. *The English Novel in the Magazines, 1740–1815*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1962.

———. "The Gothic Romance in the Magazines." *PMLA* 65 (January 1950): 766–67.

———. "How Long Was Gothic Fiction in Vogue?" *MLN* 58 (January 1943): 58–64.

McCoy, Richard. *Sir Philip Sidney: Rebellion in Arcadia*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1979.

McKeon, Michael. *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600–1740*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

———. "Reply to Ralph Rader." *Narrative* 1 (January 1993): 84–90.

McKinney, David D. *The Imprints of Gloomth: The Gothic Novel in England, 1765–1830*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1988.

McNutt, Dan J. *The Eighteenth-Century Gothic Novel: An Annotated Bibliography of Criticism and Selected Texts*. New York and London: Garland, 1975.

Medvedev, Pavel Nikolaievich. *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* (1928). Translated by Albert Wehrle. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985.

Messent, Peter, ed. *The Literature of the Occult: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1981.

Midelfort, H. C. Eric. "Madness and Civilization in Early Europe: A Reappraisal of Michel Foucault." Pp. 247–60 in *After the Reformation: Essays in Honour of J. H. Hexter*, edited by Barbara C. Malament. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980.

Milbank, Alison. *Daughters of the House: Modes of the Gothic in Victorian Fiction*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

Miles, David H. "Literary Sociology: Some Introductory Notes." *Germanic Quarterly* 48 (1975): 20.

Miles, Robert. *Gothic Writing, 1750–1820: A Genealogy*. London and New York: Routledge, 1993.

Miller, Karl. *Doubles: Studies in Literary History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Mitchell, W. J. T. "Introduction: Pluralism and Its Discontents." *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Spring 1986): 467.

———. "Pluralism as Dogmatism." *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Spring 1986): 499–501.

Modleski, Tania. *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women*. New York: Methuen, 1982.

Moers, Ellen. *Literary Women: The Great Writers*. New York: Doubleday, 1976.

Moi, Toril. *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. New York and London: Methuen, 1985.

Monléon, José B. *A Spectre Is Haunting Europe: A Socio-Historical Approach to the Fantastic*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

Montrose, Louis. "New Historicisms." Pp. 392–418 in *Redrawing the Boundaries*, edited

by Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1992.

Moore, Helen. *Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1886.

More, Hannah. *The Letters of Hannah More*. Selected by R. Brimley Johnson. London: John Lane for The Bodley Head, 1925.

Morris, Kevin L. *The Image of the Middle Ages in Romantic and Victorian Literature*. London: Croom Helm, 1984.

Mullan, John. *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

Murray, H. *The Morality of Fiction, or an Inquiry into the Tendency of Fictitious Narratives*. Edinburgh: Mundell and Son, 1805.

Mussell, Kay. *Women's Gothic and Romantic Fiction: A Reference Guide*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1981.

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

Neuburg, Victor. *Popular Literature: An Historical Guide from the Beginnings of Print to 1897*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1977.

"Novel-Reading a Cause of Female Depravity." *Monthly Mirror* 4 (November 1797): 277–79.

Oliphant, Margaret Wilson. *Literary History of England. Volume III: The XVIII–XIX Century*. London: Macmillan, 1882.

"On the Terrorist System of Novel-Writing." *Monthly Magazine* 4 (August 1797): 102–4.

Orwell, George. *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*. Edited by Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus. 4 vols. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968.

Paget, Francis Edward. *Lucretia, or The Heroine of the Nineteenth Century*. London: Joseph Masters, 1868.

Palmer, Jerry. *Thrillers: Genesis and Structure of a Popular Genre*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979.

Parker, Mark. "Measure and Countermeasure: The Lovejoy-Wellek Debate and Romantic Periodization." Pp. 227–47 in *Theoretical Issues in Literary History*, edited by David Perkins. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991.

Parreaux, André. *The Publication of "The Monk": A Literary Event, 1796–98*. Paris: Didier, 1960.

Paulson, Ronald. *Hogarth: His Life, Art, and Times*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.

———. *Hogarth's Graphic Works*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970. 3d ed., 1989.

———. *Representations of Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.

———. *Rowlandson: A New Interpretation*. London: Studio Vista, 1974.

Peake, Mervyn. *The Gormenghast Trilogy*. New York: Weybridge and Talley, 1967.

Peardon, Thomas Preston. *The Transition in English Historical Writing, 1760–1830*. No.

390 of Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law. New York: Columbia University Press, 1933.

Pepper, Stephen. *World-Hypotheses: A Study in Evidence.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1942.

Percy, Thomas. *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765). London: J. Dent, 1932–38.

Perkin, Joan. *Women and Marriage in Nineteenth-Century England.* Chicago: Lyceum Books, 1989.

Perkins, David. *Is Literary History Possible?* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Pinkerton, John. *An Enquiry into the History of Scotland preceding the Reign of Malcolm III.* London: G. Nicol, 1789.

Plutarch. *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans.* Translated by Bernadotte Perrin. 10 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Praz, Mario. *The Romantic Agony.* Translated by Angus Davidson. 2d ed. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Punter, David. *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day.* New York: Longman, 1980.

Putnam, Hilary. *Reason, Truth and History.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

R. R., Review of *The Monk. European Magazine* 31 (February 1797): 111–15.

Rabkin, Eric S. *The Fantastic in Literature.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976.

Radcliffe, Ann. *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789). New York: Arno Press, 1972.

———. *Gaston de Blondeville, or The Court of King Henry III Keeping Festival in Ardenne.* Edited by T. Noon Talfourd. 4 vols. London: Henry Colbourn, 1826.

———. *The Italian, or The Confessional of the Black Penitents* (1797). Edited by Frederick Garber. New York: Oxford University Press, 1968.

———. *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794). New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.

Radcliffe, Mary Ann. *Manfroné, or, The One-Handed Monk.* London: Minerva Press, 1809; London: Milner, 1877.

Rader, Ralph W. "The Comparative Anatomy of Three 'Baggy Monsters': *Bleak House, Vanity Fair, Middlemarch.*" *Journal of Narrative Technique* 19 (Winter 1989): 49–69.

———. "The Emergence of the Novel in England: Genre in History vs. History of Genre." *Narrative* 1 (1993): 69–83.

———. "From Richardson to Austen: 'Johnson's Rule' and the Development of the Eighteenth-Century Novel of Moral Action." Pp. 461–83 in *Johnson and His Age,* edited by James Engell. Harvard English Studies no. 12. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984.

———. "The Literary-Theoretical Contribution of Sheldon Sacks." *Critical Inquiry* 6 (1979): 183–93.

———. "The Novel and History Once More: A Reply to Michael McKeon." *Narrative* 1 (1993): 173–83.

Radway, Janice. *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.

Railo, Eino. *The Haunted Castle.* London: Routledge, 1927.

Rance, Nicholas. *Wilkie Collins and Other Sensation Novelists: Walking the Moral Hospital.* London: Macmillan, 1991.

Reade, Charles. *Hard Cash: A Matter-of-Fact Romance.* 3 vols. London: Sampson Low, 1863.

Reeve, Clara. *The Champion of Virtue.* Colchester: W. Keymer, 1777.

———. *The Old English Baron* (1778). Edited by James Trainer. London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

———. *The Progress of Romance; and the History of Charoba, Queen of Aegypt.* Reproduced from Colchester ed. of 1785. New York: Facsimile Text Society, 1930.

Reiss, Timothy. *The Meaning of Literature.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992.

Reynolds, George William MacArthur. *The Mysteries of London.* 6 vols. London: John Dicks, 1846–50.

———. *Wagner, the Wehr-Wolf: A Romance.* London: John Dicks, 1857.

Richardson, Samuel. *Clarissa, or The History of a Young Lady* (1747–48). New York: Penguin, 1990.

———. *Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740). New York: Norton, 1958.

———. *The Richardson-Stinstra Correspondence.* Edited by William C. Slattery. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969.

Richter, David H. *The Critical Tradition: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends.* Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1989.

———. *Fable's End: Completeness and Closure in Rhetorical Fiction.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974.

———. *Falling into Theory: Conflicting Views on Reading Literature.* Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994.

———. "From Medievalism to Historicism: Representations of History in the Gothic Novel and Historical Romance." *Studies in Medievalism* 4 (1992): 79–104.

———. "The Gothic Impulse." *Dickens Studies Annual: Essays on Victorian Fiction* 11 (1983): 279–311.

———. "Pandora's Box Revisited." *Critical Inquiry* 1 (Winter 1974): 453–80.

———. "The Reception of the Gothic Novel in the 1790s." Pp. 117–37 in *The Idea of the Novel in the Eighteenth Century,* edited by Robert W. Uphaus. East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1988.

———. Review of Walter Davis, *The Act of Interpretation: A Critique of Literary Reason. Style* 15 (Winter 1981): 98–101.

———. "The Second Flight of the Phoenix: Neo-Aristotelianism since Crane." *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 23, no. 1 (1982): 27–48.

———. "The Unguarded Prison: Reception Theory, Structural Marxism and the History of the Gothic Novel." *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 30, no. 3 (1989): 1–17.

"Rimelli." "Novels and Romances." *Monthly Mirror* 14 (August 1802): 81.

Ringe, Donald A. *American Gothic: Imagination and Reason in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction.* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1982.

Ritson, Joseph. *The Letters of Joseph Ritson.* Edited by Sir Harris Nicolas. 2 vols. London: William Pickering, 1833.

Roberts, Bette B. *The Gothic Romance: Its Appeal to Women Writers and Readers in Late Eighteenth-Century England.* New York: Arno Press, 1980.

Roberts, Marie. *Gothic Immortals: The Fictions of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross.* London: Routledge, 1990.

Roche, Maria Regina. *Clermont* (1798). London: Folio Society, 1968.

Roger of Wendover. *Flowers of History.* Translated by J. A. Giles. 2 vols. London: H. G. Bohn, 1849.

Rogers, Samuel. *Recollections of the Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers.* Collected by Rev. Alexander Dyce. Edited with an introduction by Morchard Bishop. London: Richards Press, 1952.

Rooney, Ellen. *Seductive Reasoning: Pluralism as the Problematic of Contemporary Literary Theory.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989.

———. "Who's Left Out? A Rose by Any Other Name Is Still Red; Or, The Politics of Pluralism." *Critical Inquiry* 12 (1986): 550–63.

Rothstein, Eric. "Diversity and Change in Literary Histories." Pp. 114–45 in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History,* edited by Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991.

Sacks, Sheldon. *Fiction and the Shape of Belief.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964.

———. "Golden Birds and Dying Generations." *Comparative Literature Studies* 6 (September 1969): 282–89.

———. "The Psychological Implications of Generic Distinctions." *Genre* 1 (April 1968): 106–15.

Sade, Alphonse Donatien, Marquis de. *Oeuvres complètes.* Edited by Annie LeBrun and Jean-Jacques Pauvert. Paris: Société Nouvelle des Editions Pauvert, 1988.

Savile, George, Marquess of Halifax. *The Lady's New-Year's Gift, or, Advice to a Daughter.* 6th ed. corrected. Dublin: Thomas Shepherd, 1699.

Sayers, Dorothy Leigh. *Gaudy Night.* London: Victor Gollancz, 1935.

Schücking, Levin L. *The Sociology of Literary Taste.* Translated by Brian Battershaw. 3d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.

Scott, Sir Walter. *Miscellaneous Prose Works.* 3 vols. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1854.

———. *The Waverley Novels* (The "Abbotsford Edition"). 12 vols. Edinburgh: Robert Cadell, 1842–47.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions.* New York: Arno Press, 1980.

Senior, Nassau. Review of *Kenilworth,* by Sir Walter Scott. *Quarterly Review* 26 (October 1821): 109.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818). Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1988.

Shelley, Percy Bysshe. "Continuation of the Shelley Papers: On 'Frankenstein.'" *Athenaeum*, no. 263 (1832): 730.

Sheridan, Richard Brinsley. *The Rivals* (1775). Edited by C. J. L. Price. London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Shklovsky, Viktor. *Theory of Prose*. Moscow: Izdatelstvo "Federatzia," 1929. Translated by Benjamin Sher. Elmwood Park, IL: Dalkey Archive Press, 1990.

Shukman, Ann. "Glossary of Russian Formalism." *Poetica: Russian Poetics in Translation* 4 (1977): 17–48.

Sidney, Sir Philip. *An Apology for Poetry*. Pp. 131–59 in David Richter, *The Critical Tradition*.

———. *The Countesse of Pembroke's Arcadia*. 2d ed. London: printed for William Ponsonbie, 1593.

Simmons, James Charles. *The Novelist as Historian*. The Hague: Mouton, 1973.

Sleath, Eleanor. *The Nocturnal Minstrel*. London: Minerva Press, 1810.

Smith, Adam. *Essays*. London: A. Murray and Son, 1869.

———. *An Inquiry in to the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. 2 vols. London, 1776.

———. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1976.

Smith, Charlotte. *The Old Manor House* (1793). Edited by Anne Ehrenpreis. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

"Sophronia Hawthorne." Letter in the Dublin *Flapper* 1, no. 45 (9 July 1796): 177–79.

Spector, Robert Donald. *The English Gothic: A Bibliographical Guide to Writers from Horace Walpole to Mary Shelley*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984.

Sprinker, Michael. *Imaginary Relations: Aesthetics and Ideology in the Theory of Historical Materialism*. London: Verso, 1987.

Steiner, George. "The Mandarin of the Hour." *New York Times Book Review*, 28 February 1971, 8, 28–31.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. London: Longmans, 1886.

Stoker, Bram. *Dracula* (1897). London: Wordsworth Classics, 1993.

Stone, Lawrence. *The Family, Sex and Marriage, 1500–1800*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977.

Stone, Lawrence, and Jeanne Fawtier Stone. *An Open Elite*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984.

Striedter, Yuri. *Literary Structure, Evolution, and Value: Russian Formalism and Czech Structuralism Reconsidered*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1989.

———. *Texte der russischen Formalisten*. 2 vols. Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1969.

Stuart, Gilbert. *A Historical Dissertation concerning the Antiquities of the English Constitution* (1768). London: T. Cadell, 1770.

Sullivan, Jack. *Elegant Nightmares: The British Ghost Story from Le Fanu to Blackwood.* Athens: Ohio University Press, 1978.

Summers, Montague. *The Gothic Quest.* London: Fortune, 1938.

Suvin, Darko. *Victorian Science Fiction in the UK: The Disguises of Knowledge and of Power.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1983.

"Sylvester Hawthorne." Letter in the Dublin *Flapper,* 1, no. 44 (2 July 1796), 173–75.

Symons, Julian. *Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel: A History* (1972). 2d ed. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Viking/Penguin, 1985.

"T. H." Letter in *Ladies' Monthly Museum* 2 (March 1799): 218–220.

Talfourd, T. Noon. *Critical and Miscellaneous Writings.* London: T. Bell, 1852. Originally published in the *New Monthly Review* 14 (June 1820).

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

Tawney, R. H. *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1926). London: Penguin, 1980.

Taylor, John Tinnan. *Early Opposition to the English Novel: The Popular Reaction from 1760 to 1830.* New York: King's Crown Press, 1943.

"Tell-tale." Letter in *Ladies' Monthly Museum* 1 (December 1798): 389–95.

Tennyson, Alfred, Lord. *Enoch Arden.* London: E. Moxon, 1864.

Todd, Janet. *Feminist Literary History: A Defense.* Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1988.

———. *Sensibility: An Introduction.* London and New York: Methuen, 1986.

Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre.* Translated by Richard Howard. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Lord of the Rings.* 2d ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967.

Tompkins, J. M. S. *Ann Radcliffe and Her Influence on Later Writers* (1921). New York: Arno Press, 1980.

———. *The Popular Novel in England, 1770 to 1800.* London: Routledge, 1932.

Tracy, Ann B. *The Gothic Novel, 1790–1830: Plot Summaries and Index to Motifs.* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1981.

Trodd, Anthea. *Domestic Violence in the Victorian Novel.* London: Macmillan, 1989.

Tropp, Martin. *Images of Fear: How Horror Stories Helped Shape Modern Culture, 1818–1918.* Jefferson, NC, and London: McFarland, 1990.

Turner, Sharon. *The History of the Anglo Saxons from the Earliest Times to the Norman Conquest.* London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1799–1805.

Tynyanov, Yuri. *Arkhaisti i novatori.* Moscow: Priboi, 1929; Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1985.

———. "The Literary Fact" (1924). Pp. 12–13 in *Arkhaisti i novatory.* Translated by L. M. O'Toole in *Poetica: Russian Poetics in Translation* 4 (1977): 52–54.

———. "Oda kak oratorskii zhanr" (The Ode as an Oratorical Genre). *Poetika* 3 (1927): 48–86.

———. *Poetika, istoria literatury, kino.* Edited by V. A. Kavarin and A. S. Miasnikov. Moscow: Nauka, 1977.

Tynyanov, Yuri, and Roman Jakobson. "Problemy izucheniya literatury i yazyka." *Novyi Lef* 12 (1928): 36–37. Translated by L. M. O'Toole as "Problems of Research in Literature and Language," in *Poetica: Russian Poetics in Translation* 4 (1977): 49–51. Translated by Ladislav Matejka and Krystyna Pomorska as "Problems in the Study of Literature and Language," in *Readings in Russian Poetics*, 79–81. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971.

Van Luchene, Stephen Robert. *Essays in Gothic Fiction: From Horace Walpole to Mary Shelley*. New York: Arno Press, 1980.

Van Sant, Ann Jessie. *Eighteenth-Century Sensibility and the Novel: The Senses in Social Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Varma, Devendra. *The Gothic Flame: Being a History of the Gothic Novel in England, Its Origins, Efflorescence, Disintegration, and Residuary Influences*. London: Arthur Barker, 1957.

Veeder, William, and Gordon Hirsch, eds. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde: After One Hundred Years*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Veeser, H. Aram., ed. *The New Historicism*. New York and London: Routledge, 1989.

"W. W." Letter in *The Scots Magazine* 64 (June 1802): 470–74.

Wagenknecht, Edward. *Cavalcade of the English Novel*. New York: Henry Holt, 1943.

Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). In *Three Gothic Novels*, edited by E. F. Bleiler. New York: Dover Publications, 1966.

Warton, Thomas. *History of English Poetry*. 4 vols. London: J. Dodsley, 1778.

Watson, Colin. *Snobbery with Violence: Crime Stories and Their Audience*. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1971.

Watt, William W. *Shilling Shockers of the Gothic School: A Study of Chapbook Gothic Romances*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1932.

Weidman, Bette. "Louis Owens and the Native American Novel." Paper presented at the International Conference of the Society for the Study of Narrative Literature, Vancouver, May 1994.

Weimann, Robert. "'Reception Aesthetics' and the Crisis in Literary History." Translated by Charles Spencer. *Clio* 5 (1975): 3–31.

———. *Structure and Society in Literary History: Studies in the History and Theory of Historical Criticism*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1976.

Wellek, René. *The Attack on Literature*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982.

———. *Concepts of Criticism*. Edited by Stephen G. Nichols, Jr. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.

———. "The Fall of Literary History." Pp. 64–67 in *The Attack on Literature*.

———. *A History of Modern Criticism, 1750–1950*. Vol. 1: *The Later Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955.

———. "Periodization in Literary History." Pp. 3:481–86 in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, edited by Edward M. Jennings. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970.

———. "Periods and Movements in Literary History." Pp. 73–93 in *English Institute Annual 1940,* edited by Rudolf Kirk. New York: Columbia University Press, 1941.

Wells, H. G. *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896). Edited by Brian Aldiss. London: Dent-Everyman, 1993.

Whitaker, John. *History of Manchester.* London: J. Johnson, 1771–75.

White, Hayden. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

———. "Historical Pluralism." *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Spring 1986): 480–93.

———. "The Historiography of Anti-Humanism." Pp. 104–41 in *The Content of the Form.*

———. *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism.* Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.

———. "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality." Pp. 1–25 in *The Content of the Form.*

Wiesenfarth, Joseph. *Gothic Manners and the Classic English Novel.* Madison and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988.

Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray.* London: Ward, Lock and Bowden, 1895.

Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City.* London: Hogarth Press, 1973.

Wilt, Judith. *Ghosts of the Gothic: Austen, Eliot, & Lawrence.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.

Wolf, Leonard, ed. *The Essential Dracula.* London: Plume, 1993.

Wolff, Cynthia Griffin. "The Radcliffean Gothic Model: A Form for Feminine Sexuality." Pp. 207–23 in Juliann E. Fleenor, ed., *The Female Gothic.*

Wood, Ellen Price. *East Lynne.* 3 vols. London: R. Bentley, 1861.

Wright, Andrew. *Fictional Discourse and Historical Space.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987.

Wuthnow, Robert. *Meaning and Moral Order: Explorations in Cultural Analysis.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.

Wynn, Frances Williams. *Diaries of a Lady of Quality from 1797 to 1844.* Edited by A. Hayward. London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1864.

Anonymous Contemporary Reviews

Review of *The Captive of Valence; or the Last Moments of Pius VI.*
Eclectic Review 1 (June 1805): 424–25.

Reviews of *Isobel, or, the Orphan of Valdarno; a Florentine Romance, founded during the Civil Wars in Italy.*
Annual Review and History of Literature 1 (1802): 722–23.
Flowers of Literature 2 (1802): 452.

Review of Francis Lathom, *The Unknown; or The Northern Gallery.*
The Cabinet 3 (April 1808): 189–90.

Reviews of Sophia Lee, *The Recess.*
Critical Review 61 (1786): 214–18.
English Review 7 (1786): 194
Gentleman's Magazine 56 (1786): 327.
Reviews of Thomas Leland, *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury.*
Critical Review 13 (March 1761): 252–57.
Monthly Review 26 (March 1762): 236–37.
Reviews of Matthew G. Lewis, *The Monk.*
Analytical Review 24 (1796): 403–4.
British Critic 7 (1796): 677.
Monthly Mirror 2 (1796): 98.
Monthly Mirror 2 (1796): 323–28.
Critical Review 19 (1797): 194–200.
European Magazine 31 (1797): 111–15.
Monthly Review 23 (1797): 451.
Reviews of Ann Radcliffe, *The Italian.*
Analytical Review 25 (1797): 516–20.
British Critic 10 (1797): 266–70.
English Review 28 (1797): 574–79.
European Magazine 31 (1797): 35.
Monthly Mirror 3 (1797): 155–58.
Monthly Review 22 (1797): 282–84. Review attributed to Arthur Aikin.
Critical Review 23 (1798): 166–69. Review attributed to Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
Reviews of Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho.*
Analytical Review 19 (June 1794): 140–45.
British Critic 4 (August 1794): 110–21.
Critical Review, 2d ser., 11 (August 1794): 361–72. Review attributed to Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
European Magazine 25 (1794): 433–40.
Gentleman's Magazine 64, part 2 (1794): 834.
Monthly Review, 2d ser., 15 (1794): 278–83. Review attributed to William Enfield.
Reviews of Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest.*
Critical Review, 2d ser., 4 (1792): 458–60.
English Review 20 (1792): 352–53.
Monthly Review, 2d ser., 8 (1792): 82–84.
Scots Magazine 54 (1792): 292.
Review of Mary Robinson, *Walsingham, or, the Pupil of Nature.*
Anti-Jacobin Review 1 (August 1798): 160–64.
Reviews of Walter Scott, *Kenilworth.*
London Magazine 3 (February 1821): 188.
The Port Folio 11 (1821): 161.

Reviews of Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus.*

Belle Assemblée, 2d ser., 17 (March 1818): 139–42.

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine 2 (March 1818): 613–20. Review attributed to Walter Scott.

Edinburgh Magazine, 2d ser., 2 (March 1818): 249–53.

Reviews of Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto.*

Critical Review 19 (1765): 50–51.

Monthly Review 32 (1765): 97–99.

Monthly Review 32 (1765): 394.

Monthly Mirror 18 (1804): 246.

INDEX

The Theory and Interpretation of Narrative

James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz, Editors

Because the series editors believe that the most significant work in narrative studies today contributes both to our knowledge of specific narratives and to our understanding of narrative in general, studies in the series typically offer interpretations of individual narratives and address significant theoretical issues underlying those interpretations. The series does not privilege any one critical perspective but is open to work from any strong theoretical position.

Framing *Anna Karenina:* Tolstoy, the Woman Question, and the Victorian Novel
AMY MANDELKER

Understanding Narrative
EDITED BY JAMES PHELAN AND PETER J. RABINOWITZ

Psychological Politics of the American Dream: The Commodification of Subjectivity in Twentieth-Century American Literature
LOIS TYSON

Narrative as Rhetoric: Technique, Audiences, Ethics, Ideology
JAMES PHELAN