

‘OUR GOTHIC BARD’: SHAKESPEARE AND APPROPRIATION
1764-1800

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, Gothic literary studies have increasingly acknowledged the role played by Shakespeare in authorial acts of appropriation. Such acknowledgement is most prominently stated in *Gothic Shakespeares* (eds. Drakakis and Townshend, 2008) and *Shakespearean Gothic* (eds. Desmet and Williams, 2009), both of which base their analyses of the Shakespeare-Gothic intersection on the premise that Shakespearean quotations, characters and events are valuable objects in their own right which mediate on behalf of the ‘present’ concerns of the agents of textual appropriation. In light of this scholarship, this thesis argues the case for the presence of ‘Gothic Shakespeare’ in Gothic writing during the latter half of the eighteenth century and, in doing so, it acknowledges the conceptual gap whereby literary borrowings were often denounced as acts of plagiarism. Despite this conceptual problem, it is possible to trace distinct ‘Gothic’ Shakespeares that dismantle the concept of Shakespeare as a singular ineffable genius by virtue of a textual practice that challenges the concept of the ‘genius’ Shakespeare as the figurehead of genuine emotion and textual authenticity.

This thesis begins by acknowledging the eighteenth-century provenance of Shakespeare’s ‘Genius’, thereby distinguishing between the malevolent barbarian Gothic of Shakespeare’s own time and the eighteenth-century Gothic Shakespeares discussed under the term ‘appropriation’. It proceeds to examine the Shakespeares of canonical Gothic writers (Horace Walpole, Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis) as well as their lesser-known contemporaries (T.J. Horsley Curties and W.H. Ireland). For instance, Walpole conscripts *Hamlet* in order to mediate his experience of living in England after the death of his father, the first Prime Minister Robert Walpole. The thesis then argues for the centrality of Shakespeare in the Gothic romance’s undercutting of the emergent discourses of emotion (or ‘passion’), as represented by the fictions of Radcliffe and Lewis, before moving on to consider Curties’s attempted recuperation – in *Ethelwina; or, the House of Fitz-Auburne* (1799) - of authentic passion, which is mediated through the authenticity apparatus of Edmond Malone’s 1790 editions of Shakespeare’s plays. It concludes with W.H. Ireland’s dismantling of Malone’s concept of the ‘authentic’ Shakespeare through the contemporary

transgressions of literary forgery and the evocation of an illicit Shakespeare in his first Gothic romance, *The Abbess*, also published in 1799.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements and Declaration	v
Introduction Shakespeare Among the Goths	1
Chapter One ‘Ghost. Adieu, Adieu’: Horace Walpole, <i>Hamlet</i> , <i>Macbeth</i> , and the Limits of Shakespeare Appropriation	48
Chapter Two Countenancing Gothic Shakespeare: Physiognomy and Passion in Gothic Romance and Drama	84
Chapter Three Re-sexing ‘Woman’: T.J. Horsley Curties’s ‘Gothic Shakespeare’	139
Chapter Four (In)Authentic Shakespeare: The Case of W.H. Ireland	182
Conclusion ‘Shakspeare’s Sanction’	220
Bibliography	225

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This thesis is dedicated to William McCourt Calder (1928-2009) and Dorothy Fletcher McGuire (1963-2009)

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that all critical and other sources (literary and electronic) have been specifically and properly acknowledged, as and when they occur in the body of my text.

Signed:

Date:

INTRODUCTION

SHAKESPEARE AMONG THE GOTHIS

This, you see, is a short and commodious philosophy. Yet barbarians have their *own*, such as it is, if they are not enlightened by our reason. Shall we then condemn them unheard, or will it not be fair to let them have the telling of their own story?
(Hurd, 1972, pp.194-195)

Bishop Richard Hurd's ultimatum, in his *Moral and Political Dialogues; with Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762), to permit Gothic barbarians 'the telling of their own story' or 'condemn them unheard', resonates with the modern critic, whose exposure to the myriad stories on all things 'Gothic' and 'Shakespearean' is the effect of the ethical stance whereby hitherto silenced voices must be amplified if criticism is to justify its claim as a democratic mode. As critics such as Richard Wilson, David Salter and Allan Lloyd Smith have shown, Shakespeare and the Gothic are implicated in a number of stories, some of which co-exist in the same temporal space, while others are told as part of a continuum of Gothic discourse. For Wilson, what he dubs 'Gothic Shakespeare' is 'the uncanny prefiguration of the unpoliced revolutionary mob' in France at the end of the eighteenth century; more specifically, it is the discourse of the French philosopher Francois Marie Arouet de Voltaire, who maintained that Shakespeare's commitment in his plays to plebeian culture – with its fools, gravediggers, and the bard of Avon's own subversive commingling of tragedy and comedy – signalled the monstrous birth of Shakespeare as a democrat in a royal state (Wilson, 2007, pp.38-39). Moreover, for Wilson, this French 'Gothic Shakespeare' has endured through Victor Hugo's 'socialist' appropriation of

Shakespeare into the present day, where cultural theorists such as Jacques Derrida read into Shakespeare's plays the promise of the 'democracy to come', albeit ushered in by the ineffable monstrosity of violence (Wilson, 2007, pp.68-73). If Gothic Shakespeare in France warns (Voltaire) or embraces (Derrida) authentic democracy, its English counterpart, by contrast, is signalled by its veneration of the rule of constitutional monarchy and its commitment to Protestantism. David Salter has argued that Matthew Lewis's referencing of Shakespeare in *The Monk* (1796) and Ann Radcliffe's deployment of Shakespeare in *The Italian* (1797) 'authorize, legitimize and even shore up that sense of Englishness that defines itself not simply as Protestant, but as virulently anti-Catholic in character' (Salter, 2009, p.54). Thus Radcliffe rewrites the benevolent Friar Lawrence, from *Romeo and Juliet*, as the malignant monk purportedly responsible for the death of Ellena di Rosalba's guardian, Signora Bianchi, in what Salter terms as Radcliffe's 'unquestioning assumption of Shakespeare's Protestantism' (Salter, 2009, p.56). Lewis's similarly unquestioning assumption of Shakespeare's sectarian affiliation is evidenced by Lewis's equation of the sexually depraved Catholic monk Ambrosio and Angelo in *Measure for Measure*. If during the so-called 'first wave' of Gothic writing, Gothic was inscribed as the transcendental signified of things 'English', 'Protestant' and 'Whiggish', the publication of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818) advanced yet another story whereby, as Allan Lloyd Smith suggests in his citation of Paul Gilroy, Gothic discourse turned from its eighteenth-century identification with religiosity to the 'dislocating dazzle of "whiteness"' (Smith, 2004, p.209). In the case of *Frankenstein*, Smith observes that the Monster, described in colonial discourse by Victor Frankenstein as the racial other, acquires an eloquent voice which ruptures the period's insistence on white superiority (Smith,

2004, p.210). Unlike the Catholic priests of Radcliffe and Lewis, the Monster not only speaks, but speaks in his own voice, thereby positing him as an intertextual echo of Caliban from *The Tempest*.

The Shakespeares accounted for above attest to his endurance across history, but it is only Wilson's account that gestures at the possibility of a Shakespeare (or set of Shakespeares) that exists as the culmination of intentional literary appropriation. While Salter's essay acknowledges the act of appropriation, his commitment to the morality of highlighting historical difference leads him to conclude that Radcliffe fundamentally misunderstood *Romeo and Juliet*, further leading him to retract his acknowledgement of literary borrowing in favour of the thesis that Radcliffe's Shakespeare is the product of 'unconscious ideological conditioning' (Salter, 2009, p.58). Smith's essay suggests a Shakespeare that recurs unconsciously, for his reference to Caliban functions merely as an allusion to the Monster's verbal skill that exceeds Mary Shelley's declared interest in *Paradise Lost*.

While Shakespearean allusions undoubtedly appeared unconsciously in a culture saturated by the bard, this thesis contends that eighteenth-century Gothic writers wilfully appropriated Shakespearean quotations and events in order to articulate their present concerns over the body politic (Horace Walpole); the place of emotion in Gothic romance and drama (Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis); the perils of 'unsexing' attending the case for the liberation of female passion in the late 1790s (T.J. Horsley Curties); and the status of Shakespeare himself in light of the controversy which resulted from the detection of lost Shakespearean objects – including the play *Vortigern and Rowena* (1795) – as forgeries created by the precocious antiquarian forger W.H. Ireland. As such, it follows on from recent criticism advocating a 'Gothic Shakespeare' attuned to textual appropriation. For

instance, in *Shakespearean Gothic* (2009), the editors Christy Desmet and Anne Williams trace this creative process at work in the works of Walpole, Radcliffe and Thomas Love Peacock (amongst others), rightly claiming that Shakespeare as we know him today was ‘born in the eighteenth century’ (Desmet and Williams, 2009, p.1), only to abandon that claim in order to advance Shakespeare himself as a Gothic writer (see Walker, 2009, pp.181-198). Conversely, John Drakakis and Dale Townshend’s collection of essays entitled *Gothic Shakespeares* (2008) recognises the independence of Shakespearean texts from their original moment in history to the point that Gothic writers from the eighteenth century to the present day simultaneously venerate and dismantle the plays (Drakakis, 2008, p.14). Nowhere is this more true than in the eighteenth-century discourse of Shakespeare as ‘Genius’.

Writing in 1762, Bishop Hurd adopts the eighteenth century’s most enduring polemic on the topic of historiography: assess the past on its own terms, for there is something inherently lacking in our rational present. As Hurd’s *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* progresses, the reader is presented with a feudal chivalric ‘Gothic system’, histories of tyrannical barons and questing knights which, despite losing cultural currency with the passage of time, retain a certain spirit transmitted through Romance literature. Horace Walpole summarizes this ‘spirit’ in the second preface to *The Castle of Otranto* (1765). Walpole’s innovation in blending ‘two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern’, widely regarded as the foundational statement of Gothic writing, is inspired by a sense of present discontent: in the ancient romance, ‘all was imagination and improbability’; in the modern romance - what we now know of as the ‘novel’, itself as an example of Hurd’s ‘short and commodious philosophy’ - ‘nature is always intended to be, and sometimes has been, copied with success.

Invention has not been wanting but the great resources of fancy have been damned up,

by a strict adherence to common life' (Walpole, 1996, p.9). What is at stake is the well-being of Literature (as we might term it) itself, a greater freedom to 'invent' truly poetical works. As Hurd suggests, the great precedent is William Shakespeare, but this association of the 'Gothic' and the 'Shakespearean' is no arbitrary one. As the inheritor of 'the Gothic system of prodigy and enchantment' (Hurd, 1972, p.254), Shakespeare's plays demonstrate the operations of a curious agency that supersedes all questions of authorial intention. Hurd then turns to Shakespeare's contemporary, Ben Jonson, whose witch scenes in *The Masque of Queens* were written 'in emulation' of the three witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, 'but certainly with the view (for so he tells us himself) *of reconciling the practice of antiquity to the Neoteric, and making it familiar with our popular witchcraft*' (Hurd, 1972, p.258). The printed text of Jonson, furthermore, complements Jonson's intention to accord due privilege to the 'practice of antiquity' as its sourcing of classic texts attests to his learnedness. For Hurd, however, the agency of 'Gothic enchantments' surpasses even the printed text's learned qualities, for Jonson's emulation of Gothic Shakespeare already deems it inevitable that the Gothic sway exerts its influence to its fullest. As Hurd concludes,

And though, as he was an idolater of the antients [*sic*], you will expect him to draw freely from that source, yet from the large use he makes, too, of his other more recent authorities, you will perceive that some of the darkest shades of his picture are owing to hints and circumstances which he had caught, and could only catch, from the *Gothic* enchantments.
(Hurd, 1972, p.258)

The Gothic, as Shakespeare purportedly conceived it, comprises a set of superstitions and enchantments carried by groups of unspecified migrant barbarians who plunged the civilized world into darkness (Hurd, 1972, p.254); as Hurd's veneration of the Gothic and of Shakespeare has it, however, this darkness was conducive to the life of

the Imagination. The Gothic is inherently paradoxical: what is conceived as ‘barbarian’ is also potentially liberating.

In the eighteenth century, the supernatural ‘Gothic enchantments’ observed by Hurd become crucial to the sense of Shakespeare as native English ‘Original Genius’, to the point that Elizabeth Montagu, in her *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespear* [sic] (1769), preserves his name under the auspices of ‘our Gothic bard’ (Montagu, 1769, p.147). As Jonathan Bate notes in his essay on Shakespeare and ‘original genius’, supernaturalism became central to the eighteenth-century sense of Shakespeare as an original writer, whose spectres and fairies were created out of nothing (see Bate, 1989). And yet, there is much at stake in Montagu’s essay: when she writes that ‘our Gothic bard employs the potent agency of sacred fable, instead of mere abusive allegory’, she locates Shakespeare in an event of parricide, in which the genius of ‘Fable’ – the raising of the ghosts of national superstition that ought to be contemplated with reverence – is unduly murdered by the ‘enlightened’ force of ‘Allegory’, or the tendency to explain away supernatural events as instances of ignorance (Montagu, 1769, pp.147-148). Allegory, or ‘Enlightenment’, is murderous insofar as it causes Genius to take shelter in the ‘groves of philosophy’, where the poet’s divinities ‘evaporate in allegory’ (Montagu, 1769, p.147). As Montagu suggests, poets such as Edmund Spenser, taking shelter in the light of day, wrote *The Fairie Queene*, but true Genius, as exhibited by Shakespeare, continued to walk in the shades of Gothic barbarism, elevating the ghosts of English superstition to the status of spectres to be revered.

But as Walpole’s remarks on the ‘damning up’ of fancy in his own age suggests, eighteenth-century presentations of Shakespeare as ‘original Genius’ amount to more than mere historical interpretation. The great Gothic past is not discovered in the

1760s. Rather, the idea of the Gothic past is created, with Shakespeare at its centre, to attend to present concerns on the state of literature. The post-Reformation ‘groves of philosophy’, as highlighted by Montagu, are always already the groves of Lockean empiricism, where John Locke’s scene of the opening of the senses into the light of day is only superficially the case. In the Lockean paradigm, supernatural scenery is conceived as an effect of the mind’s error of ‘association’. Joseph Addison, in *The Spectator* (1711-1714), approvingly quotes Locke’s chapter on the ‘association of ideas’ in his *Essay on Human Understanding* (1690):

Mr Lock...has very curious remarks to shew how by the prejudice of Education one idea after introduces to the Mind a whole Set that bear no Resemblance to one another in the Nature of Things. Among several Examples of this kind he produces the following instance. *The Ideas of Goblins and Sprights have really no more to do with Darkness than Light; yet let but a foolish Maid inculcate these often on the Mind of a Child, and raise them together, possibly he shall never be able to separate them again so long as he lives, but Darkness shall ever bring with it those frightful ideas, and they shall be so joined, that he cannot more bear the one than the other* (Addison, 1969, p.454)

On the one hand, the word ‘Genius’ had not yet acquired the cultural currency readily available to Hurd, Montagu and Walpole: when Addison, in *The Spectator* number 419 (1712), defines Shakespeare’s ‘genius’ as a ‘noble extravagance of fancy that thoroughly qualified him to touch the ‘weak superstitious part of the reader’s imagination’, his sense of ‘genius’ is limited to a certain barbarian artlessness that breaks from all obligations of fidelity to the ancient past (Addison, 1969, pp.572-573). In another 1712 text, John Dennis’s ‘On the Genius and Writings of Shakespeare’, remarkably little is mentioned of Shakespeare’s ‘genius’, vaguely defined as the capacity to exhibit ‘noble, generous, easie and natural sentiments’ in his tragedies (Smith, 1963, pp.24-25). For Dennis ‘genius’ is also self-undermining, for the mob scenes in *Julius Caesar* and *Coriolanus* reveal how Shakespeare’s artlessness ‘offends not only against the Dignity of Tragedy, but against the Truth of History likewise’

(Smith, 1963, p25). On the other hand, later writers like Bishop Hurd would engage in the task of *presenting* writers such as Addison in order to ensure the success of their *presenting* of Shakespeare as ‘our Gothic bard’. In his sixth letter in the *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, Hurd quotes a passage from *The Spectator*, once more essay 419, in which Addison comments that the vulgarity of English supernaturalism emerged not from great poetry of the ancient past, but from the untamed poetry of ‘the darkness and superstition of later ages’, from Shakespeare and his contemporaries (Hurd, 1972, p.259). Addison becomes a character who must concede to his creator’s (Hurd) contention that ‘We are on enchanted ground, my friend’. As Hurd concludes, ‘the fancies of our modern bards’ are ‘more sublime, more terrible, more alarming, than those of the ancient fablers’ (Hurd, 1972, p.260). If ‘Addison’ reads a little closer, he too will see that the modern bards, in their accommodation of superstition, ‘are the more poetical for being *Gothic*’ (Hurd, 1972, p.260). By presenting Shakespeare as the preserve of Englishness, whose ghosts testify to his genius, eighteenth-century Gothic writing engages in the creation of an idea of ‘Shakespeare’ that satisfies the needs of contemporary literature. This is ‘Gothic Shakespeare’: the *presenting* of Shakespeare that allows the mediated spectres of the superstitious past to burst through the ‘Enlightened’, yet limited, decorum of literature.

By ‘presenting’, I refer to the recent critical endeavour, headed by Hugh Grady and Terence Hawkes in their collection of essays entitled *Presentist Shakespeares* (2007), to acknowledge literary criticism’s situatedness in the here and now. As Grady and Hawkes emphasise, ‘presentism’ is incommensurable with the appellation ‘anachronism’ often associated with it; it advocates reading Shakespeare historically, but it also foregrounds the present as the enabling factor of historical reading. Ewan Fernie’s essay on political appropriations of *Henry V* in light of the current ‘War on

Terror' provides the most detailed account of how the present operates on literary texts without blocking access to the past. As Fernie notes, supporters of the Iraq war of 2003 turned to the play in order to promote the unsuspecting Henry as the talisman of 'fierce agency', whose extraordinary will in rousing the passions of troops prior to the battle of Agincourt was intended to inspire coalition troops in their crushing of the Taliban and Iraqi regimes (Fernie, 2007, p.116). Henry might, in this reading, appear anachronistically bound to the present, but Fernie uses the present Henry in order to foreground the omissions that send the King back into history and, more specifically, into utterances made by the early modern Henry that commit to acts of extreme violence (Fernie, 2007, p.109). Fernie concludes, therefore, that *Henry V* no longer appears the right play to appropriate because 'the recourse of supporters of [the] war to *Henry V* just makes the resemblance of their 'War on Terror' to the terrorism it opposes more clear' (Fernie, 2007, p.117). Following Grady and Hawkes, Fernie advocates a presentist criticism that fruitfully disrupts the categories of 'primary' and 'secondary' in a manner that guarantees equality (however violent and disturbing) for all the Shakespeares that have emerged over the past four centuries. Such equality, moreover, reconceptualises the past not as points in time that precede the present, but as a succession of 'presents' whose respective Shakespeares are mediated by issues of priority. At the same time, presentist criticism reveals the mutable character of literary criticism itself. As Grady indicates in his essay on *Hamlet* and what he terms the 'moving aesthetic "now"', Shakespeare as we know him gathered the greatest momentum during the eighteenth century, when critical readings of *Hamlet* evolved from neo-classical observations of Shakespeare's breaking of the three unities of time, place and action to psychological reading, with its emphasis on the nature of Hamlet's reluctance to revenge the murder of his father (Grady, 2007, pp.144-150). *Hamlet* has

provided the litmus test for further ‘aesthetic paradigms’ (neoclassical, romantic, modernist and postmodernist) that, together, attest to the text’s claim as a work of art existing in the present, as well as its resistance to a singular ‘universal’ meaning. The text will always yield to successive presents, but the present’s continued respect for history prevents the interference of presentism in the derogatory sense of ‘anachronism’. Presentist criticism values all Shakespeares from all times and, as such, offers the possibility of mobilizing and analysing the Shakespeares appropriated in any given time.

If presentism foregrounds the priorities of any given present, it can be argued that attending the emergence of Bardolatry during the mid- eighteenth century is the prioritising of ‘dark Genius’, where ‘Gothic Shakespeare’ signals the sense of stepping out of the confines of light to enter the night-time of ‘Genius’. As Nathan Drake suggests in *Literary Hours, or Sketches Critical and Narrative* (1798), by the end of the eighteenth century, even ‘the most enlightened mind, the mind free from all taint of superstition, involuntarily acknowledges the power of gothic agency’ (Drake, 1798, p.87). As the ‘terrible’ and spectral events of 1790s literature find approval in Drake’s *Hours*, his chapter on ‘Gothic superstition’ is especially noteworthy, not least for the manner in which he holds Shakespeare up to be the gothic writer par excellence: ‘The enchanted forest of Tasso, the spectre of Camoens, and the apparitions of Shakespeare, are to this day highly pleasing, striking, and sublime features in these delightful compositions’ (Drake, 1798, p.87). Shakespeare is invoked for more than mere citation. The Gothic gifts to Shakespeare the potential to become *influential*: while, on the one hand, one reads that it is ‘Shakespeare, beyond any other poet’ who possesses the superior talent of ‘raising the most awful, yet the most delightful species of terror’, one is also informed that the very writing that is

‘formed to influence the people, to surprise, elevate and delight’ is under attack from a fashion amongst contemporary literary criticism to discredit it. As Drake responds, ‘how shall criticism dare with impunity to expunge them?’ (Drake, 1798, p.93).

Gothic Shakespeare addresses not only the cultural celebration of Shakespeare in the eighteenth-century ‘present’, but cultural anxiety on the part of critics who detect the inseparability of the ‘Gothic’ from the ‘Shakespearean’. To expunge the Gothic mode is also to expunge Shakespeare, and vice-versa.

In short, the ‘true’ story of the Gothic barbarians is one of freedom of Imagination, literary excellence and awareness of the biases of history and historiography. Having noted this, however, analysis of one Shakespeare text, *Titus Andronicus*, shows this story up for what it is: a story, an alternative in which the *presenting* of Shakespeare and the Gothic satisfies present needs rather than preserving the past’s ahistorical unity. In this introduction, I will examine Shakespeare’s own sense of the Gothic as it is presented in *Titus Andronicus*, arguing in favour of a malevolent barbarianism that critiques the moral readings critics such as Jonathan Bate impose on the play, of a ‘Shakespearean Gothic’ distinct from ‘Gothic Shakespeare’. This essay will also examine Jonathan Bate’s Arden edition of the play (1995), which argues unconvincingly that Shakespeare’s Goths are harbingers of constitutional reform, a political ideal that is finally realized only later, during the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. The trappings of post-1688 constitutionalism added a further signification of the word ‘Gothic’ during the eighteenth century. For Joseph Addison, unflinching support for constitutional monarchy is figured as support for the ‘Gothick balance’: as Addison writes, ‘I have often heard of a Senior Alderman in Buckinghamshire, who, at all publick meetings, grows drunk in praise of Aristocracy, and is often encountered by an old Justice of Peace who lives in the neighbourhood,

and will talk to you from morning till Night on the Gothick balance' (Addison, 1980, p.264). Indeed, Bate's anachronism is compounded by the fact that the play itself was widely condemned by eighteenth-century writers and editors of Shakespeare, especially Alexander Pope and Richard Farmer. If, as Bate implies, Shakespeare's Protestant Goths appeal to eighteenth-century sensibilities regarding the Gothic constitution, it is reasonable to suggest that the play could have been adapted to peddle this political ideology, yet its reception history clearly suggests that this was never the case. Following discussion of 'Shakespearean Gothic', this introduction will consider the topic of appropriation in literature and the problem of literary borrowing during the eighteenth century, at a time when 'appropriation' did not exist as a category in literary criticism, and the notion of plagiarism gathered enough momentum to merit an entry in Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*. It is in this distinctly eighteenth-century context that 'Gothic Shakespeare' circulates.

In the decades prior to Shakespeare, Renaissance historiography on the medieval Gothic past gathered momentum as it contended that the Gothic heritage was not at all liberty loving, but barbarian. In his *Lives of the Artists* (c.1550), Giorgio Vasari outlined the force which he believed to be responsible for the erosion of high art, placing the blame squarely on the Gothic doorstep. Although at one point Vasari concedes that Italian art was already eroding prior to the 'Gothic' invasions of Rome, he nevertheless insists that the barbarian invaders are to be held responsible for its final decline. In a time of great political upheaval, Vasari writes that:

almost all the barbarian nations rose up against the Romans in various parts of the world, and this within a short time led not only to the humbling of their great empire but also to worldwide destruction, notably at Rome itself. This destruction struck equally and decisively at the greatest artists, sculptors, painters and architects: they and their work were left buried and submerged among the sorry ruins and debris of that renowned city. (Vasari, 1978, pp.35-36)

While Vasari proceeds to savour the triumph of modern Italian art over the barbarian influence, for Roger Ascham in the 1560s, the prospect of a recurrent Gothic influence in writing and in education had to be avoided by first being addressed in his *The Scholemaster* (published 1570). In this text, Ascham observes that the unwitting abuse of the Latin tongue taking place in the early modern translation curriculum is proving detrimental to the impressionable school pupil and his future development: ‘But, now, commonlie, in the best Scholes in England, for wordes, right choice is smallie regarded, true propriety wholly neglected, confusion is brought in, barbariousnesse is bred up so in yong wittes, as afterward they be, not onelie marde for speaking, but also corrupted in judgement’ (Ascham, 1967, p.2). With the precedent set by Vasari, it comes as no surprise to learn that this corruption is ‘Gothic’ in origin: Ascham stresses the importance of children learning Latin in a context in which the use of ‘Gothic’ rhyme in writing is increasing in popularity, to the extent that it has become a saleable commodity. As Ascham writes, ‘and shoppes in London should not be so full of lewd and rude rymes, as commonlie they are’ (Ascham, 1967, p.60). If the circulation of rhyme is unenlightened and yet popular in Britain, the useful myth of Gothic inheritance creates an origin in which the Gothic way in Britain can be discussed as an aberration, that is, not as something that must be disavowed, but as an error of nature that can be dismissed with ease. For Ascham, all that is required is an awareness of the inherently virtuous nature of the Latin tongue, for only then is it possible for Englishmen to evaluate their own use of ‘rude beggarly ryming’. The preservation of the myth of Gothic inheritance relies on a history of the migration of rhyme: for Ascham, rhyme was first brought into Italy by the ‘Gothes’ and ‘Hunnes’, only to migrate to Germany and France, before finally being ‘receyved

into England by men of excellent wit in deed, but of small learning, and lesse judgement in that behalfe' (Ascham, 1967, p.60).

Indeed, Shakespeare's own sense of 'the Gothic', that is, the Gothic as it is figured in Renaissance historiography, bears little resemblance to late eighteenth-century understandings of the term, with its shades of dark and impending danger suggestive of Edmund Burke's notion of 'the Sublime'. The word 'goth' appears explicitly in two of his plays, *As You Like It* and *Titus Andronicus*. In act three scene four of the former play, the pastoral setting of Arden is evoked by Touchstone the clown as an alien space adrift from the realm of civilization, remarking to his betrothed, Audrey, that 'I am here with thee and thy goats, as the most capricious poet, honest Ovid, was among the Goths' (Shakespeare, 1997d, 3.3.5-6). In the scene's immediate context, Touchstone is lamenting Audrey's lack of good taste: 'When a man's verses cannot be understood, nor a man's good wit seconded with the forward child, understanding, it strikes a man more dead than a great reckoning in a little room... Truly, I would the gods had made thee more poetical' (Shakespeare, 1997d, 3.3.11-12). Shakespeare's reference to Ovid, moreover, evokes the classical poet's biographical writing as it is presented in his *Tristia*. In this work, Ovid writes of his exile in the 'barbarian' region of Tomis, after circulating the seditious and erotic poem *Ars Amatoria*, expressing his fear of the barbarian Getae populace whose 'Harsh voices, grim faces' and innate violence appear to press too closely on Ovid's sense of his fortunate difference. Although at one point in the text he suggests that his Latin writing has been infected by the metre of 'Getic measure', Ovid reinstates himself as 'a barbarian, understood by nobody', the alien other who is laughed at because of his unfamiliar tongue (Ovid, 1988, pp.157, 249). Ovid's account of the Getic barbarians makes no reference to the terms 'Goth' or 'Gothic', but its references to Getic measure lend

themselves well to early modern anxieties concerning the presence of unenlightened sensibilities and writing styles in Britain, presences that Ascham would term Gothic. In *As You Like It*, Touchstone's appropriation of these barbarians under the name of 'Goth' concurs with the humanist import of Latin texts that stressed the derogation of a race of outsiders identified by the traces of their barbarian gothic heritage.

It is, however, in *Titus Andronicus*¹, that Shakespeare's position among the Goths is most pronounced, and most contested. In summary, the play begins with the return of the Roman general Titus to his homeland after victory against the barbarous Goths. With the Gothic prisoners Queen Tamora and her sons in tow, Titus duly proceeds to condemn Tamora's son, Alarbus, to sacrifice, in accordance with Roman custom. Upon Tamora's silenced plea, 'A mother's tears in passion for her son' (Shakespeare, 1997b, 1.1.106), the Queen of the Goths, now the bride of the emperor Saturninus, enacts an elaborate revenge that incorporates the murder of Bassianus, brother of the newly-crowned emperor Saturninus, as well as the violent rape of the chaste Lavinia at the hands of the Gothic brothers Chiron and Demetrius. While Titus's son Lucius enlists an army of Goths to invade corrupt Rome, his equally spectacular revenge reaches its height as he kills the brothers before proceeding to 'play the cook' and serve up an edible 'goth' pie to an unsuspecting Tamora. The Goths, then, fulfil two important functions. Firstly, Shakespeare's repetition of peculiarly 'Gothic' traits concurs with the textual representation of Goths as presented by Renaissance historiographers and by the pedagogical *Tristia*: Titus returns home after 'weary wars with the barbarous Goths' (Shakespeare 1997b, 1.1.28); Demetrius calls for supreme spectacles of violence, recalling a time 'When Goths were Goths and Tamora was Queen' (Shakespeare, 1997b, 1.1.135-144), while Tamora plays on Rome's sense of

¹ All quotations, unless stated otherwise, are taken from S. Greenblatt (ed.) (1997), *The Norton Shakespeare*. London and New York: W.W. Norton.

‘Gothic’ as ‘other’ as she accuses Lavinia and Bassianus of calling her ‘Lascivious Goth’ (Shakespeare, 1997b, 2.3.110). By the end of the play, however, the Goths are allies to Rome, motivated by Tamora’s desertion of them for the sake of her own ambition, while the reader or spectator is treated to one Goth soldier’s contemplation of a ‘ruinous monastery’. For Jonathan Bate, the latter event can be summarized as a ‘Goth’s meditation upon Henry VIII’s dissolution of the monasteries, the most drastic consequence of England’s break with Rome’ (Bate, 2006, p.19), a deliberately anachronistic reference to England’s break with its dark, Catholic past in the middle of the sixteenth century.

Do the Goths, then, in Shakespearean Gothic, abandon their ‘evil’ barbarian heritage in their potential to become ‘good’? Jonathan Bate’s 1995 ‘Introduction’ to the Arden edition of *Titus Andronicus* (republished in 2006) begins by acknowledging the precedents set by Renaissance historiography, and Shakespeare’s subsequent collapsing of a variety of Roman epochs onto the site of his drama. As the admired texts of Plutarch and Livy were held as valorizations of Rome’s great ancient past, narrating the defeats of the Carthaginians and the Gauls, the word ‘Goth’ came to denote a general term of denigration towards *all* foreign bodies, no matter how close they came to the gates of Rome. Bate recognizes, then, that ‘the Goths in the play are not historically specific’, that the Goth is distinctly ‘other’, yet he proceeds to argue that the Goths who come to the aid of Lucius can be located in the Germanic-inspired *translatio imperii ad Teutonicos* of the late-sixteenth century. It becomes clear that the Protestant Goth Bate is intent on preserving in *Titus Andronicus* is relayed through Samuel Klinger’s reading of the Goths in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as Bate quotes Klinger’s famous passage from *The Goths in England* (1952) in which he comments on the ‘translatio’ :

The translatio suggested forcefully an analogy between the breakup of the Roman empire by the Goths and the demands of the humanist reformers of northern Europe for religious freedom, interpreted as liberation from Roman priestcraft. In other words, the translatio crystallized the idea that humanity was twice ransomed from Roman tyranny and depravity – in antiquity by the Goths, in modern times by their descendants, the German reformers. In their youth, vigor, and moral purity, the Goths destroyed the decadent Roman civilization and brought about a rejuvenation or rebirth of the world. In the same way, the Reformation was interpreted as a second world rejuvenation. (Bate, 2006, p.20).

While I do not question Kliger's historiography, Bate's citation of Kliger neglects Kliger's own contention that the 'translatio' as it was inspired by German humanism involved 'not so much political inheritances as racial characteristics', and that the political sense of the word 'Gothic' took hold only in the middle of the seventeenth century. According to Kliger, it was not until anti-Royalist sentiments in the 1640s England took hold - against Charles I but also against the Royalist Sir Robert Filmer's political tracts – that the sense of a distinct political inheritance was detected. While critics such as Edward Jacobs argue for a Foucauldian revisionist scholarship concerning the circulation of the word 'Gothic' during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Jacobs, 2000, p.30), it ought to be conceded that the naming of this political inheritance as 'Gothic' becomes the norm only after the 1688 Revolution, and especially following the death of the Protestant William of Orange in 1714, as the example from Addison's *The Freeholder* suggests. In short, it is precisely Bate's overestimation of the influence of the German-inspired 'translation imperii ad Teutonicos' as an imported doctrine that leads him to suggest that there is something distinctly Shakespearean about the presence of the benevolent, freedom-loving Goth.

Bate further alerts us to William Lambarde's *Perambulation of Kent* (1570) as a possible source for Shakespeare's portrayal of the Goths who come to the aid of Titus: Bate tells us that Lambarde's text reveals that the names of the numerous tribes that migrated to Britain – Jutes, Getes, Goths and Germans – were interchangeable in

Elizabethan times, and that the category of ‘Goth’ created for Elizabethan culture an ancestry steeped in faith in the values of valour and justice (Bate, 2006, p.19). If one turns to Lambarde’s text, it is evident that there was a sense in which the author is influenced by the translatio: for instance, he evokes the recent Reformation as a time in which ‘the glorious and bright shining beames of Gods holy truth and gladsome gospel had pearced the mistie thick cloudes of ignorance’ (Lambarde, 1970, p.169); at the same time, the onset of Enlightenment is not figured as peculiarly ‘Germanic’ or ‘Gothic’, as Lambarde adds that this event happened ‘not onely to the people of Germanie, but to the inhabitants of this island also’ (Lambarde, 1970, p.169). Even if the Teutonic translation is in operation here, Lambarde is reluctant to concede the fact, preferring instead to frame the imported translatio as merely a shared sense of Protestantism between Britain and Germany. Furthermore, Bate’s use of Kent as a synecdoche for Britain yields further problems when Shakespeare enters the fray. In *2 Henry VI*, Kentish sensibilities, or expressions of valour and of justice, are noted for their absence, as Stafford attempts to crush Jack Cade’s rebellion against Henry’s claim to the English throne. While Stafford addresses the ‘Rebellious hinds, the filth and scum of Kent’, Lord Saye laments for the inaccuracies of ‘the commentaries Caesar writ’ on Kent, providing the epitaph of Kent as ‘*bona terra, mal gens*’ (‘a good land of bad people’) (Shakespeare, 1997a, 4.2.109; 4.7.52-71). Even William Lambarde regrets Jack Cade’s rebellion against the king, implying a dark period in Kentish history in which Kentishmen temporarily took leave of the freedom-loving traits that confirmed their distinct ‘Gothic’ heritage (Lambarde, 1970, p.391).

Shakespeare’s Gothic is not paradoxical in the sense that Hurd’s Gothic is: barbarism is ignorance and violence, without the positive political connotations of liberty and constitutional balance, without the positive literary connotations of dark Genius.

In other words, the absence of the paradox of ‘Gothic Shakespeare’ marks *Titus Andronicus* as an example of ‘Shakespearean Gothic’. Because Bate maintains that *Titus Andronicus* prefigures this sense of the Reformation ‘as a second world rejuvenation’, his reading of the play’s bloody spectacles does not, as he suggests, modulate from the Goths as racialized entities to Protestant harbingers of the Reformation; it elides entirely the issues of racial othering that are central to Shakespeare’s construction of the Goths, to the extent that the mutilated Lavinia is figured as a martyr worthy of the Protestant John Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* rather than as the victim of the ‘lascivious’ Goth brothers, Chiron and Demetrius. Moreover, Bate’s examination of the ‘Protestant Goths’ inflects his editorial decisions, as he draws upon Peter Brook’s adaptation of the 1950s for his analysis of act five scene three (‘I’ll play the cook’). In the final scene, Lucius and the Goths attend Titus’s mock-feast, witnessing his killings of Lavinia and Tamora; once Saturninus, in turn, kills Titus, Lucius completes his revenge on the emperor: ‘Can the son’s eye behold his father bleed?/There’s meed for meed for a deathly deed’ (Shakespeare, 1997b, 5.3.63-4). In the same stage direction that requires Lucius to kill Saturninus, the Goths enter the stage, although the significance of this remains questionable. The editors of the Norton Shakespeare edition of *Titus Andronicus* (1997) insert the stage direction ‘*He kills Saturninus. Confusion follows. Enter Goths. Lucius, Marcus and others go aloft*’ (Shakespeare, 1997b). Here, the presence of the Goths remains passive; they have no bearing on events as they unfold on the stage. In Bate’s edition, however, a very different stage direction reads ‘*He kills Saturninus. Uproar. The Goths protect the Andronici, who go aloft*’ (Bate, 2006). While the Norton edition endorses mere ‘confusion’ against a Goth background, Bate inserts the prospect of a kind of violence, or ‘uproar’ in which the life of Lucius is threatened by virtue of his

bloody deed, an uproar that can only be quelled by the Gothic army. But while the Norton edition retains the Goths' lack of historical specificity, the Arden edition reprints a still from Brook's production, in which the Goths patrol the presumed 'uproar', blocking the passage to Lucius and Marcus Andronicus who speak from aloft. As Bate's moral reading of the play summarizes, 'Where Saturninus went aloft with the "evil" Goths in the first act, Lucius escapes aloft through the offices of the "good" Goths in the last act' (Bate, 2006, pp.14-15). It might be suggested that Bate's edition, in fact, elides rather than engages with issues of past and present as outlined in John Drakakis's essay on the problems of editing *The Merchant of Venice*: as Drakakis writes, 'We have become fond of fudging this interplay [of a text printed four centuries ago and of 'present' scholarly ventures to fix the purity of that text], and of emphasising the difference between past and present; it is only through recognizing this difference as somehow constitutive that we can come to an understanding of ourselves' (Drakakis, 2007, p.82). While Bate secures the Protestant succession to the throne with the aid of the 'Reformed' Goths, the still from the Brook production reminds the modern reader of the space between our present moment and the lost moment of a text's original literary production, and our inevitable insertion of the present into *all* literary texts. I do not claim that the notion of the 'good Goth' did not exist in Shakespeare's time: rather, I suggest that this notion did not exert the kind of influence in Elizabethan culture, and certainly in the works of Shakespeare, that Bate would have the reader believe. The distinction between the benevolent Goth and the barbarous Goth post-dates *Titus Andronicus* by nearly a century, and yet, as Bate's analysis suggests, the semantic appropriation of the word 'Gothic' is potentially fraught with dangers that tend towards anachronism. In the case of *Titus Andronicus*, Bate's Gothic Reformation comes at a price: that price is Lavinia.

Bate's reading of the Goths elides the strategy of dissembling that operates in Shakespearean Gothic, within and between the categories of the civilized 'Roman' and the barbarous 'Goth', as the impending rupture of the Roman/Gothic distinction reaches its greatest intensity during the play's central event, the rape of Lavinia. Upon the sacrifice of Alarbus, Lucius returns to the stage with the following triumphant proclamation:

See, Lord and father, how we have performed
 Our Roman rites: Alarbus' limbs are lopped
 And entrails feed the sacrificing fire,
 Whose smoke like incense doth perfume the sky.
 (Shakespeare 1997b, 1.1.142-5)

The images of 'lopping' and 'hewing' that characterise what Lucius terms 'our Roman rites' proceed to take a sinister turn as Marcus Andronicus discovers the mutilated body of Lavinia:

Speak, gentle niece, what stern ungentle hands
 Hath lopped and hewed and made thy body bare
 Of her two branches, those sweet ornaments
 Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in
 And might not gain so great a happiness
 As half thy love. Why dost not speak to me. (Shakespeare, 1997b, 2.4.16-21)

It is only partly through the violence of the play that the binary of Roman/Gothic is brought into disrepute; the transference of the signs of 'lopping' into another realm of signification, the satisfaction of the brothers' lust and the overarching theme of revenge inaugurated by Tamora, shows the Roman principle of justice by sacrifice to be conspicuous in its absence. Instead, sacrifice becomes the site of revenge and is concentrated on the figure of Lucius as much as it is with Titus: it is Lucius, not Titus, who circulates the imagery of 'lopping' and 'hewing' throughout the first act, just as it is Lucius who finds for his father 'Revenge's cave' to call upon the aid of the Goths: 'But now nor Lucius nor Lavinia lives/But in oblivion and hateful griefs...Now will I to the Goths and raise a power,/To be revenged on Rome and

Saturnine' (Shakespeare, 1997b, 3.1.293-299). The Goth army serves the double function of securing the 'benevolent' Lucius's claim to Rome while fighting in the shadow of Titus and Lucius's desire for revenge. Roman justice and Gothic violence unwittingly coalesce in the shared desire to brutalise and exhibit tortured bodies. The idea of 'Rome' is itself marked by the tendency to become as Gothic as the barbarian Goths it denounces.

And yet, if 'Rome' is nothing other than the potential to become 'Gothic', does it then follow that 'Gothic' is the potential to become 'good'? If interpreted as a question of morality, then this certainly seems to be the case, but the Romans and Goths in *Titus Andronicus* do not express intrinsic goodness or evil that is then represented in language through the rhetoric of 'justice' or the violence of dismemberment. Rather, Romans, or any arbiters of intrinsic goodness, and Goths share a propensity to inhabit the language of their respective Other. So, while Gothic images of 'lopping' and 'hewing' burst into the Roman delivery of justice, the Goth brothers, Chiron and Demetrius, are able to goad Titus with Latinate quotations that suggest that they have undergone the standard English early modern education. In act four, Titus provokes the brothers into further violence by having young Lucius send a note to them:

DEMETRIUS

What's here? A scroll, and written about?

Let's see:

[reads] *Integer vitae, scelerisque purus,
Non eget Mauri iaculis, nec arcu*²

CHIRON

O, 'tis a verse in Horace, I know it well:

I read it in the grammar long ago (Shakespeare, 1997b, 4.2.19-23)

² Bate's translation, attributed to Horace, reads thus: 'the man of upright life and free from crime does not need the javelins or bows of the Moor'.

Chiron and Demetrius attack the discourse of their ‘civilized’ counterparts from within, exhibiting the very capacity to learn a language that typically marks the early modern man from his counterpart. Chiron and Demetrius do not become ‘good’ Goths, importing their freedom-loving traits on to a foreign land; instead, their education recalls the Gothic historiography of writers such as Vasari and Roger Ascham, who contended that the misty clouds of Gothic barbarism had been surpassed by an Enlightened sensibility. Such is his cultural currency in the world today, it is as if Shakespeare himself had anticipated the arrival of moral readings that limit the potential for deconstructionist critique. In Shakespearean Gothic, what is at stake is not the realization of the good Goth, but the useful myth of Gothic inheritance and its supplementary disavowal.

This is *not* ‘Gothic Shakespeare’: in Gothic Shakespeare, what is at stake is the preservation of Shakespeare’s name, the presenting of Shakespeare. It is with this distinction in mind that the rape of Lavinia illuminates one final irony in Bate’s historiography. If *Titus Andronicus* and post-Glorious revolutionary Whiggish political Gothicism share so close an affinity, why is it that the play was often excluded from the Shakespearean canon during the late seventeenth- and eighteenth centuries? Alexander Pope, writing in 1725, contended that *Titus Andronicus*, alongside *The Winter’s Tale* and *Love’s Labour Lost*, formed a set of plays that were ‘produced by unknown authors, or fitted up for the Theatre while it was under his [Shakespeare’s] administration: and no owner claiming them, they were adjudged to him, as they give strays to the Lord of the Manor’ (Smith, 1963, p.56). Writing in 1767, Richard Farmer, in his ‘Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare’, draws upon the authority of the Restoration playwright Edward Ravenscroft to declare that he has ‘not the least doubt but this *horrible* Piece was originally written by the Author of the

Lines thrown into the mouth of the Player in *Hamlet*, and of the Tragedy of *Lochrine*' (Smith, 1963, p.190). The subtitle of Ravenscroft's own adaptation of *Titus Andronicus* (1679), 'The Rape of Lavinia', proves telling as Lavinia's rape proves crucial to revising the narrow definition of 'Gothic' as 'barbarian' at the end of the eighteenth century. In the penultimate chapter of Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), the pastoral Languedoc landscape 'conspires' with the melody played by Emily St. Aubert on her lute, lulling 'her mind into a state of gentle sadness' as the remembrance of past times affect tears in the fashion of Sensibility (Radcliffe, 1998b, p.666). Emily's emotional susceptibility is introduced by the following epigraph: '...Then, fresh tears/Stood on her cheeks, as doth the honey-dew/Upon a gather'd lily almost withered', including the signature 'SHAKESPEARE'. The source of Radcliffe's epigraph superficially appears problematic, not only by recalling Titus's response to the mutilated body of his daughter, but also by unequivocally accepting Shakespeare's authorship of the play:

Thou hast no hands to wipe away thy years,
Nor tongue to tell me who hath martyred thee;
Thy husband is dead, and for his death
Thy brothers are condemned, and dead by this.
Look, Marcus, ah, son Lucius, look on her!
When I did name her brothers, then fresh tears
Stood on her cheeks, as doth the honey-dew
Upon a gathered lily almost withered (Shakespeare, 1997b, 3.1.106-113)

What is the dialogue between Shakespeare's text and Radcliffe's appropriation? As Radcliffe begins her epigraph with the conjunction 'then', it seems plausible to suggest that the reader of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* ought to be familiar with the context of rape that precedes it. It might then be suggested that the early modern scene of sexual violation undermines Radcliffe's scene of sensibility, but this explanation proves unsatisfactory if one considers that the female characters in *Udolpho* face little or no threat of rape. As Robert Miles suggests in *Ann Radcliffe:*

The Great Enchantress (1995) threatens to the female characters, in particular Emily herself, are economic and not sexual (see Miles, 1995, pp.129-149), as the villainous Signor Montoni chases Emily's signature, a signature that will guarantee him her inheritance. The diminution of the sexual threat attests to the semantic shift that the term 'Gothic' underwent during by the 1790s, as the overtly violent sexualities of the Goth brothers, Chiron and Demetrius, are contained in the play by their murder by Titus, and by Radcliffe in her retelling of tears for the ends of an amiable sensibility. Emily is not the only tearful character in *Udolpho*: in the same chapter, Emily is reunited with Valancourt and, as both declare their love for each other, the latter 'pressed her hand to his lips, the tears, that fell over it, spoke a language, which could not be mistaken, and to which words were inadequate' (Radcliffe, 1998b, p.668). While sexual violence dictates that Titus has no control over the fate of his daughter, the decidedly asexual union of Emily and Valancourt honours the memory of Emily's late father:

St. Aubert, as he sometimes lingered to examine the wild plants in his path, often looked forward with pleasure to Emily and Valancourt...he, with a countenance of animated delight, pointing to her attention some grand feature of the scene; and she, listening and observing with a look of tender seriousness, that spoke the elevation of her mind. They appeared like two lovers who had never strayed beyond these their native mountains; whose situation had secluded them from the frivolities of common life, whose ideas were simple and grand, like the landscapes among which they moved, and who knew no other happiness, than in the union of pure and affectionate hearts. St. Aubert smiled, and sighed at the romantic picture of felicity his fancy drew; and sighed again to think, that nature and simplicity were so little known to the world, as that their pleasures were thought romantic (Radcliffe 1998b, p.49)

The difference between *Titus Andronicus* and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is the difference between shaming the father and honouring the father. Lavinia's rape brings impossible feelings of shame upon Titus – 'Die, die, Lavinia, and thy shame with thee,/And with thy shame thy father's sorrow die' (Shakespeare, 1997b, 5.3.45-

46), while in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the preservation of the memory of St. Aubert is never in doubt because Radcliffe's appropriation/repetition disbands the sexual violence that is at the heart of Titus's sense of shame. Radcliffe's appropriation of Shakespeare is not verbatim repetition, but a creative repetition that, in order to be creative, must make present that which it seeks to discard, a point that might be made of the very nature of Gothic writing itself.

What is 'appropriation'?

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word 'appropriation' comprises two main definitions. Firstly, appropriation involves 'the making of a thing private property, whether another's or (as now commonly) one's own'. Secondly, it involves 'taking as one's own or to one's own use' (OED). On the most basic level, then, the first definition of appropriation involves issues pertinent to ownership of property, but the second definition implies a concrete difference between what might be termed the original object and its new status in its appropriated form. The second definition might be discussed in terms of literary appropriation today, a change that has taken place between the source and the present moment of writing, a change instigated by the author who turns to his/her literary heritage to find new meanings that are relevant in literary fields that are concerned with the recuperation of hitherto marginalized voices, say, in the realms of 'gender' and in (post)colonialism. If, however, we turn to Stephen Greenblatt's *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988), we encounter the term 'appropriation' defined in terms of the OED's first definition, the acquisition of property, but modified by a sense of illegality. In his 'Introduction' to *Shakespearean Negotiations*, Greenblatt concedes that no writer-archaeologist can uncover the purity

of the early modern moment, at the same time stressing that this does not mean that there is no link at all that binds Shakespeare with our own time, as the afterlife of, say, Shakespearean plays 'is the historical consequence, however transformed and refashioned, of the social energy initially encoded in these works' (Greenblatt, 1988, p.6). Greenblatt offers up 'social energy' – an 'effect' that is manifested in the organization of 'certain verbal, aural, and visual traces' in the articulation of 'collective material and mental experience' - as the condition of 'negotiation':

Hence it is associated with repeatable forms of pleasure and interest, with the capacity to arouse disquiet, pain, fear, the beating of the heart... In its aesthetic modes, social energy must have a minimum predictability – enough to make simple repetitions possible – and a minimal range: enough to reach out beyond a single creator to some community, however constricted. Occasionally, and we are generally interested in these occasions, the predictability and range will be far greater: large numbers of men and women of different social classes and divergent beliefs will be induced to explode with laughter or weep or experience a complex blend of anxiety and exaltation. Moreover, the aesthetic forms of social energy are usually characterized by a minimal adaptability – enough to enable them to survive at least some of the constant changes in social circumstance and cultural value that make ordinary utterances evanescent. Whereas most collective expressions moved from their original setting to a new place or time are dead on arrival, the social energy encoded in certain works of art continues to generate the illusion of life for centuries... (Greenblatt, 1998, pp.6-7)

On the one hand, social energies are characterized not through recourse to the 'original' context, but through a series of negotiations in which potential subversions of the perceived natural order of things are contained within a Foucauldian conceptualization of 'power': in order to stand straight, one's sense of unity, of self-identity, can only be established if suggested alongside possible ruptures to that unity. As Paul Hamilton puts it, the convergence of 'normality' and 'subversive possibilities' 'might be worth negotiating as the cost to be paid, say, in *Richard II* for undermining Richard's sense of his divine right to rule and exposing Bolingbroke's pragmatism' (see Hamilton, 2003, pp.130-140). On the other hand, those materials that are pronounced 'dead on arrival' fall, in part at least, under the definition of

‘appropriation’: for Greenblatt, ‘appropriation’ occurs where there ‘seems to be little or no payment or reciprocal understanding... Objects appear to be in the public domain, hence in the category of “things indifferent” (adiaphora)’ (Greenblatt, 1988, p.9). The distinction between ‘private’ – I acquire and therefore I ‘own’ – and ‘public’ is fudged in a way that suggests that ‘the public domain’ somehow awaits the presence of private individuals who come to acquire property in their own name, while attempted acts of appropriation are already public acts, creating the effect that the ‘I’ who appropriates can be traced by public discourse (‘Justice’) to be tried for the crime of ‘indifference’. For Greenblatt, ‘appropriation’ is the immoral component of a binary opposition that is balanced by the ethically sound discourse of ‘negotiation’. The absence of the payment, which is integral to the negotiations of social energies, regrettably assigns to ‘appropriation’ images that imply theft and irrationality, in the sense that appropriation offers no incentive towards negotiation, bargaining, or ‘reasoning’. In reality, no agent of appropriation is in a position in which to assert his/her autonomy from the Foucauldian reigns of ‘power’; anyone claiming to be such an agent can only be truly active as the effect of negotiation. While Greenblatt expresses a degree of disdain for the modern reader’s complacency in reading alien institutions and cultures³, this present discontent appears more preferable than any thesis that privileges appropriation. Appropriation, in Greenblatt’s sense, is illegal in the sense that it disregards monetary systems of exchange; it is unethical in the sense that its effects produce a sense of ‘indifference’; at the very least, appropriation is the sign of extreme complacency, as the rich

³ Greenblatt’s famous comment on the notion of ‘subversion and the position of modern readers who ‘identify as principle of order and authority in Renaissance texts what we should, if we took them more seriously, find subversive for ourselves: religious and political absolutism, aristocracy of birth, demonology, humoral psychology, and the like. That we do not find such notions subversive, that we complacently identify them as principles of aesthetic or political order, replicates the notion of containment that licensed the elements we call subversive in Renaissance texts: that is, our own values are sufficiently strong for us to contain alien forces almost effortlessly’ (Greenblatt, 1988, p.39).

complexity of negotiation is rooted out by over-simplistic standards of individual agency.

Greenblatt's notion of the 'payment' correlates with the writing of Jacques Derrida, whose *Specters of Marx* (1994) addresses the notions of 'the debt' and 'inheritance' for those who continue to aspire to the dream of individual autonomy. In this text, Derrida proceeds to de-privilege the project of the subject-position to achieve absolute singularity across all times and all cultures. Issues of singularity or uniqueness always concede to the reality of iterability: 'Repetition and first time, but also repetition and last time, since the singularity of any first time makes of it also a last time' (Derrida, 1994, p.10). While such concepts are familiar to the Derridean canon, *Specters of Marx* is perhaps the most noteworthy, as it recurs to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in order to exhibit its display of the paradox of writing and 'time': as for Hamlet – who, for our present moment of reading is really Derrida – 'the time is out of joint', and as issues of time bleed into the iterable quality of writing, so Derrida suggests that writing exhibits a concern with 'inheritance' which the subject tries, but fails, to exorcize or disavow. The inheritance to which Derrida refers is not some tangible object that comes under new ownership once acquired. Rather, it is an exchange that always carries with it the 'spectre' of previous possessors: as Derrida writes, 'That we are heirs does not mean that we have or that we receive this or that, some inheritance that enriches us one day with this or that, but that the being of what we are is first of all inheritance, whether we like it or know it or not' (Derrida, 1994, p.54). Iterability, or repetition, supersedes issues of human agency: if inheritance is our fundamental mode of being, and if writing is its evidence, literature itself becomes little more than the inevitable collision of intertexts. And yet, Gothic Shakespeare entails more than these impersonal intertextual collisions, because its project entails the presenting of

Shakespeare, the creation of a literary precursor to be emulated and appropriated.

Authorial agency, then, is accorded some privilege, but how much privilege should it be given in the face of iterability?

Curiously, for Derrida, issues of authorial intention are not elided in view of iterability. In 'Signature Event Context', for instance, Derrida challenges the hermeneutic theses of determinate context and of concrete communication, contending that any position that favours writing as a stable and representative medium of communication is, by definition, predicated on the inevitability of the future absence of the original authorial moment. Whether absence is marked by the erasure of the author or of his/her addressees, Derrida argues that a text, in the most literal sense of the marks on the page, must nonetheless remain 'legible', a condition contingent upon its 'iterability'. As 'iterability' becomes the priority of all writing, so ideas relating to singular contexts become increasingly destabilized to the point that the citationality of texts 'engender infinitely new contexts in an absolutely nonsaturable fashion' (Derrida, 1991, p.97). Derrida's language, here, anticipates Hugh Grady's endorsement of the force of the 'moving aesthetic "now"' upon *Hamlet*, as well as the force of 'agency' in the procession of 'infinitely new contexts'; Derrida insists that 'the category of intention will not disappear; it will have its place, but from this place it will no longer be able to govern the entire scene and the entire system of utterances' (Derrida, 1991, pp.104-5). I contend that Derrida's acceptance of intentionality, coupled with his awareness of the plurality of contexts, forms the central tenet of 'appropriation': there are such entities as authors with motivations and intentions, but their creative input, derived as it may be from other literary texts, is marked by contingency, the certainty that future writers will read the literature of the past differently to the way these texts are read in our own present. Iterability is not

something an author ‘does’. It is an idea of unmediated movement, yet it is movement that can only be sensed when it has been actualised in works of unconscious and creative repetitions alike. Literary works adapt to various historical and political contexts that recede in time, but they must be moulded to adapt to these contexts by intentional figures. Moreover, when Derrida holds up Shakespeare’s plays as the prime example of iterability, one is encouraged to rethink one’s narrow conception of the author as a self-contained unity. In ‘Aphorism Countertime’ (1992), Derrida writes:

Who demonstrates better that texts fully conditioned by their history, loaded with history, and on historical themes, offer themselves so well for reading in historical contexts very distant from their time and place of origin, not only in the European twentieth century, but also in lending themselves to Japanese or Chinese productions or transpositions’ (Derrida, 1992, p.63)

If appropriation teaches us one thing, it is that authors are also readers: it is through our role as readers that we become aware of the materials of the past, and yet quotations from the literature of the past furnish certain readers – known as ‘authors’ - with the skills necessary to write. The movement of iterability is the condition that enables creativity. Successive presents inevitably yield successive opportunities to revalue and creatively repeat prior works. It is how these works survive – and more than this, come to exist as such.

And yet, as recourse to Derrida teases out the difference between intertextual allusion and literary appropriation, such distinction is contingent upon the realisation that literary appropriation had no discourse of its own during the eighteenth century. As the case of Colley Cibber’s play *The Nonjuror* (1718), a retelling of Moliere’s play *Tartuffe*, attests, the absence of a language for appropriation meant that attempts at literary borrowing were met with charges of plagiarism. In *The Nonjuror*, the reader is introduced to Sir John Woodvil, whose gradual enticement to Catholic doctrine is

set to have repercussions for his son, Colonel Woodvil, who stands to lose his inheritance to the nonjuring Doctor Wolf (played by Cibber himself in the London performances). The character of Wolf appealed to the constitutional crisis following the Glorious Revolution, for the Whig government pressed for all Church of England bishops to swear allegiance to the Protestant William of Orange. When some four hundred failed to do so, they were tarnished with the name of ‘Non-jurors’ and were forced to accede their benefices. As Frank O’Gorman summarises, ‘The schism of the Non-jurors was the gravest schism in the history of the Church of England in the seventeenth century’ because it highlighted the fragile unity of Protestantism without recourse to a foreign, Catholic other (O’Gorman, 1997, p.35). But by 1715, the ideology of Jacobitism, an ideology whose sole governing premise was that the Hanoverian George I was an illegitimate monarch who must abdicate the throne for the sake of the restoration of the Stuart dynasty, attracted a number of English Non-jurors and their supporters. In mainstream Anglicanism, this led to the opportunity to disseminate a polemic that fudged the distinction between Non-juring and Catholicism. In one pamphlet, ‘The Nonjuror unmask’d; the case of Dr. Richard Welton fairly stated’ (1718), the anonymous author observes the manifest path to popery drawn by non-jurors, as well as the subsequent creation of a group of followers attracted by the conventions of Roman Catholicism: ‘Some of you are so fond of *Popery*, that you write Books to justify *Praying for the Dead*, and *Invocation of Saints*: Others are nearly so allay’d to Them, that they *mix water with the Wine at the Sacrament...*’ (Anon., 1718a, p.27). In Cibber’s play, Doctor Wolf is imagined as an Anglican dissenter in the light of the failed Jacobite uprising of 1715. As Cibber recalls in the fifteenth chapter of his *Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber* (1740) the principles of Jacobitism were a ‘desperate Folly’ that lamentably corrupted men of

good 'Conscience'; those men of 'mistaken Conscience', moreover, are pronounced the victims of 'artful Pretenders to Conscience' who had to be rendered 'as ridiculous, as they were ungratefully wicked' (Cibber, 1968, p.282).

Crucially, this political inflection is deemed to justify the borrowing of *Tartuffe*.

After denigrating the forces of Jacobitism, Cibber, in his *Apology*, proceeds to discuss the pertinence of Moliere's play to his characterisation of Doctor Wolf:

To give Life, therefore, to this Design, I borrow'd the *Tartuffe* of *Moliere*, and turn'd him, into a modern *Nonjuror*: Upon the Hypocrisy of the *French* Character, I ingrafted a stronger Wickedness, that of an English Popish Priest, lurking under the Doctrine of our own Church, to raise his Fortune, upon the Ruin of a worthy Gentleman, whom his dissembled Sanctity had seduc'd into the treasonable Cause of a *Roman* Catholick Out-law (Cibber, 1968, p.282).

Cibber's literary borrowing appeals to the theory of appropriation as advanced by Derrida, Ewan Fernie and Hugh Grady: as an authorial agent, Cibber turns to a prior text that is repeated in a new context, while that context is but one moment in the movement of iterability. However, Cibber's claim as a mere borrower is belied by his elision of a paper published 'by a Non-Juror', *The Theatre Royal turn'd into a Mountebank's Stage. In some remarks upon Mr. Cibber's Quack-Dramatical Performance, called the Non-Juror* (1718), which accuses him of plagiarising Moliere's play. Issues of identity of expression and the plundering of plot form the chief part of the author's attack, and recall Gerald Langbaine's contention, in *An Account of the English Dramatic Poets* (1691), that 'not but the French Author and English Plagiary tally very fitly together, and come up to each other almost verbatim as to the Expression and way of dialogue' (Langbaine, 1971, p.25). At the same time, however, the authorial Non-juror's attack on Cibber's play as verbatim repetition of Moliere's play is loaded with broader issues surrounding allegiance to the emergent English constitutional state. As the 'Non-Juror' writes:

I am now therefore to observe, that how wide soever the Difference may be,

As to matters of Faith and Principle, between a PURITAN and NONJURING CLERGYMAN of the Church of England; it was for Mr. Cibber's Purpose (which is altogether Gain and Sycophancy) to torture the Remains of the ingenious Moliere, and take away the Reproach due to the vicious and disloyal Behaviour of Sectaries and Dissenters, by fixing what is inseparable from the Name of the Puritan, as an indelible Stain of Infamy on the Character of the Nonjuror. (Anon., 1718b, p.3)

While, for Cibber, politics endorses his act of borrowing, for the 'Non-Juror', it is Cibber's indifference to religious difference that exposes plagiarism. Cibber cannot be classed as a literary borrower because he treats the English Doctor Wolf as if he were a French Puritan (one of the 'vicious and disloyal...Sectaries and Dissenters'), not as a benevolent Non-juring clergyman. In other words, Doctor Wolf's malevolence is a verbatim repetition (that is, a plagiarism) of *Tartuffe's* villainy. The anonymous author's attack on Cibber as a 'plagiary' further suggests that the mechanical nature of the play's use of repetition can be attributed to Cibber's sectarian prejudice. While Cibber equates English Non-jurors with French Puritans, the authorial Non-Juror offers the corrective that Non-jurors should still be able to function in the State because they are endowed with 'a spirit of Patience and Obedience, than of Innovation and Sedition'; by extension, the contemporary theatre-goer ought to observe 'a due pity for their Misfortunes, and a commendable Grief for their Mistakes' (Anon., 1718, p.4). The tract's corrective leaves the possibility that, had Cibber's borrowing of *Tartuffe* offered the stance that Doctor Wolf, and Non-jurors in general, were essentially benevolent, he would not have fallen prey to the charge of plagiarism. Cibber's failure to innovate upon Moliere's play via a political stance akin to that of the authorial Non-Juror not only marks Cibber as a plagiary, but the act of plagiarism itself as the true schismatic method that thrives upon sectarian (in)difference.

Cibber's critic is but one example of the conceptual vacuum in which the moralistic terms 'plagiarism' and 'plagiary' are used to account for literary borrowings in the eighteenth century. As Thomas Mallon reminds us, the use of the term 'plagiary' to denote a writer's or playwright's theft of another text came about at the same time as the Tudor dynasty sought a legitimate Protestant successor to Elizabeth I: if, 'In classical times a "plagiary" had been someone who kidnapped a child or slave', the term, with the death of Elizabeth, started to acquire substantial literary connotations (Mallon, 1989, p.4-6). Mallon's subsequent discussion of Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* yields an extension of our commonplace understanding of the plagiarist as one who steals the words of another, crediting them as his/her own: the plagiarist has a paradoxical psychology of his/her own, one that 'takes care to leave self-destructive clues' of their plagiarism, while at the same time harbouring an anxiety that their own plagiarisms will be plagiarised by another (Mallon, 1989, p.23). Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) refuses to enter into the psychological debate, defining 'plagiarism' merely as 'Theft; literary adoption of the thoughts and works of another', while the 'plagiary' is 'A thief in literature; one who steals the thoughts or writings of another' (Johnson 1755). Johnson's simplistic comprehension of plagiarism is representative of a moral stance that had already been exploited by the Scottish literary forger, William Lauder, between 1747 and 1748. Although he worked as a schoolmaster in Dundee Grammar School, Lauder's fame arose when he argued, in a series of articles in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, that John Milton had plagiarised *Paradise Lost* from the works of writers such as Hugo Grotius and Andrew Ramsay. The appellations 'originality' and 'Genius' appeared to be endangered by the position that bardolatry concealed the reality of plagiarism, that the most revered authors indulged in the very profanation reviled by their eighteenth-

century critics. As Bertrand Goldgar has revealed, however, the Lauder affair served to reinstate Milton's claim to 'Genius'. In 1750 John Douglas, the Bishop of Salisbury, published *Milton vindicated from the charge of plagiarism*, which revealed that Lauder had inserted lines from William Hog's Latin translation of *Paradise Lost* into the texts Milton purportedly plagiarised. Concomitant with Lauder's exposure as a forger was the recuperation of Milton bardolatry under the auspices of an opposition between 'imitation' and 'plagiarism', for Douglas advanced a definition of originality that was not limited to creation ex nihilo, a definition which acknowledged that writers could 'Imitate' prior texts without plagiarising them (see Goldgar, 2001, pp.6-7). Indeed, the period up to 1820 attests to Milton's recuperation as an author immune to the charge of plagiarism: in 1759, Edmund Burke, in *his Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, appropriated Milton's Satan as the archetype of sublime terror; Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818) is suffused by sustained literary appropriations of key scenes from Milton's text, which figure the Monster as the fallen Satan who resolves to make evil his good, as well as the prelapsarian Eve who stares disconsolately at her reflection in the water.

In the context of the eighteenth century, the agency of the author finds its epitome in Edward Young's exposition of 'original Genius', his *Conjectures of Original Composition* (1759). Writing in the aftermath of Lauder's forgeries and Douglas's turn to 'Imitation' in his approbation for Milton bardolatry, Young contends that 'Imitation' (capitalized) is the condition of all writing, but it is subdivided into two further terms, 'originality' and 'imitation'. As with any thesis of appropriation, issues of 'the past' and 'the present' are central: for Young, in order to achieve originality, one must admire the works of the past with the design to 'Imitate; but imitate not the

composition but the man' (Young, 1854, pp.554-555). From the outset, images of organic growth are pivotal to Young's rhetoric on Genius and originality: originality is 'of a vegetable nature', and 'rises spontaneously from the vital root of genius'; conversely, the imitator's work is 'a sort of manufacture...out of pre-existent materials not their own' (Young, 1854, p.551-552). Here, it is important to observe that there is no equivalence between 'imitation' and 'plagiarism'. Young begins the *Conjectures* by inviting us to 'suppose an imitator to be most excellent (and such there are), yet still he but nobly builds on another's foundation', concluding that their presence has minimal impact on his sense of Genius, for the imitator's 'debt is, at least, equal to his glory; which therefore, on the balance, cannot be very great' (Young, 1854, p.552). For scholars of Gothic writing during the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth centuries, this is a polemic that recurs with a difference, with Shakespeare at its centre, from *The Castle of Otranto* onwards. In the second preface to *Otranto*, Walpole downplays his fusion of ancient and modern romance, stating that he would have been 'more proud of having imitated, however faintly, weakly, and at a distance' the style of Shakespeare 'than to enjoy the entire merit of invention, unless I could have marked my work with genius as well as originality' (Walpole, 1996, p.14). For Walpole, writing in 1765, 'Genius' and 'originality' are not the mutually reinforcing terms that they are for Edward Young. 'Originality', conceived as creating something out of nothing, is both insufficient and impossible without the inclusion of 'genius' as a literary idea which endorses the aping of literary predecessors. Although Walpole never defines what he means by 'genius', his complicity with the eighteenth century's sense of Shakespeare as, as Walpole puts it, 'the brightest genius this country, at least, has produced' (Walpole, 1996, p.14) nevertheless addresses the crucial dialectic for Gothic Shakespeare in the eighteenth

century: the imperative towards originality is coupled with the equally potent imperative to emulate/appropriate Shakespeare. From here, we might establish the difference between ‘plagiarism’ and ‘appropriation’: in plagiarism, all is intentionality, that is, the intention to read another’s work, the intention to steal, and the intention to make a name for oneself on the back of that theft; in appropriation, intentional and creative repetitions of, and dialogues with, ‘prior’ works inevitably flow back into the movement of iterability, with the effect that any literary appropriation, while analysable in given contexts, is fundamentally a power to differ in future contexts, beyond the lives of both authors and readers.

In eighteenth-century Gothic writing, literary appropriation is enabled by the location of ‘Genius’ on the borderline between ‘originality’ and ‘emulation’. On the one hand, it is defined by Young as an abiding by Nature, and is predicated upon the Socratic imperatives to ‘Know thyself’ and ‘Reverence thyself’:

Let not great example or authorities browbeat thy reason into too great a diffidence of thyself: thyself so reverence, as to prefer the native growth of thy own mind to the richest import from abroad: such borrowed riches makes us poor. The man who thus reverences himself will soon find the world’s reverence to follow his own. His works will stand distinguished; his the sole property of them; which property alone can confer the noble title of an author; that is, of one who speaks accurately, thinks and composes; while other invaders of the press, how voluminous and learned soever, (with due respect be spoken), only read and write. (Young, 1854, pp.554-5).

Young’s sense of the author whose works are his sole ‘property’ has been analysed by Mark Rose, whose *Authors and Owners* (1993) assesses the impact of the Statute of Anne (1710) on the creation of the author. While Rose concedes that the Statute sought merely to end the monopoly of the Stationer’s Company over the patenting of books – the act reduced the Company’s right to patent a work to fourteen years (Rose, 1993, p.45) - he observes a distinction between ‘property’ and literary ‘propriety’ that began to recognize the author as the owner of his ideas. The notion of the author as

literary proprietor became more concrete in the case of *Pope v. Curll*, a case brought about by Alexander Pope's complaint that Edmund Curll published without authorization a private correspondence between Pope and Jonathan Swift. The decision of Lord Hardwicke in favour of Pope became the first real instance of a tangible author 'who created in privacy a work he might either bring to market or not as he chose' (Rose, 1993, p.66). Furthermore, Young's definition of 'Genius' came about at a time when authorship was emerging as a vocation that potentially reaped great financial reward (Rose, 1993, pp.100-105). Again, the historical difference between the eighteenth-century author and the position of the author in discourse analysis is marked with continued reference to 'debt': while Greenblatt and Derrida stress the ethics of 'payment' and 'inheritance' on their work, Young insists that 'Genius', as it was popularised during the eighteenth century, marks the triumph of 'original, unindebted energy' (Young, 1854, p.559). On the other hand, and as Rose reminds us, the Genius's 'original, unindebted energy' is also something of a misnomer if one considers the eighteenth-century author as an entity that was entirely fashioned by the very need to emulate the great writers of the past: in order for the author to gain integrity as an autonomous figure, the creation of a precedent was required, and that precedent was Shakespeare who, in his own time, 'had in fact participated in a mode of cultural production that was essentially collaborative' and yet 'was being fashioned into the epitome of original genius' (Rose, 1993, p.122). As Derrida might have it, the 'name' of Shakespeare surpasses the man who collaborated with John Fletcher on *The Two Noble Kinsman* and *Henry VIII*, and who frequently relied on the device of incorporating and re-telling sources ranging from the temporally distant Ovid to Shakespeare's contemporary, Raphael Holinshed, for use in his plays. The eighteenth-century Genius, then, can be legitimately read as a

discursive function, given that contemporary theses on ‘originality’ hinge upon the paradoxical and yet necessary appropriation of Shakespeare’s name. In order for the eighteenth-century writer to be an ‘original Genius’, s/he must paradoxically emulate/imitate/appropriate Shakespeare.

For Joanna Baillie, plagiarism remains a problem even as she draws attention to the reality of appropriation. In the ‘Introductory Discourse’ to her *Plays on the Passions* (1798), Baillie raises the issue of unacknowledged borrowing. However, far from trying to assert her originality in the face of possible charges of plagiarism, Baillie concedes that ‘There are few writers who have sufficient originality of thought to strike out for themselves new ideas upon every occasion’ (Baillie, 2001, p.111). Moreover, Baillie includes herself in this practice, in a passage where she writes in some detail on the commonplace of literary borrowing:

I am frequently sensible, from the manner in which an idea arises to my imagination, and the readiness with which words, also, present themselves to clothe it in, that I am only making use of some dormant part of that hoard of ideas which the most indifferent memories lay up, and not the native suggestions of mine own mind. (Baillie, 2001, 112)

While Baillie refers to her practice of citing her borrowings, she concedes to the prospect of her readership discovering unacknowledged appropriations, unconscious traces of prior texts: in order to abide by what she terms ‘the fair laws of literature’, Baillie expresses her gratitude to any reader who alerts her to any unsourced examples and declares her intention to ‘examine the sources he points out as having supplied my own lack of ideas; and if this book should have the good fortune to go through a second edition, I shall not fail to own my obligations to him, and the authours [*sic*] from whom I may have borrowed’ (Baillie, 2001, p.112). While Baillie expresses her own position as an author, her respect for the reader gestures at a definition of

appropriation that values the judgment of readership⁴: this readership might corroborate Baillie's own borrowings by affirming their integrity, but they also bring their own knowledge of literature to her work, thereby tracing allusions to texts that surpass the learning of the author herself. By conceding to her readers, Baillie alerts us to her own position as one of a community of readers. As Derrida, perhaps unwittingly, reminds us in 'Aphorism Countertime', in all cases of appropriation, writers are also invariably readers and interpreters: while they creatively repeat prior works, they possess a substantial, but incomplete, knowledge of their literary heritage. I suggest, then, that the reality of appropriation – whether it is of literary works or of the name of a historical figure such as Shakespeare – no longer bracketed as it is in Young's *Conjectures*, is accepted even though the Romantic inheritance of 'Genius' seeks to preserve the notion of 'originality'.

During the emerging cult of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century, Gothic writers frequently draw attention to their own role as readers and interpreters. Apart from Baillie, Walpole's reading of 'Unhappy Shakespeare' in *Otranto*, but also his correspondences and other writings, is conditioned in part by increased British hostility towards Voltairean attitudes towards Shakespeare's unruly dramatic form, and in part by the state of contemporary British theatre from the 1750s onwards. In Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (1791), we read of how her heroine's sensitivity to scenes of 'the Beautiful' had inspired her to write 'words which she had

⁴ See, for example, Julie Sanders's reading of the controversy surrounding Graham Swift's *Last Orders* (1996) and the unacknowledged influence of William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* (1939) (Sanders, 2005, pp.32.38). See also M. Randall's, *Pragmatic Plagiarism: Authorship, Profit and Power*, for a reading of literary appropriations from medieval times to the present day. Randall identifies three criterion for valid appropriation: the 'self-consciousness' that the author is 'less an originating moment than an appropriative one'; 'Construction of identity', where the individuality of identity is analysed through discourse analysis, given that authorship itself is fundamentally communal and discursive; and the 'authority-to-speak', or the emergence of previously silenced voices with particular emphasis on feminist and postcolonial discourses (Randall, 2001, pp.58-59). Pertinent to her theory is the central role occupied by the reader, for it is, according to Randall, the reader who decides on whether literary borrowings succeed in their aim to create new possibilities from earlier works.

one day written after having read that rich effusion of Shakespeare's genius, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Radcliffe, 1998a, p.284). Just as Adeline's edition of Shakespeare opens her up to the fairy world of Titania and Oberon, so she becomes receptive to Shakespeare's 'dark Genius' to the point that she is inspired to emerge from Elizabeth Montagu's 'groves of philosophy', to write her own event of the supernatural. As aesthetic practice, literary appropriation is entirely consistent with the concept of Genius, because geniuses read as well as write.

The chapters which follow trace the emergence of Gothic Shakespeare from 1764 to 1800. Starting with Horace Walpole's appropriation of Shakespeare, subsequent readings of the fictions of Ann Radcliffe, Matthew Lewis, T.J. Horsley Curties and W.H. Ireland reveal a greater intricacy at the heart of Shakespearean appropriation than Derridean analyses of 'the power to differ' across cultural time and space allows. Specifically, the notion of a 'Gothic Shakespeare' as a monolithic category in the eighteenth century is a misnomer, for Shakespeare existed in a number of guises: the textual; the theatrical; the object of literary criticism; and, as the Boydell gallery which opened in 1789 testified, the Shakespeare of the canvas. This claim appears problematic given the period's own advancement of Shakespeare as 'our Gothic bard': by definition, bardolatry does not take cognisance of how its materials are organised into coherent systems of meaning, but the Gothic bard in the eighteenth century is one that was continually evolving in the light of editorial interventions, the distinctions between Shakespeare's texts and versions adapted for the stage, and the emerging art of interpretive activity as evidenced by writers such as Elizabeth Montagu, William Richardson and Edmond Malone. Contained within 'our Gothic bard' is the plurality of Shakespeares that simultaneously endorse Shakespeare's 'genius' and imagine Shakespeare beyond the narrow confines of bardolatry. Such

Shakespeare's influence the emergence of Gothic writing from Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764/5) to Curtius's *Ethelwina; or, the House of Fitz-Auburne* (1799). Chapter one discusses Horace Walpole's appropriation of the theatrical Shakespeare as promulgated by David Garrick as a method of honouring his father, the first prime minister Robert Walpole. It proposes that Walpole enabled himself to pay tribute to his father through Shakespeare by reinstating the graveyard scene that Garrick notoriously excised from his productions of *Hamlet*. A rebuttal of Garrick's *Hamlet*, Walpole's casting of himself as the orphaned prince marks the culmination of his lifelong defence of his father, as well as his equally prolonged mourning for the loss of Gothic liberty. As early as 1743, Walpole relied on Shakespeare in an attempt to articulate his experience of his father's political assassination at the hands of his fellow Whigs Bolingbroke and William Pulteney. In 'The Dear Witches', an article published anonymously in June 1743, Walpole satirises the weird sisters as popularised by contemporary performances of William D'Avenant's *Macbeth*, recasting the witches as political villains who succeed in their plot against Gothic nationalism by usurping Robert Walpole, whose absence marks him as the murdered King Duncan.

Although the timing of the publication of the second edition of Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1765) is concomitant with Samuel Johnson's edition of Shakespeare's works, the former's interest in the theatrical Shakespeare as expressed in his letters suggests a diffidence to the Shakespearean text that marks his distinction from his Gothic forbears towards the end of the eighteenth century. If Walpole's letters revealed little interest in the text of Shakespeare, by the 1790s Gothic Shakespeare became increasingly preoccupied with the bard in light of the emergence of character criticism, with its emphasis on psychology, and of the 'authenticity'

apparatus of Edmond Malone in his edition of the plays. Chapter two examines the Gothic appropriation of psychological discourse in the fictions of Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis's play *The Castle Spectre* (1797). It proposes that the intersection of 'the Gothic' and 'the Shakespearean' found in Gothic romance serves to dismantle the privilege assigned to the mind by critics of Shakespearean tragedy. That such privilege culminates in Malone's footnotes on tragic characters such as Macbeth and Richard the Third suggests a Gothic interest in a textual Shakespeare which is appropriated and rendered problematic by competing audiences. Shakespeare's presence in Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian* (1797) signals a shift whereby authentic tragic passion is faced by an emergent 'Gothic' passion that voices its cognisance of audience heterogeneity and its attendant undermining of the distinction between 'authentic' and 'performed' passion. In *Udolpho*, for instance, Radcliffe utilises the contemporary discourse of physiognomy in order to map the progress of Laurentini's 'unresisted passion'; at the same time, the framing of Laurentini's authentic passion by epigraphs citing the sleepwalking Lady Macbeth attempts to postulate a rational audience (the physician in Shakespeare's text and Emily St. Aubert in Radcliffe's romance) that will temper passion's influence on the mind. But the univocal audience in *Udolpho* yields to the equivocal audience in *The Italian*, as the monk Schedoni is caught between tragic and melodramatic readings of character. Schedoni is introduced as a nefarious actor who feigns benevolence in order to ingratiate himself into the home of the aristocratic Vivaldi family, and even though the revelation that he may be the father of Ellena di Rosalba – the suitor to the son of the Marchese di Vivaldi who orders Schedoni to murder Ellena – appears to recuperate tragic passion, the sincerity of such passion remains in doubt as Schedoni finds himself subject to the gazes of Ellena and a tour guide with

an enthusiasm for melodrama. Schedoni's object-status, moreover, reflects the progress of the stage at the end of the century, which utilised its enlarged spaces and innovative technologies to provide various entertainments - tragedy, melodrama, burlesque, pantomime - in a single sitting. As the billing of works written for the stage suggest the lack of a hierarchy between 'high' and 'low' forms, so the binary of tragic passion and performed passion comes under duress for, as Radcliffe suggests through Schedoni, individual characters exceed the dimensions of tragedy when faced by aficionados of other stage forms such as melodrama.

The eighteenth-century concept of 'passion' considered the perceiving subject's ability to distinguish between sincere and inauthentic emotions, but the 1790s also marked the culmination of the gendering of extreme passion in women who strove to supplant their status as creatures of domesticity. For Mary Wollstonecraft, this meant the recognition of women as possessing an equal claim to rational discourse, but the publication of William Godwin's biography of Wollstonecraft offered material that allowed the conservative Reverend Richard Polwhele to inscribe her as 'unsexed' in his poem *The Unsex'd Females* (1798). More pertinent to this chapter, however, is the radical writer Mary Robinson, whose *Letter to the Women of England* (1798) called upon women to form a 'legion' of Wollstonecrafts that would reclaim female passion. As such passion incorporated the justification of violence by women, female passion presented a different problem for the royalist romance writer T.J. Horsley Curties, in his first romance *Ethelwina; or, the House of Fitz-Auburne* (1799), to the general problem of passion outlined by Radcliffe. For Curties, as for Polwhele, female passion was all too authentic, and his first romance turned to the sustained appropriation of the textual *Hamlet* in order to temper the force of female violence. Anticipating the melancholy of the Romantic Hamlet as produced by such writers as

Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Hazlitt, the textual Hamlet of the late eighteenth century was marked by the fortuitousness of his frequent deferrals of the spectral command to revenge his father's 'foul and unnatural' murder. The late eighteenth-century and Romantic emphasis on Hamlet's delay recast Hamlet from his early modern guise as a villain wholly prepared to damn Claudius to a literary character whose inner life damns him as an icon of feminine melancholy. As Edmond Malone's copious footnotes on *Hamlet* in his 1790 edition of the play suggest, however, critical readings by the Shakespeare editors Samuel Johnson and George Steevens postulated Hamlet as a villain motivated by the love of extreme violence. It is important, therefore, to read Curties's portrayal of Ethelwina as a female Hamlet situated on the cusp of the residue of the early modern prince and his Romantic guise as an indomitable procrastinator, for the potentiality of female villainy brings Ethelwina to the brink of unsexing as she, like the prince, is met with the spectral command to avenge the death of her father. *Ethelwina* is also the imagined embodiment of the triumph of patriarchy over the momentum of 1790s feminist discourse. Prospectively one of Polwhele's unsexed females, or one of the militant legions of Wollstonecrafts headed by Mary Robinson, Ethelwina's delay – which is also Hamlet's delay – serves to reinforce the rule of sexual difference in a culture stretched simultaneously towards the conservative vision of women's domesticity and the then-radical vision of her mental and physical strength.

While the early chapters of this thesis deal with the spectrum of passion, ranging from the authentic to the inauthentic, the final chapter turns on the category of 'the authentic' itself. In April 1796 Richard Brinsley Sheridan presented the lost Shakespeare play, *Vortigern and Rowena*, to the audiences of Drury Lane, at the behest of an unassuming legal clerk named William Henry Ireland. Ireland purported

to have discovered not only the play but a series of letters and manuscripts derived from the hand of Shakespeare himself. Subsequent accusations of forgery, headed by Malone, proved to be true, but Malone's skills in detection served to undermine the efficacy of his project of authenticating Shakespeare and his works; Malone's editorship advanced 'authenticity' as part of its service to bardolatry, but bardolatry had reached the stage whereby authenticity could be performed in the guise of forgery. At once endorsing and belying 'Genius', Ireland's Shakespeare loses the distinctions that coalesce to produce Shakespeare as 'our gothic bard', becoming neither distinctly textual, theatrical, literary critical nor painterly. In the process, Ireland moves into the realm of the Gothic romance in an effort to postulate a sexual Shakespeare who resists the efforts of writers such as Clara Reeve and Thomas J. Mathias who argue for the necessary excision of illicit desiring in romances and novels. Ireland's Shakespeare, then, breaches two limits: Shakespeare's immunity from forgery, and Shakespeare as a playwright dedicated to the restoration of asexuality.

CHAPTER ONE

'GHOST. ADIEU, ADIEU': HORACE WALPOLE, *HAMLET*, *MACBETH* AND THE LIMITS OF SHAKESPEARE APPROPRIATION

The absence of the Ghost

In March 1742, one month after the resignation of Sir Robert Walpole as Prime Minister, Alexander Pope published his new edition of *The Dunciad*, complete with a new book in which the empire of 'Dulness' has effectively swept aside all traces of literary merit:

[...] held in tenfold bonds the Muses lie,
 Watched both by Envy's and by Flattery's eye:
 There to her heart sad Tragedy address'd
 The dagger wont to pierce the tyrant's breast;
 But sober History restrained her rage,
 And promised vengeance on a barb'rous age.
 There sunk Thalia, nerveless, cold, and dead,
 Had not her sister Satire held her head;
 Nor could'st thou, Chesterfield, a tear refuse,
 Thou wep'st, and with thee wept each gentle Muse. (Pope, 1961, Book 4:
 35-44)

In Pope's satire, the enslavement of the Muses recalls the passing in Parliament of the 1737 Licensing Act, under the auspices of Robert Walpole. Directed at the theatre, the act endorsed the closure of theatres that did not carry a royal patent, and decreed that all future plays had to be approved by the Lord Chamberlain before they reached the stage.⁵ For Pope, as for Robert Walpole's literary and political opponents, the act prefigured the end of the very liberty that was granted during the Glorious Revolution of 1688: maintaining an equation of politics with the literary, *The Dunciad* denounces the act as a form of censorship that drives 'Tragedy' herself to contemplate one final

⁵ For a discussion of censorship on the eighteenth-century stage, see Calhoun Winton 1980, 'Dramatic Censorship' in R. D. Hume (ed.) *The London Theatre World, 1600-1800*, Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, pp.286-308.

theatrical flourish and, while the promise of revenge upon the censors is made, the act's opponents in Parliament (especially Lord Chesterfield) and the Muses themselves weep over the theatre's premature frailty. As Bertrand A. Goldgar argues in *Walpole and the Wits*, the Licensing Act also served to perpetuate a concept that had been popular since the publication of Bolingbroke's *The Occasional Writer* in 1727, namely, of Robert Walpole as the central opponent of letters and learning (Goldgar, 1976, p.44). By 1742, he is recast as Palinarus, now the pilot to Dulness, as inertia takes hold of contemporary politics: 'The vapour mild o'er each committee crept;/Unfinished treaties in each office slept' (Pope, 1961, Book 4: 615-616).

For Horace Walpole, the memory of his father's political downfall was green. In a letter to Horace Mann dated 13 January 1780, Walpole recounted one evening in Strawberry Hill which was taken up by the reading of a series of correspondences addressed to Jonathan Swift from Bolingbroke and John Gay, only to find purportedly unsubstantiated 'lamentations on the ruin of England – in that era of its prosperity and peace' (Lewis, Smith & Lam (eds.), 1971, p.6). While such proclamations by Robert Walpole's literary and political detractors contravened Horace's sense of his father as preserving liberty in the English constitution – 'Oh, my father! Twenty years of peace, and credit, and happiness, and liberty, were punishments to rascals who weighed everything in the scales of self!' (Lewis, Smith & Lam (eds.), p.6) – Walpole's letter proceeds to recruit *Hamlet*, with its rendition of a young son possessed by the memory of his recently deceased father. Thirty-five years after the death of his own father, and yet similarly possessed by green memory, Walpole's recollection of Sir Robert's political death in 1742 calls up the graveyard scene in act five of Shakespeare's play, as well as the absence of the paternal ghost: 'I soon forgot an impotent cabal of mock-patriots; but the scene they vainly sought to disturb, rushed

on my mind, and like Hamlet at the sight of Yorick's skull, I recollected the prosperity of Denmark when my father ruled, and compared it with the present moment! – I looked about for a Sir Robert Walpole – but where was he to be found?' (Lewis, Smith & Lam (eds.), 1971, p.7). The appropriation of the graveyard scene serves as a reminder of Walpole's defence of act five during his delineation of the mixing comic and tragic modes outlined in the second preface to *The Castle of Otranto*. The same appropriation marks a curious spectral absence given Walpole's canonization as the inaugural writer in the Gothic mode: Prince Hamlet's memory calls up the ghost of his father in his 'mind's eye', and once the Purgatorial ghost makes its visitation to unfold its tale, Hamlet is resolved to commit his memory to the ghost's injunction 'Remember me':

Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past
That youth and observation copied there
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain
Unmixed with baser matter. (Shakespeare: 1997e, 1.5.98-104)

In Shakespeare's play, the spectral injunction usurps that place in memory previously occupied by the 'saws of books', the network of texts and maxims that constituted Hamlet's learning; the metaphorical 'book and volume' of the Prince's brain has been substituted for the material text, with the effect that textuality is subsumed by the work of memory. For Horace Walpole – prolific printer with his own printing press at Strawberry Hill, as well as the author of a 'Gothic Story' – the hierarchy that privileges memory over textuality did not hold, with the effect that he had no paternal ghost of his own to call up. As his letter to Mann demonstrates, the texts of early eighteenth-century satirists haunted the bookshelves of Strawberry Hill, appearing to hold sway over Walpole's own memory of his father as the guardian of English

liberty. Not content with his allusion to Hamlet's recollection of the jests of Yorick, he closes his letter with a return to Bolingbroke, retracting his previous reference to him as a 'rascal' but only to substitute it for 'villain' (Lewis, Smith & Lam (eds.), 1971, p.7). While for Prince Hamlet, the ghost and its command allowed him to possess a sense of 'memory' as that which transcends mediation by the text, for Walpole the enduring memory of the villainy of his father's detractors meant that 'saws of books' and the 'book and volume' of his own brain found no way of being prised apart.

In the absence of Robert Walpole's ghost, the work of haunting is carried out by all-too-present literary materials whose presence on the shelves of Strawberry Hill suggests that such haunting was embraced by Horace Walpole. In Pope's 1728 edition of *The Dunciad*, Robert Walpole features as the wizard servant of Dulness who tempts his subjects to drink of the Magus cup, effecting a turn to infamy that signals his indifference to English liberty: as Pope writes, in Walpole's England, 'The vulgar herd turn off to roll with hogs,/To run with horses, or to hunt with dogs,/But, sad example? Never to escape/Their infamy, still keep the human shape' (Pope, 1961, Book 4:525-528). As Bertrand Goldgar (1976) and Edward H. Jacobs (2000) have demonstrated, the satirical content of literary output bolstered the development of print culture insofar as it performed important political work for the anti-Walpole press. While Goldgar observes that opposition papers such as *The Craftsman* and *Fog's Journal* fomented Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* as an allegorical novel whose depictions of political fraud and luxury thinly veiled Swift's opposition to Walpole (Goldgar, 1976, pp.59-63), Jacobs has noted that the pro-Bolingbroke journal, *The Craftsman*, expanded the force of satire by appropriating seemingly inauspicious medical advertisements that cautioned against counterfeit medicines that,

in the style of the contents of the magus cup in *The Dunciad*, peddled a bodily corruption that was symptomatic of deeper political corruption (Jacobs, 2000, pp.110-114). Although Horace Walpole's appropriation of *Hamlet* accounts for the textual assassinations of the late 1720s and 1730s, the publication of James Thomson's *The Castle of Indolence* in 1748 shows that the vogue for anti-Walpole satire did not abate despite the resignation of Sir Robert Walpole five years earlier. As Christine Gerrard has argued, the text's subtitle, 'An allegorical poem', signals a decidedly political attack on the character Indolence, whose close resemblance to Pope's wizard identifies him as the former prime minister (Gerrard, 1990, p.54). In the poem, a group of pilgrims – including Thomson himself – is seduced into a false bower of bliss guarded by Indolence's songster; using his 'syren melody' and 'enfeebling lute', Indolence's accomplice imprisons the unsuspecting pilgrims by singing of virtue as the 'repose of mind' that they will find upon residing in the castle (Thomson, 1748, p.7). Unlike other vociferous attacks on Robert Walpole, Thomson acknowledges his complicity in the triumph of luxury over civilisation, for he writes of himself as 'loose loitering' in the 'soul-deadening' castle, divested of the muse whose authentic musicality sings of the 'bold sons of BRITAIN' whose valour inspires the cause of liberty' (Thomson, 1748, p.13). But upon the completion of a series of stanzas in which Thomson describes the soothing spectacle of the false bower, he comes to the realisation that his Muse, too, is in danger of succumbing to the lure of Indolence:

No, fair illusions! Artful phantoms, no!
 My Muse will not attempt your fairy-land:
 She has no colours that like you can glow;
 To catch your vivid scenes too gross her hand.
 But sure it is, was ne`er a subtler band
 Than these same guileful angel-seeming sprights,
 Who thus in dreams, voluptuous, soft, and bland,
 Pour'd all th' *Arabian heaven* upon our nights,
 And bless'd them oft besides with more refin'd delights. (Thomson, 1748, p.16)

Committed to the cause of Gothic liberty that informs much of his poetry, Thomson is rescued by the Knight of Arts and Industry, a character whose allegorical function as the purveyor of liberty in Britain recalls the entry into civilisation inaugurated by the Glorious Revolution; having installed constitutional monarchy and the spirit of toil and commerce, the Knight enjoys a short retirement, recruited only when Indolence lures the populace from their hard fought polity. Attended by an incorruptible bard who plays a 'British harp', the Knight waves a wand containing 'anti-magic power', revealing the bower of bliss to be an illusion concealing the permanent night-time of madness, suicide and putrefaction (Thomson, 1748, p.42). For Robert Walpole's literary opponents, the body politic was faced with a clear choice between a mode of governance consumed either by corporeality (seduction, luxury and rotting corpses) or by the anti-corporeal cause of 'Liberty', but the choice offered by satire professed liberty by recruiting the corporeal as that which rendered visible the marks of political corruption. As a spectacle, the deathly landscape of Walpole's England was too tangible for Hamlet's ghost to reinscribe itself as the sign of liberty that preceded his (political) assassination at the hands of the usurper.

With the absence of the ghost of Robert Walpole, his son's investment in Shakespeare works not only to honour the memory of the first First Lord of the Treasury, but also to draw attention to the work of appropriation as textual practice. On one level, Walpole's allusion to Yorick alludes to the prosperity of Denmark under the old regime and of England under Robert Walpole. Indeed, Yorick, in Shakespeare's play, circumscribes 'jest' and 'merriment' as markers (or memories) of such prosperity, as Hamlet recollects upon seeing Yorick's skull:

Alas, poor Yorick. I knew him, Horatio. A fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He hath bore me on his back a thousand times, and now how abhorred in my imagination it is. My gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your jibes now – your

gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? (Shakespeare, 1997e, 5.1.170 – 187)

On another level, Walpole's appropriation of act five marks yet another absence for, in 1772, David Garrick staged his production of *Hamlet*, famed for its excision of the gravediggers' scene. Garrick's letters testify to an audacity on his part to remove most of act five; writing in a letter to the Abbé Andre Morellet, dated 4 January 1773, Garrick comments that 'I have play'd the Devil this Winter, I have dar'd to alter Hamlet, I have thrown away the gravediggers, & all the 5th Act, & notwithstanding the Galleries were so fond of them, I have met with more applause than I did at five and twenty – this is a great revolution in our theatrical history' (Little & Kahrl (eds.), 1963, p.841). For Walpole, writing in 1773, Garrick's 'revolution' was in thrall to an 'injudicious complaisance to French critics, and their cold regularity, which cramps genius' (Lewis, Cronin Jr. & Bennett (eds.), 1955, p.368). Moreover, such a 'revolution' redacted the graveyard scene from act five of *Hamlet* that informed Walpole's memorializing of his father in 1780. As Walpole wrote in his commentary on Garrick's adaptation, Garrick's 'frenchifying' of Hamlet obviated the work of memory:

The grave-digger's account of Yorick's ludicrous behaviour is precisely an instance of that exquisite and matchless art, and furnishes an answer too to the last objection, that the humour of the grave-digger interrupts the interest of the action and weakens the purpose of Hamlet. Directly the contrary; the skull of Yoric and the account of his jests could have no effect but to recall fresh to the Prince's mind the happy days of his childhood, and the court of the King his father, and thence make him [see] his uncle's reign in a comparative view that must have rendered the latter odious to him, and consequently the scene serves to whet *his almost blunted purpose* .
(Lewis, Cronin Jr. & Bennett (eds.), 1955, pp.368-369)

In order to recover memory's prerogative, Walpole calls up not a ghost but a clown, for it is only through the reconciliation of comic and tragic modes that England's prosperity under Robert Walpole can be perceived (in 1780) to have been lost to the

corruption of the present, just as Hamlet's recollection of 'the King his father' allows him to see 'his uncle's reign in a comparative view that must have rendered the latter odious to him'. Furthermore, the summonsed clown echoes the project carried out by Pope, Bolingbroke and Thomson of recruiting corporeality as a method of rejecting the bodily in favour of the 'spirit' of British liberty. While the satirical materials of the 1720s, 1730s and 1740s rejected the corporeal, Walpole's conscription of the clown's skull roots his project of remembrance firmly within the substance of the body, with its requisites of flourishing and decomposition. What begins as a comic turn concludes as the postulation of an equation between literary appropriation and corporeality, for the task of honouring Robert Walpole becomes contingent upon a series of signs that are themselves marked by contingency. Under the force of alternative readings meaning is always provisional, and it is marked by both retrospective and prospective tendencies whereby it flourishes under Walpole's remembrance of his father, and decays under anti-Walpolean England's forgetting of Robert Walpole's virtue. In short, memory is parasitic upon textual appropriation.

From the outset, this chapter contends that the Walpolean appropriation of Shakespeare encountered its limits, not only in 1780 but also during the decades prior to the publication of *The Castle of Otranto* (1764/5). In calling up a clown rather than a ghost, Walpole's debt to *Hamlet* avoids the potential paradox imbibed in the wholesale appropriation of the ghost: while the spectral injunction necessitates the honouring of memory, the ghost itself is figured as an usurper. An usurper of the night-time, the ghost's donning of King Hamlet's armour carries the suggestion that it has appropriated (read as 'stolen') the dead King's body. Moreover, its command to 'Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder' (Shakespeare, 1997e, 1.5.25) seemingly points to the dead King and father as anterior to the 'questionable shape' of

a ghost that locates itself in an order of representation akin the Player King in the Prince's *The Mousetrap*, as well as the 'counterfeit presentment of two brothers' (Shakespeare, 1997e, 3.4.53) that the frenzied prince shows Gertrude in the bedroom scene. In short, there is no 'real' father in Shakespeare's text; rather, the figure of the benevolent father is rendered impossible as it cedes to a precession of simulacra, all of which don the part of an actor ('Ghost', 'Player King', 'counterfeit presentment') donning the part of the 'real' father.⁶ The distinction between King Hamlet and the 'questionable shape' recalls the early modern purgatorial ghost. As Stephen Greenblatt has written in *Hamlet in Purgatory*, early modern accounts of ghosts were suffused with a language of 'stage-play' that illuminated the quandary over whether certain ghosts were the manifestations of souls in pain or of demons performing the role of souls in pain. Even when Horatio authenticates King Hamlet's ghost as a pained soul, he insists on establishing an absolute difference between the Catholic ghost and the corporeal king. Following a reading of the Catholic Pierre Le Foyer's 1586 apparition treatise *III Livres des Spectres ou Apparitions et visions d'Esprits, Anges et Demons se monstrans sensiblement aux homes*, Greenblatt contends that the purgatorial ghost in *Hamlet* pulls towards the inauthentic because its imitation of the King as he was known to his subjects constitutes a kind of 'embodied memory' that writes over the decaying corpse of the real King (Greenblatt, 2001, pp.208-214). The ghost's appropriation of the image of the living King Hamlet, as opposed to the invisible yet real corpse of the dead King, proves successful as its exploitation of

⁶ As Jerrold E. Hogle observes in his essay 'The Gothic Ghost of the Counterfeit and the Progress of Abjection', Gothic writing from Walpole onwards frequently engaged in a process of counterfeiting that fashioned its origins from already dubious systems of signification. Moreover, Hogle sees this process working in the scholarly canonizing of 'the Gothic' as a mode: 'Walpole's *neo*-Gothic' spectres and virtually all the levels of his 'Gothic Story' are signifiers of signifiers much more prone to drifts from and falsifications of their foundations, even as the very word 'gothic', by 1765, has drifted away from rigorously accurate references to the Goths or the churches or the castles of the Middle Ages' (Hogle, 2001, p.294). More recently, Sue Chaplin has discussed such repetitions within a Derridean framework (Chaplin, 2008)

memory ensures that the play's ghost-seers, not least Prince Hamlet, conflate the ghost and King Hamlet into a collective memory, the vividness of which they desire to remain subject to. As Walpole's analysis of the graveyard scene suggests, the absence of the purgatorial ghost elides the Catholic strain attending early modern apparitions, and indeed the staging of ghosts on the English stage in the aftermath of the Reformation, but in doing so he commits to a corporeality that renders his father irrevocably dead. Although his account of Garrick's *Hamlet* does not directly refer to his father, Robert Walpole can be read into it, for Horace Walpole's enduring memory of the play is Hamlet's remembrance of 'the court of the King his father' and not the present intrusions of the living image of the incorporeal soul in pain. For Walpole, corporeal remainders mark the absences of King Hamlet and his father, but the latter recedes into the inauthentic 'embodied memory' of the former prime minister as the wizard-like agent of moral decay in England.

Robert Walpole's absence was marked in his own lifetime with the little-known 'The Dear Witches', a work written by Horace Walpole in 1743 and published in *Old England: or, the constitutional journal*. Unlike other Shakespeare appropriations, this text relies not upon *Hamlet* but *Macbeth* as its point of reference. 'The Dear Witches' satirizes Robert Walpole's fall from power at the hands of his fellow Whig yet erstwhile detractor William Pulteney, the Earl of Bath; while Pulteney takes on the role of the usurper Macbeth, the absence of Duncan (Robert Walpole) suggests that Pulteney's campaign of political assassination is already a *fait accompli*. It is not the case, however, that Duncan's absence marks the text as belonging to the tragic mode; rather, the events surrounding Robert Walpole's removal from office in 1742 sanction a satirical mode that identifies his detractors as usurpers. At the same time Walpole vindicates his father from the charge of usurper by rendering him absent and

irrevocably dead via intertextual play with Shakespeare's script and its Restoration adaptation, in which the ghost of the murdered King Duncan haunts Lady Macbeth into remorse for her role in the act of usurpation. The absences of both the ghost of Duncan and of Lady Macbeth mark a lack of remorse on the part of Macbeth/Pulteney, whose masculinist resolve is held in check, but only temporarily, without the aid of an ambitious Lady Macbeth. The limits of appropriation, then, surround the rejection of the figure of the ghost. In 'The Dear Witches', its absence allows satire to assault the real usurpers who forced Robert Walpole from office, while Horace Walpole's debt to *Hamlet* negotiates between the ghost and the clown, in the end privileging the clown as the appropriate restorative of the work of memory. As Jacobs has suggested, Walpole's turn to satire brings into relief the contested nature of the term 'Gothic'. Walpole's antagonists sought to establish irreducible difference between the Gothic barbarism of Shakespeare's time and the enlightened Gothic liberty as promulgated in their own publications (*The Dunciad*, *The Castle of Indolence*, and Bolingbroke's *The Craftsman*). Conversely, Walpole's oeuvre purposely undermined this distinction in order to satirize anti-Walpolean repudiations of the past: in his analysis of Walpole's essays in *The World* (1753-1757), Jacobs identifies sustained attempts by Walpole (writing under the name Adam Fitz-Adam) to propose and parody the alternative history that 'past and present orders alike are problematized by the weed-like springing up of discursive things such as errors and books out of previous ones' (Jacobs, 2000, p.137). In other words, the present is as much, if not more, prone to irrationality as the past, and the self-fashioning of Robert Walpole's opponents as advocates on enlightened Gothicism proves to be self-serving and politically expedient.

Additionally, Walpole's oeuvre can be situated within an anti-Catholic framework: the obviation of the speaking ghost blots out both the scripting and the performance of the ghost from Purgatory, leaving the ghosts of Gothic simultaneously muted and stilted. In their turn, Walpole's ghosts ensure that the conventions of genre – whether tragedy or the mixed mode that combined ancient and modern forms of romance – are met, thereby maintaining the deferral of the texts' secret – in the case of *Otranto*, this secret revolves around the noble provenance of the peasant Theodore.

Sir Robert Walpole in the 1740s

Unlike the son's vindication of his father as the preserver of English liberty, Robert Walpole frequently came under the attack of politicians and satirists alike throughout his period in office (1721-1742). During 1733 and 1734, for instance, his parliamentary bill to impose excise duty on salt met with a furore of opposition across Whig and Tory (and Country and Court) divides, but, as Frank O' Gorman observes, it was the reaction to the bill that led to its demise: protesting under the slogan 'excise, wooden shoes and no jury', they soon attracted the support of those merchants, especially in wine and tobacco, who feared that excise tax would soon come to them (O'Gorman, 1997, p.81). Between 1739 and 1740, tensions created by Spanish refusals to follow the terms set out in the Asiento – an agreement that granted Britain the right to trade with Spanish colonies for a thirty-year period - saw Walpole reluctantly send a fleet into the Spanish colony of Porto Bello in March 1740, to be headed by another opposition Whig, Admiral Vernon. Vernon's success soon gave rise to a wave of praise from fellow opponents such as Richard Glover, whose ballad 'Admiral Hosier's Ghost. To the Tune of, Come and Listen to my Ditty' (published anonymously in 1740), while holding Vernon in veneration, struck a melancholy

chord that recalled Walpole's reluctance in the 1720s to involve Britain in war with Spain. In this poem, Glover describes how Vernon's celebration of his victory against the Spanish fleet is halted by a spectral visitation: upon hearing 'Heideous [*sic*] Yells and Shrieks', 'A sad Troop of Ghosts appear'd;/All in dreary Hammocks shrouded,/Which for winding Sheets they wore' (Glover, 1740, p.4). From the precession of spectres emerges the ghost of Admiral Hosier who, in 1726, led a fleet of twenty ships to blockade Porto Bello but who, along with his fleet (the 'troop of ghosts'), became ridden with disease following its success. The ghost recalls how Hosier was left to die by Walpole's ministry, who were angry at Hosier's use of military force against the Spaniards: 'To have fall'n, my Country Crying,/He has play'd an *English* part,/Had been better far than Dying/Of a griev'd and broken Heart' (Glover, 1740, p.6). But the ghost's eulogising serves a broader political purpose, for it gestures towards the need of a vanguard for 'Englishness', finding in Vernon the figure who will carry the memory of Hosier back to England, and carrying also the spectral command to be revenged for the sins of Walpole: 'When your Patriot's Friends you see,/Think on Vengeance for my ruin,/and for England sham'd in me' (Glover, 1740, p.7). Glover's ghosts embody another limit for literary appropriation for they are permitted to speak only as the servants of the opposition to Walpole, and the tale they unfold postulates the necessary pretext for political change and the restoration of English liberty.

As opposition rhetoric demarcated a distinction between its praise of 'liberty' and Robert Walpole's perpetuation of inefficiency, Shakespeare acquired cultural capital in such journals as *The Craftsman* –founded by William Pulteney and Bolingbroke – as the voice of Whig liberty. In his article on Shakespeare in the periodicals, George Winchester Stone notes that since its inception in 1726, *The Craftsman* invested in

Shakespeare's plays to demonstrate the point that Shakespeare's representations of political corruption in plays such as *Henry VIII*, *Hamlet* and *Measure for Measure* reflected the level of corruption and ineptitude in Walpole's ministry (Stone, 1952, pp.318, 325). In this reading, Shakespeare occupies a paradoxical position that postulates the need to recuperate liberty from the force of evil, but articulated from a distinct partisan agenda. Writing to Horace Walpole on 16 February 1741, Horace Mann appears to confirm this position by appropriating Milton, and not Shakespeare, to express his disdain for those politicians who sought to remove Walpole from office; having lost a recent petition to oust Walpole, Mann compares Robert Walpole's would-be political assassins to 'Milton's description of Satan and his crew of fallen angels; some are threatening; some silent and gloomy; some reasoning apart; but all overwhelmed with flames, and disappointment, and all in the dark as to everything but their own unhappiness' (Lewis & Troide (eds.), 1974, p.92).

As Catherine M. S. Alexander has discussed in her article on her recent discovery of 'The Dear Witches', the thesis that Shakespeare accrued political capital only for Robert Walpole's opponents is confounded by Horace's investment in Shakespeare to vindicate his father by foregrounding the political aspirations of those who removed him from office (see Alexander, 1998). In 'The Dear Witches', Walpole arrives at his Shakespeare via the poetry of the pro-Walpolean Charles Hanbury Williams. On 8 October 1742, Walpole forwarded Williams's 'The Capuchin' to Mann, commenting that the poem was inspired by advice given to William Pulteney to pursue the office of Privy Seal. Williams's poem attacked Pulteney within an anti-Catholic aesthetic that figured him as a duplicitous politician who, by donning an incorruptible facade, could fulfil his ambition to attain high office. As the eponymous Capuchin monk, Pulteney acts as a figure who refuses all offers of money or high office: 'So the great

Earl of Bath/Has sworn in his wrath/That he'll never accept of a place;/Neither
 Chancellor he,/Nor Treas'rer will be,/And refuses his seals and the mace' (Lewis,
 Smith & Lam (eds.), 1954, p.72). The Capuchin-Pulteney's ambition is soon awoken
 by a crowd whose reliance on Pulteney as a figurehead from which to realise their
 own political aspirations requires them to unveil his true nature: 'But near him a
 crowd/Stand bellowing aloud/For all that two Courts could afford' (Lewis, Smith &
 Lam (eds), 1954, p.72). While the poetic voice takes an ironic turn by becoming one
 of this crowd, encouraging him to usurp the office of Privy Seal from the Lord
 Gower, an annotation attributed to Walpole gestures towards a reading of the poem
 that inspired the characterisation in 'The Dear Witches': following the line 'But near
 him a crowd', Walpole comments that 'every intelligent reader will immediately have
 in his thoughts eight or ten of the ablest geniuses in this kingdom, such as H. Vane, H.
 Furnese, Lord Limerick, Mr Hooper, Mr Samuel Sandys, Mr Bootle, Mr Gybbon, Sir
 John Rushout etc etc etc' (Lewis, Smith & Lam (eds), 1954, p.72). Returning to the
 'dramatis personae' of Walpole's text, the first and second witches are acted by
 'Goody S---' and Goody R---', both of whom are figured in Walpole's letter to the
 printer as female acquaintances of an elderly duchess (whom Walpole casts as Hecate
 in his text while also alleging that she was the unruly woman who interrupted
 Addison's viewing of *Macbeth* in 1710). The witches, with Addison's unruly woman
 (or Walpole's countess) as Hecate, '*from the lively representation of their Parts, have
 ever since gone in the Country by the Name of the DEAR WITCHES*' are later
 identified as Samuel Sandys and John Rushout, both of whom Walpole attacked in a
 letter to Mann dated 30 November 1743 on the subject of the recent formation of the
 new ministry formed by another Walpole opponent, Sir John Carteret:

Winnington is to be paymaster; Sandys cofferer, on resigning the Exchequer
 to Pelham; Sir John Rushout treasurer of the Navy, and Harry Fox lord of the

Treasury... Wat Plumber, a known man, said t'other day, 'Zounds! Mr Pulteney took those old dishclouts to wipe out the Treasury, and now they are going to lace them and lay them up!' 'Tis a most just idea: to be sure Sandys and Rushout and their fellows are dishclouts, if dishclouts there are in the world, and now to lace them! (Lewis, Smith & Lam (eds.), 1954, p.350)

Before they assumed the appellation of 'dishclouts' Sandys and Rushout comprised two of the three witches that would awaken the ambition of Pulteney as Macbeth: '1st W. All hail Macbeth, hail, Privy Counsellor!/2nd W. All hail Macbeth, hail to the E[arl] of B[ath]!/3rd W. All hail Macbeth, That shalt be T[reasure]r (Walpole, 1743). Alexander's reading of 'The Dear Witches' proposes that Walpole's treatment, via *Macbeth*, of gender politics incorporates a nexus of texts that includes not only Shakespeare's and D'Avenant's texts, but also Joseph Addison's essay from 21 April 1711 (number 45), in which Addison recalls a rowdy female audience member's anticipation at seeing 'the dear witches' who were played by then-prominent male comic actors such as Thomas Doggett (Alexander, 1998, p.133). Walpole, then, brings to his text not only a conflation of gender positions, but also an appropriation of *Macbeth* that mixes tragic and comic modes. In the tragic mode, 'The Dear Witches' unfolds with the downfall of Robert Walpole as presided over by the witches who then promise Macbeth (Pulteney) the spoils of wealth and high office; in the the comical or satirical mode, the casting of the witches creates a circularity that 'diminishes the status of [Walpole's] political opponents – they are the evil protagonists of Shakespeare's original, the buffoons as performed by Pinky, Doggett, and co, and they are the silly, self-indulgent women of Addison's essay and of his own address to the printer and his cast list' (Alexander, 1998, p.143).⁷

⁷ Aside from examining the satirical context of 'The Dear Witches', Alexander's article focuses on verifying Walpole's Shakespearean source (Alexander, 1998, pp.141-142). D'Avenant's burlesque is ruled out due to Walpole's text's affinity to the words of Shakespeare himself. After dismissing editions of Shakespeare produced by Lewis Theobald and Alexander Pope, Alexander concludes that Walpole worked closely with Nicholas Rowe's *The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare in Six Volumes, adorn'd with Cuts, Revis'd and Corrected, with an Account of the Life of the Author* (1709). .

Like Walpole's exorcism of the ghost of King Hamlet in his letter of 1780, 'The Dear Witches' is marked by the absence of spectrality, despite William D'Avenant's burlesque rendition of *Macbeth*, which amplifies spectrality with the insertion of a second ghost (King Duncan). In act five of *Macbeth*, as performed in 1710, the guilt-ridden ghost-seer Lady Macbeth urges her husband to resign his throne, so relieving her of being haunted by the ghost of Duncan. When the ghost appears on stage, Macbeth articulates his incredulity over the ghost's presence, thereby demonstrating the banishment of his conscience. D'Avenant's *Macbeth* reverses the gender roles assigned to the usurper and Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare's play: if in the banquet scene the usurper's womanish apparition of the ghost of Banquo is only quelled by the ghost's eventual disappearance, the mannishness of D'Avenant's Lady Macbeth – that which blinded her to the ghost of Banquo - ebbs away as the female conscience calls up the ghost of Duncan. D'Avenant's adaptation, then, reinstates what Lady Macbeth calls the 'Charter' of sex (D'Avenant, 1710, p.41); despite her earlier role in Duncan's regicide, Lady Macbeth fashions herself as the mere counsellor whose regicidal thoughts are superseded by her husband's manifest treason: 'there was more Crime in you/When you obeyed my Counsels, that I contracted/By my giving it' (D'Avenant, 1710, p.41). While there is no ghost of Duncan or remorseful Lady Macbeth in Walpole's text, 'The Dear Witches' is marked by the absence of another ghost, Banquo; keeping Banquo – as 'played' by John Carteret – alive throughout the text, Walpole reserves his most scathing criticism for the most female of all of his father's political assassins, William Pulteney. In scene five of the text, which evokes Macbeth's encounter with the witches in act four of Shakespeare's play and is set in the Treasury Chamber, Macbeth/Pulteney arrives to see the witches concocting their potions for further political strife ('Double, Double, Toil and Trouble!/Parties burn

and Nonsense bubble!') (Walpole, 1743). The witches call up three apparitions: the 'Apparition of a King's Head arm'd' that warns '*Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!* Beware *Macduff!*', where Macduff represents Henry Pelham, the future First Lord of the Treasury who would go on to lead the 'Broadbottom' administration; the 'Apparition of 'Mrs. S—h', Pulteney's mistress, who relates that 'no Son born of me/Shall keep *Macbeth* from my *Inheritance* (the son purports to be the illegitimate son of Pulteney, whose apparent madness would allow Pulteney, under an act that he campaigned for, to inherit the estate of his mistress); and the 'Apparition of a Baby crown'd' who decrees that Macbeth 'shall never be discarded, till/ THE BROADBOTTOM become the TOP O' TH' HILL' (Walpole, 1743). Not reassured, Macbeth asks if 'vap'ring Banquo' shall ever lead a government, and receives a response that involves the sinking of the cauldron and a stage direction that introduces bagpipes. As the bagpipe music plays, the witches reluctantly acquiesce to send Macbeth to his fate:

ALL. Shew his Eyes and grieve his Heart
Come like Shadows, so depart!
(*Eight Shadows of new Courtiers, among them are L—d W—, two F—s, L—d B—, L—d B—of S—, appear and pass over in Order. Banquo last with a BUMPER in his Hand.*)

MACB. Thou art too like the Spirit of *Banquo!* Down!
Thy *Pow'r* doth fear mine Eye Balls. And thy Hair
[Thou other black-brow'd Wight] is like the first!
A third is like the former! Filthy Hags,
Why do you shew me this? ----- A fourth! Start eye!
What will the line stretch out to th' Crack of Doom?
Another yet ----- a seventh! -----I'll see no more -----
And yet the Eighth appears, who bears a GLASS
AND DRINKS TO MANY MORE ----- and some I see
That *Golden Keys, Green Bags, and White Staves* carry -----
Horrible Sight ----- and now I see `tis true
For the Romantic Banquo smiles upon me;
And points at them for HIS ----- What is this so?
1st W. Aye, Sir, all this is so.

They dance round him, turn his Brain, and vanish ----- He goes off raving.
(Walpole, 1743)

Pulteney-Macbeth finds himself implicated in anti-Catholic discourse: Macbeth thinks he sees the ghost of Banquo-Carteret, accompanied by Carteret's supporters in parliament. Upon closer inspection, however, one of the 'shadows' drinks to further political alliances with Carteret, and Pulteney-Macbeth realises that in spite of being called up by the witches, 'Romantic Banquo' is no ghost but is the living messenger of Pulteney's political downfall.

The misidentification of ghosts recalls Walpole's later closet drama *The Mysterious Mother* (1768). In common with the gothic fictions of the Romantic period, the play centres on an undisclosed secret, later revealed to be the incestuous encounter between the Countess of Narbonne and her son, Edmund. The Catholic monk, Benedict, seeks to uncover the secret by enlisting superstition: 'I nurse her in new horrors; form her tenants/To fancy visions, phantoms; and report them./She mocks their fond credulity – but trust me,/Her memory retains the colouring' (Walpole, 2000, 1.1.215-217). The Countess's incessant use of prayer locates her in a sectarian tradition of Protestant dissent and not Catholicism, but, upon the return of Edmund to Narbonne, the Countess is temporarily overcome by a Catholic 'strain' that leads her to think she is being visited by the ghost of her dead husband: 'Why thus assail my splitting brain? [...]/What is this dubious form,/Impressed with ev'ry feature I adore,/And ev'ry lineament I dread to look on?' (Walpole, 2000, 3.1.271-275). While the Countess's brain is split by the momentary substitution of a ghost for the husband, Pulteney-Macbeth's brain is turned by the substitution of the 'real' Banquo (Carteret) for the ghost. And yet, this Banquo is accompanied by the song of bagpipes, with its overt Catholic Jacobite association. During his early political career as a Whig opponent to the Tory ministry, Carteret expressed his concern over the influence of Jacobitism in Tory politics, particularly Viscount Bolingbroke's support of the claim

of the Catholic Pretender to the throne in England following the death of Queen Anne in 1714 (Ballantyne, 1887, p.24). By 1743, Walpole's text appears to align Carteret with the Jacobite cause, but this should take into account his declining reputation following Walpole's resignation. His support for George II caused resentment among his own Cabinet, particularly when he allowed the King (who was also the Elector of Hanover) to pay for the deployment of Hanoverian troops at the Battle of Dettingen (the battle against French troops that took place only a week after the publication of 'The Dear Witches') via the English coffers. As a 'Hanoverian' rather than an 'Englishman', contemporary resentment towards Carteret foregrounded a schism at the heart of government that struggled to accept George's position, despite his overt Protestantism, as at once the King of England and Elector of Hanover. The Banquo that drives Pulteney to madness, then, is one that will ferment, rather than resolve, a schism that will revive the claims of a unified Catholic Jacobite cause that Carteret/Banquo himself foresaw thirty years earlier, and that would culminate, in 1745, in a failed attempt to bring the Pretender to the throne. Indeed, a year after Henry Pelham (Macduff) became the First Lord of the Treasury in 1743, Carteret was dismissed by the King at Pelham's request, leaving Pelham to form his 'Broad Bottom' ministry. As with the arrival of Macduff's army at Birnam Wood in Shakespeare's text, the apparition of the crowned child predicting that 'THE BROADBOTTOM become the TOP O' TH' HILL', when coupled with the bagpipes, would foretell the demise of both Macbeth and Banquo, Pulteney and Carteret. In *Macbeth*, the threat to the usurper comes from the ghost of the past; in 'The Dear Witches' there is no ghost, as the living Banquo foretells a threat from an imagined Catholic future that figures the Protestant Carteret as an unintended ally.

Genre and the Ghost: from Voltaire to *The Count of Narbonne*, the ‘rational tragedy’

‘if anyone were to ask me which genre is best, I would reply, the one which is best handled’
From ‘Preface de l’editeur de l’edition de 1738’ of Voltaire’s *Merope* (1736)

As his letter of January 1780 to Horace Mann suggests, Walpole’s preoccupation with preserving the memory of his father intersected with the prerogative to preserve theatrical and textual modes that championed solemnity and comedy in the same space; as Walpole himself had commented in 1773 – with reference to Garrick’s adaptation of *Hamlet* – the event of the gravedigger’s humour is the necessary prerequisite for memory to begin its work on the aggrieved son (*Hamlet*/Walpole). Although his later writings position Walpole as seeking a mode of expression through a Shakespearean conduit, such writings elaborate upon an imperative for a particular genre of storytelling that accommodated mixed modes outlined in the second preface to *The Castle of Otranto* in 1765 and, ultimately, to endorse the native ‘Genius’ of Shakespeare. In the second preface, Walpole reiterates the French position on theatrical representation, as outlined by Voltaire in his 1763 preface to the works of Corneille, which deemed as intolerable the combination of ‘buffoonery’ and ‘solemnity’ (Walpole, 1996, p.11). In order to articulate his own opinion of the rules of genre, Walpole appropriates not an English tract or stricture, but the writing of the young Voltaire ‘at a moment when Voltaire was impartial’ (Walpole, 1996, p.12): Voltaire’s preface to the 1738 edition of *Merope* privileges an alchemical blend of seriousness and jest in comedy to the point that ‘if anyone were to ask me which genre is best, I would reply, the one which is best handled’⁸; this accords with

⁸ E.J. Clery’s 1996 reprinting of W.S. Lewis’s edition of *The Castle of Otranto* provides the following translation of Voltaire’s preface:

‘We find there a mixture of seriousness and jesting, of the comic and the pathetic; often even a single incident produces all these contrasts. Nothing is more common than a house in which a father is scolding, a daughter – absorbed in her emotions – weeping; the son makes fun of both of them, some relatives take different sides in the scene, etc. We do not infer from this that every comedy ought to

Walpole's own theory of genre, and yet it is a theory that must be inclusive of all generic categories, including tragedy. If, as Voltaire asserted, comedy might include scenes of sobriety as well as jest, 'tragedy may now and then, soberly, be indulged in a smile. Who shall proscribe it? Shall the critic, who in self-defence declares that no kind ought to be excluded from comedy, give laws to Shakespeare?' (Walpole, 1996, p.12). Enlisting more than mere nationalist and anti-Gallican rhetoric, Walpole appeals to his memory of the young Voltaire prior to the rise of Shakespeare bardolatry, whose 'impartiality' in the 1730s accords with Walpole's own call for impartiality in attitudes towards genre in the 1760s. With the voice of young Voltaire behind him, Walpole castigates the other Voltaire – the older and thoroughly 'Frenchified' Voltaire of the 1760s – for his audacity in suggesting that the English Gothic bard, situated above the rules of genre, ought to be subjected to French standards of theatrical decorum.

Having read Walpole's account of Richard the Third and his second preface to *The Castle of Otranto* – *Otranto* was twice translated into French between 1766-1767 – Voltaire recorded his defence of his position on Shakespeare in a letter to Walpole dated 15 July 1768. In this letter, he cited his younger self as a loyal servant of English letters who worked to reinforce the growing discourse of national circumscription. Although Voltaire did not challenge the 'genius' of Shakespeare, he contended that 'genius' was an insufficient marker of Shakespeare bardolatry: 'I long ago said, that had Shakespeare appeared in the age of Addison, he would have joined to his genius that elegance and purity for which Addison is commendable. I have said *that* his genius was his own, and his faults those of his age' (Voltaire, 1779, p.154).

have scenes of buffoonery and scenes of touching emotion: there are many very good plays in which gaiety alone reigns; others entirely serious; others mixed; others where compassion gives rise to tears; no genre should be ruled out: and if someone were to ask me which genre is best, I would reply, the one that is best handled' (Walpole 1996, p.119).

As the servant of English letters, Voltaire reminded Walpole that it was he who introduced the canonical writers of English poetry and philosophy; having translated passages from Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden and Pope into French forty years prior to his correspondence with Walpole, as well as importing Newtonian and Lockean philosophies to the disdain of his own nation, Voltaire concludes that ‘I have been your apostle and your martyr. In truth, the English ought not to complain of me’ (Voltaire, 1779, p.154). As his letter reaches its conclusion, Voltaire criticises the English theatre’s disregard for the Unities – ‘The English writers are so fond of liberty, as to observe neither unity of place, unity of time, nor unity of action’ (Voltaire, 1779, p.157) – but he also enlists the tragedies of ancient Greece in his defence of his nation: for Voltaire, ‘all the Greek Tragedies appear...the work of school boys in comparison to the sublime scenes of Corneille, and the perfect tragedies of Racine. Thus thought Boileau himself, notwithstanding the warmth of his admiration for the ancients’ (Voltaire, 1779, p.158). Aside from this commonplace Voltairean maxim, a collection of essays translated and published in 1761 under the title *Critical Essays on Dramatic Poetry* demonstrates Voltaire’s concern with the faults of both English and French theatrical modes of representing scenes of death in the tragic mode. While, on the one hand, the ancient Greeks and the English ‘have passed the bounds of decency, and given spectacles which are really horrible, when they only meant them to be terrible’, French theatre stops ‘too soon, for fear of going too far, and sometimes don’t arrive at the tragic point, lest we should pass its limits’ (Voltaire, 1761, pp.19-20). Substantiating his observation, Voltaire offers the example of violence and its relation to representation:

I am far from proposing that the stage should become a scene of slaughter and destruction, as it is in Shakespear and his successors; who, not being possessed of his genius, have only imitated his faults; but I dare assert, that there are situations which now appear disagreeable and horrible to the French,

which, if they were well conducted, and artfully represented, and, especially, if softened by the charms of fine poetry, would create a kind of pleasure of which, we have not, at present, the least conception (Voltaire, 1761, p.20)

For Voltaire, it is *Hamlet* which epitomises the blunted genius of Shakespeare; apart from his dissatisfaction with the mirth of the gravediggers, he reads scenes such as the death of Polonius in act three and act five's violent spectacle involving the prince, Laertes and the usurper Claudius as instances that would lead one to 'take this performance for the fruit of the imagination of a drunken savage' (Voltaire, 1761, p.219).

The almost blunted purpose of Shakespeare bardolatry is, for Voltaire, whetted in *Hamlet* by its supernatural visitations. In an extended commentary on the ghost of King Hamlet, Voltaire writes:

We must allow that, among the beauties that shine in the midst of all these shocking inconsistencies, the ghost of Hamlet's father is one of the most striking incidents. It has always a great effect upon the English, I say even upon those among them who are the most learned, and most thoroughly convinced of the great irregularities of their ancient theatre. The ghost inspires us with terror at the very reading, than the apparition itself of Darius in the tragedy of Eschylus, called the Persians: And why? Because in Eschylus, Darius appears only to foretel the misfortunes of his family; but in Shakespear, the ghost of Hamlet's father comes to demand revenge; comes to reveal secret crimes; it is neither useless, nor awkwardly introduced; it serves to shew, that there is an invisible power, directing the world.
(Voltaire, 1761, p.218-219)

Voltaire calls up the ghost that Walpole dare not: the ghost of a theatrical Purgatory that harbours the potential for justice to be delivered. While Walpole's investment in Yorick keeps Sir Robert Walpole at once irrevocably dead and the subject of memory, Voltaire's praise of the ghost in *Hamlet* appears to be couched in his sense that purgatorial supernaturalism is conducive as the driver to bring about the 'tragic point' he feels is lacking in French theatre. Furthermore, the tragic point is enabled by the Hamlet-like conflation of the soul in pain and the 'embodied memory' of King Hamlet; unlike Walpole's displacement of the ghost's function to Yorick's skull, 'the

ghost of Hamlet's father is one of the most striking incidents'. As one in the same thing, the fudging of the ghost and the father shows that Voltaire is evidently convinced by the purgatorial performance, and reads the ghost – and his demand for justice- as the plausible issue of providential design. Proceeding to discuss Providence, Voltaire continues his commentary:

All mankind, who have a love for justice at the bottom of their hearts, are naturally pleased, that Providence should interest itself in avenging innocence. People will see with satisfaction, in every age, and in every country, that the Supreme Being employs itself in punishing the crimes of those, whose power renders them superior to the laws of Man: it is a consolation to the weak, and a curb to the wicked.

And farther; I dare assert, that when such a prodigy is intimated in the beginning of a tragedy, when it is fully prepared, when things are so managed, that it is rendered necessary, and even impatiently expected by the audience; I say it then may be placed in the rank of natural events.
(Voltaire, 1761, pp.219-220)

In Voltaire's analysis, the ghost of the dead king is situated on the cusp between supernaturalism (as the agent of Providence) and 'nature' (in the sense that the ghost functions as a trope for a tragic mode that must move towards its final catastrophe). As both the supernatural and the natural intersect via the motif of a ghost commanding revenge, the ghost of Purgatory as performed from Shakespeare's own time onwards tries to call up not only itself but the memory of the sinning king at the scene of a crime: cut off in the blossoms of sin while sleeping in the orchard and 'Unhoused, disappointed, unaneled,/No reckoning made' (Shakespeare, 1997e, 1.5. 76-78), the ghost pays for the sins of the 'real' father by usurping the night and burning in Purgatory during the day 'Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature/Are burnt and purged away' (Shakespeare, 1997e, 1.5. 12-13). In distinction to the Protestantism of Walpole and of Shakespeare himself, Voltaire endorses a Catholic Shakespeare whose resort to Purgatory posits the imperative to host a figure – the catalyst to revenge - to drive the cause of justice for the father. Catholic

Providence and genre commingle in Shakespeare as ‘the ghost of Hamlet’s father comes to demand revenge’. If Voltaire reads the ghost’s vociferous call to violence as its prerogative to speak in spite of the confines imposed upon it by Purgatory, Walpole’s excision of Purgatory – with its associations of the incorporeal and the failure to recuperate his dead father - signals the failure of the eighteenth-century Protestant ghost to speak for itself.

Silence, too, marks Walpole’s ghosts in *The Castle of Otranto*. The usurper, Manfred, declares his desire to marry Isabella, who was previously betrothed to his recently deceased son Conrad, as part of the forging of dynastic ties between Otranto and the Marquis of Vincenza. Manfred’s ensuing pursuit of Isabella is halted by two supernatural visitations. First, the sight of the helmet that crushed Conrad momentarily lets in Providence with Isabella’s cry that ‘heaven itself declares against your impious intentions’ (Walpole, 1996, p.26). Second, Manfred’s silencing of heaven’s ‘declaration’ - ‘Heaven nor hell shall impede my designs’ (Walpole, 1996, p.26) - is, however, answered not by Providence but by a painting. Contrary to Voltaire’s reliance on ‘heaven’ in his critique of the ghost, the substitution of the providential for the aesthetic lets in an alternative Shakespeare in *Otranto*. The ghost of Manfred’s grandfather emerges from a painting to beckon Manfred just as the ghost in Hamlet beckons his son to hear his account of his sins and listen to his command to revenge his murder; unlike Hamlet, *Otranto* blocks the possibility of any spectral commandment, not only through the spectre’s failure to answer Manfred’s command to ‘Speak’, but also through another Shakespearean tragedy, *Macbeth*:

The spectre marched sedately, but dejected, to the end of the gallery, and turned into a chamber on the right hand. Manfred accompanied him at a little distance, full of anxiety and horror, but resolved. As he would have entered the chamber, the door was clapped-to with violence by an invisible hand. The prince, collecting courage from this delay, would have forcibly burst open the door with his foot, but found that it resisted his utmost

efforts. Since hell would not satisfy my curiosity, said Manfred, I will use the human means in my power for preserving my race; Isabella shall not escape me (Walpole, 1996, p.26)

In the first instance, the ‘invisible hand’ Manfred encounters appears to confirm Voltaire’s point that the ghost must be ‘rendered necessary’ to the action of tragedy; in the case of *Hamlet*, the spectre must be allowed to speak for itself and make its commands for justice and memorialisation. Walpole’s text, however, is not a tragedy for the stage, but an attempt to combine ancient and modern modes of romance writing, and it is in this generic shift that the ghost is barred from speech. Having outlined in the preface to the second edition his intention to give liberty to ‘fancy’ so that it can ‘expatiate through the boundless realms of invention’, Walpole also insists that his characters be treated according to the rules of ‘probability’, that they ‘think, speak and act, as it might be supposed mere men and women would do in extraordinary positions’ (Walpole, 1996, p.10). What is at stake, then, in Manfred’s ghostly encounter is not the honouring of a spectral commandment, but his response to the ‘extraordinary position’ whereby he is faced with the spectre and its silence. Far from having a Hamlet-like disposition to be consumed by memory, Manfred’s response to the spectre, ‘full of anxiety and horror, but resolved’, recalls not the sweet prince but the usurping Macbeth and his encounter with the silent ghost of Banquo. In this play Macbeth gathers his resolve by calling upon his powers of speech in order to render silent the ghost as the usurper of the dead Banquo: ‘Avaunt, and quit my sight!...Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold./Thou hast no speculation in those eyes/Which thou dost glare with’ (Shakespeare, 1997g, 3.4.91-94). Corpse-like, Banquo is unlike the ‘dead corpse’ that reveals itself to be the ghost of king Hamlet who is granted the rights of speech and of memory; Macbeth’s invitation to have his fear declaimed by the ghost as unmanly, ‘If trembling I inhabit then, protest me the

baby of a girl', is nullified with the usurper's command 'Unreal mockery, hence [*Exit Ghost*]' (Shakespeare, 1997f, 3.4.104-106) and his subsequent recovery of his manliness. Just as, in *Macbeth*, the silencing of the ghost restores the usurper's resolve, so the silence and disappearance of the ghost behind the door in *Otranto* allows Manfred to swiftly recover his own resolution to assert his manliness by using 'the human means' in his power to take Isabella, thereby preserving his dynasty.

While the painting in *Otranto* instigates this negotiation of gender roles, it also recalls Walpole's anti-Catholic pronouncements in 'A Sermon on Painting', his 1742 essay appended to his commentaries on his father's collection of paintings at Houghton, *Aedes Walpolianae*. For Walpole, the religious subjects that adorn the walls of the Roman Catholic church give rise to an impiety that blocks Protestant England's praise of religion and liberty, while also blocking the perceived function of language to signify beyond the mere human. 'Catholic' paintings are deified by both the painter and the Catholic viewer and substituted for God Himself to suit what Walpole refers to as 'the mercenary purposes of priestly ambition': the artist paints 'the persecuting, the barbarous, the wicked head of a sainted inquisitor, a gloomy visionary, or an imaginary hermit! Yet such are deified, such are shrouded in clouds of glory...with all the force of study and colours' (Walpole, 1798, Volume 2: p.283); Protestant art, meanwhile, tends explicitly towards a form of patriotism that dated back to the saving of Protestantism during the Glorious Revolution of 1688: it 'shows us with what fire, what love of mankind, WILLIAM flew to save religion and liberty! It expresses how honest, how benign the line of HANOVER! It helps our gratitude to consecrate their memory' (Walpole, 1798, Volume 2: p.284). Moreover, Walpole draws speech into his distinction between Catholic and Protestant painting through his appropriation of Psalm 115, 'They have Mouths, but speak not: Eyes have they, but

they see: neither is there any breath in their Nostrils' (Walpole, 1798, Volume 2: p.279). According to Walpole's ideal, the privilege of speech should be assigned to Protestantism, for the subjects of Protestant painting 'speak' in a manner that endorses 'Gothic' English nationalism and the memorialisation of William of Orange as the vanguard of Protestantism. By contrast Walpole considers that the subjects of Catholic painting should be governed by silence and the adoration of the copy, of the simulacra figured as the sign of secondariness. In *Otranto*, however, the ghost that emerges out of the painting is positioned on a distinct anti-Catholic plane. On the one hand, the painting itself presents an usurper whose role involves the violation of the natural and divine orders, and who offers no spoken sign towards Walpole's Protestant God. Concomitant with the absence of speech is the failure of gesture, as the ghost's beckoning of Manfred enacts a repetition of the Shakespearean ghost's beckoning of his son – 'MARCELLUS. Look with what courteous action /It waves you to a more removed ground' (Shakespeare, 1997e, 1.4. 41-2) – that is reiterated with a difference, as the trappings of *Otranto* bar false Catholic discoursing between a ghost and a mortal. But this limit fails to obviate Catholicism in favour of the Gothic English strain. Rather, Manfred's subsequent positioning of himself as Macbeth after the disappearance of Banquo's ghost surmises a Catholic agency no longer influenced by supernatural forces: as Walpole reminds us, Manfred is 'resolved' upon securing Isabella by 'human means' 'since hell would not satisfy my curiosity'.

And yet, the ensuing series of spectral repetitions that follow mark this revived Catholic agency as false surmise. While the speaking ghost is essential to *Hamlet*, the intertextual 'dialogue' between *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* in Walpole's appropriation of Shakespeare elicits a form of spectral agency that is not contingent upon speech, an agency rendered sufficient by the ghost's mere physical appearance alone. The

servant Bianca, upon hearing murmurs in the chamber beneath, confers with Matilda that the chamber is haunted by the ghosts of Conrad and his tutor (who committed suicide); Matilda, not dismissive of Bianca, urges that ‘If they be spirits in pain, we may ease their sufferings by questioning them. They can mean no hurt to us, for we have not injured them...Reach me my beads; we will say a prayer, and then speak to them’ (Walpole, 1996, p.42). On one level, Matilda’s proposition recalls Horatio’s questioning of the ghost in *Hamlet*:

HORATIO

What are thou that usurp’st this time of night
 Together with that fair and warlike form
 In which the majesty of buried Denmark
 Did sometimes march? By heaven, I charge thee speak.

MARCELLUS

It is offended.

BARNARDO

See, it stalks away.

HORATIO

Stay, speak, speak, I charge thee speak. *Exit Ghost.*
 (Shakespeare, 1997e, 1.1.44-50)

In Shakespeare, too, speech is not the sole marker of spectral agency. If, as Marcellus asserts, the ghost is offended at the linguistic turn that figures it as a usurper, the ghost, in its silence, reclaims its agency, resisting Horatio’s command ‘I charge thee speak’ by choosing to leave the stage; the performance direction ‘*Exit Ghost*’ reinforces the ghost of Hamlet’s volition, choosing not to answer Horatio’s questions. In *Hamlet* it is the ghost from Purgatory, and not the mortal subjects, who is afforded the right to command (‘Remember me’). *Otranto*, as a romance rather than a stage performance, observes the silence of ghosts as the sign of a secret that they themselves cannot disclose, for the text’s secret, that the peasant Theodore is in fact the rightful heir of Otranto, must be articulated at the end of the romance rather than at the beginning of a tragedy. Rather than confront a ghost, Matilda and Bianca discover Theodore, imprisoned by Manfred, in the chamber beneath in a narrative not

unlike the explained supernaturalism associated with the fiction of Ann Radcliffe. Nonetheless, Theodore comes to occupy subject-positions that align him simultaneously with the ghosts of Hamlet and of Banquo as he dons the armour of his ancestor Alphonso. Armour-clad, Theodore incites an encounter that initially places him in the position of Banquo's ghost whose deadened yet glaring eyes fixate on Manfred's Macbeth: exclaiming 'Ha! What art thou, dreadful spectre!...Why do you fix your eye-balls thus?', Manfred realises that the 'ghost' is visible to him only while Hippolita, assuming the role of Lady Macbeth, implores him 'resume your soul, command your reason. There is none here but we, your friends' (Walpole, 1996, p.83). While in *Macbeth*, the usurper's resolve allows him to exorcize the ghost, Manfred's realisation that the spectre is in fact Theodore brings the substitute ghost of king Hamlet: 'Theodore, or a phantom, he has unhinged the soul of Manfred. – But how comes he here? And how comes he in armour?' (Walpole, 1996, p.83). The answer lies not merely in Theodore's attempt at heroism by attacking the knight who turns out to be the father of his future companion Isabella, but in the undisclosed secret of Theodore's provenance. With no speaking ghost beneath the armorial cladding, the armour itself assumes the spectral role. The armour with it the ghost of an intertext that must disclose its secret to the victim prince from the outset but that must, in a new generic context, defer the act of disclosure until its haunting of the guilty usurper, initialled by the haunting by the intertextual silent ghost of Banquo, is complete. If the real ghost that emerged from the painting fails in its task to emasculate Manfred, the figurative armorial ghost in Horace Walpole's Gothic Shakespeare succeeds on 'unhinging' the minds of the descendants of the guilty.

The ghost of Hamlet, now rendered speechless, also echoes in Robert Jephson's theatrical adaptation of *Otranto, The Count of Narbonne*, first performed in 1781.⁹ From the outset, the ghost of Hamlet is evoked; before the dialogue begins, the opening performance direction establishes a painting of Alphonso, whose armour, in the absence of a ghost beneath it, foretells a secret that cannot be disclosed through any supernatural machinery: 'A Hall with Gothic Ornaments; a full-length Picture of Alphonso in Armour, in the centre of the back scene...' (Jephson, 1782, p.1). Like *The Castle of Otranto*, Jephson's play is concerned with the act of usurpation and the inheritance, or curse, that such an act brings on the descendants of the original usurper. Count Raymond (Jephson's Manfred), is burdened with the judgement of his populace, but particularly his wife Hortensia, that vengeance is due to be enacted upon him. For Hortensia, the time is 'out of joint', for 'the owl mistakes his season, in broad day/Screaming his hideous omens; spectres glide,/Gibbering and pointing as we pass along...Blood shed unrighteously, blood unappeas'd,/Though we are guiltless, cries, I fear, for vengeance.' (Jephson, 1782, p.11). Hortensia's ghosts, while dismissed as the outcome of 'nature's common frailties' by Raymond, retain an agency despite their inarticulation: on the one hand, the ghosts seek the aid of language, but their appropriation of language is unequal to the task of disclosing the play's secret; at the same time, however, the secret of Theodore's provenance has already been revealed in Walpole's text, with the effect that the ghosts' failure in language is compensated by language's apparent obviation. The ghost requires only the agency imbibed in gesture, 'pointing' at a path that is a reiteration of Manfred's demise. Moreover, the painting of Alphonso, as an intimation of the ghost about to reveal a secret, appears to posit a parodic ghost of the ghost of king Hamlet that, in its

⁹ All page references for *The Count of Narbonne* are taken from the Dublin 1782 edition.

speechless parody, has already unwittingly revealed its secret. Such reiteration, moreover, is not mere repetition, as the absence of Walpolean supernaturalism leads Count Raymond to his final catastrophe: the accidental stabbing of his daughter Adelaide as she is about to enter into a clandestine marriage with Theodore, and his subsequent grief and suicide.

In his correspondence with Jephson in 1777, Walpole observed that the purpose of tragedy as he read it, that is, ‘the representation of the passions and conduct of mankind’, had lately been undermined because ‘Of late the world has been forced to accept a mezzo-terme, the *tragedie bourgeoise*. Kings, heroes and heroines could not be persuaded to lower their style. Their etiquette would not allow them to be natural. We were forced to descend amongst ourselves, and seek nature where it grovelled yet’ (Lewis (ed.), 1980, p.367). In Jephson’s play, ‘nature’ is revealed by the child’s commands to be remembered and obeyed: Adelaide, having been stabbed offstage in the middle of her nuptials by the frenzied Raymond and brought back on stage - the scene a place of worship - urges Theodore to ‘Forget me not, but love my memory’, before turning to her father:

If I was ever dear to thee, my father,
 (Those tears declare I was) will you not hear me,
 And grant one wish to your expiring child...
 Be gentle to my mother; her kind nature
 Has suffer’d much; she will need all your care;
 Forsake her not; and may the All-merciful
 Look down with pity on this fatal error;
 Bless you – and – oh - *[Dies]*
 (Jephson, 1782, p.55)

Raymond, too, is urged to honour his daughter’s memory in a manner akin to the ghost of Hamlet’s command to his son to leave Gertrude to heaven, a command that the son fails to follow as his speaking daggers at his mother prompts the ghost’s return (Shakespeare, 1997e, 3.4). Like *Hamlet*, the end of *The Count of Narbonne* is

marked by the failure to observe the wishes of the dead as Raymond, consumed by guilt and self-loathing, stabs himself in front of Hortensia, leaving Hortensia surrounded by the corpses of her husband and daughter and beckoning the hour of her own death: ‘These pangs, these struggles, let them be my last;/Release thy poor, afflicted, suffering creature;/Take me from misery, too sharp to bear,./And join me to my child’ (Jephson, 1782, p.57). Unlike *Hamlet*, speech fails because the wrongdoer has forgotten to honour the commands given by his daughter; instead he retreats into speechless gesture, the onstage act of suicide that was once, but no more, considered an act of heroism. Raymond’s suicide means that he has effectively forsaken Hortensia, who now faces her own death instead of the ‘care’ that Raymond was commanded to bestow upon her by Adelaide.

As commands are made and breached, the stage directions also reveal the presence of Alphonso, as if the ghost of king Hamlet: ‘*The inside of a Convent, with aisles and Gothic arches. Part of an altar appearing on one side; the statue of Alphonso in armour in the centre. Other statues and monuments also appearing. Adelaide veiled, rising from her knees before the statue of Alphonso*’ (Jephson, 1782, p.50). If the painting that opened the play posits Alphonso as already the parodic ghost of Hamlet whose command has been issued from the revealing of a secret, the statue of Alphonso anticipates a command that cannot be obeyed. In the presence of the trace of the armoured spectre, the priest Austin assumes the role of mediator between Alphonso and Theodore, issuing the following command to the tables of Theodore’s memory: Theodore is to avenge Alphonso, ‘Not by treachery,./But casting off all thoughts of idle love,/[...]/To keep the memory of his wrongs; do justice/To his great name, and prove the blood you spring from’ (Jephson, 1782, p.51). Just as memory’s prerogative is assigned to the clown over the ghost in Walpole’s letter to Mann in

1780, so Theodore's appropriation of the command to remember exorcizes the armoured spectre, rendering it a mere corpse, a parodic ghost of an already parodic ghost. Theodore may well deliver the justice sought by Austin, but it is no longer a foregone conclusion that the dispensation of justice will buttress the memorialisation of Alphonso. It seems no coincidence that during one performance of *The Count of Narbonne*, the statue of Alphonso lay rather than stood erect on the stage, much to Jephson's own disdain: in a letter to Jephson dated 21 November 1781, Walpole wrote that 'I am sorry you are discontent with there being no standing figure of Alphonso, and that I acquiesced in its being cumbent... In the first place you seemed to have made a distinction between the statue and the tomb, and had both been represented, they would have made a confusion' (Lewis (ed.), 1980, p.461).¹⁰

Alphonso, as the trace of the ghost of king Hamlet, has lost the force of gesture as well as of speech, therefore becoming reliant upon a Catholic strain of mediation in order to create an 'embodied memory' of his benevolence. Meanwhile Hortensia's superstitious ghosts, in their 'gibbering' and 'pointing', in the end beckon the play's characters to a tomb that has been substituted for the erect and foreboding statue that was supposed to support the work of memory as instigated by Austin. In *Hamlet*, the usurper returns from the future realm of Purgatory, able to speak and gesticulate (the Ghost 'beckons' the prince to follow it in act one); in *The Count of Narbonne*, the ghost cannot issue commands – whether by speech or through gesture – and so is rendered irrevocably dead.

¹⁰ Apart from the problem of staging the statue of Alphonso, Walpole's letters to Jephson identify the influence of the contemporary audience's opinion of the play: 'In the green room I found that Hortensia's sudden death was the only incident disapproved, as we heard by intelligence from the pit; and it is to be deliberated tomorrow whether it may not be preferable to carry her off as if only in a swoon' (letter to Jephson, Sunday 18 November 1781). Walpole's suggestion was fulfilled: in the stage direction from the 1782 Dublin edition, Hortensia 'Falls in the arms of her attendants' (Jephson, 1782, p.57) while in the 1781 London edition, Hortensia '*Falls on the body of Adelaide*' (Jephson, 1781, p.80).

The Ghost of ‘Admiral Hosier’s Ghost’

Walpole’s appraisal of the failure to create an ‘embodied memory’ for the benevolent Alphonso resonates with the comments of Hannah More, who recounted her experience of a recital of Richard Glover’s ‘Admiral Hosier’s Ghost’ in a letter to her sister dated 16 June 1785. As More noted, among the audience members was Horace Walpole. Recalling the circumstances surrounding the demise of Robert Walpole, More wrote: ‘It was a very curious circumstance to see his son listening to the recital of it with so much complacency. Such is the effect of the lapse of time’ (Lewis, Smith & Bennett (eds.), 1961, p.229). By 1780, Walpole’s defence of his father had ceded to the authority of the skull of Yorick; by recalling the former glory of Hamlet’s – or Claudius’s – Denmark, the clown invariably invoked a past that, by virtue of being past, could not be recuperated by any force, natural or supernatural. As the silencing of speech and the stillness of gesture circulated around the failure of spectrality, the only ghost left with its own voice was that of the partisan Whig ghost that sought political ‘vengeance’ on Robert Walpole for the untimely deaths of Admiral Hosier and his men. As More’s letter reveals, any notion of Robert Walpole as the guardian of English liberty sunk further into the past; Horace’s own demeanour was marked by a similar failure of speech.

CHAPTER TWO

COUNTENANCING GOTHIC SHAKESPEARE: PHYSIOGNOMY AND PASSION IN GOTHIC ROMANCE AND DRAMA

There is, perhaps, no employment which the human mind will with so much avidity pursue, as the discovery of a concealed passion, as the tracing the varieties and progress of a perturbed soul.
(Baillie, 2001, p.73)

For Joanna Baillie, writing in her ‘Introductory Discourse’ to *A Series of Plays: in which it is attempted to delineate the stronger passions of the mind* (1798), the delineation of the mind’s ‘stronger passions’ was imperative to the recuperation of the tragic mode as represented on the stage. As Jeffrey N. Cox and Michael Gamer outline in their introduction to *The Broadview Anthology of Romantic Drama*, the theatre at the end of the eighteenth century was one that popularised and legitimated new modes (such as melodrama, burletta and hippodrama) as well as reviving tragedy. At the same time, audiences were generally not faced with the dilemma of choosing one genre over another, for they would often attend the theatre to watch a number of modes at one sitting while also enjoying performances by singers and magicians between the acts (Cox and Gamer, 2003, xv). While tragedy appeared in the midst of the vast spectrum of staged entertainments, Cox and Gamer’s endorsement of Joanna Baillie as a canonical Romantic playwright serves to buttress their counterargument to the so-called ‘death of tragedy’ thesis. Even the work of Bertrand Evans, whose *Gothic Drama from Walpole to Shelley* (1947) advocated the recognition of a dramatic Gothic mode beyond the pages of Radcliffean romance and reaching the stage, demonstrates a reluctance to equate the emergent Gothic mode with tragic form; as Evans writes, late eighteenth-century and Romantic playwrights ‘could not

create whole Hamlets, Iagos, Richards, or Macbeths, but they could reproduce some of the more violent actions and reactions' (Evans, 1947, n251). While critical assumptions that the Romantic stage produced nothing of cultural value have promulgated 'Romanticism' as a literary movement, the example of Baillie provides sufficient proof of a carefully orchestrated revival of tragedy. Under the auspices of Baillie, 'tragedy' denoted a mode that extolled 'the passions', where 'passion' is defined as psychological depth achieved by complex characterisation. But while our own interdisciplinary modernity can safely recover tragedy at the same time as it accords value to new stage presences, Baillie's motivation for recuperating tragedy is marked by her anxiety surrounding the loss of 'depth' which attended the rise of new stage entertainments. Arguing that contemporary tragedy has fallen foul of the spirit of the burlesque, Baillie's 'Introductory Discourse' observes a propensity towards what might be termed the 'melodramatic' representation of dramatic character; heroes are made to 'exceed in courage and fire what the standard of humanity will agree to', while villains delight in the 'very love of villainy itself' (Baillie, 2001, pp.88-89). In an extended footnote on the function of the hero in the burlesque mode, Baillie elaborates on her disdain:

Let us in good earnest believe that a man is capable of achieving all that human courage can achieve, and we will suffer him to talk of impossibilities. Amidst all their pomp of words, therefore, our admiration of such heroes is readily excited, (for the understanding is more easily deceived than the heart,) but how stands our sympathy affected? (Baillie, 2001, p.88)

At the same time, Baillie's contention that burlesque imitations of tragedy leave sympathy cold reveals her commitment to the aesthetic of 'sympathetick curiosity', the sense of fellow-feeling which turns upon the inquisitive energy of readers and spectators to seek the 'discovery of a concealed passion'. The process of detection and discovery is contingent upon complex characterisation: in the case of her tragedy

on love, *Count Basil*, Baillie explains that the chief passion is ‘grafted’ not onto the familiar countenances of lovers, but on men of a ‘firm, thoughtful, reserved turn of mind’ whose passions betray the expectations promulgated by physiognomic discourse (Baillie, 2001, p.107). The combination of complex characterisation and psychological depth produces a play in which the violent progress of dominant passions can be rendered visible. *Count Basil*, however, pits the tragic passions against performed passions, as the eponymous protagonist is the site upon which the authentic passion of love and the performed passion of valour are portrayed. In Act one, scene two, Count Basil is represented as a valorous soldier whose acts in battle rouse the courageous passions: as his confidant Rosinberg postulates, ‘When Basil fights he wields a thousand swords;/For `tis their trust in his unshaken mind,/O’erwatching all the changes of the field,/Calm and inventive midst the battle’s storm,/Which makes his soldiers bold’ (Baillie, 2001, 1.2.32-36). The army general’s imperative, in short, is not only to be bold but to embolden others, and the remainder of the play examines the intercession of love and its effects on the Count and his soldiers through Basil’s infatuation with Victoria, daughter of the Duke of Mantua. Basil’s subsequent refusal to march his troops out of Mantua and into the services of Emperor Charles V at the battle of Pavia fuels his desiring to the point that, in the third act of the play, he attempts to perform the role of a wounded soldier at a masked ball. Baillie’s irony at this point is unmistakable; a masked woman mistakenly believes Basil’s feigned wounds to be the sign of manly valour – ‘valiant soldier,/Thy wound doth gall thee sorely’ (Baillie, 2001, 3.3.171-172) – and yet the level of Basil’s desire undermines his dissimulation, for Basil’s wound is in the head, the heart, ‘`Tis ev’rywhere, where medicine cannot cure’ (Baillie, 2001, 3.3.176-177). But as the masked woman reveals herself as Victoria, Baillie allows the force of Basil’s passion

to undercut the linguistic composition of soldierly passion itself. As Victoria leaves the ball, Basil censures himself: 'O! What a fool am I that had no power/To follow her, and urge th' advantage on./Be gone unmanly fears! I must be bold' (Baillie, 2001, 3.3.202-204). Displacing the passion of boldness from the military to the amatory context, the passion of boldness is rendered significantly weaker as it becomes increasingly individualistic: that is, the imperative to embolden others is superseded by sexual desire, rendering boldness as the inauthentic performed passion and love as the real and tragic passion. The tragic element of the play assumes full force as the violent progress of amatory passion reverberates through the Count's army as the threat of mutiny carries them to the brink of 'frantick' passion. Figured by Rosinberg as a group with 'forms with frantick gesture agitate' (Baillie, 2001, 3.1.50) and by Basil as figurative regicides when he commands his troop to either obey or assassinate him - 'The man who slays me, but an angry soldier,/Acting in passion, like the frantick son,/Who struck his sire, and wept' (Baillie, 2001, 3.2.70-72) – the absence of the emboldening cipher of valour carries the troop to the brink of rebellion. That Basil succeeds in quelling the prospect of rebellion by simulating the character of the valiant general he once was is testament to the continued force and inefficacy of dissimulation as a mode of rousing passion; Basil is proclaimed once more as 'Our gallant general' following his comparison of his troop to a tribe of banditti, but his continued desire for Victoria culminates in the revelation that although 'roaring thunders' and 'clashing steel,/Welcome once more', he is left to 'play the brave man o'er again' (Baillie, 2001, 3.3.239). In other words, by playing 'brave', Basil concedes to the substitution of the simulacrum of courageous passion for its authentic equivalent, and his suicide following the revelation that his troops have missed the battle of Pavia leads Baillie to the conclusion that Basil's army is 'roused with the

loss of a beloved leader and indignant at any idea of disgrace being attached to him' (Baillie, 2001, p.107). Suicide marks the culmination of the violence inflicted by tragic passion. But, for Baillie, writing in the 'Introductory Discourse', Basil's troop is 'roused' not merely by their love for their general, but roused into complicity with the crime of suicide; as Baillie pleads, 'I should be extremely sorry if...it should be supposed that I mean to countenance suicide...Let it be considered, that whatever I have inserted there, which can at all raise any suspicions of this kind, is put into the mouths of rude, uncultivated soldiers, who are roused with the loss of a beloved leader...' (Baillie, 2001, p.107). Baillie's caveat, that her presentation of self-slaughter does not 'countenance suicide', offers a distinction between the crime of suicide and the theatrical appropriation of suicide as the consequence of the failure to regulate tragic passion.

As a crime, suicide was punished by the State through the seizure of property, although one writer challenged the efficacy of targeting property as a method of punishing those men who had become 'deaf to the voice of God' and indifferent to the rule of law; as William Eden writes in his 1771 book *Principals of Penal Law*, the suicide's indifference rendered the confiscation of property as 'ineffectual and absurd', adding that it is 'cruel also and unjust thus to heap sufferings on the head of innocence, by punishing the Child for the loss of its parent, or aggravating the distress of a widow, because she hath been deserted by her husband' (Eden, 1771, p.228). A short essay entitled 'Suicide: a dissertation' (1790), written by Edmund Burton, elaborates on the detriment to society caused by suicide for, as the essay's subtitle, 'Descend into yourself', suggests, suicides violated the natural law's prerogative of living for the common good and turned increasingly to individual gratification. Such a violation was, in the 1790s, viewed as a threat to the buffers of collectivity, for:

if an individual, who, by being bound to promote society, and therefore bound to promote his own existence, commits a murder upon himself, the contagion of example, supposing the person to bear a conspicuous rank in the state, will be spread through the subordinate distinctions of ranking, and inferior minds will suppose it to be by no means contrary to moral principles, to do what one more intelligent than themselves has done...(Burton, 1790, p.10)

While Eden and Burton consider the efficacy of the law and the threat posed to the state by suicide respectively, Baillie's appropriation of suicide assigns greater significance to the origin of which suicide is the effect: that origin is tragic passion, whose violence against performed passion endorses its authenticity. Moreover, the triumph of tragic passion should, for Baillie, occur despite the stage's increased focus on providing entertainment, for her contention that the 'human mind will with so much avidity pursue...a concealed passion' announces not merely the revival of tragedy; it also marks the inception of an ideal audience attuned more to the sophistication of tragic theatre than to the entertainments offered by burlesque performance.

If burlesque is marked by the enjoyment of surfaces, and tragedy is privileged as the revival of psychological depth, contemporary reviews of Baillie's plays as scripts to be read identify a problem of privilege that is amplified when the Shakespearean provenance of the passions is invoked against the melodramatic turn. For Baillie herself the practice of tracing the course of a single passion signalled the return to Shakespeare's commitment to delineating the operations of the mind: 'Shakespeare, more than any of our poets, gives peculiar and appropriate distinction to the characters of his tragedies. The remarks I have made, in regard to the little variety of character to be met with in tragedy, apply not to him' (Baillie, 2001, p.113). And yet, apologies on the conduct of Shakespeare as distinct from Baillie pervade positive and negative reviews alike. One review, from *Literary Leisure* (dated Thursday 30 January, 1800) praises Shakespeare's ethical approach to the passions but falls short of proposing that

his talent for ‘marking the almost insensible motives which operate to produce a deviation from virtue’ (in Baillie, 2001, p.425) constitutes a critical method; rather, Shakespeare’s ‘impulse’ and the happy occurrence of the ‘master-strokes of nature in the process of composition’ are evidence that the incidents of his plays were not presented as ‘undeniable proofs of his exquisite researches into the human heart’ (in Baillie, 2001, p.435). While the same review congratulates Baillie for advancing morality in light of the ‘Blue Beards, the Pizarros, the Castle Spectres of the English stage’ and the ‘wild ravings of German drama’ (in Baillie, 2001, p.428), other reviewers challenged Baillie’s philosophy of mind: an 1803 essay for the *Edinburgh Review* objected to the deformation of dramatic character ensuing from the presentation of a single passion, concluding that ‘The growth of the passion is not the growth of the mind’ (in Baillie, 2001, p.433). Here, the language of the reviewer’s distinction between ‘passion’ and ‘mind’ verges on a reappraisal of Baillie’s manifesto as an unwitting exponent of melodrama: Baillie abandons real characters for ‘personifications’ (in Baillie, 2001, p.426); the integrity of physiognomy becomes a convenient repository in which to heap the ‘impenetrable shade of character’ (in Baillie, 2001, p.426), and the moral mission of tragedy is offset by the view that readers and audiences are not attuned to challenging psychological exposition, for ‘Plays have, for the most part, no moral effect at all; and they are seen and read for amusement and curiosity only (in Baillie, 2001, p.437).

Taken together, the ‘Introductory Discourse’, *Count Basil*, and the reviews that challenged the efficacy of staging tragedy for audiences seeking entertainment offer coverage of the problem of postulating authentic passion. While Baillie’s solution was to excite the ‘sympathetick curiosity’ of readers and audiences, Ann Radcliffe presented, as her solution, the Gothic romance. In *The Italian* (1797) the

machinations of the Catholic monk Schedoni are curbed upon his realisation that his murderous intent has been directed to his 'daughter' Ellena Rosalba, whose betrothal to Vincentio di Vivaldi has incurred the wrath of the phallic Marchesa di Vivaldi. Horrified by his narrow escape from the committing of infanticide, Schedoni takes Ellena back to Naples, but his remorse seizes him as he, Ellena and their guide witness a burlesque of the story of the murder of Virginia by her father Appius. As Radcliffe writes, 'The people above were acting what seemed to have been intended for a tragedy, but what their strange gestures, uncouth recitation, and incongruous countenances, had transformed into a comedy' (Radcliffe 1998c: p.274): by allowing her characters to watch a comedy adapted from a tragedy, Radcliffe enters the debate over the location of tragedy in an economy that enjoys the entertainment offered by melodrama. What follows is the complex fashioning of different audiences – audiences that do not universally validate Baillie's future idea that the human mind avidly pursues 'the discovery of a concealed passion' - as Schedoni, Ellena and their companion offer their responses to the play. For the guide, the performance appeals to the melodramatic drive to create visually striking stage villains and victims - 'what a scoundrel! what a villain! See! he has murdered his own daughter!' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.274) – with the effect that he 'suffered under the strange delights of artificial grief' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.275). Schedoni, himself on the cusp of villainy during volumes one and two of Radcliffe's romance, is the only spectator to recognise the demise of Appius and Virginia as the source of the performance, and yet his spectatorship produces a more problematic response. Roused by his guide's announcement of villainy on the stage,

the indignation of Schedoni was done away by other emotions; he turned his eye upon the stage, and perceived that the actors were performing the story of Virginia. It was at the moment when she was dying in the arms of her father, who was holding up the poniard, with which he had stabbed her. The feelings

of Schedoni, at this instant, inflicted a punishment almost worthy of the crime he had meditated (Radcliffe, 1998c, pp.274-275)

The contrast between the guide and Schedoni, however, comprises more than the discrimination of imitated and real violence, for the onstage violence provides the culmination of opposing views, against as well as in favour of melodrama, regarding the affective progress of 'passion'. In the first case, it is not 'artificial grief' but, rather, the subsumption of it to the overriding sensation of 'strange delights' which marks the guide's appraisal of onstage violence; in other words, he appears as the ideal spectator as originally envisaged by Edmund Burke in his *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1759).

For Burke, the distinction between real and imitated distresses is a complex one that endeavours to contain the prospect of 'pleasure' resulting from witnessing scenes of real violence; if 'terror', when at some distance from the perceiving subject, produces 'delight', then 'pleasure' accompanies pity, 'because it arises from love and social affection' (Burke, 1998, p.42). 'Delight' is the residue which attends the removal of pain and signals the ebbing of Sublime terror into a faint trace, while 'positive pleasure' belongs to societal passions that include 'how we are affected by the feelings of our fellow creatures in circumstances of real distress' (or what Burke terms as 'Sympathy') and 'Imitation'. According to Burke's binary logic, all tragedies, by virtue of their status as 'imitation', produce pleasure, just as the diminution of real danger produces 'delight'. Burke's subsequent call to 'Chuse a day on which to represent the most sublime and affecting tragedy...and when you have collected your audience, let it be reported that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining square' (Burke, 1998, p.43) allows for the substitution of one social passion – the 'triumph of real sympathy' – in place of the pleasurable effect of imitation. At the same time, the guide is himself a burlesque of

Burke's spectators, as he is pleased by melodramatic scenes while he is roused by the 'real' distress of a horse suffering under the violence of Schedoni's ill-treatment (he was 'half-angry, to observe an animal, of which he had the care, ill treated') (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.275). In the absence of imitation in the tragic mode, the guide becomes representative of audiences furnished with the claims to heroism and villainy which are to be found in melodrama. For Radcliffe, aficionados of melodrama are attuned to an absurd didacticism which encourages the detection of villainy at any cost; the guide remains unaware of the correlation between the father of Virginia and Schedoni but his reading, framed by his ruling dramaturgical taxonomy, nevertheless renders Schedoni's ill-treatment of a horse an act of cruelty which marks the monk as a villain akin to the infanticide Appius.

As the guide enjoys melodrama, it is Ellena who provides the passage's alternative taxonomy of anti-melodrama. While she merely 'consented to endure' the performance, Ellena's gaze quickly turns to the force of Schedoni's passions:

Ellena, struck with the action, and with the contrast which it seemed to offer to what she believed to have been the late conduct of Schedoni towards herself, looked at him with most expressive tenderness, and as his glance met hers, she perceived, with surprise, the changing emotions of his soul, and the inexplicable character of his countenance. Stung to the heart, the Confessor furiously spurred his horse, that he might escape from the scene... (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.275)

By deferring to the role of the spectator of a melodrama within the strictures of Gothic romance rather than the actor on the stage, Schedoni is recuperated from the burlesque framework endorsed by the guide. In this reading, genre resolves the histrionic problem of performed passion faced by the tragedian, and Ellena's gazing upon Schedoni buttresses the Gothic genre's inheritance of the tragic mode: it is not just that Schedoni suffers the throes of passion; it is that he is *seen* in an impassioned state outside of the confines of a stage which could give rise to overacting. Schedoni's

passions are genuine, free from histrionic gesture, precisely because he is the subject of the page rather than the stage; he is a tragic character whose undirected physiognomy marks him as a Gothic Shakespearean subject. And yet, the persistence of melodrama remains as the pro- and anti-melodrama positions converge as ‘Stung to the heart, the Confessor furiously spurred his horse’. Schedoni’s spurring of the guide’s horse appears, to Ellena’s gaze, as the effect of ‘the changing emotions of his soul, and the inexplicable character of his countenance’, and of his incontrovertible need to evade Ellena’s reading of his mind through his body, but it also advances the guide’s simplified reading of him as a melodramatic villain. The guide, in his reading of Schedoni’s act of animal cruelty as a mode of villainy akin to that of the infanticide Appius, is representative of an audience which longs for melodrama after its progress on the stage has ended. Conversely, Ellena represents the ideal tragic audience that Baillie would seek one year later, for her ability to perceive, through physiognomy, the inward tumults of passion signal the inscription of Schedoni as a tragic character. The Gothic Shakespearean subject, then, never fully gains the privilege of one taxonomy (authentic ‘passion’) over another (‘melodrama’); instead, it emerges through complex networks of authors, playwrights, readers and audiences whose refusal to assign hierarchical difference to ‘real’ and performed passions enables the portrayal of real passion in the Gothic romance in the first place. Furthermore, any critical effort to privilege ‘high’ tragedy over ‘low’ melodrama will ironically repeat the position of Radcliffe’s guide, creating the category of ‘melodrama’ itself as a villain, while tragedy and Gothic romance are cast in the role of heroine.

This chapter will conclude by arguing that the fate of Schedoni becomes literally inscribed on his face, and that his face signals his necessary dispensability for the sake of the new bourgeois female subjectivity. It is not coincidental that the publication of

The Italian sits squarely within the increasing popularity of translations of Johann Kaspar Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy*, published and reprinted throughout the 1780s and the 1790s. Lavater's essays postulated that the pairing of religious and aesthetic discourses would lead to an increased capacity to read good and evil on the face while also producing the concept of limited redemption for officers of vice; as legibility requires an idea of stasis, so the permanent signs of the face fashioned all villains as identical and eminently dispensable. In contradistinction, Schedoni, while dispensable, is the culmination of the fashioning of tragic villainy that can be traced in the new art of Shakespeare criticism, with particular reference to *Macbeth*. Writing in 1769, Elizabeth Montagu created a Macbeth vulnerable to attacks of remorse, arguing that Macbeth's descent into vice is fuelled by irresolution and not by embracing the perverse image of manliness. The *Macbeth* criticism of William Richardson, meanwhile, pointed to contemporary philosophical disquisitions on the nature of the mind, creating a Macbeth whose overheated passion for power becomes the mark of a man whose mind settles into the violent progress of immoral passion. In other words, Montagu's remorseful villain becomes, in Richardson's thesis, an object lesson on the effects which attend the failure of the subject to tutor himself in the regulation of excess emotion. But while the tragic Macbeth of Montagu and Richardson is bolstered by authentic passion, Schedoni's subject position as a tragic character is consistently undermined by his interlocutors' sole reliance on his physiognomy; characters such as the guide and the assassin Spalatro read villainy on Schedoni's face and behaviour (the former because of his love of melodrama, the latter because he is himself a villain), while Ellena's efforts to detect tragic passion in the monk are halted by her struggle to penetrate the psychological depth that would give rise to the marks of passion that appear on his face. The problem of 'depth' posed by the Gothic recalls

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's reading of the surface/depth dichotomy in texts such as *The Italian*. For Sedgwick, the Gothic does not exclude considerations of depth, but the proposition that depth is legible is internally contradictory, for legibility relies solely upon surfaces that conceal, as well as reveal, the complex motions of the mind. As Sedgwick writes:

...the "character", whatever it is, may be written on countenance, brow, fancy, mind or heart – in, one presumes, roughly descending order of visibility and publicness – but its veracity is not at all proportional to how private it is or how deep it lies; to the contrary, the very image of writing or engraving seems to insist that the ground be seen strictly as surface, whatever its real dimensional status. (Sedgwick, 1986, p.153)

If the eighteenth-century Macbeth is invested with psychological depth that instructs audiences to moderate their own passions, the Gothic Macbeth is faced with the irresolvable tension between privileging psychological depth as 'real dimensional status' and the insistence 'that the ground be seen strictly as surface'. Physiognomy in Gothic Shakespeare is at once the portal to, and the surface which conceals, such depth.

Historicising 'passion'

Ellena's observations on the changing countenance of Schedoni during the staging of the death of Virginia bolster a theory of the mind, and thereby register the historical juncture which placed increasing importance on physiognomy as a critical practice for reading the passions of the mind. At the same time, it is important to note that physiognomy is but one stage in a critical discourse in which the history of passion once occupied not the mind, but the humoral body of early modern subjectivity. Tracts such as Thomas Nashe's *The Terrors of the Night* (1594) track the progress of the black bile of melancholy, thickening to the point that it sends erroneous images to the imagination. Nashe's melancholy is also defined by duration: the first form of

melancholy is ‘one that, digested by our liuer, swimmeth like oyle aboute water, & is rightly tearmed Womens melancholy, which lasteth but for an houre’, while the second form ‘corrupteth all the blood, and is the causer of lunacie’ (Nashe, 1966, p.357). As Gail Kern Paster suggests, the period’s advancement of the Aristotelian properties of ‘Soul’ allowed a degree of similitude between the passions of (wo)men and animals (the ‘sensitive’ soul) in contradistinction to the ‘vegetable’ souls of plants and animals and the ‘intellectual’ aspects of man. For Nashe, the effects of melancholy can be brought to bear on this similitude, as he professes that he need not ‘discourse how many encumbred with it haue thought themselues birdes and beasts, with feathers, hornes, and hydes’ (Nashe, 1966, p.355). Thus the melancholy of Falstaff in *1 Henry IV* is likened to that of a cat, while the newly recuperated valour of Macbeth is likened to a baited bear’s appeal to self-preservation (Paster, 2004, pp.113-116; 121). As recent scholarship, headed by Paster and Mary Floyd-Wilson in their collection *Reading the Early Modern Passions* (2004) shows, the early modern construction of passion was determined beyond the relations between men and beasts, looking outwards to the cosmos as well as more locally in environmental conditioning. Paster uses the example of melancholy and discusses its relation to the elemental forces of earth, water, air and fire (with their correspondent qualities of coldness, wetness, dryness and heat), concluding with the postulation that Falstaff’s melancholy produces a coldness that brings him closer to the grave that is the earth (Paster, 2004, p.118). Mary Floyd-Wilson’s essay on ‘English Mettle’ goes further than Paster by observing the nationalist agendas of writers such as Thomas Hill and Shakespeare himself in *Henry V*: the moist and cold bodies that typically mark English temperament logically concede to a lack of ‘mettle’ in situations of war, but the English victory over the French at Agincourt indicates a peculiar arousal of heat

and thickness of humour that are characteristic of barbarian or ‘goth’ invaders (Floyd-Wilson, 2004, p.137). According to Floyd-Wilson, such mettle is ‘English’ by virtue of its moderated constitution, for it tames and cools – but not excessively so – the excess of heat among the Scottish and Welsh cohorts in Henry’s troop that are typified as goth-like in their barbarianism (Floyd-Wilson, 2004, p.138). English mettle, in short, successfully steers clear of the fusing of ‘English’ and ‘Gothic’ which would mark the loosely libertarian causes of post-Glorious revolution writers such as Addison, and the eventual inclusion of Shakespeare’s name into the anti-Gallic, pro-English and pro-supernatural bent of ‘Gothic’ bardolatry in the light of Elizabeth Montagu and Horace Walpole.

But while the meaning of ‘mettle’ has remained largely unchanged since the composition of *Henry V*, the semantic shift concerning ‘melancholy’ signals the difference between the passions of Shakespeare as rooted in the body and eighteenth-century Gothic’s preoccupation with the passions as rooted in the mind. Therefore, the eighteenth century’s reading of Shakespeare is the effect of a Shakespeare who exceeds his early modern locale and is thereby rendered legible in the burgeoning discipline of psychology. Samuel Johnson’s *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) acknowledges the noun ‘melancholy’ as a bodily ailment caused by viscous blood, but it turns to the textual practice of appropriation, citing the humoral melancholy of Jacques from *As You Like It*. Johnson quotes Jacques’s remark that ‘I have neither the scholar’s melancholy, which is emulation; nor the musician’s, which is fantastical...it is a melancholy of mine own...which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness’ - in order to privilege the noun ‘melancholy’ as a disease of the mind, ‘a kind of madness, in which the mind is always fixed on one object’ (Johnson 1755-6). Adjectival definitions of ‘melancholy’ endorse the new

locus of passion in the mind, as terms such as ‘gloomy’, ‘dismal’, ‘fanciful’ and ‘habitually dejected’ are made to buttress the melancholy of Jacques in cultural work that naturalises Shakespeare as an exponent of emotions formed in and by the mind. Moreover, Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* signals the potential for the new emotional script to exist under the auspices of the term ‘Gothic’. Walpole’s text concludes with Manfred’s murder of his daughter, Matilda, in a bid to prevent her marriage to Otranto’s rightful heir, Theodore, and Theodore’s subsequent commitment to perpetual mourning:

Theodore’s grief was too fresh to admit the thought of another love; and it was not till after frequent discourses with Isabella, of his dear Matilda, that he was persuaded he could know no happiness but in the society of one with whom he he could forever indulge the melancholy that had taken possession of his soul. (Walpole, 1996, p.115)

If early modern melancholy is a disease of the body which either ‘lasteth but an houre’ or culminates in lunacy (as Thomas Nashe complained), melancholy in eighteenth-century Gothic fictions marked a state of mind which, although occurring against the volition of the subject (it took ‘possession’ of Theodore’s soul), is embraced (‘indulged’), through a process of ritualisation, for the sake of honouring the dead. As Angela Wright has noted, the example of melancholy extends to the Gothic fictions of the 1780s, with the publication of Sophia Lee’s *The Recess* (1785), where melancholy is signalled by the substitution of portraits of lost love objects for their living presence. Thus Ellinor, one of the fictional daughters of Mary Queen of Scots in *The Recess*, is so consumed by grief for the loss of the Earl of Essex that she defers to his portrait at the moment of her death (Wright, 2004, p.21). Whether freely ‘indulged’ (Walpole) or the effect of madness (Lee), the Gothic passions remain firmly entrenched in the mind.

Like the progress of passion from Shakespeare to eighteenth-century Gothic, the trajectory through which physiognomy became a reliable method of reading the motions of the mind addresses the problem of historical and cultural contingency. Nashe, writing in 1594, extols his view that physiognomy bears no relation to the passions. Countering a view that the face bespeaks the moral composition of the mind, Nashe offers an alternative stance, that faces ‘which sundrie times with surfet, greefe, studie...are most deformedlye welked and crumpled; there is no more to bee gathered ...that they haue beene layd vp in slouens presse, and with miscarriage and misgouernment are so fretted and galled’ (Nashe, 1966, p.371). The surface of the face countenances the abuse of the body through slovenly living and not psychological depth wrought by the tumults of conscience. By contrast, the union of mind and body can be traced in the English translation of Charles Le Brun’s work on physiognomy, adding an aesthetic dimension to the development of passions that could decode the composition of the mind. The title page of Le Brun’s short treatise, *A method to learn to design the passions* (1734), reveals the aesthetic influence, for Le Brun sought not merely to represent the countenances of passion, but to design a pedagogical tool which would advance his own field of art and craft. Le Brun, as the title page reveals, was ‘chief painter to the *French King*’ as well as ‘Chancellor and Director of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture’. Le Brun’s English translator, John Williams, promoted the aesthetic portrayal of the passions, commending the work to the royal physician and art connoisseur Hans Sloane. Disciplinary readings have, for Williams, contracted the scope of the passions; while philosophy has encouraged the subjection of passion to Reason, medical discourse has turned to curing men of passion’s overwhelming hold on the body, and yet ‘no one has hitherto thought of making it his particular study with an eye to Painting, in order

to Express all those emotions which outwardly manifest themselves' (Le Brun, 1734, Preface). Le Brun's turn to painting constitutes the wholesale embrace of passion, for he asserts and rejects the Cartesian dualism which informed his historical present. If, for Descartes, the mind of Man is fundamentally rational and his body an efficient machine, Le Brun rejects Descartes's materiality by arguing that the pineal gland in the brain is not the core of the passions and asserting instead the unity of body and soul. That the soul and body are resistant to splitting is, for Le Brun, revealed by tracing the creation and movement of 'Animal spirits': the brain receives 'spirits' that have been heated by the circulatory process and are then purified in the pineal gland; the spirits, while in the brain, form a juice that is sent into the nervous system which, in turn, proportionally releases the juices into the musculature (Le Brun, 1734, pp.13-14). The passions produced by the mind-body collaboration fall into two categories: the concupiscent (or those 'simple' passions aligned firmly to the present moment) and the irascible (or 'compound' passions roused by a concern for the future). Concupiscent passions include love and hatred: in the former case of love the pulse beats normally, a 'genial warmth' is experienced in the breast and aids the 'easy digestion of food to the stomach'; hatred rouses opposing symptoms that include an irregular pulse, an internal sensation of 'sharp and piercing fire' and the obstruction of the digestive process (Le Brun, 1734, p.19). Irascible (or 'compound') passions produce actions that preserve the subject when faced with danger, so that 'Fear may be expressed by a man flying away' and Anger 'by a man clinching his fists and seeming to strike' (Le Brun, 1734, p.20). Different kinds of passion, however, can be discerned by the levelling effect of physiognomy as the face becomes the site whereby the passions manifest themselves most clearly. A complexion in love, for instance gives off a vermilion hue, moderately raised eyebrows and a 'blooming

blush', while a complexion in fright is marked by excessively raised eyebrows, hair standing on end and a 'pale and livid' face (Le Brun, 1734, pp.31, 36). In short, the union of body and soul is rendered possible through an increasing reliance upon a form of stylization that is postulated as the natural conclusion of the history of the passions.

If the Cartesian passions are moral aberrations to be exorcised for the sake of Reason, the post-Cartesian interest in the relation between the passions and physiognomy harbours potential for the emerging discourse of aesthetics during the eighteenth century. The example of Burke, for example, reveals that so-called rational men in fact function in the wider society of the passions, and that his accounts of Beauty and Sublimity expand on what 'mere reason' failed to explain. Introducing the topic of 'sympathy' in the *Philosophical Enquiry*, Burke maintains that rational explanations of tragic scenes on the stage fall short of the mind's impassioned operations: Reason stipulates that the fictionality of tragedy permits the free reign of pleasure in the spectator, and yet the experience of sympathy shows that 'the influence of reason in producing the passions is nothing so near so extensive as it is commonly believed' (Burke, 1998, p.41). In common with Le Brun, Burke adapts the emerging discourse of physiognomy in freeing passion from 'mere reason' through the example of the early modern philosopher Tomasso Campanella. As Burke writes, Campanella is distinctive as a composite of the functions of the physiognomist and of the actor; while searching the face for its corresponding passion, Campanella would mimic the faces and gestures and approximate the passion felt 'as effectually as if he had been changed into the very men' (Burke, 1998, p.120). In the society of the passions, however, the talent of the physiognomist to create authentic passion out of

imitation becomes the ability of all perceiving subjects. Burke writes of his own endeavours in physiognomy:

I have often observed, that on mimicking the looks and gestures, of angry, or placid, or frighted, or daring men, I have involuntarily found my mind turned to that passion whose appearance I endeavoured to imitate; nay, I am convinced it is hard to avoid it; though one strove to separate the passion from its correspondent gestures. Our minds and bodies are so closely and intimately connected, that one is incapable of pain or pleasure without the other (Burke, 1998, pp.120-121)

In this extension to his comparison of tragedy to public executions in his chapter on sympathy, the impassioned mind begins an act of imitation that customarily falls within the province of reason, and yet, ‘mere reason’ cannot account for the subsequent life that the passions take in the mind and body. Reason strives to enact the separation of passion from gesture but, as Burke would have it, the recourse to reason is little more than a custom (or what Burke terms ‘a second nature’) that is always already poised between pain and pleasure (Burke, 1998, p.94). While the faces Burke assumes resemble the stylized countenances of Le Brun (‘angry’, ‘placid’, ‘frighted’), his contention that both his mind and face ‘involuntarily’ turned to the real passions borne by his skill as a physiognomist is testament to the naturalness of ‘sympathy’ as a category of experience that conjoins face and feeling.

In the decades following, the publication of titles such as *Treatise on the passions, so far as they regard the stage* (Samuel Foote, 1747), *Reflections upon theatrical expression in tragedy* (anonymously published in 1755) and Aaron Hill’s *An essay on the art of acting; in which, the passions are properly defined and described* (published in 1779) marked the appropriation of Le Brun’s stylized physiognomy, where the term ‘stylized’ is read as the paradoxical endeavour to trace the immateriality of Providence (or ‘the Soul’) in a reified set of countenances. Unlike Burke’s experience as a physiognomist, the proper actor must curb the process

whereby imitated passions become real, and so Hill begins his tract by outlining that the actor's mandate necessarily involves the proper acting of a passion. A good actor, according to Hill, must never attempt to imitate passions until 'his fancy has conceived so strong an image, or idea, of it, as to move the same impressive springs within his mind, which form that passion when it is undesigned and natural' (Hill, 1779, p.1). If contemporary philosophy advocated passion as a portmanteau term that explained all human behaviour, actors were invested with the ability to manipulate their minds and bodies to suit the appearance of a dramatic character's dominant disposition. Hill traces the origin and progress of Othello's jealousy in light of Iago's intimation of Cassio's and Desdemona's adultery; jealousy begins with the compounding of anger incurred by his sense of his victimisation and his pity for Desdemona, but turns to 'a struggle between fury and sorrow' as 'Jealousy extracts information, from appearances, which concur toward a proof ('I think my wife is honest – and think she is not!/I think thou art just, and think thou art not! I'll have full proof') (Hill, 1779, pp.33-34). In Hill's reading, Othello becomes the dramatic character 'Jealousy' in a process of personification whereby passion consumes Othello's identities (Moor, husband, valiant general) as part of its claim to invoke the law, but as it demands 'full proof', 'Jealousy' is itself subsumed by its status as imitation. Audiences might experience Burkean 'sympathy' for the tragic plights of Othello and Desdemona, but the peculiar agency of actors to imitate strong passions means that they never share the fate of the Moor. Performed passion never cedes to its authentic equivalent. The anonymous author of *Reflections upon theatrical expression in tragedy* concurs, advocating the study of art and sculpture in order to imitate the appearance of impassioned bodies while also cautioning against indifference to the face; articulating what would be a critical commonplace by the

time of *The Italian*'s publication in 1797, the writer suggests that 'the face is the grand index to the Mind, the Soul, and the Affections and Passions of both' and that any actor who is 'indolent or indifferent in the Study of so material a Part of Expression, is unpardonable' (Anon., 1755, pp.40-41).

Samuel Foote's treatise, however, is symptomatic of the charge that even the most respected actors were vulnerable to misrepresenting the passions and miscasting. His recollection of seeing Garrick in *King Lear*, for instance, shows that the belief that the face is but an imprint of the dominant passion(s) is insufficient to account for the tragic decline of dramatic characters. Garrick's delivery of Lear's cursing of his daughters should be acted 'with a Rage almost equal to Phrenzy', and yet his Lear is marked by unnatural turns of 'Anger and Grief' that lead to 'unmanly Sniveling' (Foote, 1747, p.16). Turning to Thomas Betterton in the role of Othello, Foote cautions Betterton against the 'Prostitution' of his excellence in imitating grief by 'hackneying the Passion, and applying it indiscriminately' when 'Anger is rather the Passion than Sorrow' (Foote, 1747, p.31). But as Foote asserts the centrality of the face to good acting, Charles Macklin's Iago presented a different problem. By playing a character whose role involves the dissimulation of honesty, Macklin's face could not convincingly assume the appearance of virtue. Foote asserts the contemporary commonplace that 'it is generally agreed that his Muscles are luckily formed for marking the villain', also noting that some critics have fashioned a spurious equivalence between the actor imitating passion and the character dissimulating passion, leading to the conclusion that Macklin looks so much the villain 'that Nature has denied him the Advantage of expressing the open, sincere, honest Man' (Foote, 1747, p.50). If this critical stance postulates that Iago enjoys greater success as an actor than the actor playing him, Foote offers a rebuttal whereby

his commitment to physiognomy is rendered provisional; as Foote writes, ‘let *Macklin’s Visage* be ever so unfortunate, I am sure he has the Art of looking more like a Rogue at one Time than another’ (Foote, 1747, p.38). The most noteworthy feature of Foote’s provisionality is that it does not so much constitute a retreat from physiognomy as it reveals that physiognomy had yet to take hold as a rigorous scientific method buttressed by the aesthetic designs of Le Brun, for Macklin’s ability to act in spite of his marks of villainy apotheosizes a model of immateriality that transcends the evidence of sense-perception. But if the fleshliness of physiognomy had reached its limit on the stage, Foote’s alternative immaterial stance proved equally dubious given its lack. Far from being substantially spiritual, Macklin’s defiance of what Nature gave him proves to be an exceptional case whereby the marks of villainy do not denote actual vice, and therefore do not curb his success on the early eighteenth-century stage.

The task of bringing authentic passion to the surface later found currency in sentimental texts, most notably Henry Mackenzie’s *The Man of Feeling* (1771), which relied on the shedding of tears as the foil to counterfeited passion. As such, this text advances Edmund Burke’s conjoining of face and feeling, surface and depth, in order to champion the cause of virtue. It must be noted, however, that critical readings of sentimental literature postulate the problem of reading depth in surface countenances in a manner akin to Sedgwick’s reading of the Gothic as the literature of surfaces. Writing of a genre that was popular between the 1740s and the 1770s, Janet Todd has argued that sensibility’s emphasis on the outpouring of emotion does not constitute psychological depth, for the fragmentary and repetitive structures of sentimental texts highlight neither ‘a moral truth [n]or impress a psychological trait’ but privilege instead the portrayal and intensification of ‘emotional effect’ (Todd, 1986, p.92).

Todd's argument is supported by her view that physiognomy augments a link between mind and body that falls short of psychological depth; sentimental protagonists meet (generally benevolent) characters with affective stories to tell, but this is merely a structural point suggesting that 'Each person encountered has a story, and his face is the book cover that may but should not belie the contents' (Todd, 1986, p.105). For Todd, references to the face in sentimental literature neither reveal nor conceal psychological depth because the distinction between 'surface' and 'content' is not identical to that between 'surface' and 'depth'. Rather, 'content' is the unfolding of more inscriptions that fulfil the promise given by the surfaces insofar as they are designed to elicit emotion from men and women of feeling, where 'men and women of feeling' comprise the readers of sentimental novels as well as their protagonists. Nevertheless, the tears of sensibility comprise an important step towards the development of psychological depth, for they offer a viable alternative to the strategy of counterfeiting virtuous dispositions. For instance, Todd's reference to physiognomy recalls the efforts of Henry Mackenzie's protagonist, Harley, in *The Man of Feeling*. In the chapter entitled 'His skill in physiognomy', Harley encounters a beggar recalling his distresses to a gentleman who, in turn, expresses his regret for not having any change to offer. Harley is soon drawn to the gentleman's face, and he offers his own money in his stead before looking again at the man's face, and he 'blessed himself for his skill in physiognomy' (Mackenzie, 1967, pp.44-45). At the same time, the problem of reading virtue in the face is highlighted by Mackenzie's omission of the details of the gentleman's face, and the wisdom of an aunt who had previously taught him 'that all's not gold that glisters' (Mackenzie, 1967, p.44). Indeed, the subsequent chapter, 'His skill in physiognomy is doubted', reveals that the gentleman and the beggar were, in fact, gamblers notorious in the streets of London

for their strategy of dissimulation in order to extort money. Harley is left with the advice that ‘you may look into them to know, whether a man’s nose be a long one or a short one’ (Mackenzie, 1967, p.53). His subsequent meeting with the distressed Miss Atkins bridges the gap between, on the one hand, the problem of interpreting virtue by relying solely upon the face and, on the other hand, reading virtue in tears. Tears rely as much on readings of surface as the marks of the face, but their emotional freight – affecting readerships as well as the characters described – offers up virtue as their transcendental signified. In works such as *The Man of Feeling*, then, tears are the manifestation of authentic passions that lie beyond the capacity for performance. In contrast to the false faces of the gentleman and the beggar, Miss Atkins’s virtue is evidenced not by the composition of her face, but by her propensity to draw tears of disdain for the virtue that has been buried alive by her social exclusion; as Harley comments, ‘there is virtue in these tears; let the fruit of them be virtue’ (Mackenzie, 1967, p.50). While it can be argued that Mackenzie refuses to allow her virtue to flourish into an autonomous ‘character’ in the modern day sense of ‘that which denotes psychological depth’, her function in the novel is to reaffirm Harley’s faith in the emotional script of sensibility despite his flawed adventures as a physiognomist. Miss Atkins assumes the role of the storyteller, recalling the sacrifice of her virtue as she is forced into prostitution but she stops her story once she observes the profuse crying of Harley (Mackenzie, 1967, p.66), whose own show of emotion casts him as the model of the ideal consumer of sentimental literature.

Such displays of authentic passion can also be found in *The Castle of Otranto*, in which tears are shed following the reunion of Theodore with his father, Jerome. Under sentence of death for aiding the escape of Isabella from her forced union with Manfred, Father Jerome intercedes and discovers the sentenced to be his own son.

Walpole's claim that 'The passions that ensued must be conceived; they cannot be painted' (Walpole, 1996, p.57) endorses sensibility as a mode that promotes the natural growth of authentic passion in the mind, in contrast to the artifice that attends performance. But while Jerome is vested with the effusion of tears that appear in sentimental texts, the succession of countenances which appear on Theodore – 'Surprise', 'doubt', 'tenderness', 'respect' – chart a teleology that, unlike Harley's misadventures as a physiognomist, reveal physiognomy to be a reliable indicator of authentic passion. Moreover, the real emotion expressed by father and son contrasts with the difficulties faced by their audience in sharing in their experience. Manfred's servants are reduced to tears, but their crying suddenly ceases as they turn to Manfred in order to gauge 'what they ought to feel'; while they do not challenge the authenticity of the scene they are witnessing, their collective response stops short of the sentimental aim to reproduce uninterrupted emotional affect in audiences of sensibility. Theodore counters this problem by turning his gaze to Manfred too, 'as if to say, Canst thou not be unmoved at such a scene is this?' (Walpole, 1996, 57). Manfred, then, is faced by two audiences, one attuned to sensibility (Theodore) and another untutored (his servants). While his anger momentarily wanes, Manfred's familiarity with performance leads him to suspect Jerome of counterfeiting the passions of sensibility, for he 'even doubted whether this discovery was not a contrivance of the friar to save the youth' (Walpole, 1996, p.57). The scenario whereby the villain Manfred is caught by the gaze of alternative audiences echoes the audiences of the death of Virginia in *The Italian* who variously cast Schedoni as both a melodramatic villain and as a tragic character susceptible to feeling. But Manfred's disavowal of sensibility means that he succeeds in denying privilege to Theodore's attempts to install him as a man of feeling. Walpole's inclusion of sensibility and

Manfred's exclusion of emotion comprises the epistemic shift between what Dale Townshend has termed 'the insensibility of alliance' that marked aristocratic privilege and the 'modern sexuality' of the emergent middle classes in England. As Townshend has argued, Walpole's own relationship with his father, although formally of privilege, is revealed to be one of affection more than duty' (Townshend, 2007, p.70), and this extra-textual fact can be brought to bear on Father Jerome's tearful reunion with his son. Manfred, as an exponent of 'the insensibility of alliance', resists displays of affection because they are deemed to exist beyond the limits demarcated by the imperative of arranged marriage. While Manfred's lack of sympathy, particularly following the death of his son, Conrad, marks him as a villain, the limits decreed by 'alliance' are happily exceeded in 'modern sexuality', which appropriates companionate pairing and emotional affect as its core values. As the first 'Gothic story' of the eighteenth century, Walpole establishes a clear distinction between virtue and villainy: if villainy schemes to preserve the insensibility of alliance, virtue is the wholesale embrace of sensibility as a legible script that attests not only to the authenticity of passion, but also to the finality of modern sexuality as the dominant episteme.

As Radcliffe's *The Italian* reveals, the end-of-century guise of physiognomy is appropriated to create or 'countenance' villains who scheme against the bourgeois virtue of companionate marriage. The physiognomy of Lavater, while creating villains, also creates a buffer for Radcliffe's heroes whereby the villain's face also prophesies his inability to reform himself under the new regime. In the specific case of *The Italian*, the heterogeneous nature of readers and audiences means that Schedoni's casting as a tragic character invested with psychological depth is undercut by alternative readings that position him as a villain akin to Walpole's Manfred.

Sedgwick's thesis on the problem of reading depth via the sole reliance on surfaces remains pertinent, but we might add that Schedoni's suspicion that he may be Ellena's father, coupled with his subsequent perception of Ellena and Vivaldi's union, become mere expedients to the insensibility of alliance at the same time as they attempt to install him as a tragic character. As Radcliffe writes of Schedoni following his near-murder of Ellena, 'An alliance with the illustrious house of Vivaldi, was above his loftiest hope of advancement, and this event he had himself nearly prevented by the very means which had been adopted, at the expense of every virtuous consideration, to obtain an inferior promotion' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.243). While Manfred's villainy is confirmed to his exclusion of audiences registering their knowledge of emotional affect, Schedoni remains in thrall to various audiences that potentially read both sincerity and performance respectively in his passionate displays. Schedoni himself is never permitted the agency to inscribe himself as either a villain or as a tragic man of feeling.

By the end of the eighteenth century the numerous Europe-wide printings and translations of Reverend Johann Kaspar Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* (first published in England in 1783) sought to reconcile the irreducible materiality of the face with the design of Providence, thereby fashioning the idea that God Himself countenanced the aesthetics of the face. In the chapter in volume two entitled 'Of the universal excellence of the form of Man', Lavater's commitment to both science and religion is repeatedly articulated in his appraisals of physiognomy: the 'belief of the indispensability, and individuality, of all men, and in our own metaphysical indispensability and individuality, is, again, one of the unacknowledged, the noble fruits of physiognomy; a fruit pregnant with seed most precious, whence shall spring lenity and love' (Lavater, 1789, Volume 2: p.7). 'Lenity' and 'love', in their turn, can

be countenanced only by the ethical gaze of the physiognomist. For Lavater, the ethics of physiognomy must recall the superiority of 'Man' to beasts (in contrast the early modern equivalence of human and animal passions), and the concomitant view that 'Man' can never descend to the order of beasts, however much his physiognomy and his descent into vice might be deemed inhuman. While virtue and vice are – according to the Providential-scientific teleology of physiognomy - countenanced in and by the face, Lavater allows room for two notable exceptions: the unethical physiognomist and figures of dissimulation. The unethical physiognomist, for example, 'may appear to have approached the sublime ideal of Grecian art', but his failure to acknowledge that the 'deformed, the foolish, the apes, the hypocrites, the vulgar of mankind' are but men themselves marks the revelation of his own villainy, proving 'as distorted as the most ridiculous, most depraved, moral, or physical, monster appears to be in his eyes' (Lavater, 1789, Volume 2: pp.9-10). This is not to say that physiognomy falters as unethical practice ensues, for Lavater's presupposition is that the bad physiognomist's proximity to Grecian art makes him more open to the recuperation of virtue. However, the new science's Providential inheritance is vulnerable to earthly motivations. The code of aesthetics for its own sake, for instance, tends towards inner moral decay which is itself countenanced by dissimulation, but while Lavater acknowledges the objection that men practice dissimulation on such a scale that physiognomy cannot be reduced to science (Lavater, 1789, Volume 1: p.195), he maintains that the atheistic force of such an objection is precisely its undoing. Physiognomy can fail if it is read in God's absence, but Providence has provided secure buffers whereby some parts of the body are invulnerable to counterfeiting at the same time as dissimulation itself can be read in the human countenance (Lavater, 1789, Volume 1: p.196). Lavater's Christian

ethic, then, is one in which the faces of good and evil are traceable in all men (and women), and in which the face signifies the moral categories into which all subjects conform. Such faces, as will be discussed in relation to *The Italian* below, belong to a wider social construct that produces and exiles villains (Schedoni), clearing the path for the maternal endorsement of the companionate relationship between Ellena and Vivaldi. Some five decades after Samuel Foote was unable to account for Macklin's inability to dissimulate virtue, dissimulation was explained as the trace of Providential 'design'.

Macbeth and the passions in The Mysteries of Udolpho and The Italian

In 1789 the Shakespeare gallery opened its doors. For its creator, John Boydell, the new gallery signalled the culmination of his commercial vision to promote distinctly English schools of historical painting and engraving, observing, in the 1789 preface to the catalogue of the gallery's exhibits, the reversal of the vogue whereby engravings 'sold in England were imported from foreign countries, particularly from France' (Boydell, 1794, p.iv). Moreover, Boydell recognised the force of Shakespeare bardolatry in combining his commercial and nationalistic agendas by citing the example of George Steevens, the former Shakespearean editor who agreed to work with Boydell to produce a 'national Edition of the Works of Shapkseare [*sic*]' that would combine the texts of the English Shakespeare, Steevens's editorial expertise, and illustrations based on works by English artists. It must be noted, however, that when taken as a whole, the scenes from Shakespeare that donned the gallery walls did not display a sustained concern with marking the distinction between real and performed passion. The contents section of the 1794 catalogue, for instance, reveals that priority was given to historical scenes from the *Henry IV* plays, the *Henry VI* triad

, *Richard II*, *Richard III* and *Henry VIII*, as well as to scenes from the comedies. Tragedy appears underrepresented, as the catalogue records only two paintings each for *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *King Lear*. If the official catalogue of Boydell privileged history and comedy, the unofficial catalogue – entitled *The Shakspeare Gallery; containing a select series of scenes and characters, accompanied by criticisms and remarks* (1794) – advanced the cause of tragic passion; as the title suggests, the study of character (read as psychological depth) is given equal access to the canvas in a project whereby the alternative catalogue encompasses the publisher's 'design to publish FIFTY CHARACTERS, selected from the Works of SHAKSPEARE' (Anon., 1794, 'To the Public'). One such character, the regicide Macbeth, is examined through recourse to physiognomy. Casting Lady Macbeth as the arch-physiognomist, the anonymous critic reads Macbeth as a character internally torn between conscience and vice, but also torn between psychological depth and the misreading of the surface. Lady Macbeth's observation of Macbeth's resolution to commit regicide is attended by the warning that his face 'is a book, where men/May read strange matters' and the subsequent advice to perform a settled state of mind: 'to beguile the time/Look like the time' (Anon., 1794, p.7). The critic's analysis of Macbeth's inner conflict closely resembles Lavater's theory that dissimulation cannot conceal the true state of one's character:

The open, the honest, the gallant, the loyal, MACBETH, could not suddenly assume the guise of serenity, while not serene, could not suddenly repress the involuntary variations of his tell-tale features: not sufficiently a knave to disguise his knavery, a novice in mysterious guilt, not a completely initiated professor, he suffers; unknown to himself, those indications escape him, which a complete villain would carefully have concealed.
(Anon., 1794, p.7)

As a character 'not sufficiently a knave', 'novice' and 'not...completely initiated', Macbeth is alienated from the strictures of performance Lady Macbeth commands

him to observe. He cannot 'Look like the time' because the violence of authentic passion disables his volition and assumes control of his face, the location of his 'tell-tale features', and passion continues its progress as he battles against 'controlling his feelings, and displaying them' in light of the visitation of the ghost of Banquo during the banquet scene of act three, scene four. The distinction between performed and real passions is buttressed by the critic's differentiation between Macbeth as a man who feels and the 'complete villain' tutored in the art of dissimulation. In the latter case, the 'complete villain' is defined by his/her skill as an actor whose ability to conceal passion undercuts the visual display of tragic character; Macbeth, by contrast, is the epitome of the mode of tragic characterisation that can be successfully conveyed by visual media such as the canvas and the stage, thereby rendering as sufficient the reading of surfaces as a method of psychological enquiry.

As a subsequent plate and essay on the character of Lady Macbeth testifies, the unofficial catalogue's distinction between real and performed passion also serves to reinforce a moral stance that cautions against the excess of sensibility in women. The plate, composed by H. Singleton and based on Henry Fuseli's 1784 portrait of Lady Macbeth sleepwalking, provides a visual aid to the effects of overheated passion: Fuseli's painting shows Lady Macbeth pointing her right arm beyond the confines of the picture, as if to repeat her position as an unsexed woman and the antagonist to her husband; Singleton's print reveals a decidedly meeker woman, one whose cowering posture signals her reluctance to satiate her command to 'unsex me here'. The distinction between the sexed and unsexed Lady Macbeths is reinforced by the presence of the physician and the female servant. In Fuseli's painting, they comprise an audience whose postures lurching to the right signal their being overwhelmed by the force of Lady Macbeth's passion. In contradistinction to Fuseli, the catalogue

portrait conveys them in controlled postures, conversing as well as looking; as rational forbears remonstrating against excessive sensibility, the portrait recalls the physician's words that 'Unnatural deeds/Do breed unnatural troubles; infected minds/To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets./More needs she the divine than the physician' (Shakespeare, 1997f, 5.1.61-64). The physician and the servant are faced by authentic passions that exceed earthly laws, but their shared spectatorship reinforces the position that passionate excess can be allayed by gazing at, and conversing on, its effects. The essay, entitled 'Lady Macbeth', extends the moral lesson by politicizing the role of women in society, asking 'What could have been the previous life of this 'unsex'd LADY? By what strange concurrence of event, could the female mind become absorb'd in principles directly opposite to every attribute of the softer sex?' (Anon., 1794, p.31). The anonymous critic subsequently fails to ascribe an origin to Lady Macbeth's excessive sensibility. As an unsexed woman, she abjects the 'sympathy native in the sex' which attends her role as a mother, and her fright by the resemblance of the sleeping Duncan to her father signals the abandonment of 'the sense of duty which in filial affection has administered support to the declining years of an aged parent' (Anon., 1794, p.32). The critic's solution, then, becomes one whereby ideal readers and spectators are required to take an ethical stance on what they read and witness; as the essay argues, 'There is nothing more effectual in correcting any principle, than to shew its nature and tendency when uncontroled, and impetuously rushing to extremes: Madness itself is but the extreme of uncorrected ideas; and domineering passions, in proportion as they are indulged, are more or less allied to Madness' (Anon., 1794, p.40). Unlike the entertainment value that is the chief end of melodrama, the tragic mode encourages its spectators to check their own passions, and to converse on the detection of excessive sensibility in

others. Moreover, the portrait serves as a reminder of the gender politics at play in casting some spectators as rational men (the physician) and domestic servants (the female waiting-woman). That consensus can be imagined from a conversation taking place between different ranks and different sexes is testament to the critic's faith in utilising Shakespearean texts in order to fashion an audience attuned to tragedy and its inculcation of feminine propriety.

Also published in 1794, Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* carries the tragic strain whereby the violence of unnatural female passion is curbed by rational spectatorship and discoursing. The heroine, Emily St. Aubert, is cautioned by her dying father against ceding to sensibility in his absence (Radcliffe, 1998b, p.80), but his teachings reach fruition in Emily's observation of the effects of passion in Signora Laurentini, the murderer of Emily's aunt who sought refuge as Sister Agnes. A brief account of Laurentini's history exemplifies that tragedy's failure to discuss the origin of extreme sensibility is the Gothic romance's success in utilising secrecy as the trope that eventually reveals the process of psychological aberration. An only child and heir to the castle of Udolpho, Laurentini is born into a family where the parents habitually indulged in passion at reason's expense and whose conduct bore no trace of 'rational kindness...when they indulged, or opposed the passions of their daughter, they gratified their own' (Radcliffe, 1998b, p.655). Upon entering society with her passions gaining free reign, she becomes the mistress to the Marquis di Villeroi, who subsequently leaves her for another woman, Emily's aunt. Donning the role of the unsexed Lady Macbeth, she convinces the Marquis of his newly married wife's infidelity, persuading him to murder her. Laurentini's role, however, leaves her exposed to 'the horrors of unavailing pity and remorse', and she takes the veil as what Radcliffe terms 'a dreadful victim of unresisted passion' (Radcliffe, 1998b, p.659).

The epigraph to chapter sixteen of volume four announces the intervention of an ethical audience attuned to tragedy's reliance on moral intervention, for it cites the dialogue between the physician and the female servant upon viewing Lady Macbeth's manifest torment; as the epigraph reads, 'Unnatural deeds/Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds/To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets./More needs she the divine, than the physician' (Radcliffe, 1998b, p.641). Radcliffe's citation of *Macbeth* is adapted into the Gothic mode, in which secrets are unfolded beyond the privacy of 'deaf pillows' through the public discourse of physiognomy. Wright has observed that, to Laurentini, Emily's resemblance to the murdered Marchioness di Villeroi makes her 'the literal moral arbiter in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and provokes Sister Agnes to confess her crimes' (Wright, 2004, p.24), but it is Laurentini's account of her physiognomic change which acts as the repetition of St. Aubert's dying injunction to moderate the passions. Earlier described as possessing a 'deep melancholy' that is etched on her countenance (Radcliffe, 1998b, p.578), in chapter sixteen Laurentini presents Emily with a miniature portrait of her younger self, and her pedagogical aim becomes clear when she commands Emily to 'Look at me well, and see what guilt has made me' (Radcliffe, 1998b, p.646). If the miniature presents an almost prelapsarian period of innocence, the facial inscription of her indulgence in the passions marks the completion of 'unsexing', for 'Such may be the force of even a single passion, that it overcomes every other, and sears up every other approach to the heart' (Radcliffe, 1998b, p.646). Even the attempt at re-sexing that ensues via the throbbing of conscience is insufficient because it is belated; recalling Shakespeare's physician's call for divine resolution, Laurentini declares that 'not all the powers on heaven and earth united can undo' her crime, but Lavater's physiognomy ensures that the faces of Lady Macbeth and of Laurentini are permanently etched with the signs of

unsexed. Frozen by physiognomy, unsexed women become increasingly unable to reform their character, so their faces must become the moral arbiter in a century attuned to the rule of sexual difference. Indeed, as the anonymous critic of the alternative catalogue to the Shakespeare gallery contends,

Domestic life is Woman's province: distant far from the contention of jarring passions, from the tempest of public tumult, it furnishes perpetual opportunity for exercise of the milder virtues, and their amiable attendants: to confer kindness, to contribute delight, to render all around as happy as life admits, such is the honour and dignity of the sex. (Anon., 1794, p.32)

Domesticity is the preventative measure against unsexed, but the passions that attend a distinctly tragic unsexed must render visible that which the economy of sexual difference seeks to elide; to revise the passage above, the unsexed faces of tragedy and Radcliffean romance allow proximity, rather than distance, to 'jarring passions' and to the public gaze in order to achieve their moral objective.

If the intersection of a tragic Gothic audience with Lavater's physiognomy in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* privileges the romance as a genre able to authenticate the passions, her later novel *The Italian* examined the efficacy of such intersection by imagining its audience as either split between contrary modes of theatrical innovation (tragedy versus melodrama, for instance), or as untutored in reading inner character through physiognomy. Both cases are countenanced by the conflict between the guide's reading of Schedoni as a melodramatic villain and Ellena's attempt to discern tragic character, but Radcliffe's account of Schedoni as a man of passion at the beginning of the text must also be taken into account. Schedoni's face establishes an equivalence between the violence of secret passions in the mind and the mind's inscription of passion in the face, as he is described as exhibiting the hue of melancholy - albeit a melancholy denoting a 'gloomy and ferocious disposition rather than 'a sensible and wounded heart' - and as having a face that bears 'the traces of

many passions, which seemed to have fixed the features they no longer animated' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.35). But if inscription is the tool whereby secret passions become manifest, Schedoni's successful endeavours to destabilise this scripting of passion signal a shift that instantiates him as the offstage director whose position outside of the stage allows him to evade the audience's gaze. Schedoni is cast as a physiognomist whose eyes are said to 'penetrate...into the hearts of men, and to read their inmost thoughts; few persons could support their scrutiny, or even endure to meet them twice' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.35). Schedoni's manifest skill in physiognomy allows him to reverse the dynamic that invests audiences with power through their gazing; in his role as gazer Schedoni's passions are increasingly given over to performance, for he also reveals an ability to call forth 'a character upon his countenance entirely different' as well as the capacity to imitate the passions of others in his efforts to counterfeit himself as the benign confessor of the Marchese di Vivaldi (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.35). If audiences are reconfigured as the objects of another's gaze, it is no coincidence that Radcliffe attempts to delineate Schedoni in the tragic mode at the moment that he inadvertently finds himself in an audience witnessing the performance of the infanticide Appius and his daughter, for the possibility of reading Schedoni as a tragic character emerges from the seeming revelation of his own paternity.

In the eighth chapter of volume two of Radcliffe's *The Italian*, Schedoni's resolve to murder the innocent Ellena di Rosalba while she is held captive in a coastal Adriatic villa is interrupted by an epigraph from *Macbeth*: 'I am settled, and bend up/Each corporal agent to his terrible feat' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.225). The problem highlighted by the appearance of this epigraph proves literal. The wavering Schedoni has already 'settled' since conquering what Radcliffe terms 'the new emotion' of

conscience. And yet, as the intervention of conscience abates, the epigraph assumes ironic force whereby Macbeth's settled state in Shakespeare's play is figured as merely transitory, its impermanence serving to interrupt Schedoni's settled state in Radcliffe's Gothic romance. Far from merely operating as an echo of Shakespeare, Radcliffe's appropriation of *Macbeth* in her epigraph signals the reiteration of authentic passion in the minds of both Shakespeare's regicide and Schedoni's Catholic countenance, as the discovery of a telling portrait appears to foretell the monk's paternity. However, the omission of Macbeth's maxim, that 'False face must hide what the false heart doth know', yields a problem of reading for the modern critic. In Shakespeare's play, masculinity is at stake as the phallic Lady Macbeth invokes the early modern equivalence between the sensitive souls of men and beasts in order to taunt her husband's lack of manly fortitude (Macbeth is at once man and beast as he reports his dark imaginings to his wife, but is reduced to the cowardice of a cat as the fatal event approaches (Shakespeare, 1997f, 1.7.35-50)). In the ensuing dialogue, which recalls Floyd-Wilson's analysis of 'mettle' in *Henry V*, the 'undaunted mettle' (Shakespeare, 1997f, 1.7.73) of Lady Macbeth rouses Macbeth's lost mettle, with two effects: the regicide becomes 'settled', but settled to the point that he can reap the benefit of dissimulation, namely, that his 'false face' allows him to appear as if he stands outside of the play's action. Thus Macbeth and Lady Macbeth recast themselves as inauspicious hosts as they observe the fleeing of the princes, Malcolm and Donalbain, and mark them as regicides. When Macbeth's acting is brought under duress in the banquet scene, the spectral interruption that is Banquo serves not merely to torment the usurper, but, more pointedly, to render the practice of dissimulation as entirely dispensable; Macbeth becomes 'a man again' once the ghost obeys his command to 'hence', and once he commits himself to a

career in recidivism. Such an account, however, reminds us of the distinctly early modernist location of *Macbeth*, a location which preceded the physiognomy of Lavater and the invention of ‘Shakespeare’ himself. In other words, in the early modern drama of Shakespeare, physiognomy posed the problem of discerning between natural and performed countenances. Sibylle Baumbach’s essay on ‘facing’ Shakespeare’s narratives, for instance, conjectures the influence of Guiseppe Arcimboldo’s 1566 portrait ‘The Librarian’. As Baumbach observes, this portrait substitutes a collection of ornately arranged books in place of the countenance of the subject, the archivist Wolfgang Lazius; the point made by the substitution, that the progress of passion can be ‘read’ in the face, is countenanced by Lady Macbeth’s warning to her husband that his face ‘is as a book where man/May read strange matters’. Furthermore, Arcimboldo’s substitution raises the problem that just as legible scripts emerge from the literary and rhetorical prowess of their authors, the face itself might be the effect of the work of an individual who ‘partakes in constructing, even rewriting, his or her (inner and outer) disposition. By granting man co-authorship in the *liber corporis*, which was believed to carry the signature of the divine, its lucidity is no longer guaranteed’ (Baumbach, 2005). If the early modern villain circumnavigates the divine with the aid of his physiognomy, the gothic villains of Radcliffe are beholden to a rewritten scientific method whereby divinity, from the very outset, shone its light upon those committed to the ‘false face’.

An awareness of historical difference offers some relief from the omission of the ‘false face’, but it also begs consideration of the contemporary import of Macbeth’s contention that ‘I am settled’, particularly in view of the fact that Radcliffe’s epigraph forms the culmination of the cultural work that attended the emergent Shakespearean character criticism in the decades prior to the publication of *The Italian*. In the final

analysis, Schedoni appears as the Gothic inheritor of an eighteenth-century Macbeth who is held under the auspices of psychological discourse, with its insistence on legible 'depth'. Although Montagu's essay on Shakespeare's 'genius' is credited as a rebuttal of neoclassical French taste, it is possible to trace, in her essay on *Macbeth*, an interest in dramatic character that would later be appropriated by pseudo-psychology. According to Montagu, Macbeth's vices are the effect of influences wrought by supernatural agency; he is not inherently evil because his tragedy comprises his lack of volition, of being acted upon by forces that overcome the buffers of valour and innate goodness. Montagu elaborates by contrasting Macbeth to the usurping Richard the Third:

The bad man is his own tempter. Richard III. had a heart that prompted him to do all that that the worst demon could have suggested, so that the witches had been only an idle wonder in his story... But Macbeth, of a generous disposition, and good propensities, but with vehement passions and aspiring wishes, was a subject liable to be seduced by splendid prospects, and ambitious counsels. (Montagu, 1769, p.176)

The frame that endorses Macbeth's lack of agency comes to fruition as he cedes to the influence of Lady Macbeth. Macbeth is 'overcome, rather than persuaded' as he (dis)simulates the resolution that 'I am settled, and bend up/Each corp'ral agent to this terrible feat':

How terrible to him, how repugnant to his nature, we plainly perceive, when, even in the moment that he summons up the resolution needful to perform it, horrid phantasms present themselves; murder alarumed by his centinel; the wolf stealing towards his design; witchcraft celebrating pale Hecate's offerings; the midnight ravisher invading sleeping innocence, seem his associates; and bloody daggers lead him to the very chamber of the king (Montagu, 1769, p.189)

If the early modern Macbeth's settled state allows him to assume a 'false face', the settled state of the eighteenth-century Macbeth is, according to Montagu, itself a strategy of dissimulation which conceals his persistent conflict of conscience.

Montagu's essay, nevertheless, remains committed to refuting Voltaire's sophistic criticism, while William Richardson's *Essays on Shakespeare's dramatic characters of Macbeth, Hamlet, Jaques and Imogen* (1774, published in 1786) fashioned itself as the immediate inheritor of Montagu, at once congratulating 'the ingenious author of the Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare' who salvaged Shakespeare from French ruination, while also setting out a psychological system grounded in the observation of the passions in society (Richardson, 1786, p.45).

Richardson's use of Shakespeare in his essay illuminates the paradox at the heart of the textual practice of appropriation: the invention of provenance. First, his introduction shifts Montagu's anti-Gallic emphasis to a new focus on the mind that resumed the usage of the term 'passion'. For Richardson, the passions can be properly delineated through psychosocial discourse: as in Foote, the slow momentum of physiognomy is evident as Richardson expresses disdain that the body falls short of reading the passions. Richardson proceeds to reverse his initial disdain by noting that passion remains legible to observers who, like their theatrical counterparts, can divest themselves of real passions and enter into sympathy with the objects of their gaze. The habitual examination of the passions of others, by extension, yields a 'copy and portrait of minds different from our own' which, in its turn, permits philosophical investigation to track passions which are 'augmented and promoted by the imagination and that are imprinted on the observing mind as discovering 'new tints, and uncommon features' (Richardson, 1786, p.24). Second, Richardson's socialisation of passion becomes the bulwark for the invention of Shakespeare as the exemplary imitator of the passions; Richardson argues that, unlike Euripedes, who could only occasionally imitate the passions of his characters, Shakespeare is postulated as the earliest instance of the investigative spirit that Richardson seeks to

professionalise in his own study. With professionalisation comes extra reinforcement to the invention of Shakespearean provenance, for Richardson's analysis of the development of Macbeth's ambitions for the throne distinguishes between the early modern belief in superstition and Shakespeare's privileging of the mind. In the former case, the violent progress of passion was purportedly explained by cultural theorists who were 'strongly addicted to a superstitious belief in sorcery' that led them to ascribe Macbeth's passion to supernatural agency; in the latter instance, Shakespeare's uncanny ability to locate passion in the mind holds him up as the arbiter of psychology who can tempt his audiences away from the conjunction of superstition and passion by encouraging them to 'conjecture, supported by some facts and observations, concerning the power of fancy' (Richardson, 1786, pp.46-47). Richardson's reference to 'facts and observations' reveals the rational core of his interest in the psychology of Macbeth. As his analysis of the character of Macbeth continues, it becomes clear that the psychosocial position of Richardson debunks the idea that selves are inherently penetrable and refashioned by unearthly forces, for the mind's propensity to reflect upon future happiness in the mortal realm never allows for the satiability of desire (Richardson, 1786, p.47). Passion begins and grows in the 'imagination', and the spectrum of subjectivities temper its violence with varying success. On one side of this spectrum, 'the prudent man, in search of honours' is capable of delimiting the force of desire to attain 'objects within his reach' (Richardson, 1786, p.52). At the other extreme is the free reign of 'imagination', of which Macbeth is an instance, which occurs in subjects in whom the violence of imagination is the effect of the failure of delimitation. In the second instance, Macbeth's proclamation that 'I am settled' signals not the counterfeiting of resolve, as

Montagu suggested, but the exhaustion of virtue in the permanent conflict between his meek conscience and violent desires (Richardson, 1786, 64-70).

As analysis of *The Italian* will bear out, Shakespeare's ability to straddle between the medieval 'barbarian' belief in demoniac supernaturalism and the modern Protestant dismissal of ghosts creates the Protestant inflection as a solution yielding its own problems; if, on the one hand, Shakespeare's aesthetic project on the early modern stage constituted the desacralisation of supernaturalism, then his supernatural remainders (not only his ghosts, but their echoes in Radcliffe's epigraphs from Shakespeare) signalled the awakening of passions which threatened the progress of the late eighteenth-century bourgeois female subject. In Radcliffe's romance, Ellena lives modestly under the care of Signora Bianchi and is brought up to subsidise herself in the weaving and selling of embroidery. While her goods are primarily sold to neighbouring convents, Radcliffe reveals that the phallic mother of the love object Vivaldi also adorns the fruits of Ellena's artistry. As Radcliffe comments, little did Vivaldi know 'that a beautiful robe, which he had often seen his mother wear, was worked by Ellena; nor that some copies from the antique, which ornamented a cabinet of the Vivaldi palace, were drawn by her hand' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.9). The text, then, anticipates the close of the novel where Ellena inscribes herself into an ideal model of social mobility, enabled by companionate marriage, that can be enjoyed by women. But the promise of bourgeois ascendance as embodied by Ellena is countered by the stasis that marks the villain-physiognomy of Schedoni, who ingratiates himself into the conservative/aristocratic agenda of the Marchesa di Vivaldi, the phallic mother whose fear of the taint of clandestine marriage drives her to command the death of Ellena. As the epigraph 'I am settled' approaches, Schedoni's ability to perform passion is countered by psychological interpretations of *Macbeth* (cited from

Montagu and Richardson) which arise through recourse to physiognomy, for Schedoni's near-murder of Ellena is most famous for the revelation attending the discovery of a miniature containing two portraits of Schedoni. The first portrait offers a glimpse of the monk in his former life as the Count di Marinella, whose 'smiling countenance...expressed triumph rather than sweetness' and whose general disposition betrayed a haughty sense of superiority, while the second portrait reveals his altered physiognomy on which could be read a darkness formed by the 'habitual indulgence of morose passions' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.238). In the second case, an artistry akin to Ellena's fashioning of her future bourgeois identity is emphasised, for 'it seemed as if the painter, prophetic of Schedoni's future disposition, had arrested and embodied that smile, to prove hereafter that cheerfulness had once played upon his features' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.238). But where Ellena's skills symbolise her future flourishing, portraiture represents an alternative future for Schedoni, a turn to Lavater's endorsement of stasis in which villain-inflected identities cannot mobilise themselves in the social sphere. The mobilisation of Schedoni's face across the two miniatures entraps the monk within the category of 'villain' across cultural time and space; if Schedoni's haughty counterfeit signals the villain whose 'imagination' offsets attacks of conscience, the morose Schedoni is consumed by continual attacks of remorse that augment, rather than alleviate, the charge of villainy. It is with this point in mind that we might postulate that Schedoni's response to the comedic performance of the story of Appius and Virginia consigns him to villainy even as the gazes of his guide and of Ellena offer readings that can be described as 'burlesque' and 'psychological' respectively.

However, to distinguish between the readings of the guide and of Ellena is to elide the complexity of Ellena's reading of Schedoni as a tragic character, for her inability

to discern the cause of Schedoni's passions blocks her access to a sentimental (and, therefore, bourgeois) reunion that might redeem Schedoni from the charge of villainy. Upon her discovery that Schedoni may be her father, she observes the signs of internal conflict (the heaving breast, darting eyes, distracted looks, irregular pacing to and fro) and proceeds to enquire into the cause of his passion. Her enquiry appears to yield the commencement of a sentimental scene, for the remorse-stricken Schedoni 'pressed her to his bosom, and wetted her cheek with his tears', but Ellena's role undercuts the passage's sentimental potential:

Ellena wept to see him weep, till her doubts began to take alarm. Whatever might be the proofs, that had convinced Schedoni of the relationship between them, he had not explained these to her, and, however strong was the eloquence of nature which she had witnessed, it was not sufficient to justify an entire confidence in the assertion he had made, or to allow her to permit his caresses without trembling. She shrunk, and endeavoured to disengage herself; when, immediately understanding her, he said, 'Can you doubt the cause of these emotions? these signs of paternal affection?' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.237)

Ellena's reluctance to partake of the sentimental scene contrasts with the reunion of Theodore and Jerome in *The Castle of Otranto*. Walpole's Theodore unconditionally endorses sensibility by embracing his father and imploring Manfred to share in the sentimental scene, but Ellena's display of emotional affect is quickly undermined by the force of the doubts and hesitations that follow. It is this undermining that transforms the tragic Macbeth of contemporary Shakespearean criticism into the Gothic Macbeth who stands poised between authentic and performed passion. First, the absence of incontrovertible facts proving Schedoni's paternity suggests that paternal tears are no longer sufficient to guarantee a similar level of emotionality in Ellena or Radcliffe's readership. Second, and most significantly, Ellena's observance of the absence of factuality (read as 'Reason') offers a reading whereby Schedoni's tears signal his skill in performing passion; Schedoni's questions, 'Can you doubt the

cause of these emotions? these signs of paternal affection?', invest power in the untutored gaze of Ellena, whose doubts over her paternity, and her struggle to discern the authenticity of Schedoni's display of passion, block Schedoni from entering the rational bourgeois economy of virtue.

The intervention of the miniature portraits might allow Schedoni to fall short of being cast as Appius, but the scene of the crime that never was installs Schedoni into a paternal role to which he does not comfortably fit. Radcliffe's decision to reveal that Schedoni is, in fact, Ellena's uncle works to give the author the power of life and death over villains given over to performing passion, and it is perhaps unsurprising that evocations of the tent scene in *Richard III* should mark Schedoni's final moments. In the eighth chapter of volume three Radcliffe quotes from William Collins's 1743 'An Epistle: Addressed to Sir Thomas Hanmer, on his Edition of Shakespeare's Works' that 'The time shall come when Glo'ster's heart shall bleed/In life's last hours with horrors of the deed;/when dreary visions shall at last present/Thy vengeful image' (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.355). Radcliffe's turn to a textual Shakespeare at this point obviates the remorseless progress of the staged Richard of Colley Cibber, for while Cibber edits out the ruminations of Shakespeare's Richard on the force of 'Conscience' (that is, authentic passion) in order to amplify the determination of Richard's villainy, the villainy of the textual Richard retains the tales told by the 'thousand several tongues' of conscience: 'And every tale condemns me for a villain' (Shakespeare, 1997c, 5.5. 145-147), Richard concludes in a reading in which supernatural agency does not afflict his conscience in the style of *Macbeth*, but informs him that imminent death is to be the cost of achieving the guise of the villain. If the eighteenth-century *Macbeth* instructs society on the causes of the perpetual antithesis of benevolent and violent passions, then *Richard III* is positioned as the

villain whose flair for performing passion (most notably in his wooing of Lady Anne) is met by the inevitabilities of authentic 'Conscience' and death. In Radcliffe's text, Schedoni's death is the issue of vociferous charges of villainy; in addition to the intricacies surrounding his double positioning as the gazer and the gazed in relation to the staging of the death of Virginia, and his internal conflict at the prospect of murdering his daughter, one might also recall the words of the hired assassin, Spalatro, who asserts that his villainy signals him as 'no more a villain' than Schedoni himself (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.230). In other words, the supernatural revenants of Shakespeare's play are replaced by curses that are firmly rooted in the material world, curses that voicelessly demand the insertion of a bourgeois progressive vision of human potentiality in place of villainy's aristocratic trappings. Cursed by the charge of villainy, the death of Schedoni becomes, in Radcliffe's romance, a formal necessity to ensure the triumphs of bourgeois endeavour. Schedoni's demise is accompanied by the appearance of Ellena's mother, Countess di Bruno, long presumed dead but revealed to have taken the veil as Olivia, the nun who aided Ellena's escape from the priestly agents of the Marchesa. Radcliffe's investment in physiognomy applies as much to pictures of virtue as it does to villainy, and Olivia's physiognomy is announced as the resolution to interpreting the problem of dissimulation. For example, when Olivia aids in Ellena's escape from the monastery of San Stephano, Ellena experiences an internalised form of 'pain' which attends her suspicion that Olivia, working under the instructions of the abbess, intends to sabotage her escape:

She sickened at this dreadful supposition, and dismissed it without suffering herself to examine its probability. That Olivia...whose countenance and manners announced so fair a mind...should be so cruel and treacherous, was a suspicion that gave her more pain, than the actual imprisonment in which she suffered; and when she looked again upon her face, Ellena was consoled by a clear conviction, that she was utterly incapable of perfidy. (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.97)

The picture of virtue is healthful in two respects, both of which serve to endorse the normalisation of physiognomy in the quotidian. First, the good face moves from interpretive potential to the resolute face/fact of habitual virtue. Second, physiognomy, in common with the symbolic value of embroidery, offers remedial value to the emergent bourgeois temperament of Ellena; just as her skills in weaving and selling anticipate her entrance into the bourgeois economy, so the cessation of her sensations of ‘sickness’ and ‘pain’ are installed as the bodily sign which proves that reading physiognomy cures the experience of doubt which, if unresolved or misread, would halt the otherwise inimitable rise of virtue. That is, the successes of physiognomy and emotional affect in discerning the inner character of virtue are contingent upon the efficacy of ‘Reason’. Indeed, it is Olivia herself who purposely inscribes the rational bourgeois economy upon her daughter’s marriage to Vivaldi, establishing consensus with the Marchese who, in turn, ‘willingly relinquished the views of superior rank and fortune’ in favour of ‘those of virtue and permanent happiness that were now unfolded to him’ (Radcliffe, 1998c, p.410). In Radcliffe’s vision, bourgeois economy unfolds itself as the end of a teleology in which middle-class aspiration is foretold in the picture of virtue and is exercised in a crafted process, written through Shakespeare, of cursing at its villainous others.

Blocking ‘depth’ in *The Castle Spectre*

On 14 December 1797, Matthew Lewis’s melodrama *The Castle Spectre* opened to audiences at the Drury Lane theatre and maintained its popularity throughout the early nineteenth century.¹¹ But while the rise of Lewis’s play can be read as representative of the vogue for melodramatic theatre over contemporary tragedy’s project of

¹¹ For instance, Jeffrey Cox, writing in his ‘Introduction’ to *Seven Gothic Dramas, 1789-1825*, has noted the many performances given not only in England, but also in New York, where it was still being performed as late as 1834 (Cox, 1992, 1).

encouraging the discovery of ‘concealed passions’, close reading of the text of the play bears out its own negotiation with passion, particularly as the villain, Osmond, converses with the servant Saib on a dream that foretells his demise at the hands of the revengeful revenant Evelina. The action of the play centres on the attempts of the peasant Percy to rescue the love-object, Angela, from the wrath of her uncle Osmond, who has previously planned the murder of his brother (Angela’s father, Reginald), and is soon revealed as the usurper of Conway Castle. As the superstitious servants claim to see the ghost of Reginald stalk the castle in a manner akin to the ghost of King Hamlet, the play builds up to the appearance of the ghost of Evelina at the end of act four. As the spectral reminder of Osmond’s failed attempt to kill his brother (Evelina stood between Osmond’s sword and Reginald, thus receiving the fatal wound herself), Evelina’s beckoning of Angela leads to the latter’s discovery that her father is still alive, trapped in the catacombs, and the play concludes with a duel between the brothers which is broken up by the ghost, followed by Angela’s successful attempt to stab Osmond. Although not fatally injured, Osmond’s demise signals the return of Conway Castle to Reginald, and endorses a decidedly Gothic strategy whereby the intervention of the spectral Evelina curbs Osmond’s ultimatum to Angela to either marry him or see her father killed.

My analysis of *The Castle Spectre* follows recent critical attention to the play which has focused largely on Lewis’s use of spectacle and his preoccupation with representing onstage villains. For James Robert Allard, Lewis’s decision to delay the spectacular core of the play – that is, the entrance of the ghost of Evelina - demonstrates an awareness of the prevailing theatrical tastes of audiences that pay to be gripped by the ‘expectation of violence, spectacle and special effect’ as opposed to their actual display (Allard, 2001, p.252). Dale Townshend’s analysis of the play

concentrates on how Lewis's appropriation of *Hamlet* can account for the argument that *The Castle Spectre* is the culmination of the weaving of Gothic romance and the revenge motif of Shakespearean tragedy. If, for Townshend, Shakespeare's play is concerned with the effects of usurpation on the body politic, then Osmond's role as usurper casts Angela as a female Hamlet whose opportunity to avenge her father's demise comes when she commands Osmond to 'Die!', stabbing him (though not fatally) during the closing lines of the play (Townshend, 2008b, pp84-85). Lauren Fitzgerald's discussion of the play considers Lewis's depiction of villainy, arguing that Osmond's status as the usurper of his brother's property parodies contemporary vilifications of Lewis as a plagiarist. Pertinent to Fitzgerald's equation of 'villain' and 'plagiarist' is the *Analytical Review*'s alertness to Lewis's debt to Radcliffe's fictions, as 'Mr. L's obligations...to Mrs. Radcliffe are everywhere so apparent...that we may reasonably question, whether his castle would have been raised, if her romantic edifices had not previously been constructed' (Fitzgerald, 2005, p.10). As the property of Emily St Aubert is seized by the villainous Montoni, so Lewis steals the Gothic 'plots' of Radcliffe, especially *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, thereby casting himself as the 'villain' and Radcliffe as heroine. However, Fitzgerald's conclusion that Lewis is read as 'a villain who attempts to appropriate illegitimately the property of a Gothic heroine' (Fitzgerald, 2005, p.253) incorporates Lewis's own admission of his debt to a single scene in *Udolpho*; as part of a ploy to conceal the true extent of his debt, Lewis's reference to *Udolpho* bolsters the claims of contemporary reviewers who believed that such a reference comprised an unconvincing attempt at performing virtue. The image of villainy suggested by the play's reviewers posits a clear distinction between authentic shows of virtue and their inauthentic simulations,

making Lewis's commitment to illegitimate appropriation, by extension, a commitment to a mode of villainy shorn of the passions of guilt and remorse.

While *The Mysteries of Udolpho* fashions an ideal tragic audience whose rational consensus endorses the tempering of Lady Macbeth's/Laurentini's extreme sensibility, Lewis's play bears closer affinity to the heterogeneity of audience interpretation displayed in *The Italian*. But while *The Italian* invests power to an audience that simultaneously endorses and refutes Schedoni's claim to tragic character (with its connotation of psychological depth), Lewis's appropriation of the familiar trope of the dream undercuts Osmond's own attempt to prove his psychological complexity. As physiognomy at once augments and undermines the legibility of the face in *The Italian*, so in *The Castle Spectre* dreams become subject to similar acts of reading which amplify a polyphony of voices both in favour of and against pseudopsychology. In act four, Osmond recalls a dream in which Angela transforms into the bloody form of the murdered Evelina. Evelina is accompanied by a chorus of spectres that 'gnashed their teeth while they gazed upon [Osmond]' (Lewis, 1993, p.198). In the act of recollection Osmond's dream is layered with conflicting interpretations which refuse hierarchical positioning. For Osmond himself, the dream is the effect of the work of 'fancy' which inflicts a mental torture greater than the rack (Lewis, 1993, p.197); that torture is later termed a 'Horror' that impedes his ability to articulate his mind's pain, for 'my feelings – words are too weak, too powerless to express them' (Lewis, 1993, p.198). Osmond's explication that words are too weak to approximate the strength of 'feeling' anticipates subsequent successful attempts to fill the void left by his wordlessness. First, Osmond himself becomes intent on blocking his audience to the revelation of inner character. While his 'tempestuous passions' are 'hushed' by Angela's 'image', he

commands Saib to rouse him from his sleep as soon as he shows the signs of fear and remorse that are the companions of sleep; as Osmond implores to Saib, ‘watch me while I sleep. Then, if you see my limbs convulsed, my teeth clenched, my hair bristling...seize me!...Snatch me from my bed! I must not dream again!’ (Lewis, 1993, p.198). Second, Osmond’s servants, Hassan and Saib, give their own readings of Osmond’s dream, both of which undercut his claim to be worked upon by his passion: for Hassan, Osmond reveals the symptoms of passion, but they are weak in comparison to his own mental torture upon being prised apart from his African family while, for Saib, the dream represents the Gothic convention that requires the iteration of dream-content. Third, and most significantly, the published edition of the *The Castle Spectre* reveals Lewis’s deference to audience interpretation as he cites the examples of Shakespeare and Schiller. As Lewis writes in a footnote, ‘This scene will doubtless have reminded the Reader of *Clarence’s dream, Richard’s dream &c.*: But it bears a much closer resemblance to the Dream of Francis in *Schiller’s Robbers*, which, in my opinion, is surpassed by no other vision ever related upon the stage’ (Lewis, 1993, p.199). Lewis’s reference to Clarence identifies the textual *Richard III* as opposed to Colley Cibber’s popular stage adaptation (which does not feature Clarence). Moreover, a comparison of Edmund Malone’s footnotes to his 1790 edition of the play with Francis’s dream in *The Robbers* reveals an audience split between surface and depth. In Shakespeare’s play, Clarence’s dream prophesies his murder at the hands of his brother, thereby negating the dream’s status as the repository of psychological content, but Lewis’s footnote also leads us to Malone’s reading of Richard’s dream, a reading in which he utilises his skill in historical verification in order to privilege psychological depth. In a footnote attached to the word ‘Ghost’ (announcing the presence of Prince Edward’s spectre), Malone reveals

his debt to the historian Raphael Holinshed for, as ‘Shakespeare’s authority’, Holinshed declared the true effect of Richard’s spectral visitors, who ‘stuffed his head and troubled his mind with many busy and dreadful imaginations’ (Shakespeare, 1790c, p.602).¹² Reading Malone reading Holinshed, Richard’s spectres are merely the spectacular culmination of a deep-rooted and prolonged period of internal conflict. When the ghost of Lady Anne ascends, she announces herself as ‘thy wife, that wretched Anne thy wife/That never slept a quiet hour with thee’, but Malone adapts Anne’s insomnia into a generalised and sympathetic portrayal, relayed through Holinshed, of Richard’s interiority; as Malone writes, Richard’s mind is tormented following the murder of his nephews, and his torment is legible in his physiognomy as ‘his eyes whirled about...his hand ever upon the dagger...his countenance and maner like only always readie to strike againe...*rather slumbered than slept, troubled with fearfull dreames...*’ (Shakespeare, 1790c, p.604). It is tempting to undermine the force of Malone’s investment in psychology by recalling the character of Richmond, whose presence on the stage alongside Richard suggests that he shares the same dream. In such a reading, both Richard and Richmond are divested of their subjectivities, but the historical contingency of ‘reading’ itself reveals a network of interpretations, of which ‘our’ present is but one instance. If our present amplifies Richard’s villainy and sexual lasciviousness, Malone’s Richard relied on contemporary print culture that combined bardolatry, physiognomy and scholarly editorship to produce psychology as a viable discourse. In other words, Lewis’s use of footnotes in published editions of *The Castle Spectre* exploits the trend, established by Malone, of relying upon footnotes in order to postulate authority. As Holinshed’s

¹² Here, and in subsequent chapters, all further references to Shakespeare’s plays are taken from Edmond Malone’s ten-volume edition of the plays and poems of Shakespeare (1790). In referencing Malone’s edition, I hope to gauge a sense of the Gothic mode’s indebtedness to investments in the appropriation of psychological discourse advanced by critics such as William Richardson, and reinforced by Malone as part of his project of recuperating the ‘real’ Shakespeare.

chronicles, abridged into footnotes, invest Richard with inner character, so Lewis's references to the textual Richard of 1790 in his footnotes appear to invest in the state of Osmond's mind, thereby filling the gap left by Osmond's inability to express his passions in words.

Having noted this, Lewis's suggestion that Osmond's dream bears closer resemblance to Franz's dream in *The Robbers* subverts the textual practice that endorses a reading of inner character fashioned by Malone's edition of Shakespeare. In act five of Schiller's play, the parricide Franz recalls a dream to his servant, Daniel, who occupies the subject position shared by Ellena and the guide in *The Italian*, Emily in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, and by the servants Saib and Hassan in Lewis's play. In the dream, Franz witnesses the day of Judgement but is lured into the action of the dream by a 'dreadful voice' that commands him and his fellow sinners to receive his judgement. As judgement is about to be given Franz observes amongst the sinners an old man – most likely the father murdered at his hands – 'bent to the ground with sorrow' and ready to be committed into heaven, while the voice decrees that Franz will be rejected (Schiller, 1792, pp.187-189). Franz's recollection of his dream, however, is mediated by the servant Daniel, who refuses the imposition of Franz's endeavours to explain the dream away through the force of rationality; after failing to convince Daniel that 'Tis indigestion makes us dream', he proceeds to reduce the dream to an oral narrative that commands laughter from the audience ('Nay Daniel, I must tell you - `tis so odd. – You'll laugh, I promise you') (Schiller, 1792, p.186). If laughter attests to the force of rationality in explaining dreams away, the narrative then turns on Daniel's failure to laugh at Franz's story; as Franz continues to implore Daniel to accept his rationalistic enterprise ('prithce laugh at me') (Schiller, 1792, p.188), Daniel's refusal to do so offers up the convention

whereby dream-content prophesies a truth to come in the waking world at the expense of any investment in psychological depth. Daniel's superstitious belief that 'Dreams come from God', and the realization of this position as Franz is captured by his exiled brother and his banditti followers, decisively resembles Saib's suggestion that Osmond's dream prophesies his demise at the behest of the spectral Evelina. Lewis's simultaneous turns towards the English Shakespeare and the German Schiller supports Lauren Fitzgerald's claim that Osmond's villainy mirrors Lewis's reputation as a plagiarist, but it should be noted that the terms 'villain' and 'plagiarist' are assigned without the consent of the named characters/authors. Unable to articulate his tragic character, and cast as a villain akin to Radcliffe's Schedoni rather than Laurentini, Osmond becomes little more than the site that substitutes textual appropriations studded with problematic spectators for the speechless, but nonetheless legible, integrity of passion.

CHAPTER THREE

RE-SEXING 'WOMAN': T.J. HORSLEY CURTIES'S 'GOTHIC SHAKESPEARE'

Survey with me, what ne'er our fathers saw,
A female band despising NATURE'S law,
As 'proud defiance' flashes from their arms,
And vengeance smothers all their softer charms.

(Richard Polwhele, 1798, p.7)

As the full title of the Reverend Richard Polwhele's poem *The Unsex'd Females: a poem addressed to the author of The Pursuits of Literature* (1798) suggests, the author looks to Thomas Mathias's examination of contemporary literature, first published in 1794, as its point of departure. While Mathias's text offered legalistic criticisms of the emergence of sensualised male and female bodies in literature with reference to such texts as John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1749) and Lewis's *The Monk* – 'Another Cleland see in Lewis rise./Why sleep the ministers of truth and law' (Mathias, 1798, p.345) – Polwhele's appropriation of the law turned on a 'real life' cause, the emergence of female rational discourse as spearheaded by prominent figures such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Robinson. For Polwhele, the violence of the French Revolution created a rupture in the 'natural' rule of sexual difference, creating an Amazonian band of unnatural women whose minds and bodies have become the conduits for the importation of the militancy of the female 'Gallic freaks' into England; as Polwhele writes in a footnote, the new female subject has no regard for the rule of law, while her disregard for 'NATURE'S law' is manifested 'in the decoration of her person' and 'the culture of her mind', which 'will soon walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government' (Polwhele, 1800, p.7). One such woman, Mary Wollstonecraft, provides the example of an errant

woman whose death as a result of childbirth is cited to reinforce the rule of incommensurable sexual difference, for Polwhele's poem responds not only to Mathias, but also to the recent publication of William Godwin's *Memoirs of the Author of 'The Rights of Woman'* in 1798. As Polwhele summarises, Wollstonecraft was schooled in both the established Church and in the rationalism of Richard Price, and her refusal to attend worship comprised the first symptom of her unsexing (Polwhele, 1800, p.38). Of equal interest to Polwhele is Wollstonecraft's two suicide attempts following the failure of her passions for the painter Henry Fuseli and for one Mr Imlay; as Polwhele recalls, 'Her meditated suicide, we shall contemplate with fresh horror, when we consider that, at the time of the desperate act, she was a mother, deserting a poor helpless offspring' (Polwhele, 1800, p.38). Wollstonecraft, then, is nominated as the model of the aberrant female subject whose abandonment of religion and maternity render her 'unsexed'. At the same time, Wollstonecraft's death provides the site of re-sexing: Polwhele insists that providence presided over Wollstonecraft despite her apparent boast of irreligion during her labour, but the achievement of her death is the reinstatement of sexual difference; Wollstonecraft 'died a death that strongly marked the distinction of the sexes, by pointing out the destiny of women, and the diseases to which they are liable' (Polwhele, 1800, p.39).

In the language of Thomas Laqueur, the circumstances of Wollstonecraft's death restate the imperative of the 'two-sex' model of sexual difference. But for Laqueur, writing in *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (1990, reprinted in 1992), the idea of 'Nature' upon which the 'two-sex' model is grounded is itself contingent upon culture and ideological practices inscribed upon bodies. Laqueur's expansive historiography begins with classical philosophy and the thinking of Galen and Aristotle, both of whom postulated the 'naturalness' of the 'one-sex' model which

saw female sexual organs as inverted – and therefore inferior – renditions of male genitalia. What Galen and Aristotle read in the genitalia was not the result of unadulterated perception, but of culture itself, for the potency of the ‘male seed’ over the ‘female seed’ during sexual intercourse marked the preservation of the ‘Father’ as a cultural sign which presided over civilization itself (Laqueur, 1992, p.58). The ascent of ‘one-sex’ continued into the rise of anatomy as a pedagogical tool, which proclaimed to present the body as it really was but, once again, ideology supplanted observation as the aesthetics of anatomy – as represented by contemporary illustrations of male and female genitalia – continued to ‘see’ a series of undifferentiated sexual organs (Laqueur, 1992, pp.79-88). While Laqueur refuses to suggest an origin for the emergence of the ‘two-sex’ model, he suggests that the erasure of female orgasm in nineteenth-century scientific thought allowed a model of female passionlessness to differentiate between male and female sexualities (Laqueur, 1992, p.189). Such a model had already been proposed in the eighteenth century, with Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Wollstonecraft suggesting that female passionlessness made women more ‘moral’ than their male counterparts, but Wollstonecraft’s unsexing of herself as revealed in Godwin’s biography reinforced (as Polwhele believed) her failure to function as a fully sexed female in her private life.

While Laqueur is principally concerned with culture’s inscriptions on sexed bodies, revealing both ‘one-sex’ and ‘two-sex’ to be the effects of culture, the allegation of impropriety – even monstrosity – in the case of Mary Wollstonecraft reveals the anxiety contemporary to the eighteenth century for sexed bodies to act in accordance with their gendered being. In Polwhele’s case, this leads to the elision of culture in his account of the now inseparable categories of ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ as he argues for the ‘two-sex’ model of sexual difference as an ahistorical, and therefore natural,

category. The re-sexing of 'woman' in *The Unsex'd Females* is advanced with reference to a dubious historical account of female virtue. In this account, classical philosophers such as Quintilian and Seneca are suggested as early exponents of the two-sex model through their respective opinions that women should fulfil their role as teachers of morality to their children in the domestic space, while retaining in themselves a sense of modesty becoming a woman (Polwhele, 1800, p.40).

Moreover, in the late eighteenth century, the culture of print is recruited by Polwhele under the auspices of fully sexed women whose 'female genius' collectively endorses the two-sex model of sexual difference: Elizabeth Montagu, who announced Shakespeare as 'our Gothic bard', is 'the best female critic, ever produced in any country'; Ann Radcliffe, in writing *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, presents 'all that is wild, magnificent and beautiful, combined by the genius of Shakespeare, and the taste of Mason'; and Princess Elizabeth is held up as the model of feminine virtue (Polwhele, 1800, pp.42, 45, 46). In the first instance, the references to Montagu and Radcliffe refer both obliquely and explicitly to their service to the cause of English nationalism, as headed by Shakespeare; as one of the first women to praise Shakespeare's genius, Montagu performed her duty to the emergent bardolatry which Ann Radcliffe would proceed to celebrate with her indebtedness to Shakespeare in her fiction. In the second instance, while the grouping of such women under 'female genius' provides a sense to the correlative group headed by Wollstonecraft, it also postulates a female voice to sanction it. The last of Polwhele's sexed females, Hannah More, is revealed as the provenance of the term 'female genius' in a long citation from her 1778 tract *Essays upon various subjects, principally designed for young ladies*. The citation begins with general differences between men and women - 'Women speak, to shine or please, men, to convince, or confute' and 'Women prefer

a sparkling effusion of fancy, to the most laborious investigation of facts' (Polwhele, 1800, p.48) – but it soon turns to the function of the female author:

In Romance and Novel-writing, the women cannot be excelled. To amuse, rather than to instruct, or to instruct indirectly, by short inferences drawn from a long concatenation of circumstances, is at once, the business of this sort of composition, and one of the characteristics of female genius. In short, it appears, that the mind, in each sex, has some natural kind of bias, which constitutes a distinction of character; and that the happiness of both depends, in great measure, on the preservation and observance of this distinction. (Polwhele, 1800, p.48)

Polwhele's point is that he is no reactionary anti-feminist, but is following a rule of sexual difference which is itself endorsed by women; in re-sexing the female, he paradoxically de-sexes the ideological base on which the two-sex model comes into force. That 'female genius' is attracted to Shakespeare is a testimony to Shakespeare's power to naturalise the two-sex model as if it were the broad consensus of all times; women, moreover, formed part of this consensual base whereby an essential distinction of 'mind' as well as body determined the status of 'Man' and 'Woman'.

As Eleanor Ty has noted in *Unsex'd Revolutionaries*, unsexing found further momentum in female endeavours at novel-writing during the 1790s. Citing the examples of Wollstonecraft (*The Wrongs of Woman*), Mary Hays (*Memoirs of Emma Courtney; The Victim of Prejudice*), Helen Maria Williams (*Julia*) Elizabeth Inchbald (*A Simple Story; Nature and Art*) and Charlotte Smith (*Emmeline; Desmond; The Young Philosopher*), Ty observes, through Lacanian psychoanalysis, how the fictions of these women variously negotiated Woman's space within the symbolic order sustained by the Law of the Father. While Hays's Emma Courtney narrates her longing to break free from the figurative 'magic circle', the 'economic and mental imprisonment' that commands her subservience to the will of her father (Ty, 1993, p.53), Wollstonecraft's Maria literalises the magic circle, for her confinement in an

asylum gives her husband the opportunity to seize her property. Ty summarises the positions of both writers with regard to the qualities of ‘compliance and restraint in women’: ‘Hays like Wollstonecraft argues that these artificially instilled qualities only serve to create havoc in the female subject’ who becomes an ‘emotional and mental outcast’ by virtue of her struggling between the codes of feminine silence and masculine vociferousness (Ty, 1993, p.47). While it is true that the contemporary codification by Polwhele of female political radicals as ‘unsexed’ elides the ideologically complex positions of radical female novelists, it must also be noted that the position of Polwhele is in equal thrall to an ideology of genre - the Gothic romance - that attempts to validate a project of ‘re-sexing’ by portraying the violent progress of the unsexed woman to its absolute limit. Such unsexed women – that is, female novelists as well as their characters – form the potent foreground on which the real women outlined in Polwhele’s poem and the imaginary women in T. J. Curties’s first gothic romance, *Ethelwina; or, the House of Fitz-Auburne* (1799) carry out the work of re-sexing. This chapter suggests that the trajectory followed by Polwhele in *The Unsex’d Females* – from the presentation of ‘unsexed’ women to their necessary re-sexing – can be traced in the Gothic Romances of Ann Radcliffe and of the royalist Curties in *Ethelwina*, which was published in 1799, at the height of the tension between what Laqueur terms the ‘one-sex’ and ‘two-sex’ models of sexual difference. Curties’s romance follows the familiar path laid by Radcliffe whereby a female subject who is heir to a vast inheritance is aggressively pursued by a lascivious male nobleman seeking to usurp her and gain her property for himself. During her imprisonment at the hands of Lord Leopold, Countess Ethelwina is visited by the spectre of her dead father who, in turn, seeks retribution for his murder at the hands of Leopold. In the first place, this plot proceeds from Curties’s acknowledged

indebtedness to ‘the immortal Bard of Avon, who found a spectre necessary for his purpose...to “harrow up the soul”’ (Curties, 1799, p.iii). But *Ethelwina*’s plot forms part of a sustained appropriation of *Hamlet*, whereby the dubious spectre of the father seeks revenge for his most ‘foul and unnatural murder’, placing Ethelwina in the subject position of the melancholic and inactive Prince who cannot muster his (or her) mental and corporeal energies to honour the spectral injunction. For Curties this is precisely the point, for his re-sexing of the Prince can be read as part of the broader cultural work of re-sexing ‘Woman’ as performed in the 1790s.

This thesis, however, brings into relief a further problem for the ‘two-sex’ model. By writing a Gothic romance, Curties performs a task which has been listed by Hannah More as a distinctly female activity, for the constitution of the female mind, in More’s estimation, is part of a ‘natural kind of bias’ or ‘female genius’ which is reiterated in the ideology of genre (More, 1778, p.12). Far from unwittingly stating a ‘one-sex’ position, Curties’s authorship endorses More’s conservative account of the sexes because the sexual economy intersects with the economy of capital. To say that women excel at Romance-writing is not to say that it is essentially a female act; rather, by the late 1790s, More’s claim that ‘To amuse, rather than to instruct, or to instruct indirectly’ (More, 1778, p.12) is a ‘business’ which is most profitable to female genii also opens up the possibility of male imitations which are inferentially less commercially viable by virtue of being mere approximations of the literary productions of Romance writers such as Ann Radcliffe. Curties himself acknowledges this in his preface to *Ethelwina*; the tropes of the Gothic romance are utilised by ‘sublime genius’, but ‘The Author of this Work soars not so high; he humbly follows the track through which superior talents have already forced a way; he would emulate, but is too sensible how feeble the attempt must be’ (Curties, 1799,

p.ii). This is a position Curties would restate in the preface to his 1801 romance *Ancient Records; or, the Abbey of Saint Oswythe*, in which he expresses his ‘enthusiastic admiration of Udolpho’s unrivalled Foundress’ as well as his contentment to follow her ‘as a shadow, in attending her footsteps’ (Curties, 1801, p.vi). But Curties, like Polwhele before him, champions the case for Radcliffe as a fully sexed female in contrast to ‘Jacobin’ women writers: as Curties contends, female novelists tend to ‘degrade that timidity, that shrinking innocence which is the loveliest boast of womanhood’ by creating ‘grovelling incidents, debased characters, and low pursuits’, tasks which ‘the chaste pen of female delicacy’ should leave ‘to the other sex’. By writing novels on subjects that ought to be beyond the scope of their designated role as domestic beings (or what Curties terms ‘LITERARY PROSTITUTION’), female novelists reveal their ‘relaxed morals’, that is, their change into an unsexed habit (Curties, 1801, pp.vii-viii). That Curties implores women to leave novel-writing to men at the same time as he names himself as the author of a romance (*Ethelwina* was published under his Christian names ‘T.J. Horsley’) suggests that male writers can enjoy both the masculine province of novels while they effectively unsex themselves through the act of writing gothic romances. Curties’s self-deprecation in presenting his work to the public proves profitable to the economy of ‘two-sex’; the ‘two-sex’ model is not self-sustaining but is, rather, contingent upon the metaphysics of ‘Genius’ and a trade in Gothic writing that allows for male imitation in what might be termed edifying unsexing.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Radcliffe’s appropriation of the sleepwalking scene in *Macbeth* in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* accounted not only for the overheated passions of Laurentini, but also posited a rational frame for Emily St Aubert to observe the effects of excessive sensibility on Laurentini’s face in the same way that

the physician and his female servant in *Macbeth* concur that ‘Unnatural deeds/Do breed unnatural troubles’. However, Curties’s decision to appropriate *Hamlet*, and not *Macbeth*, reveals his alertness to the contemporary resurgence of the concept of female passion as championed by Mary Robinson; if Radcliffe’s appropriation of Lady Macbeth’s sleepwalking reinstates faith in Reason, the literary output of the late 1790s suggests that Reason is, in itself, insufficient to curb the resurgence of what Laurentini terms ‘unresisted passion’. In light of this I argue that Curties’s text forestalls the call for women to exact revenge on corrupt men as featured in Mary Robinson’s *A Letter to the Women of England* (also published in 1799).

Robinson’s text argues that the rule of self-preservation, enshrined in law to protect the libidinous activities of married men, should also be applied to women. By ‘self-preservation’ Robinson refers not to a matter of convenience to fallen subjects, but to a call for equality whereby female violence can be vindicated under a ‘one-sex’ economy which acknowledges the possibility of female passion in the face of her ruination. Robinson suggests that such a possibility exists on the level of language but is curbed by the law of ‘Custom’, for a woman may speak ‘of punishing the villain who has destroyed her’ but he smiles at the menace, and tells her, *she is, a WOMAN*’ (Robinson, 2003, p.43). Robinson begins her letter by acknowledging the list of ills that have befallen women as featured in Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), but her endorsement of violence favours a position that is more complex than Wollstonecraft’s call for women to be recognised as equally rational to her male counterpart. For Robinson, women must recuperate not their ‘reason’ but their passion. Indeed, Wollstonecraft’s appeal to female rationality is contingent upon a militant approach which is fuelled by passion; as Robinson asserts, ‘though this letter may not display the philosophical reasoning with

which *'The Rights of Woman'* abounded; it is not less suited to the purpose. For it requires a *legion of Wollstonecrafts* to undermine the poisons of prejudice and malevolence' (Robinson, 2003, p.41). The recent scholarly recuperation of Robinson's corpus has been noted by Adriana Craciun, who convincingly argues, in *Fatal Women of Romanticism* (2003), that the inclusion of Robinson, alongside other female writers such as Anne Bannerman and Charlotte Dacre into the Romantic canon, requires a critical reassessment of a feminist position that bolsters women's natural non-violence. Following Laqueur, Craciun writes that the reality of female violence attests to the existence of the 'unfemale' (Craciun, 2003, p.58), or to writers who lived during a time of marked oscillation between the models of sexual difference and 'one-sex'. As Craciun summarises in decidedly gothic language: 'The unsexed as a category is related to the undead, for both are corporeal categories that fall outside the binary systems that would contain them, and both enjoy none of the consolations of these systems (such as a fixed, natural identity)' (Craciun, 2003, p.11). When a reading of *Ethelwina* is taken into account, it becomes evident that Curties is aware that the process that begins in the mind – the figurative violence of 'unresisted passion' – culminates in a distinctly corporeal energy that manifests itself through acts of (or at least the prospect of) literal violence in the quotidian. If the fictions of Radcliffe relied upon physiognomy in order to detect unnatural passion, Curties's first attempt in the Gothic mode acknowledged the corporeal potential imbued in 'unsexing', relying on a reading of the inactive Prince Hamlet in order to create a female character poised between masculine reason and the passions that yield an attraction to 'unfemale' violence.

The contest between the 'one-sex' model of female violence and the 'two-sex' model of female inaction is illuminated by another female presence: the actress. But

as the professional actress moved confidently onto the stage by the end of the Cromwellian Republic, she would come to endorse the rules of both ‘two-sex’ and ‘one-sex’. On the one hand, Wollstonecraft’s examinations of the actress in her fiction and in her appropriation of Imogen’s cross-dressing in *Cymbeline* ultimately supported female subservience as a state of mind that should be reformed but not overturned through female passion – that is, she should not express a capacity for violence. On the other hand, Wollstonecraft’s attention to the performed nature of gendered identity can be seen in her appropriation of Rosalind’s wooing of Orlando in the guise of the male Ganymede in a reading whereby masculinity is placed under duress by the presentation of same-sex desire. Curties’s problem in composing *Ethelwina*, then, is twofold, and goes beyond Craciun’s analysis of the unsexed female by offering a sustained meditation, through the portrayal of Arthur as an active version of Prince Hamlet, on the ‘proper’ place of the masculine: by drawing upon the newly emerging task of the literary criticism of dramatic characters, the stage would cede to the text, and Curties’s project of re-sexing ‘Woman’ via *Hamlet* would also re-sex ‘Man’.

It is, therefore, insufficient to perceive *Ethelwina* as a sustained appropriation of *Hamlet* given that Shakespeare’s play underwent a series of readings and re-readings in the fields of textual editing, character criticism and theatre. For the modern critic the concept of a ‘female Hamlet’ initially privileges the stage as Curties’s primary influence, for the casting of Sarah Siddons as the prince in 1775, 1777, 1781, 1802-3 and 1805 (see Woo, 2007, p.574) added momentum to the emerging Romantic episteme of passion as that which pertains to the operations of the mind. As Tony Howard argues, the endurance of *Hamlet* through four centuries can be traced to the woman within the prince. According to Howard, the early modern Hamlet, as a

character unable to enact the masculine violence attending the tragic revenger, is ravaged by what Thomas Nashe describes as melancholia as a distinct female humor; when the prince directs his rage at female characters, such rage ‘is inseparable from his loathing of the woman in himself, yet what he hates is precisely what made *Hamlet* enduring’ (Howard, 2007, p.18-19). As Celestine Woo suggests, the casting of Siddons as Hamlet can be read as the Romantic conflict between masculine violence and feminine melancholia in its nascent state, for William Hazlitt’s influential analysis, in *Characters of Shakespeare’s Plays* (1817), brought the concept of a ‘feminised’ Hamlet to mainstream Romantic criticism by juxtaposing the prince’s ‘masculine’ desire for revenge against his ‘feminine’ propensity towards delay and melancholy (Woo, 2007, p.582). As Woo also observes, however, Siddons frequently tasked herself with delineating gender politics on the stage by exploiting her reputation as an actress renowned for a masculine acting style marked by ‘intellectual depth, authority and dignity’ when playing suppliant women (such as Calista in Nicholas Rowe’s play *The Fair Penitent*) (Woo, 2007, p.587). Siddons’s *Hamlet* is what Woo terms the ‘concrete physicality’ of her performances of masculine women. Curties’s female Hamlet, by contrast, relies on the textual *Hamlet* of writers such as William Richardson and Edmond Malone. If the female Hamlet of the stage presses close to the act of unsexing condemned by Polwhele, Curties’s appropriation of *Hamlet* turns away from the stage and towards the Malonean reading of the prince as entirely consumed by grief and, by extension, unable to exact revenge for his/her father’s murder.

Transmutations of Acting: Literary Criticism against the Stage

1660: the year of the Restoration of the British monarchy, and thus the historical endpoint of a prolonged period of political entropy, the annals of which recorded civil

war in England in 1641-2, the execution of God's vice-regent Charles I in 1649, and the Cromwellian Republic of the 1650s. [*King Charles II, Thomas Killigrew and William D'Avenant enter, together*]. In August of that year, the new King announced the re-opening of the London theatres under the reliable auspices of Thomas Killigrew and William D'Avenant under separate companies; for the first time – in Britain at least – ‘all the womens [*sic*] parts to be acted in either of the said two companies for the time to come, may be performed by women’ (Bush-Bailey, 2007, p.20). As Gill Bush-Bailey notes in her essay on the seventeenth-century actress, the inception of the female actor on the stage proved to be simultaneously liberatory and productive of a theatrical discourse that dissolved the distinction between female stage presences and the private life of ‘Woman’. Indeed, the earliest known actress to take to the stage, Nell Gwynn, donned the part of the desiring mistress enjoying the King's body natural just as the King's two bodies re-emerged from the dust of Republicanism. Such desiring as represented onstage did not, however, threaten the indissolubility of the King's body natural and his body politic, but served instead to endorse a conception of whorishness as the bind between the actress on stage and off: Gwynn was herself one of the King's mistresses.

But as Bush-Bailey also observes, Gwynn's rise to the stage created a legacy for her female contemporaries that would endure throughout the next century, even informing the stage practices of the female Melpomene herself, Sarah Siddons. The story of one such contemporary, Elizabeth Barry, testified to the efficacy of the actress-prostitute bind: formerly under the charge of D'Avenant, Barry's biography is punctuated by acts supposedly unbecoming the Restoration, ranging from an affair with the libertine Earl of Rochester to the honing of a world view, concomitant with the rise of monied interest following the Glorious Revolution, that success on the stage and financial

acumen were inextricably linked and could be enjoyed by men and women alike. The onstage partnership between Barry and Anne Bracegirdle reinforced the dissolution of public actress/private woman while also postulating female virtue as a category transcending the spaces of stage and house (via the figure of Bracegirdle). Often appearing onstage together in their respective roles of the sexually fallen woman and the signifier of virtue, Barry and Bracegirdle presented 'Woman' not as essence, but as a heterogeneous category which would comprise the point of departure for female writers of the 1790s – particularly Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Robinson – in their own examinations on the mental and corporeal capabilities of women in light of the bloody aftermath of the French Revolution.

Nicholas Rowe's play *The Fair Penitent* (first performed in 1703), harnesses the endeavours of Barry and Bracegirdle in its staging of the fallen Calista (played in 1703 by Barry and by Siddons in the 1780s) and of the virtuous Lavinia (played in 1703 by Bracegirdle). Calista, daughter of the noble Sciolto and bride of Altemont, succumbs to temptation in the form of Lothario, leading to diatribes from other characters on female nature. The denunciations of Altemont's confidant Horatio, for instance, concur with the public/private dissolution that likened the female actress to a prostitute: Calista/Barry numbers with such women who are 'fatally fair', 'false, luxurious in their appetites/[...]/One lover to another still succeeds,/Another, and another after that' (Rowe, 1790, p.15). Conversely, Calista's ward (and also the sister of Altemont and husband of Horatio), Lavinia, upholds an alternative model of the virtuous woman who preserves the homosocial ties between men. As Horatio reveals Calista's infidelity to Altemont, the latter is reminded of the former's role as a second father who 'form'd with care thy inexperience'd youth/To virtue and to arms'; subsequently, Horatio has the 'venerable mark' of Sciolto, protecting him from

Altemont's vengeance' (Rowe, 1790, p.32). The honourable bind, however, proves its deficiency as both men take out their swords. Enter Anne Bracegirdle as Lavinia:

Lavinia enters, and runs between their swords.
 Lav. My brother! my *Horatio!* is it possible?
 Oh! turn your cruel swords upon *Lavinia*.
 If you must quench your impious rage in blood,
 Behold my heart shall give you all her store,
 To save those dearer streams that flow from yours. (Rowe, 1790, p.33)

In Rowe's play, the virtuous woman is one who affirms the cultural currency of homosociality by risking her own life; blood itself is ordered in a hierarchy in which female blood – however virtuous – is dispensable in order to preserve the 'dearer streams' that mark the tie between men. But as Bracegirdle's function assumes greater prominence, it is clear by the play's epilogue that the productive male-male partnership is contingent upon the same propensity to virtue expected of the female subject. The play's denouement arrives as Calista takes her own life as a result not only of her infidelity, but upon learning of the death of her father at the hands of the henchmen of the recently deceased Lothario; Calista frames Sciolto's death as the tragic climax to her failure as a daughter, a failure compounded by her assuming the role of the parricide sanctioning her suicide in front of the 'patient earth' which laboured 'with my murd'rous weight' (Rowe, 1790, p.53). The epilogue, spoken by Bracegirdle as Lavinia, refuses to vindicate Calista (and Elizabeth Barry) while concomitantly refusing to absolve male culpability in the failure of the marriage contract. Opening with a tercet which creates a contrast between the adulterous Calista/Barry and the virtuous Altemont ('You see the tripping dame could find no favour,/Dearly she paid for breach of good behaviour,/Nor could her husband's fondness save her'), Lavinia/Bracegirdle launches a castigation of promiscuous men who fail to follow the model of virtue embodied in their wives; in the light of husbands committed to the accoutrements of vice such as drinking and extra-marital

sex, Lavinia/Bracegirdle expresses sympathy for virtuous women who form ‘the cuckold-making tribe’ but insists that it is men who must take the first steps to effect a reformation of sexual mores and virtue:

*You men must first begin the reformation.
Then shall the golden age of love return,
No turtle for her wand'ring mate shall mourn,
No foreign charms shall cause domestic strife,
But ev'ry married man shall toast his wife
[...]
Lampoons shall cease, and envious scandal die,
And all shall live in peace, like my good man and I.* (Rowe, 1790, p.55)

Bracegirdle/Lavinia exploits the dissolution of the private/public woman to articulate her position that ‘virtue’ is of no sex and that the stage itself can offer instruction in maintaining a successful marriage. With the stage serving this social function, the examples of Horatio and Lavinia serve to lampoon the culture of gossip – itself parasitic upon ‘lampoons’ and ‘scandal’ – obviating it upon the provision that both sexes aspire to return to the ‘golden age of love’.

If the early eighteenth-century actress performed a cultural work which de-sexed ‘virtue’, the end of the century turned its analyses of fallen women on a psychological trajectory which anticipated the emergence of the literary analysis of dramatic characters. In the case of *The Fair Penitent* – one of the most performed plays of the century – it would be Calista herself, as played by Sarah Siddons, and not Lavinia, who attracted the new literary criticism. As one anonymous poetic essay, ‘The theatrical portrait, a poem, on the celebrated Mrs Siddons’ (1783), reveals, the public/private erasure survived into Siddons’s performances as Rowe’s Calista, although in a manner akin to Bracegirdle’s Lavinia than to Elizabeth Barry’s Calista; her appeal lay in the popular belief that ‘In private Life she shines as on the Stage’ (Anon, 1783, p.2), but unlike Barry, Siddons’s appropriation of the role yields a

reading of Calista as a teacher of virtue through the onstage display of her own sexual fall. The anonymous poet begins his explication of Calista:

SEE fair CALISTA'S penitential Woe!
 Her Heart dissolves; her Eyes with Tears o`erflow;
 Tortur'd with Anguish, and o`erwhelmed with Care,
 Her Breast the Seat of Horror and Despair! (Anon., 1783, p.2)

The passions of Calista – her penitence, her tears, her anguish, her despair – are the passions of an actress not merely imitating the passions, but experiencing the passion anew: for the poet, the appeal of passions at once real and staged supplies the object-lesson for virtuous women under duress from real-life Lotharios but who will eventually announce that ‘CALISTA'S Sorrow sav'd my virgin Fame./Preserv'd my Virtue! Kept my Soul from Shame!’ (Anon., 1783, p.3). In Siddons's performance, virtue remains of no sex, but it can be taught independently of the input of Lavinia and her absolute purity.

For Mary Wollstonecraft, however, writing in her *Thoughts on the education of daughters* (1787), the contemporary stage has become the receptacle of the ‘false’ passions which even Siddons could not counter. Writing of her own experience of the pit, Wollstonecraft laments the stage heroine who, although inspiring violent passion in every spectator, is unable to act ‘passion’ beyond servile imitation.

Wollstonecraft's assertion, however, is contingent upon the author who created the heroine, and it is Shakespeare's women who most eloquently enact and live through passion:

That start of Cordelia's when her father says, ‘I think that Lady is my daughter,’ had affected me beyond measure, when I could unmoved hear Calista describe the cave in which she would live ‘Until her tears had washed her guilt away.’ (Wollstonecraft, 1787, p.149)

As Wollstonecraft intimates, tragedy has failed to observe what she terms ‘the almost imperceptible progress of the passions, which Shakespeare has so finely delineated’

(Wollstonecraft, 1787, p.152). But if Shakespeare's women offer up a consonance between the passions onstage and offstage, Calista's passions gesture at the limits of representation insofar as the passions inspired by women's theatre-going fail to perform any service to the emergent female rational discourse of the 1790s. In her novella *The Wrongs of Woman; or, Maria* (published in 1798), the central protagonist's recollection of viewing *The Fair Penitent* yields mere disconsolation as her sympathetic identification with Calista – played by Sarah Siddons – reflects the passivity of both. Maria's remembrance of Rowe's play focuses on Calista's soliloquy, which is delivered upon the realisation of her position as the trafficked woman between her father Sciolto and the nobleman Altemont; 'how hard is the condition of our sex,/Through ev'ry state of life the slaves of man?' Calista meditates before contemplating her role as the wife in a world of wives who are shut by their husbands 'Like cloister'd idiots, from the worlds' acquaintance/And all the joys of freedom' (Rowe, 1790, p.26). Calista's apparition of herself as a 'cloister'd idiot' recalls the scenario of Wollstonecraft's protagonist, in her marriage to the rakish Venables and his subsequent imprisonment of her while he enjoys the spoils of her wealth and property. The display of Calista/Siddons's passions ignites the passions of Maria, who shares with Calista the predicament of submitting to the will of tyrannous fathers and husbands:

My delighted eye followed Mrs Siddons, when, with dignified delicacy, she played Calista; and I involuntarily repeated after her, in the same tone, and with a long-drawn sigh,
 'Hearts like our's [*sic*] were made...not match'd'
 (Wollstonecraft, 1998, p.144)

In her proclamation that 'Hearts like our's were made...not match'd', Calista's dialogue with Altemont gives voice to the otherwise silenced trafficked woman, while offering a precedent for her staged passions to be rendered substantive through a

female character-female spectator relationship. But unlike Calista, whose passions are the offshoot of her remorse following her adultery with Lothario, Maria's passions arise from the act of dispossession which she incurs at the hands of her husband as a result of her precarious position as a propertied married woman. Wollstonecraft's novel begins with the imprisoned Maria whose dispossession leads her to an asylum in which her thoughts of her husband's villainy and her fear for her daughter's welfare 'threatened to fire her brain'. From the opening paragraph, Wollstonecraft refuses the consolation of the restoration of property offered by the Gothic romance, for:

ABODES of horror have frequently been described, and castles, filled with spectres and chimeras, conjured up by the magic spell of genius to harrow the soul, and absorb the wondering mind. But, formed as such stuff as dreams are made of, what were they to the mansion of despair, in one corner of which Maria sat, endeavouring to recall her scattered thoughts!
(Wollstonecraft, 1998, p.75)

For Wollstonecraft genre is ideology, and subscription to the conventions of Radcliffe's Gothic fictions creates a palimpsest of the propertied woman which conceals the reality, as endorsed by property law, that a woman cannot be at once married and propertied. But Wollstonecraft's appropriation of the novel itself subscribes to an ideological textual practice which renounces the efficacy of Shakespeare, whose service to Gothic romance is made evident by her contention that the conventions of Gothic romance – the 'abodes of horror', the 'spectres and chimeras', even the 'genius' which gave rise to such conventions in the first instance – are inscribed as events sanctioned by the mind of Shakespeare himself in his capacity to form 'such stuff as dreams are made of'. The status of Wollstonecraft's quotation from *The Tempest*, and also the Ghost's warning to Hamlet that the tale he could unfold would 'harrow up' his soul, function as mere quotations which, as utterances from the opposing ideological base of dubious female consolation, are not nominated as sustained appropriations.

At the same time, the addition of cross-dressing scenes from *As You Like It* and *Cymbeline* in *The Female Reader* (1789) reveal Wollstonecraft's awareness of the performative aspects of gendered identity, aided by the life of clothes. In the extract from *As You Like It*, Wollstonecraft excerpts Rosalind's wooing – as Ganymede and in male attire – of the lovesick Orlando. When asked by Orlando to recount the flaws of women, Rosalind refuses and turns her attention to reading Orlando's physiognomy, only to find that he exhibits none of the signs of lovesickness: 'A lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye and sunken, which you have not... a beard neglected, which you have not... your hose should be ungartered, your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation' (Wollstonecraft, 1789, p.243). Stephen Orgel's work on gender on the early modern English stage shows us that Rosalind's cross-dressing stages the fluidity of gender, constituting a threat to the Renaissance version of 'one-sex' insofar as the function of clothing as the guarantor of gendered identity is utilised to stir the sexualities of men and women both within and beyond the parameters of the stage (Orgel, 1997, p.63). As Ganymede, Rosalind evokes early modern culture's equation of boys and women as sexually alluring to older men at the same time as her cross-dressing reveals the 'real' actor behind the female protagonist. In the eighteenth century, however, the role of Rosalind was principally a breeches part – where an actress would don a male role, exposing her legs for the titillation of the male members of the audience. The transgressive potential of Rosalind's cross-dressing would have been alien to Wollstonecraft, and yet her attention to Orlando's appearance and costuming makes an important point in her training of the female mind: Rosalind/Ganymede fabricates a story in which her/his uncle has trained her/him to read the characters of men on their faces and costumes, but the fact that Orlando's masculine appearance is not what it really is

becomes the marker of his own complicity in destabilising clothes as the sign of gender.

That Shakespeare's men and women are not what they really are is a theme that is continued in Wollstonecraft's excerpting of *Cymbeline*, which comes closer to her eulogising of the fate of 'Woman' in *The Wrongs of Woman*. The extract begins with the heading 'Imogen in boy's clothes' and follows Imogen, daughter of the king, as she dons masculine apparel to escape her vengeful husband Posthumus, who has been led to believe by Iachimo that he has been cuckolded. Imogen then retreats to a cave where she meets its dwellers Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus, unaware that the latter two are in fact her brothers. It is clear that the brothers, themselves unaware of their true nobility since they were taken from the king by Belarius to live under the names of Polydore and Cadwal respectively, represent the kind of Enlightenment rationalism Wollstonecraft aspires for in men, as Imogen's offer of money for their food meets with hostility from Arviragus: 'All god and silver rather turn to dirt!/As 'tis no better reckon'd but of those/Who worship dirty gods' (Wollstonecraft, 1789, p.267). Indeed, Imogen's subsequent homage to the brothers articulates the aspiration for a form of nobility that supersedes the dictums of class:

Great men,
That had a court no bigger than this cave,
That did attend themselves, and had the virtue
Which their own conscience seal'd them, laying by
That nothing-gift of deferring multitudes,
Could not out-peer these twain. Pardon me, gods!
I'd change my sex to be companion with them,
Since Leonitus is false (Wollstonecraft, 1789, p.268)

Guiderius and Arviragus have ineffable nobility akin to Theodore in Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* and Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron*, but such nobility is framed within a monologue that sexes the privilege of companionship. Imogen's re-gendering of herself as Fidele simultaneously allows her to enjoy the fruits of

fraternity and genders the wife beneath the clothes: 'I'd change my sex to be companion with them,/Since Leonitus is false'. Imogen speaks not as Fidele but as a fully sexed female whose subject position – the 'wife' – reveals the fantasy or lack at the core of her experience of equality with her brothers. In reality, her assumed name 'Fidele' asserts not her commitment to the act of unsexing but her absolute fidelity as the wife of a man whose blindness to Iachimo's deceit leads him to surmise that he has been cuckolded. If *As You Like It* reveals that both 'Man' and 'Woman' are categories of performance, *Cymbeline* reveals the inefficacy of subversive performance in the context of 'things as they are'; the gap between 'sex' and 'gender' opened up by costuming is not sufficiently unstable for the marriage contract to be overturned.

The limits imposed by cross-dressing are also at the core of Mary Robinson's novel *Walsingham; or the Pupil of Nature* (1797). The novel, narrated by Walsingham Ainsforth, traces the antagonistic relationship between Walsingham and his aristocratic cousin Sir Sidney Aubrey, who persistently foils the narrator's love interests. While Sidney's motives are not disclosed for most of the text, Walsingham knows that the answer lies in a locked ivory cabinet which he rescues during a fire in the Aubrey's estate, Glenowen, in a scene reminiscent of Caleb Williams's contemplation of the locked chest which reveals the guilt of Falkland. As the trope of secrecy in Godwin's novel harbours the over-reaching of chivalry, the secret at the heart of *Walsingham* is that Sidney, despite being raised as a male, is in fact a woman. Sidney's attributes are recalled by Walsingham with admiration: Sidney sings, dances, and is a master of languages, but 'he' also 'fenced like a professor of the sciences' and is also 'expert at all manly exercises' (Robinson, 2003b, p.129). But Sidney's cross-dressing has no liberatory potential for Sidney is herself in love with

Walsingham but has been sworn to secrecy by her mother, thereby enabling Sidney to enjoy a fulsome share of her deceased father's property. Upon the revelation of Sidney's true sex, Walsingham is urged temporarily to delay his suit as Sidney will 'demand some time to fashion her manners to the graces of her sex' (Robinson, 2003b, p.492). Sidney's subsequent re-sexing yields problems for the subject-position of Walsingham; re-sexed, Sidney is 'so purely gentle, so feminine in manners; while her mind still retains the energy of that richly-treasured dignity of feeling which are the effects of a masculine education...' (Robinson, 2003b, p.495). It is the re-sexing which follows cross-dressing, and not merely the act of cross-dressing itself, which performs the work of subversion, as it effects a permanent delay in fixing Walsingham as a fully sexed male subject. In the introduction to her edition of *Walsingham*, Julie A. Shaffer observes the resemblance of Sidney's cross-dressing to Rosalind/Ganymede's wooing of Orlando in *As You Like It*: as the shepherdess Phoebe is attracted to Rosalind as Ganymede, so the women of Robinson's text are attracted to the cross-dressed Sidney (Robinson, 2003b, p.30). (At one point in the novel, Sidney and Isabella Hanbury – formerly betrothed to Walsingham - plot to elope (Robinson, 2003b, pp.160-164)). But if *As You Like It* relays an implicit lesbianism, it also illustrates another point made by Shaffer at an earlier point in her introduction, that whether Walsingham perceives Sidney as a man or as a masculine woman, 'Walsingham and Sidney's relationship suggests that no man is free from the potential of being attracted to an (apparent) male' (Robinson, 2003b, p.19). To this end, Robinson's novel reiterates the 'one-sex' position which was dramatised on the early modern stage even as the writings of authors such as Polwhele and Hannah More insisted on the incontrovertible distinction between the two sexes: Orlando is wooed by someone he not only perceives as a man, but whose name, as Orgel has

shown, evokes same-sex desiring between men; by adopting the subject position of Orlando in the 1790s debate on sexual difference, Walsingham's questionable sexuality effectively de-sexes – or unsexes – him. Unsexing is mercilessly indifferent to gender.

The predicament faced by Curties, in *Ethelwina*, involves not only the re-sexing of 'Woman' but also the imperative to re-sex 'Man' in the light of female thinkers like Wollstonecraft and Robinson. While the eponymous protagonist is re-sexed through the sustained appropriation of *Hamlet*, the spectral injunction is fulfilled by her brother, Arthur, who also dons the role of the Prince beckoned by the ghost to exact revenge; while the sexing of Ethelwina is guaranteed through Hamlet's delay (thereby re-sexing Hamlet as female), Arthur's immediate fulfilment of the Ghost's command sexes him as male. Curties's 'Gothic Shakespeare' is one in which Hamlet's delay is not a problem but a boon which supports the 'two-sex' economy.

A Letter to the Women of England, Hamlet, and Ethelwina

The year 1799 saw the publication of two contrasting works: Mary Robinson's *A Letter to the Women of England* and T.J. Horsley Curties's *Ethelwina; or, the House of Fitz-Auburne*, respectively challenging and endorsing the 'two-sex' economy of sexual difference in the contemporary social sphere. Like Wollstonecraft, Robinson proposes that 'culture' has placed women in the untenable position of a being dispossessed of her passions and of her property. As a passionless quasi-subject contra Rousseau, women are to endure the sexual misdemeanours of their husbands because 'Custom' – Robinson's term for masculine-authored law – supplies Man with the power of self-preservation; a groom may intone the marriage oath with the express intention of breaching it, but 'he pleads the frailty of human nature...he urges the

sovereignty of the passions, the dominion of the senses, the sanction of long established custom' (Robinson, 2003a, p.75). In direct antithesis to the masculine subject of patriarchy, 'Woman' does not have any entitlement to self-preservation as she is not 'allowed to plead the frailty of human nature; 'she is to have no passions, no affections' and is castigated if she breaks her solemn oath (Robinson, 2003a, p.75).

For Robinson, the utility of the 'two-sex' model of passionlessness becomes apparent in its triangulation with the rule of male self-preservation and property law:

If a woman be married, her property becomes her husband; and yet she is amenable to the laws if she contracts debts beyond what that husband and those laws pronounce the necessities of life... We have seen innumerable instances, in cases of divorce, where the weaker, the defenceless partner is allotted a scanty pittance, upon which she is expected to live *honourably*; while the husband, the lord of the creation, is permitted openly to indulge in every *dishonourable* propensity. (Robinson, 2003a, p76)

What Robinson opposes is no less than the law of coverture as advanced by William Blackstone in his *Commentaries on the laws of England* (reprinted between 1793 and 1795). For Blackstone, the marriage contract requires the suspension of 'the very being [and] legal existence' of the woman, whose status as a wife permits her to enjoy 'the protection and influence of her husband, her baron, her lord' (Blackstone, 1793, p.441). But, for Robinson, the law operates a double standard whereby women are afforded no status as legal subjects, but are paradoxically culpable before the law in order to safeguard patriarchal self-preservation.

It should be observed that Robinson does not attack the principle of self-preservation but, rather, attacks the gendering of self-preservation by the force of 'Custom'. As the quotation above suggests, Robinson perceives 'Woman' as she is to be the 'defenceless' sex, unable to seek redress in the principle of self-preservation, and yet the *Letter* is punctuated by an argument in favour of its de-sexing. At the

outset, Robinson considers the sexual hypocrisy that would ensue from male and female acts of revenge respectively:

If a man receive an insult, he is justified in seeking retribution. He may chastise, challenge, and even destroy his adversary. Such a proceeding in MAN is termed honourable; his character is exonerated from the stigma which calumny attached to it; and his courage rises in estimation, in proportion as it exemplifies its revenge. But were a WOMAN to attempt such an expedient, however strong her sense of injury, however invincible her fortitude, or important to the preservation of character, she would be deemed a murderess. (Robinson, 2003a, p.42)

While Robinson is vociferous in her endorsement of female corporeality she is also alert to the controversial nature of her comments. In the earlier cited quotation, she acknowledges that the mere utterance of revenge from a woman constitutes a ‘menace’ (Robinson, 2003a, p.43), but this is a preamble to the contemplation of murder – whether literal or figurative – which would figure the woman as a ‘murderess’ in contrast to honourable ‘Man’. Robinson’s antidote to this sexual hypocrisy is suggested in her brief narrative of world history, in which she celebrates women of letters. Of especial interest is her account of the Goths in A.D. 500 and of Amalasueta, the daughter of the king of the Goths who ruled during the minority of her son Athalric; Robinson asserts that Amalasueta delivered her son’s education, ‘whom she instructed in all the polite learning *before unknown to the Goths*’, but her claim raises in her a query:

Might not the society of *some* living *English women*, if properly appreciated, tend to the reformation of certain *gothic* eccentricities; as well as, by comparison, produce more masculine energies? Men should be shamed out of their *effeminate* foibles, when they beheld the masculine virtues dignifying the mind of woman (Robinson, 2003a, p.57)

If women can be revengers they can also effect, through education, a reformation in sexual mores. Robinson’s position might be described as ‘anti-Gothic’: that a woman among the barbarian Goths was able to impart a polite education to her son is evidence of the capabilities of Robinson’s own contemporaries; her letter closes with

a 'list of British female literary characters Living in the Eighteenth Century' which includes herself, Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Hannah More and Elizabeth Montagu, author of the 'Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare; being a defence of him from the slanders of Voltaire' (Robinson, 2003a, pp.86-87). Moreover, Robinson's anti-Gothicism allows her to turn her attention to her male contemporaries. For Robinson, educated women who are possessed of masculine virtues – presumably the sense of honour that gives rise to female violence – shore up her contention that her proposed reformation must include those men who must be 'shamed out of their *effeminate* foibles'. As the dubious sexuality of Walsingham Ainsforth in Robinson's earlier novel suggested, 'unsexing' can be expediently applied to men as well as women. In short, the year 1799 witnessed the continued momentum in the culture of print of a 'one-sex' economy which rendered problematic both the categories of the 'masculine' and the 'feminine'.

In contrast, *Ethelwina* follows the politics of sexual dimorphism and, as such, can be aligned to a circuit of Shakespeare-inspired texts that broach the subject of unsexing. The anonymously published *Shakspeare Gallery* (1794) has already been discussed in relation to the presentation of the unsexed Lady Macbeth, whose monstrosity functions to discipline the gaze of her audiences. For the anonymous author, Lady Macbeth is an aberration who has transgressed the boundaries of feminine domesticity, and his call to humanise her by assigning an extra-textual origin is taken up by Ann Radcliffe, whose portrayal of Signora Laurentini in *Udolpho* permits her to designate parental neglect as the cause of her 'unresisted passion'. Such citations of Lady Macbeth, however, account only for the unsexed female in her finished state and not for the need to reform the internal discipline of female minds on the cusp of unsexing. Curties's romance, therefore, acquires political currency

through the contrast between an already unsexed Lady Macbeth, shorn of the rationalistic gazes of her spectators, and a female Hamlet whose feminine delicacy revolts at the prospect of unsexing in order to revenge her father's murder. In the fifth volume of the 1790 edition of Shakespeare's plays, Edmond Malone glosses Lady Macbeth's invocation to the spirit realm as part of her summoning of her resolve to murder Duncan – 'Come, you spirits/That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here' (Shakespeare, 1790b, p.295) – concluding that Shakespeare might have had in mind Thomas Nashe's *Pierce Penniless his supplication to the Devil* (1592) as the source of her unsexing. As Nashe's *Pierce Penniless* summons the devil to free him from his life of poverty, so Lady Macbeth summons spirits to wreak mischief on culture's sanctioning of domestic and public spaces. Malone quotes from Nashe's description of one group of spirits called by Pierce: the 'Spirits of revenge' that 'incense men to rapines, sacrilege, theft, murder, wrath, fury, and all manner of cruelties' (Shakespeare 1790b, p.295). Appropriated as the object of supernatural will, Lady Macbeth is divested of the possibility for reformation enjoyed by Radcliffe's heroines. Indeed, Malone is silent on the efforts of the physician and of his female servant to provide a rational frame in which Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking can be read as the image of excessive sensibility. Instead, Malone references George Steevens's gloss on Lady Macbeth's proclamation that 'Hell is murky':

Lady Macbeth is acting over, in a dream, the business of the murder of Duncan, and encouraging her husband as when awake. She, therefore, would not have even hinted the terrors of hell to one whose conscience she saw was too much alarmed already for her purpose. She certainly imagines herself here talking to Macbeth, who (she supposes) has just said, *Hell is murky*, (i.e. hell is a dismal place to go to in consequence of such a deed) and repeats his words in contempt of his cowardice. (Shakespeare, 1790b, pp.414-415)

The contrast between Macbeth and his wife is rendered absolute by Malone: while Macbeth possesses 'conscience', Lady Macbeth possesses the rhetorical skill to

resignify conscience as ‘cowardice’; but if Macbeth possesses ‘conscience’, Lady Macbeth’s dreaming, for Malone, paradoxically signals its absence, as her dream is merely the ‘acting over’ of her plan to kill the king. Steevens’s point, that iterability supplants the place of conscience, is confirmed when Malone offers a gloss on the physician’s role as gazer. Although the physician offers the maxim that ‘Unnatural deeds/Do breed unnatural troubles’, his dialogue concludes with his admission of his sense of being overwhelmed by Lady Macbeth’s dream: ‘My mind she has mated, and amaz’d my sight:/I think, but dare not speak’ (Shakespeare, 1790b, p.416). Malone’s footnote on the word ‘mated’ reveals a level of anxiety over the extent of the physician’s loss of self-discipline, an anxiety that recalls Henry Fuseli’s 1784 portrait of Lady Macbeth and her powerless spectators as opposed to the moralistic pedagogy later promulgated by the unofficial catalogue for the Shakespeare gallery and by the example of Laurentini in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. First, he concurs with Samuel Johnson’s dictionary definition of ‘mated’ as meaning ‘Astonished’ or ‘confounded’, thereby suggesting that the physician’s turn to passion is merely a temporary deviation. Second, Malone references Alexander Pope’s reading of ‘mated’ as denoting not a temporary failure of the mind but a more enduring state, that of being ‘conquered or subdued’; although Malone initially asserts that Pope’s gloss ‘is not the sense affixed to it by Shakespeare’, he is forced to concede that ‘the etymology, supposing the expression to be taken from *chess-playing*, might favour such an interpretation’ (Shakespeare, 1790b, p.416). The potency of Lady Macbeth’s unsexing is evidenced not only by her ability to bend the will of her husband, but also by linguistic inefficacy on the part of her audience; Malone and Steevens read her as an actor tasked with the work of iterability as represented by her dream, a process of

repetition that unhinges language from rationality to the point that the physician declares that ‘I think, but dare not speak’.

Malone’s reference to Nashe’s fiction can be brought to bear on both Lady Macbeth and Curties’s female Hamlet. If the summonsed force of supernatural agency casts Pierce Penniless and Lady Macbeth as objects who are incensed ‘to rapines, sacrilege, theft, murder...’, the uncalled spectre of Ethelwina’s father becomes a failed ghost by virtue of the strength of his obsolescence, his forgetting of the strictures of tempered sensibility which guide the inner life of his daughter. Ethelwina retains her integrity as a thinking ‘subject’ unlike Malone’s Lady Macbeth, but also unlike the unsexed Queen Eleanor in Thomas Hull’s tragedy *Henry the Second; or, the fall of Rosamond*. First performed in 1775, Hull’s play tells of the illicit desire between the king and Rosamond, daughter of his confidant Clifford, and of Eleanor’s resolve to exact revenge on the king by murdering Rosamond. Like Lady Macbeth, Eleanor is acted upon by external intervention, although the presence of a sinister Abbot is substituted for Shakespearean supernaturalism. The efforts of the Abbot to tempt Eleanor into murder prove successful, as the play concludes with Rosamond’s subsequent death and the murderer’s expression of remorse: ‘My rage unsex’d me; and the dire remembrance/Will ever haunt my mind’ (Hull, 1795, p.75). Although Eleanor atones for her unsexing by taking the veil, the 1795 print of the play bears an illustration of Queen Eleanor about to hand Rosamond a poisoned cup, thereby rendering the manifestation of unsexing as more potent than her remorse. The illustration precedes the title page, and shows the ill-fated Rosamond (on the right hand side) resisting the poisoned cup, while Eleanor resolves to stab her with the poignard she is holding in her right hand. The extent of the extreme violence Eleanor is prepared to carry out is

borne by a quotation lifted from act five, in which Eleanor orders Rosamond to ‘Drink or this poignard searches every vein’.

A synopsis of Curties’s *Ethelwina* suggests a foray into the familiar territory of the Radcliffean romance, but with the notable exception of the inclusion of a real ghost which delivers its spectral command. *Ethelwina* charts the rise of the house of Fitz-Auburne under the auspices of King Edward the Third, observing at the outset that fidelity to the monarch marks the benevolence of character. Godfred, the Earl of Fitz-Auburne and father to Ethelwina, is introduced as a man of ‘striking manly beauty’ whose valour in Edward’s military campaign – having once saved the King in the field – is the cause of the King’s facilitation of Godfred’s nuptials with Lady Ursuline of Castle-Acre. A ward of the Crown but also an unmarried yet propertied woman, Ursuline was ‘much sought, and her alliance courted, by the Nobles of Britain’ (Curties, 1799, Volume 1: p.3), but her alliance with Godfred produces a daughter, the ‘delicately feminine’ Ethelwina (Curties, 1799, Volume 1: p.33), who becomes heir to both her paternal and maternal estates. The arrival of Godfred’s nephew, Leopold of St. Iver, to Fitz-Auburne begins a chain of events which sees Leopold’s failure to claim Ethelwina’s hand in marriage, his subsequent murdering of Godfred for refusing his proposed alliance as well as the imprisonment of Ethelwina and her sibling, Arthur. Leopold’s indifference to the royal deed which preserves Ethelwina’s right to her father’s property upon his decease marks him as the Gothic villain who is, not coincidentally, an anti-royalist akin to contemporary Jacobinism in his rebellion against the king; Leopold’s father, tainted with the charge of treason against the King, was ‘alienated’ (Curties, 1799, Volume 1: p.71) from his land, and the monarch’s detection of Leopold’s cabal against the King has subsequently led to Leopold’s own exile to the Welsh castle of St. Iver.

The conflict between the royalism of Fitz-Auburne and the Jacobinism of St. Iver is further advanced when, while imprisoned in Leopold's castle, Ethelwina is visited by the ghost of her dead father who commands his daughter to abandon her 'delicately feminine' sensibility, as nurtured by Ursuline, in order to avenge his foul and unnatural murder. Ethelwina's reluctance to become her father's revenger confirms her as a female Hamlet whose prolonged mourning for her parents results in her delay. This delay, however, proves fortuitous as her discovery of Arthur in another prison leads to the revelation that Arthur too has been visited by the ghost of Leopold and issued with the same command. Ethelwina's and Arthur's escape from St. Iver, along with Arthur's success in avenging Godfred's murder, leads to an alliance between Ethelwina and Augustine.

Curties's interest in *Hamlet*, sustained in a female character that cannot fulfil the role of revenger, can be read within the context of the contemporary criticism of Shakespeare's characters. William Richardson's analysis of the Prince in his *Essays on Shakespeare's dramatic characters of Macbeth, Hamlet, Jaques and Imogen* (fourth edition 1786) is especially pertinent as it paves the direction for the progress of 'passion' in place of the inheritance of his father's property: that Hamlet 'is excluded from succeeding immediately to the royalty that belongs to him, seems to affect him slightly' because he is moved 'by finer principles, by an exquisite sense of virtue, of moral beauty and turpitude' (Richardson, 1786, pp.89-90). In other words, concomitant with Richardson's presentation of *Hamlet* as a play on the passions is his contention that issues of property and inheritance are at best peripheral: Hamlet is cast 'into utter agony' by his mother's inadequate mourning for her husband and her hasty wedding to Claudius, whom Hamlet already suspects of regicide (Richardson, 1786, p.90). For Richardson, the subsequent appearance of the ghost serves to confirm

Hamlet's suspicion and to create resentment as the passion which motivates his initial obeisance to the spectral command (Richardson, 1786, p.111). At the same time, the Prince's 'antic disposition' is but one symptom of his defining irresolution, for, even as external evidence of Claudius's guilt is presented through his response to *The Mousetrap*, the passion of resentment is curbed by what Richardson terms as Hamlet's 'moral beauty':

Still, however, his moral principles, the supreme and governing powers of his constitution, conducting those passions which they seem to justify and excite, determine him again to examine his evidence, by additional circumstances, to have it strengthened (Richardson, 1786, pp.120-121)

In his second essay on the Prince, published as an appendix to his *Essays on Shakespeare's dramatic characters of Richard the Third, King Lear, and Timon of Athens* (1786), Richardson qualifies his defence of Hamlet's 'moral beauty' in light of the prayer scene in act three. Revealing his culpability, Claudius muses on the inefficacy of repentance given his desire to retain the trappings of wealth that come with the act of regicide: 'In the corrupted elements of this world/Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,/And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself buys/Buys out the law' (Shakespeare, 1790d, p326). But as Claudius proceeds to perform the gesture of prayer – 'Bow, stubborn knees' (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.327) – Hamlet enters and misconstrues Claudius's acting, thereby continuing the play's dramatisation of Hamlet's delay. Richardson proceeds to address the charge that this scene confirms Hamlet's malevolent nature. The Prince appears resolved upon killing Claudius 'When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage', when engaged in an act that closes off the circuits to heaven, but Richardson insists that 'such savage enormity' (Richardson, 1786, p.159) can only be attributed to his desire to conceal his authentic irresolution:

He indulges, and shelters himself under the subterfuge. He alleges, as direct causes of his delay, motives that could never influence his conduct; and thus exhibits a most exquisite picture of amiable self-deceit

(Richardson, 1786, pp.161-162)

For Richardson, Hamlet's malevolence is merely a performed passion that suffers under the weight of his true delay. Richardson's apologia meets with agreement in Thomas Robertson's *Essay on the character of Hamlet* (first published in 1786), which contends that upon seeing Claudius in prayer, the Prince's 'ordinary softness immediately recurs; and he endeavours to hide it from himself, by projecting a more awful death at a future period, but which he seems never to have thought of afterwards' (Robertson, 1786, p.261). In the emerging field of character criticism, Hamlet is marked by 'moral beauty', or 'ordinary softness', which comes into conflict with, and defeats, the violence inherent in the spectral injunction. Hamlet's delay is not merely fortuitous, but inherently virtuous, as the prospect of violence never permanently encroaches upon authentic moral passion.

That the textual Hamlet's virtue is contingent upon the presentation of his melancholy temperament is suggested by Malone in his 1790 edition of the play. Following the project of delineating 'character' as established by George Steevens, Malone proceeds to refute Steevens's categorisation of the prince as a villain. The funeral scene in Act five, scene one proves central to the endeavours of both editors. For Steevens, Hamlet is notable for his lack of grief, for he arrives to interrupt Ophelia's funeral as well as to haughtily proclaim his superior affection for her in front of Laertes. The prince, moreover, not only lacks sorrow but openly criticises Laertes's grief; after quarrelling with Laertes in Ophelia's grave, Steevens notes that the prince 'apologizes to Horatio afterwards for the absurdity of his behaviour, to which, he says, he was provoked by that nobleness of fraternal grief, which, indeed, he ought rather to have applauded than condemned' (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.423). In opposition to Steevens, Malone argues a position that would come to confirm the

prince as the emblem of Romantic melancholy, for the prince leaps into Ophelia's grave out of a passion akin to that of Laertes:

He appears to have been induced to leap into Ophelia's grave, not with a design to insult Laertes, but from his love to her, (which then he had no reason to conceal,) and from the *bravery of her brother's grief*, which excited him (not to condemn that brother, as has been stated, but) to *vie* with him in the expression of affection and sorrow. (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.424)

The production of Hamlet as a man of feeling is as much the effect of editorial interpretation as it is an appraisal of emotion. Both Steevens and Malone acknowledge the prince's apology to Horatio, in which he notes that the 'bravery' of Laertes's grief 'did put me/Into a towering passion' (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.406). Steevens's assertions on Hamlet's villainy arise out what Malone reads as his privileging of the Quartos which, not coincidentally, do not contain the prince's account of his 'towering passion'. If the Quartos' deletion of Hamlet's sorrow augments the prince's villainy, Malone's acceptance of the authority and authenticity of the Folio text permits the prince to stand as the purveyor of emotion that would dominate Shakespearean criticism through to William Hazlitt's *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (1817).

In *Ethelwina*, Curties writes a female Hamlet on the cusp of becoming an unsexed female, but inherits the probity of Hamlet's delay and his grief as it is freshly delineated in the Shakespearean literary criticism of the 1790s. Volume two opens with the ghost of Godfred visiting Ethelwina in her prison, beckoning her to the secret compartment which comprises the scene of his murder. The ghost's command is clear - 'The hand of the child must perform the deed of justice...swear to avenge me!' (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: p.23) – and Ethelwina's resolution to unsex herself appears unequivocal:

A parent's injured shade demands from his child vengeance on his

murderer, and shall any selfish thought for so poor a wretch as I am, mitigate the horror I feel for the monster, who has inhumanly plunged his sword into the heart of him who gave me being? – No! the weakness and delicacy of my sex shall be for a time forgot; and, if Heaven has doomed me to be the instrument of punishment, I will faithfully perform my sacred promise, then hide my sorrow and guilt for ever from the world.
(Curties, 1799, Volume 2: pp.25-36)

As an unsexed female, Ethelwina is positioned as Hamlet at the peak of his resolution to exact revenge on Claudius; as Hamlet, in the prayer scene, resolves to be unscrupulous in the manner of his revenge, so Ethelwina's decision to forget her sex allows her to accept the role of the amoral revenger. The erroneous interpretation, as Richardson would have it, that Hamlet's desire to kill Claudius only when the latter is engaged in 'some act/That has no relish of salvation in't' exemplifies Hamlet's own malevolence, performs a useful service in Curties's presentation of unsexed females in the manner of Richard Polwhele. As Polwhele wrote on the revolutionary women of the 1790s, 'vengeance smothers all their softer charms', and Ethelwina's unsexing of herself prospectively adds her to the list of women that include Wollstonecraft and Mary Robinson.

Upon closer examination of this passage, however, it is evident that Ethelwina's resolution, far from smothering her 'softer charms', is a failed endeavour at acting the part of the revenger. In the first instance, Curties notes that 'the delicacy of her truly feminine heart was shocked at the thought of being herself the punisher of her father's destroyer' (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: pp.34-35): in contrast to Mary Robinson's call, in *A Letter to the Women of England*, for women to exercise their capacities as revengers for the sake of self-preservation, Ethelwina's conservative attitude towards the function of the sexes in society prohibits the possibility of female violence. Moreover, Ethelwina's tenacity in offering to unsex herself must take cognisance of the fact that she is reproaching herself 'for not feeling that, just, abhorrent indignation

which should excite her to revenge the barbarous deed' (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: p.35). The slipperiness of unsexing is easily recuperated by Curties because its function as mere utterance, or as words without corresponding action, guarantees the integrity of the 'two-sex' model endorsed by Polwhele and opposed by Robinson. The discord between utterance and action during unsexing is completed by Ethelwina's defence of Arthur, who is imperilled by the murderous servant of Leopold, Ruthmer. With the dagger used to murder Godfred, Ethelwina stands between Arthur and Ruthmer and stabs the latter (Curties, 1799, Volume 3: p.71) and, upon encountering Ruthmer during their escape from Leopold's castle, it transpires that Ruthmer's wounds are superficial, thereby allowing Ethelwina the consolation of knowing she is not a murderer (Curties, 1799, Volume 3: p.92).

The dissonance between language and action, however, is more complex than oppositional logic might suggest, and must take into account Curties's presentation of the multi-voiced nature of the utterance itself. Like Hamlet, Ethelwina is instructed to 'remember' her duty to avenge Godfred's murder; remembrance, in this reading, is inexplicably bound to the will of the father. Unlike the Prince, reiterations of the injunction to 'remember' also require Ethelwina to maintain her fidelity to the strictures of 'Woman' as favoured by Polwhele and Curties. Following the disappearance of her father and the death of her mother, Ethelwina is required to take the seat of Fitz-Auburne and witness the oaths of fealty delivered by her subjects; her reluctance to assume the position is checked by the intervention of her adopted sister, Emma, who implores her to '*Remember*'.

The word seemed to contain the power of a talisman, and to Ethelwina had a double meaning; whilst the tone of Emma's voice, as she uttered the word 'Remember', sounded so like that of her brother, that Ethelwina started, and almost fancied it was Augustine whispering again in her ear, as he did when he left the castle – *Remember*; - and she became outwardly calm, and resolved to go through a form that was so necessary to her welfare... The Countess then

seating herself, Rupert and the seneschal administered the oath of fealty to all the tenants and vassals... (Curties, 1799, Volume 1: pp.164-165)

Emma's advice stirs Ethelwina to honour the inheritance bequeathed by her deceased parents – and, indeed, by the King himself - by assuming her position as the Countess of Fitz-Auburne, but it also echoes Ethelwina's desire to remember Augustine, her lover who has been deployed to France to fight alongside the monarch. When Ethelwina and Augustine meet for the final time prior to his departure, the former gives the latter a small miniature featuring her portrait but, in the absence of a gift to complete the exchange, Augustine implores Ethelwina to 'Remember'; his command is immediately honoured as Ethelwina retires 'to indulge the melancholy which Augustine's absence created' and, as years pass, Ethelwina continues to mourn for his absence by prizing 'the remembrance of Augustine with increasing affection' (Curties, 1799, Volume 1: p.114). Fundamental to the process of re-sexing Ethelwina, then, is the re-signification of 'remembering' from that which pertains to female villainy akin to Mary Robinson and the fictional Lady Macbeth, to the exercise of feminine virtue.

Curties's investment in *Hamlet* ensures that Ethelwina's acts of mourning throughout the text contain her femininity. In Shakespeare's play, the usurper Claudius praises his subjects for not excessively mourning the death of the King: 'we with wisest sorrow think on him/Together with remembrance of ourselves' (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.196). In what might be termed 'wise sorrow', an official period of mourning is required whose end allows for the preservation of lands secured by King Hamlet from Fortinbras. If 'wisest sorrow' is the rule of the Father, its breaching would suggest a threat to the order of things that is other than 'Man'; consequently, Hamlet's excessive mourning for his father is denounced by Claudius as 'unmanly grief' which must be countered by the former's thinking of Claudius 'as

of a father' (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.201). But Hamlet's jest to Horatio – 'the funeral baked meats/Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.206) – reminds him that Claudius himself, in his hasty marriage to Gertrude, has failed to follow the rule of 'wisest sorrow'. While *Hamlet* dramatises the failure to uphold a model of sensible mourning, in *Ethelwina* the problem of excessive mourning proves fortuitous rather than threatening. As Ethelwina prepares to receive the oath of fealty from her subjects, we are informed that she chooses to wear black in mourning for the memory of her deceased mother in spite of the fact that the period of official mourning has expired. Hamlet's 'unmanly grief', then, is the womanly grief of Ethelwina, and her clothing serves to augment the idea of a fully sexed female unlikely to become a violent protagonist: her mourning attire 'set off her fine shape'; her 'sleek white arms and fine formed neck received additional beauty from the dark richness of her shining habit; and 'the paleness of her countenance...received a more expressive softness from her apparent melancholy' (Curties, 1799, Volume 1: pp.161-162). In the aspiration for female 'softness' which echoes Polwhele's poem, Ethelwina's clothing provides an index both to her mind and her body. As black emblematises her prolonged melancholy, so the revelation of the female body in the countenance of mourning curbs, for Curties, the plausibility of 'other' unfemale bodies whose 'softer charms' are rendered invisible by revenge. In volume two, Leopold attempts to force Ethelwina into marriage but the ghost of Godfred again intercedes – appearing only to Ethelwina – and rouses her into a spirit of 'fortitude and resistance' (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: p.69) that culminates in her disclosure of Leopold as Godfred's murderer. As Ethelwina asserts, the mere disclosure of her uncle's secret means the culmination of her role as revenger (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: p.78) but her assertion proves misplaced because her decision to wear her mourning

attire during her dubious nuptials betrays her subsequent resistance. Curties's description of Ethelwina's mourning attire as displaying 'the beauty of her majestic person' (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: p.59) might underline her regal status as Countess and ward to the monarch, but the revelation of her 'beauty' reiterates the supple body incapable of the forms of violence required of the revenger. Furthermore, it is important to remember that her mourning clothes honour the memory not of her father, but of her mother, and so the spectro-paternal command to revenge the murder of Godfred is belied by the absent presence of Ursuline through Ethelwina's clothes. The significance of the memory of Ursuline becomes apparent through the familiar trope of the dream; Ethelwina's dream begins with the apparition of the dying Godfred imploring her to 'remember', but the dubious semantic integrity of the ghost of Godfred has already been undermined by Ethelwina's 'essential' femininity, a femininity which is maintained in the dream by the apparition of Ursuline, who reveals that 'There lives a Being who shall amply avenge our house's wrongs' and that her daughter must 'resume again the inborn virtues of her soul' (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: p.102). In effect, the insertion of the maternal command serves to elide the problem of Shakespeare's protagonist that 'The time is out of joint' (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.239). In Shakespeare's play, maternity has been consumed by Gertrude's marriage to Claudius – 'a beast that wants discourse of reason/Would have mourned longer' – leaving her to hasten 'With such dexterity to incestuous sheets' (Shakespeare, 1790, p.205) at the same time as the spectro-paternal presence from the future hastens to Hamlet's present imploring revenge. The ghost of King Hamlet is, at best, 'spectro-paternal' in its mere approximation to the 'real' yet unstaged body (whether living or dead) of Hamlet's father; Hamlet remarks to the ghost that 'Thou com'st in such a questionable shape' and proceeds to an act of naming in the future

tense ('I'll call thee Hamlet,/King,father, royal Dane' (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.224)). In contradistinction to the spurious ghost of King Hamlet, the absent presence of the mother in *Ethelwina* permits a language which casts no doubt upon the integrity of the apparition of Ursuline. Her ghost is introduced not as a questionable entity, but is variously a 'heavenly form' and a 'bright angelic spirit' (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: pp.102-103) devoid of the temporal ambivalence that ensues from Purgatorial rhetoric. The time is 'out of joint' only if Ethelwina betrays her proper sphere (as Curties and Polwhele might view it) and responds to the beckonings of the spectral father.

The delay of Ethelwina as a female Hamlet allows for a mode of re-sexing which leaves the role of revenger to 'Man'. By having Ethelwina's brother, Arthur, carry out revenge against Leopold, Curties contests the challenge posed by the unsexed female to the rule of masculinity even when such a challenge is postulated (Robinson) as the exception to the normative image of 'Woman'. In *A Letter to the Women of England*, Robinson argues for the recognition of the corporeal strength of some women; women exert themselves in 'household drudgery' and are allowed to 'follow the plough', 'perform the laborious business of the dairy' and 'work in the manufactories' while their male counterparts 'are revelling in luxury' (Robinson, 2003, p.49). In *Ethelwina*, female corporeality cedes to the fortitude of Arthur, whose education has groomed him for the task of revenge; Arthur recollects the teachings of his father, that he be guided by 'virtue and manly firmness', and is subsequently taught 'the practice of war...and its exercises' (Curties, 1799, Volume2: pp.175, 177). Arthur's communication to Ethelwina that he too has seen the ghost of Godfred (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: p.132) appears to be the catalyst to his exertion of his manly fortitude by the end of the novel. Upon returning to St. Iver to rescue his sister,

Emma, Arthur delivers to Leopold his death-blow, exclaiming ‘my father, thou art obeyed! – thy murder is avenged’ (Curties, 1799, Volume 3: p.223). But Arthur’s fulfilment of the ghost’s command is more than a citation of the spectral injunction in *Hamlet* for, in his recollection to Ethelwina of an encounter with the murderous Ruthmer, Arthur occupies a distinct unHamlet-like position: near the moment of death ‘the prison-door flew open, and I beheld my father, but pale and bloody; I knew not but it was himself’ (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: p.209). As an appropriated spectre, the ghost of Godfred is divested of the ‘questionable shape’ that burdens Hamlet’s perception of his father’s ghost, thereby becoming a father issuing a lawful command. Arthur’s attention to the paradoxical corporeality of the ghost serves to buttress the probity of the equation of ‘father’ and ‘spectre’:

I was running up to him, but in a moment he vanished from my sight, and I saw no more of him! – I flew to the open door – I called upon him by his name – I conjured him to return, and protect his poor Arthur; but he answered me with a deep groan, and then I heard no more of him. I returned into the room as Ruthmer was rising; he looked more pale and wild than even my father. (Curties, 1799, Volume 2: pp.210-211)

Unlike Hamlet, Arthur is not burdened by the future tense (‘I’ll call thee father...’) as the mention of Godfred’s name brings him into corporeality, while the spectacle of Godfred is bolstered by the difference between the ghost’s ‘paleness’ and that of Ruthmer, who ‘looked more pale and wild than even my father’. Both the ghost and Ruthmer are imbued with corporeality, but it is Ruthmer, in his paleness, who appears as a more plausible ghost. Godfred’s greater proximity to the category of the corporeal installs him as the authentic father whose command augments the cause of justice; such justice, moreover, is provisional upon his remembrance of the strictures of sexual difference as advocated by Richard Polwhele and by Curties himself.

If Ethelwina perceives the spectre of a father who forgets the two-sex economy, Arthur’s perception is privileged by the same father’s subsequent remembrance that

female violence must be curbed via the displacement of violent potential onto the son. Such displacement also serves to advocate the necessary re-sexing of 'Man'. Arthur's masculinity is preserved by the elision of doubt from his encounter with the ghost of his father, an elision which is transferred to Ethelwina, producing a female Hamlet whose delay performs useful cultural work to those who seek to curb the influence of the 'band of women despising NATURE's law', instead endorsing what Laqueur terms the 'two-sex' model of sexual difference.

CHAPTER FOUR

(IN)AUTHENTIC SHAKESPEARE: THE CASE OF W.H. IRELAND

In 1765, Horace Walpole's place in the culture of forgery was secured by the revelation that the found manuscript entitled *The Castle of Otranto* was, in fact, a forgery created by Walpole himself. At the same time, the second preface to *Otranto* appears to postulate the exclusivity of the categories of 'the forged text' and the 'Shakespearean text'. The second preface to *Otranto* began by confessing its status as a forged text, having upon original publication presented itself as a faux-archaeological discovery comprising William Marshal's translation of the Italian priest Onuphrio Muralto: 'It was printed at Naples, in the black letter, in the year 1529. How much sooner it was written does not appear' (Walpole, 1996, p5). The gap opened up between the printed text and the written text is closed by 'Marshal', whose theory that the original moment of composition 'was little antecedent to that of the impression', when letters were the weapon of choice to Italian Reformers seeking to 'dispel the empire of superstition'; this further leads him to conjecture that *Otranto* was written by 'an artful priest' seeking to enact his own counter-Reformation by Catholicising the letter (Walpole, 1996, p.5). The letter is not inherently meaningful in itself, but acquires currency through the intervention of the external realms of politics and culture; and Walpole's conscription of Shakespeare himself, in the second preface to *Otranto*, obviates the problem of forgery in favour of his original genius. As Walpole summarises, the controversy surrounding *Otranto*'s status as a forgery is belied by its author's resolve to 'shelter my own daring under the cannon of the brightest genius this country, at least, has produced' (Walpole, 1996, p.14). With the

fortuitous elision of forgery advanced by the process of cultural transmission, ‘Genius’ becomes the total of the authentic experience of reading the Shakespearean text.

In 1795, the severance of forgery and Shakespeare no longer held. As Robert Miles has summarised in *Romantic Misfits* (2008), one William Henry Ireland accompanied his father, the antiquarian scholar Samuel Ireland, on a trip to Stratford-upon-Avon. Samuel imparted his desire to discover lost Shakespearean relics to his son, and so William Henry set about an enterprise that culminated in a collection of forgeries which included Shakespeare’s declaration of his Protestant faith, as well as two unknown Shakespeare plays, *Vortigern and Rowena* and *Henry II*. Samuel Ireland’s subsequent publication of the lost documents, as the *Miscellaneous papers and legal instruments under the hand and seal of William Shakespeare* (1796), set off a chain reaction which led to Edmond Malone’s discovery of the Shakespeare papers as forged texts (Miles, 2008, pp.22-24).

Malone’s discovery is not his first encounter with forgery in the Shakespearean context, for his account of Prince Hamlet’s endeavours in forgery buffers the Romantic prince against the residue of his villainous Other. In *Hamlet*, the conflation of the radical textual instability created by the prince’s forgeries commanding the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and his villainy would appear to endorse the readings of Samuel Johnson and George Steevens of the prince as a villain whose turn to forgery is but one instance of his adoration of extreme violence. This Hamlet bears close affinity to the Renaissance Hamlet who permeates Shakespeare’s text. As Margreta de Grazia postulates in *Hamlet without Hamlet* (2007), the Renaissance Hamlet is one that should be read without the firmaments of his Romantic transmutation, for his adherence to the Senecan model of the revenger (whereby the

revenger's violence exceeds that of the usurping Claudius) 'goes beyond the pale of the human' and would have been recognisable to early modern audiences as the devil's work (de Grazia, 2007, p.193). Moreover, for de Grazia, the composition of textual Hamlet as a symbol of Romantic passion was enabled partly by the closing of the theatres under the auspices of Charles I; with the removal of the stage came the slow forgetting of Hamlet's villainy, and the realm of performance was relegated to the internal theatre of the mind, for what de Grazia terms as Hamlet's 'performative monstrosity' became 'naturalized as deep-seated emotional or psychological disturbance' (de Grazia, 2007, 193). While de Grazia's assessment of Hamlet's villainy under both early modern and Romantic perspective relies mainly upon the notorious prayer scene in which the prince stops short of heaping damnation upon the usurping Claudius, further reading of Malone's defence of the prince's character suggests that Hamlet's Romantic self is enabled by a quasi-legal process that makes abjected material out of his real monstrosity. Malone turns to *The History of Hamblet* as the most probable source for Hamlet's account of his act of forgery. As Malone narrates, in this text the usurping Fengon assigns two of his ministers to escort Hamblet to England, the site where he is meant to meet his death. Hamblet, however, intercepts the letters and discovers 'the wicked and villainous mindes of the two courtiers' as well as Fengon's villainy, and proceeds to forge the deed that will send the courtiers to their deaths. The *History's* observation that the courtiers were complicit with the machinations of Fengon provides sufficient evidence for Malone to testify to the benevolence of Shakespeare's prince; 'though certainly not absolutely necessary to his own safety', Malone writes that Hamblet/Hamlet's deed 'does not appear to have been a wanton and unprovoked cruelty, as Mr. Steevens has supposed...' (Shakespeare, 1790d, p.400). As the previous chapter has demonstrated,

by entrenching *Hamlet* firmly within a textual, as distinct from a theatrical, apparatus the prince enters the Shakespearean canon in a guise that satisfied the cultural work of T.J. Horsley Curties, whose *Ethelwina* is a female Hamlet who lives on the cusp of unsexing but whose inheritance of the prince's delay anticipates the Romantic episteme of melancholy which, in turn, nullifies the trace of villainy. As Malone's rewriting of the early modern prince via *The Hystory of Hamblet* suggests, the authentic Hamlet who appears in *Ethelwina* is the effect of the textual production of authenticity in the here and now of 1790 and, as such, Malone's legalistic method defends not only the re-formed Hamlet, but his own critical practice.

Malone's contention that Hamlet's forgeries are not committed out of 'wanton and unprovoked cruelty' highlights the difference between the prince's and Ireland's respective roles as forgers; if Hamlet forges to save his life and to restore disjointed time, Ireland, as Miles notes, opportunistically 'grievously wounded all those with an ideological investment in bardolatry' (Miles, 2008, p.42). Such a binary supposes that Ireland's forgeries are the effect of 'wanton and unprovoked cruelty' towards Shakespeare himself, but as de Grazia has observed in *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus*, the eighteenth-century history of the literary production of Shakespeare's plays produced a theory of authenticity that was inseparable from the act of literary forgery. As de Grazia reminds us, Edmund Malone's project of (re)producing the authentic Shakespearean text in 1790, the published edition of which re-established Shakespeare's original linguistic 'rudeness' alongside supplementary biographical writings on his life, postulated authenticity as 'an external principle for settling Shakespeare's erratic text' (de Grazia, 1991, 70). Initially, the erratic progress of the text into and throughout the eighteenth century was informed not by forgery but by the realities of print culture

and editorship from 1623 (the publication of the First Folio) into the eighteenth century; while errors in pagination and wording made by the compositors of the First Folio led to the proliferation of different versions of the same text, editors of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century appropriated the text in order to correct Shakespeare's 'rudeness' in order to comply with contemporary linguistic standards (de Grazia, 1991, p.66). Furthermore, editors such as Pope, Lewis Theobald, William Warburton, Samuel Johnson and Edward Capell worked under the tutelage of the Tonson publishing dynasty, whose recruitment of editors over six decades protected their right to copy Shakespeare's texts beyond the twenty-one-year period granted to publishers to print new works. Although Shakespeare's name and ideas, belonging to an earlier barbaric period in history, were not protected by copyright, the revisions editors made on the work of previous editors rendered the Shakespearean text 'new' to the point that the editor and publisher would have enjoyed the space that literary history assigned to 'the author'.

The implications of what de Grazia terms the 'reproduction' of authenticity on literary history culminated in 1795 with the publication of Ireland's Shakespeare papers. In reproducing an ideal of 'authenticity' that was alien to Shakespeare's own time, Malone's project is contingent upon rendering Shakespeare as irrevocably dead, thereby rendering Shakespeare's text as a 'dead letter' located in time and space, ready to be consumed as opposed to interrogated by the eighteenth-century subject. By reproducing Malone's reproduction of authenticity, Ireland's forgeries breach a law – but not the Law as such - that argues for the immutability of textuality. Moreover, Miles and Michael Gamer have compellingly argued that *Vortigern and Rowena* inscribed forgery as a valid form that foregrounded its allegiance to the myth of the Gothic liberty. In *Vortigern and Rowena*, for instance, the tyrant king

Vortigern is overthrown by his nephew Aurelius, thereby reversing the effect of the tyrant's usurpation of Aurelius's father, Constantius. But the play's action gives rise to a complicated allegory that refuses to cast Vortigern in the role of 'villain', for it is Vortigern who legitimates the myth of Gothic liberty by inviting the Saxon-Goths to England. Furthermore, Miles and Gamer have observed that Aurelius's troops resurrect the lost 'Jacobite' fantasy of overthrowing the incumbent Hanoverian dynasty at the same time as Aurelius's victory signals the onset of Gothic liberty enabled by Vortigern and promoted by the Hanoverians (Miles & Gamer, 2008, pp. 142-146). Ireland forges Shakespeare, but he is also a forger of English national identity, with Shakespeare at its core.

While Miles and Gamer discuss Ireland's forged play as a valid literary form, Jeffrey Kahan observes Ireland's continued commitment to forgery in his first Gothic romance, *The Abbess* (1799). The title page of *The Abbess* features an epigraph attributed to Shakespeare but is, in fact, sourced from Dryden's adaptation of *Troilus and Cressida* (1679). Superficially, Kahan argues, it seems to suggest remorse for his acts of forgery; the epigraph, 'Let Modest matrons, at thy mention start/And blushing Virgins, when they read our annals,/Skip o'er the guilty page', recalls the prologues of *Vortigern* and Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida*, in which actors speaking as the ghost of Shakespeare respectively call for the acceptance of *Vortigern* and the emergence of more adaptations of his plays. Kahan concludes that the apologetic epigraph is really a parodic take on the confessional form, and that Ireland's forgeries were effectively licensed by the preceding tradition of adaptation. Adaptation, moreover, is the effect of the command of Shakespeare himself, a command that fudges the distinction between adaptation and forgery and supports the output of more forgeries (Kahan, 2009, pp.76-77).

In this chapter I argue that the dismantling of Shakespeare attending the Ireland controversy allowed Ireland to broaden the ‘authenticity’ debate by conscripting an inauthentic Shakespeare who advanced the possibility of dramatising unresisted sexual passion in *The Abbess*. In *The Abbess*, Conte Marcello Porta prepares for an illicit meeting with the beloved Maddelena in the convent of Santa Maria del Nova; after engaging in illicit sex with a veiled woman during the meeting, he realises that the woman is not Maddelena but the Abbess Vittoria Bracciano. Kahan has noted Ireland’s appropriation of the bed-trick in *Measure for Measure*, in which the lascivious Angelo is duped into believing that he will enjoy a sexual encounter with Isabella, only to meet with his wife Mariana (Kahan, 2009, p.72). But while the effect of the bed-trick is reversed in Ireland’s text – it brings about a breakdown in law and order, while Shakespeare’s bed-trick effects the restoration of order by removing Angelo from power – Ireland’s invocation of a sexual Shakespeare resists Edmond Malone’s reading of the play as an exorcism of sexual villainy. Malone’s textual authenticity apparatus turns to act five of *Measure for Measure*, in which Isabella reveals Angelo’s attempt to seduce her in return for the life of her brother in an inquisition headed by the Duke of Vienna: as she declares, ‘may Angelo,/In all his dressings, characts, titles, forms,/Be an arch-villain’ (Shakespeare, 1790a, p.110). The context the term ‘characts’, glossed as ‘inscription’ (Shakespeare, 1790a. p.110), inhabits proves to be of central importance insofar as it advances definitions of villainy and passion which exceed the ‘unresisted passion’ of Laurentini in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, as well as the tragic and melodramatic dimensions of Schedoni in *The Italian*. In Malone’s footnotes, what begins as the unravelling of semiotic signification – that is, the illusion that legal scripts confirm the rationality of holders of high office - concludes as the revelation of villainy imbued with unresisted sexual

passion. As an ‘arch-villain’ Angelo anticipates Ambrosio’s excessive desiring in Matthew Lewis’s *The Monk* (1796), but the intersection of sexual villainy and the legal ‘characters’ of authenticity more accurately prefigures W.H. Ireland’s first romance, *The Abbess* (1799), in which the eponymous abbess and the perverse image of the Radcliffean hero both cede to their sexualities while the former turns to legal rhetoric in order to conceal her sexual fall.

If Radcliffe’s Gothic Shakespeare locates the Bard on the boundary between authentic tragic passion and performed passion, Ireland’s Gothic Shakespeare challenges the status of authenticity itself as its performative dimensions are appropriated with the aid of Shakespeare himself. In *The Abbess*, ‘authenticity’ encapsulates not only the appropriation of the modern discourse of factuality, but also the practice, embodied by Clara Reeve in *The Progress of Romance*, of performative authenticity in the production of a literary mode – Romance – that elides the proximity of sexual desire in the state of ‘things as they are’. To this end, Ireland resists not only Malone and Reeve, but also Reverend Thomas J Mathias’s invective against representations of illicit sex as outlined in his poem *The Pursuits of Literature* (1798). For Ireland, *Measure for Measure* provides the precedent whereby the intersection of law, authenticity and unresisted sexual passion produces an unsexed female Angelo (the eponymous abbess of the text’s title) whose presence signals the inefficacy of suturing the gap created by excessive appropriations of the language of the law.

‘De-romancing’ the Bards: Lauder’s Milton and Ireland’s Shakespeare

Although Walpole, in the second preface to *Otranto*, underlined the credibility of authenticity with recourse to Shakespeare’s ‘Genius’, the textual Shakespeare

presided over by the Tonson dynasty created Shakespeare as a laudable improvement on the rancorous Shakespeare who pervaded the erratic Quartos and Folios during the seventeenth century. In other words, Shakespeare occupied the faultline between the surface of authenticity and the performative factuality which produced the category of the authentic in the first place. As the example of William Lauder reveals, eighteenth-century discourse on authenticity was already preoccupied with the implications of performed authenticity. In 1751 another English bard, John Milton, attracted the attention of Lauder, whose *An essay on Milton's use and imitation of the moderns, in his Paradise Lost* embedded Milton's 'Genius' in a controversy that figured Milton as a plagiarist. While one essay defines his Genius as the capacity to display both 'original Beauties, and those which are imitated' (Lauder, 1741, p.45), Lauder's narrative contended that Miltonic bardolatry had become dogmatic to the point of eliding the reality of plagiarism. The 'sublime conceptions' of Satan in Pandemonium plotting vengeance on the tyrant God were, according to Lauder, lifted from the poet Masenius; Massenius's lines, translated into English by Lauder as,

The prince of darkness...
 Outcast of Heav'n...
 with threatening front,
 And arm'd hand, the new-born world he fills
 With horrid war, and devastation wide...

become in Milton's lines on Satan,

...what time his pride
 Had cast him out of Heav'n, with all his host
 Of rebel angels...and with ambitious aim
 Rais'd imperious war in Heav'n (Lauder, 1751, pp.26-27)

Lauder's attack on Milton is sustained throughout the *Essay* and is buttressed by the comments of other learned scholars: one Mr. Peck, Milton scholar and memoirist, contended that 'the whole plan of *Paradise Lost*...is taken from a romance, entitled,

Gusman de Alfarche, while Zachary Pearce, Bishop of Bangor, offered his opinion that Milton was inspired to plagiarise an Italian tragedy called *Il Paradiso Perdo*' (Lauder, 1751, p.154). Moreover, Lauder had 'been informed by several persons of unquestionable judgment and veracity, that almost all that is admir'd as lofty and sublime, in Milton's description of the angels, in his sixth book, is wholly transcribed from this tragedy' (Lauder, 1751, p.154). What appears as 'lofty and sublime' is merely a plagiarised approximation of inimitable literary precedents.

As Bertrand Goldgar writes in his article on the Lauder affair, the *Essay*'s legacy lay not in the sphere of plagiarism, but of forgery, as writers such as John Douglas discovered that 'Lauder had interpolated lines from William Hog's Latin version of *Paradise Lost* (1690) into works by the modern Latin poets he accuses Milton of plundering' (Goldgar, 2001, p.7). But while Douglas countered Lauder in his own essays *Milton vindicated from the charge of plagiarism, brought against him by Mr Lauder* (1751) and *Milton no plagiary; or, a detection of the forgeries contained in Lauder's essay on the imitation of the moderns* (1756), the publication of a poem by 'Philatheles', a poem commonly attributed to Douglas, *Pandaemonium: or, a new infernal expedition. Inscrib'd to a being who calls himself William Lauder* (1750) sought to attack Lauder with his own infernal agenda, framing the controversy around a Protestant aesthetic that foregrounded the travesty of forgery. In the poem Lauder himself is Satan, reeling after failing to prevent the spread of the Bible 'that in Britain 'tis too freely read' (Douglas, 1750, p.5). In light of the poet's subsequent footnote that 'Satan wishes not well to the protestant interest' (Douglas, 1750, p.5), Lauder-Satan summons his followers to debate the fate of *Paradise Lost*, another protestant text that has propelled its author to the heavenly sphere of bardolatry. Having failed to prevent the publication of Milton's text, the monarch Satan offers the proposal to

commit forgery with the view of exposing Milton as a plagiarist, while also publishing the plagiarised texts:

Man's loss of *Paradise*, by *Milton* sung,
 Past by translation, into many a tongue;
 From these lines be borrow'd, on pretence
 The bard stole all his grandest strokes from hence;
 These to the *British* nation one might quote
 As great originals e'er *Milton* wrote:
 To put the thing beyond all reach of doubt,
 Proposals to reprint `em should come out (Douglas, 1750, p.10)

The moralistic tone of the poem is sustained throughout, as the angelic Uriel 'Descends on Douglas, luminates his mind,/And bids him mark th' impostor to mankind', with Douglas reciprocating by exposing and denouncing Lauder as the 'Scotch Devil' who, in 'spight of all thy skill/Thou fail'st! our Milton is immortal still' (Douglas, 1750, p.14). For Douglas bardolatry is most vulnerable when it is embroiled in controversies surrounding forgery and plagiarism, but it is the former that is deemed to be the greater offence.

But it is an offence that marks the absence of a legal framework to punish it. In his book *The House of Forgery in Eighteenth-century Britain* (1999), Paul Baines notes that Horace Walpole's assertion – in the light of the Rowley forgeries of Thomas Chatterton – that 'all of the house of forgery are relations' is symptomatic of the blurring of the distinction between literary forgery and forgery following the post-1688 constitution, with the latter taking the form of the counterfeiting of bills of exchange, bank notes and promissory notes. As a capital offence since the inception of the Bank of England in 1694, the number forgeries of bills, monies and bonds are relatively few (Baines, 1999, pp.3-12), but the execution of William Dodd on 27 June 1777 for forging a bond offered one instance whereby the distinction between forging money and forging literary texts was elucidated. As Baines reminds us, Samuel Johnson, one-time editor of Shakespeare and arbiter of the English language's entry

into rationality, wrote Dodd's apology, *Dr Dodd's speech*, assuming Dodd's voice to repent his crime and entrench forgery in the 'real' juridical economy (Baines, 199, p.132). Literature, then, performs a service to the letter of the law. With no constitutional letter through which to try Lauder's literary crime, Douglas invents a juridical economy in which Milton bardolatry appears as the quasi-law to be subscribed to or transgressed. Transgression, in Douglas's poem, is figured with reference to Lauder's Jacobite sympathies: as Baines further observes, Lauder's castigation of the forged casket letters of George Buchanan aligned Lauder to the cause of Mary Queen of Scots, as 'Milton and Buchanan were 'divine' poets, mirroring the creativity of God in their version of the cosmos; but to Jacobites they were Satanic politicians and historians, turning against the ruling members of the Stuart family and even forging evidence against them' (Baines, 1999, p.91). As the Jacobite 'Scotch devil', Lauder's recourse to forgery breaches the quasi-law, not merely through the act of forgery itself, but through the forged document's injunction to reinstate a rule of law that, *Hamlet*-like, permits an overreaching Catholic to follow through the act of usurping a divine bard.

For Edmond Malone, in *An enquiry into the authenticity of certain miscellaneous papers and legal instruments* (published 1795), the quasi-law of Douglas did not suffice in the light of the forgeries of sealed bonds, wills, letters, parchments and plays falsely attributed to Shakespeare; instead, Malone would apply the full force of the law, via William Blackstone, and its logic of detection, to the legal forgeries of William Henry Ireland. In his contention that the objects discovered by Ireland do not constitute 'external evidence' of Shakespearean provenance (Malone, 1795, pp.6-7), Malone turns to Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, first published in 1766, in order to postulate and defend the legalistic framework Ireland's

Shakespeare papers will be scrutinised under. After commenting on the dubious narrative of Ireland's discovery, and especially Ireland's failure to disclose the faux-archaeological site of discovery, Malone invokes Blackstone's judgement on the presentation of dubious evidence in the court of law: 'for, if it be found (says Sir William Blackstone) that there is any better evidence existing than is produced, the very not producing it is a presumption that it would have detected some falsehood that at present is concealed' (Malone, 1795, pp.17-18). Taking his cue from Blackstone as defender of the logos of the law, the ensuing text examines a number of documents that include a signature of Elizabeth I and 'Willy' Shakespeare's letter to Anne Hathaway in order to disclose 'internal' signs of forgery that are rendered manifest through spurious orthography, phraseology and handwriting (Malone, 1795, pp.22-23). In the case of the latter document, however, the Blackstonian injunction is fashioned as the purveyor of truth regarding the forger's politics. The letter, presented as a preface to a love poem to Hathaway in which 'Shakespeare', throws up evidence of anachronisms that purportedly reveal the forger's republican sympathies, as 'Neytherre the gyldedde bawble thatte envyrnnes the heade of Majestye noe norre honourres moste weyghtye wulde give mee halfe the joye as didde thysse mye little worke forre thee' (Ireland, 1795, n.pag.). In Malone's historiography, Shakespeare's royalism – as implied by numerous references to the golden crown in his histories and tragedies - precluded the possibility of describing the crown as a bauble: as a term that denoted 'any slight toy, gewgaw, or trifling piece of finery' (Malone, 1795, p.155), 'bauble', according to Malone, could be appropriated into (anti-) Cromwellian sentiment following the regicide of Charles I (considered by Cromwell as only 'the HIGH CONSTABLE of the nation' (Malone 1795: p.156)) in 1649, and repeated in the arena of the revolution in France in the 1790s. While Malone's reproduction of

authenticity in his 1790 edition of Shakespeare's plays and poems sought to locate Shakespeare in 'Renaissance space', his recruitment of temporality in the identification of forgery performs a service that reveals signification to be culturally determined, the embodiment of a difference that separates the perceived univocality of Renaissance royalism from the revolutionary acts that mark dissent and anxiety over the implications for England of the killing of the king in France.

The act of regicide, then, has a distinctly English provenance that has to be inscribed in the letter of the law, figured here as the preserver of cultural memory. But the law, relayed through Blackstone's evidential theory, has to postulate the boundaries that bring both legality and transgression into being at the same time. Subsequently, Malone concludes his *Inquiry* by deploying confessional and juridical modes drawn from recent literary history and the phantasmatic reconstruction of the court of law presided over by a committee of critics and poets. In relation to the confessional style, Malone enlists Samuel Johnson, the author of William Lauder's confession *Milton no plagiarist*. Here, the penitential language of Johnson's text posits a precedent for the quasi-law of literary forgery that Ireland, at that point the 'unknown contriver of the present imposture', will heed by acknowledging 'the heinousness of his offence against society and the cause of letters' (Malone, 1795, p.355). Substituting 'Shakespeare' for 'Milton', Malone's citation reads:

I publicly, and without the least dissimulation, subterfuge, or concealment, acknowledge the truth of the charge which you have advanced. On the sincerity and punctuality of this confession, I am willing to depend for all the future regard for mankind; and cannot but indulge some hopes that they whom my offence hath alienated from me, may by this instance of ingenuity and repentance be propitiated and reconciled. – Whatever may be the event, I shall at least have done all that can be done in reparation of my former injuries to *Shakspeare*, to truth, and to mankind; and entreat that those who shall still continue implacable will examine their own hearts, whether they have not committed equal crimes without equal proofs of sorrow, or equal acts of atonement. – For the violation of truth I offer no excuse, because I well know that nothing can excuse it. Nor will I aggravate my crime by disingenuous

palliations. I confess, I repent it, and resolve that my first offence shall by my last. (Malone, 1795, p.356)

Johnson's penitential mode is studded with claims towards authentic passion:

Johnson's ideal presentation of Lauder incorporates the latter's dismissal of performance ('without the least dissimulation') and proceeds to express his 'sorrow' and his wish to atone for his crimes in the name of truth. Malone's acknowledgement that Lauder was 'base enough to retract' his apology (Malone, 1795, p.355) reveals the problematic nature of inscribing authentic passion, for the appeal of *Milton no plagiarist* for Malone recalls Horace Walpole's contention that 'all in the house of forgery are relations'. On the one hand, Malone presents literary forgery as the scene of a crime against 'Shakspeare, to truth, and to mankind'; on the other hand, it also foregrounds his reliance on an act paraphrased and reiterated by Samuel Johnson in the mode of performed authenticity as 'confession', 'repentance' and 'atonement'. The semiotic shift that brings Lauder's attack on Milton and Ireland's Shakespeare papers to the brink of criminality nonetheless leaves the trace of literary forgery as a distinctly legal transgression.

If Johnson's intervention in the Lauder forgery scandal places passion in the double bind of authentic/inauthentic, Malone, in his subsequent presentation of the phantasm of a law that transcends such a bind, presents his case for the revision of the 1710 Statute of Anne to accommodate long-dead authors. In his account, presented as a dream-vision, Malone imagines himself as Shakespeare's counsel in the court of law in Parnassus. Maintaining his commitment to the 'authenticity' apparatus, he recognizes in the ambrosial setting adjacent to the court among the 'poets of all times and countries...our author by his strong resemblance to the only authentick portrait of him, which belonged to the late Duke of Chandos, and of which I have three copies by eminent masters' (Malone, 1795, p.357). Apollo, as judge, begins his final

pronouncement with a diatribe on the legal rights of the author: in the first instance, the statute makes no provision for ‘the injury which might be done to the reputation of poets long after their death, by attributing to them miserable trash printed from pretended ancient manuscripts’; in Malone-Apollo’s final analysis, ‘this offence, though *not within the letter*, was clearly within the spirit and equity of the statute’ (Malone 1795: p.357), and that a new letter of law be written up by ‘a select committee of poets’ vested with the responsibility of establishing a discourse of equivalence between ‘letter’ and ‘spirit’ (Malone, 1795, p.358). This ideal model of equivalence, moreover, reveals Malone’s commitment to modern factuality insofar as he postulates a primary transcendent realm of authenticity which is merely re-presented in the secondary mode of writing. Concomitant to the imaginary new law and the command to burn Ireland’s Shakespeare papers, Malone-Apollo decrees that those who argued for the authenticity of the forgeries are to be punished through the force of satire: revisiting the vogue for satire contemporaneous with the age of Robert Walpole and his son’s own satirical ‘The Dear Witches’, authors including John Dryden, Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope are ordered to write a series of verses that will be sent to England

...and inserted for one month in the Poets’ Corner of all the loyal Morning and Evening Newspapers of London, to the end that each of these credulous partisans of folly and imposture should remain

‘Sacred to ridicule his whole life long,
And the sad burthen of some merry song’

On this mild and just sentence being pronounced, all the poetic tribe who were within hearing gave a loud shout of applause, which drew Shakespeare and his companions from their game, and awakened me from my dream.
(Malone, 1795, p.366)

Citing Pope’s imitations of Horace (‘Sacred to ridicule...’) Malone seeks the application of the spirit of the law to literature, its satirical ‘letter’ entering a discursive field that obviates the difference between legal and illegal transgression.

Moreover, this new discourse, akin to the ‘author-function’, is set to be endorsed by Shakespeare himself, as the applause from Apollo’s pronouncement attracts the attention of Shakespeare from his sports.

For Thomas J Mathias, in *The Pursuits of Literature* (seventh edition published 1798), moreover, the satirical letter must pay due respect to the law according to Blackstone: citing book four of Blackstone’s commentaries, Mathias begins his text with prefatory remarks that defend him against the charge of libel against his objects of satire. As, for Blackstone ‘In a CRIMINAL PROSECUTION, *the tendency which all libels have to create animosities and disturb the peace, IS THE WHOLE which the law considers*’, so Mathias appeals to a Blackstonian idea of the law in which the proper place of satire – itself a manifestation of the ‘the freedom of the press, and of rational and guarded liberty of England’ – is threatened by what he terms ‘the war-whoop of Jacobins and democratick writers, or the feeble shrieks of witlings and poetasters’ (Mathias, 1798, p.11). Of the English democrats, Mathias pours particular scorn over Joseph Priestley, whose ‘king-killing wishes’, purportedly exhibited in his disappointment that ‘THE SENTENCE (*of DEATH on Charles the First*) could not be passed *by the WHOLE NATION*’ (Mathias, 1798, p.50), testify to the necessity of satire to corroborate the force of law in a time of revolution and regicide. As in Edmond Malone’s disputation of the Shakespeare papers, so for Mathias, the event of regicide recalls an all-too-English origin that is, moreover, a post-Reformation ‘Protestant’ event, but his reference to the ‘rational and guarded liberty of England’ postulates the alternative origin of an Englishness rooted in the 1688 Glorious Revolution. In light of the events of 1649, which could not be viewed as a mere aberration, ideas of historiography deem as insufficient the Reformation as the privileged origin of the English enlightenment; other origins, such as the shift from

absolute to constitutional monarchy, the growing importance of money in light of the creation of the Bank of England in 1694 and the freedom of the press (the latter revealing a circularity through which satire is enabled and postulated as the companion to the law by Mathias) coalesce to enable Mathias's formulation of English rationality and liberty.

Unlike Malone, however, Mathias' rule of satire incorporates a system of detailed footnotes that creates a discontinuity that, in the final analysis, refuses to chastise the act of forgery. In the dialogue that comprises the poem, the character referred to as 'the Author' discusses how the forgeries of 'Masterre Ireland' have bolstered his resolve to honour the words and texts written by Shakespeare himself: while the Author commands 'Give me the soul that breathes in Shakespeare's page... The pen he dipt in mind', his interlocutor Octavius concurs by conferring Shakespeare's authenticity beyond textuality, as auditory, for 'Enough for me great Shakespeare's words to hear,/Though but in common with the vulgar ear' (Mathias, 1798, pp.138, 140). In the poem itself, Ireland is named as a deviant whose antipathy to Shakespeare bardolatry, now literary-juridical rather than merely literary, is evident given the modernity of the appearance of the Shakespeare papers, thus signalling the absence of the signs of authenticity: 'But where's the dark array, the vesture plain,/with many a mould'ring venerable stain?/All fled: a wonder opens to our view;/The shield is scowered, and the books are new' (Mathias, 1798, p.139). Despite Octavius's claims of recuperating the 'real' Shakespeare through the auditory sense, Mathias, in his footnotes, keeps the terms of the Ireland affair firmly entrenched in issues of textuality and textual production. Beginning with Samuel Ireland's presentation of signatures – including 'the Rev. Dr. Parr, Sir Isaac Heard, Mr. Pinkerton, Mr. Laureat Pye, Mr. Boswell &c.' - verifying the authenticity of the

papers, Mathias recounts William Henry Ireland's confession of forgery to his father and the latter's assertion that he was hitherto ignorant of the papers' provenance, an assertion altered by Samuel himself who proceeds to defend the authenticity of the Shakespeare papers (Mathias, 1798, p.142). Mathias goes on to demonstrate the law's fallibility through an ambiguity that evades law's intervention:

...between them both, Father and Son, there appears to me... a sort of parental affection for these manuscripts, which is very strange, and which I cannot explain, but which quite satisfies me as to the nature of their originality. Mr. Malone's learning and politeness have not much to do with the business as a matter of fact; and the whole question now turns upon this momentous point: 'whether Mr. Ireland or Mr. Malone is THE GREATEST SCHOLAR...' (Mathias, 1798, p.142)

In the first instance, the 'parental affection' exhibited by both Samuel and William confounds the rule of law, as law's postulates cede to an inexplicable strangeness that, while outside of Malone's legalistic rhetoric, nonetheless remains within a sympathetic family drama. Furthermore, Mathias wrests Malone's commitment to factuality from him in order to resituate the forgery debate in terms of the papers' double paternity; the fact that the Shakespeare papers have two fathers – and are therefore doubly legitimate – is sufficient evidence of their 'originality'. And yet, Mathias's ethic of originality exceeds Malone's ideation of the law punishing literary forgers who breach the rule of 'originality' as creation *ex nihilo*: in Mathias' gap of inexplicable strangeness, Ireland's literary forgery, loosely directed towards family drama, acquires originality once the name 'Shakespeare' has been removed; Ireland, by becoming the *author-father* of *Vortigern and Rowena*, *Kynge Leare* and Shakespeare's love letter to Anne Hathaway, does away with questions of legitimate origin (including his own) through Shakespeare, the signifier of 'original Genius', himself. It is only as 'original Genius' that Shakespeare and issues of authenticity can be challenged.

The conflation of ‘origin’ and ‘originality’ outlined above is not, however, coincidental. As Horace Walpole’s veneration of Shakespeare’s ‘Genius’ in the second preface to *The Castle of Otranto* was countered by a distinct experience of Shakespeare, both before and within bardolatry, that utilised appropriation in defence of Sir Robert Walpole and cushioned the latter’s satirical onslaught (‘The Dear Witches’), so Mathias’ footnotes, in light of bardolatry, seek to relocate the performed Shakespeare which preceded the textual Shakespeare who attended contemporary bardolatry. In one footnote, Mathias offers up a brief history of the textual production of Shakespeare’s plays, noting the 1623 first folio and the eight-decade period that elapsed between the corrected folio of 1632 and the succession of editions that started with Rowe’s Shakespeare. But Mathias’ interest in the Shakespearean text is historiographic rather than merely historical: after noting a comment by George Steevens, in his edition of 1766, that ‘*no proof can be given that the poet superintended the publication*’ of any of Shakespeare’s plays, Mathias responds by questioning ‘If this be true, as I believe, what can any editor arrogate to himself concerning the *genuine text* of this great poet...the *actual words* themselves as written by Shakespeare?’ (Mathias, 1798, p.91). Moreover, and in contradistinction to the eighteenth-century adoration of Shakespeare and his texts, Mathias’s contention that ‘Hemminge and Condell’ had reference only to what Mathias terms the ‘play-house manuscript copy’ and that ‘no MSS. Whatsoever existed after that time’ is evidence that ‘Shakespeare appears wholly to have neglected or despised reputation in succeeding ages. It is for this age to amuse itself with schools and galleries, and without blame, in my opinion’ (Mathias, 1798, p.92). Textual Shakespeare, figured by Malone as the purveyor of authenticity, unravels itself as it calls up the reproduction of authenticity as described by de Grazia; by calling up the non-

authentic endeavours of eighteenth-century editors of Shakespeare, Mathias further beckons the appearance of the Shakespeare of the stage who, unlike the character ‘Shakespeare’ whose ghost issued injunctions to so many unsuspecting Hamlets to preserve his reputation for all time, would have regarded fame and posterity as alien to his own location in time and space. Mathias’s historiography, unlike Walpole’s sustained appropriation of Shakespeare, lingers on a territory that would inaugurate the stage Shakespeare as the ‘real’ Shakespeare, an essentialism that elided the potential to experience of an idea of Shakespeare – as is the task of literary appropriation – in favour of postulating an alternative authenticity. If it is possible to broaden the scope of ‘originality’ to the point that the Shakespeare papers are deemed to be ‘original’ works, so too does the scope of the ‘origin’ have to be revalued in a mode, the Gothic Romance, that gives priority to neither the textual nor the theatrical Shakespeare, but instead relays an idea of Shakespeare that locates the bard in the gap between bardolatry and the process of its dismantling through literary appropriation.

Another problem for ‘Authenticity’: ‘Romance’, ‘Novel’ and Sexual Desire

If ‘Shakespeare’ in the eighteenth century is an effect without origin, venerated while contemporary productions in the service of veneration reveal the concept of ‘origin’ to be at once necessary and impossible, then the terms ‘Gothic’ and ‘romance’ serve to render increasingly visible the fissures that run through writerly endeavours to stabilise the ‘origin’. Writing on Clara Reeve’s 1785 essay *The Progress of Romance*, a text composed in the style of a philosophical dialogue, Sue Chaplin observes that Reeve’s Euphrasia, the champion of ‘Romance’ who is tasked to ‘regulate’ and ‘methodise’ romance (thereby giving ‘Romance’ a history of its own), unwittingly undergoes a series of ‘maddening’ negotiations between the

categories of ‘novel’ and ‘romance’ that threaten to undermine her historical project (Chaplin, 2007, pp.72-73). As Reeve herself suggests in her preface and in her commentary on the status of the novel, both ‘the romance’ and ‘the novel’ are dangerous categories to the impressionable mental life of the child. Romances ‘are not to be put into the hands of young persons without distinction and reserve, but under proper restrictions and regulations’ that elevate their utility to the reading of ‘true history’ and are therefore conducive both to enjoyment and rational education (Reeve, 1785, Volume 1: p.102). For Reeve, the regulation of romance-reading works in the service of Reason and Reason’s commitment to factuality, and yet she concedes that there are unsavoury facts that ought to be censored from the child’s cognition. This problem is evoked in terms of genre (namely, the novel), especially Rousseau’s *Eloisa*, with its depiction of an extra-marital affair, which provides evidence of a danger to youth that is later substantiated through Euphrasia’s quotation of an extract from Dr Gregory’s *A Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man*. Recalling Gregory, Euphrasia notes that modern novels ‘represent mankind too much what they really are, and paint such scenes of pleasure and vice as are unworthy to see the light, and thus in a manner hackney youth in the ways of wickedness before they are well entered into the world’ (Reeve, 1785, Volume 2: pp.86-87). The pedagogical value of ‘methodised’ Romances counters the unlearned progress of a culture that devotes itself to effeminate indulgences, the ‘thirst of immoderate wealth or pleasure’ born out of the cultural currency of new money and its attendant, luxury. At the same time, such value accrues only upon the unspoken condition that the authenticity of the child’s reading experience tempers the fact of sexual passion in the ‘real’ world; romance is romanced by an ideology that strives to retain passion’s desexualised signification.

Reeve's romancing of Romance is reinforced by Mathias, who, in his discussion of *The Monk* in *The Pursuits of Literature*, brings Lewis's purportedly perverse romance to bear upon an alternative romance of the law 'as it ought to be' via a discussion of sexual desire in 1790s fiction. Unlike Malone, who proposes that the act of forgery is the greatest literary crime, Mathias insists upon the need to regulate textuality itself in light of the printing press's publication of texts which, in Mathias's view, work against the protestant common law. For Mathias, writing in 1796, both printer and author (the latter whose name was by then a regular feature of a text's frontispiece) were culpable in this ideal model of law: in an extended footnote, Mathias recalls the prosecution of Edmund Curl 'for printing two obscene books' that were deemed 'an offence against the King's peace' (Mathias, 1798, p.239) and who was sent to the pillory, citing this as a precedent to indict Lewis's portrayal of carnal pleasure and purported blasphemy against religion according to the rule of common law. Mathias focuses on the passage in which Ambrosio observes Antonia reading a copy of the Bible substantially altered by her mother, Elvira: despite her appreciation of the 'beauties of the sacred writings', Elvira's contention that many of the Bible's narratives 'can only tend to excite ideas the worst calculated for a female breast', that 'Every thing is called plainly and roundly by its name; and the annals of a Brothel would scarcely furnish a greater choice of indecent expressions' (Lewis, 1998, p.259) necessitates her intervention as a textual editor. While Mathias condemns the intermingling of the sacred and the pornographic he reads in *The Monk*, Elvira's role as an editor who tasks herself with altering the Bible with a view to presenting a more edifying text to her child resembles Clara Reeve's thesis that 'Romance' requires methodising and regulation before its canon can be brought to the cognisance of children. In this respect, it is perhaps no coincidence that the appellation 'A

Romance' is attached to Lewis's text for, as an unregulated 'Romance', and in contradistinction to Reeve's mission to distinguish between 'novel' and 'Romance', *The Monk's* turn to unresisted sexual passion bears a striking resemblance to the novel genre's celebration of sex, most notably in the light of John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (published between 1748 and 1749). The celebration of male and female bodies in Cleland's novel, itself a catalyst for debate on the necessity of legal intervention in the affairs of print culture upon its publication, is, for Mathias, little more than a form of sensualism that culminated in *The Monk*: 'Another Cleland see in Lewis rise./Why sleep the ministers of truth and law?/Has the State no controul, no decent awe...' (Mathias, 1798, p.345). The machinations of Cleland and Lewis, then, function as manifestations of the failure of contemporary jurisprudence to account for, and regulate, the dissemination of texts that simultaneously confound standards of literary decorum and generic classification; as the 'ministers of truth and law' sleep, the will to protest is established as an approximation of the law as 'Romance'. It might be argued that, through Reeve, Mathias calls for the restorative that renders the status of Lewis's text as 'Romance' as illegitimate, against the common law. As Mathias writes in his concluding comments on *The Monk*:

Novels of this seductive and libidinous tendency excite disgust, fear and horror, in every man and woman who reflect upon those virtues which alone give support, comfort and continuance, to human Society. The interests of Society and the essential welfare, and even the very existence, of this kingdom, authorise any man, though conscious of manifold frailties, to speak in the manner I have done. For we cannot long deceive ourselves. Poetical men, of loose and ungoverned morals can offer to us or to themselves but feeble consolations from wit and imagery when left to solitary reflection and the agony of remorse. (Mathias, 1798, p.346-347)

In the absence of the law as it ought to be, vociferous speech is required to approximate the work of regulation, inventing a mode of literary criminality marked by 'solitary reflection and the agony of remorse'; matters of literary regulation,

moreover, are directly political in the sense that the welfare of the structures that bolster monarchism are at stake. In addition, Mathias's description of *The Monk* as belonging not to 'Romance' but to texts of a 'seductive and libidinous tendency' described as *Novels* give further credence to the work of securing the integrity of 'Romance'. The publication of Ireland's *The Abbess* in 1797, however, installed a pattern of repetition whereby the hitherto exceptional case of *The Monk* as 'A Romance' threatened to create an alternative canon of Romance that revelled in sexuality at the expense of the consolations of asexual desire and companionate marriage that mark Radcliffe's fictions. Ireland, then, indulges in a double transgression: the forging of Shakespeare, and the dismantling of Shakespeare as the spearhead of asexual passion, achieved through *Measure for Measure*.

Having noted Mathias's endeavour to utilise sex in order to distinguish between 'novel' and 'romance', the resemblances among Reeve's project of accounting for the progress of Romance, Elvira's censorship in a text subtitled 'A Romance' and Mathias's evocation of the law 'as it ought to be' serve to amplify, rather than resolve, the dubious binary between edifying Romance and dangerous 'novel'. Their respective reliance on a mode of writing akin to the narration of 'things as they ought to be' harbours a process of irrationality in which the Shakespearean spectral utterance 'I could a tale unfold' carries legal implications for both the subjects of Romance and for literary characters as romance readers. In her exploration of the spectral injunction in the fiction of Ann Radcliffe, Chaplin observes how Radcliffe's women lack the agency inherent in Prince Hamlet's resolution to come to terms 'with some spectre'; in other words, the ghost's command to his son to seek retribution for his 'foul and unnatural murder' is, in Radcliffe, blocked by her female characters' legal status as objects of exchange. In *The Romance of the Forest* (1791), therefore,

Adeline de Montalt's desire for retribution upon reading her deceased father's narrative is belied by the law's failure to appoint her as the agent of retribution upon her usurping uncle the Marquis of Montalt, while, in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), Emily St Aubert's encounters with portraits that point to a 'disavowed feminine line' substitute a female melancholy described by Chaplin in Kristevan terms as 'impossible mourning' for the possibility of an active, female legal subject (Chaplin, 2007, pp.94-113).

And yet, in all its irrationality, the Ghost of King Hamlet breaches the boundaries of 'Romance' and 'novel' postulated by Clara Reeve by encroaching upon a novel, Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, in which the legal presence of the eponymous romance-reader is brought under duress as a result of the effusion of facts that belie Gothic chivalry. Godwin's novel expands upon the thesis outlined in his *Enquiry into Political Justice* (1793) that the system of Gothic chivalry prized by the monarchist Edmund Burke (in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in 1790) tends towards a form of repression that, in *Caleb Williams*, substitutes the maddening allegiance to 'Romance' for Man's personal sovereignty. Using the language of law and authenticity, Godwin dramatises Reeve's ideal Romance reader in order to highlight the consequences of subscribing to inauthentic reading experiences. Williams, an avid reader of Romances, narrates his slow dissolution following Squire Falkland's revelation of the secret that he murdered his rival, Tyrrel, in the name of gentlemanly chivalry, after the deceased's violation of the rule of chivalry. As Chaplin notes, however, Caleb's narrative is studded by his proclamations of deriving 'enjoyment' from his taunting of the surrogate father Falkland for the sake of uncovering both the Squire's secret and himself in the act of revolting against the rule of the father. The Shakespearean spectral command to 'Swear' is replaced by the alternative command

to 'Enjoy', as Caleb's resolution at the close of the novel to 'unfold a tale' inscribes in textual form the transgression of the father-Falkland and the perverse enjoyment of the son-Caleb (Chaplin, 2007, pp.134-135). By occupying the subject position of Shakespeare's ghost, however, Caleb's resolve culminates with the elimination of the familial appellations 'father' and 'son': as the Ghost in *Hamlet* is a mere 'Thing' caught up in a network of simulations that mark the absence of sovereignty, so Caleb's commitment to textuality falters under the weight of the rule of law that has unwittingly preserved Falkland's recourse to gothic chivalry's violent potentiality. Writing, for Caleb, begins as the Hamlet-like alternative to this gothic violence, where, momentarily shifting his subject position to the Prince, he postulates that his text will 'stab' Falkland 'in the very point he was most solicitous to defend' (Godwin, 2004, p.325), just as the 'words like daggers enter' the ears of Gertrude upon the Prince's accusation of damned incest. And yet, Caleb's uneasy fit into the character of the Prince marks a contingency requiring him to come to terms with some 'Tremble!' that surpasses the agency of the author: 'The pen lingers in my trembling fingers! Is there anything I have left unsaid?' (Godwin, 2004, pp.324-326). While Caleb contends that trembling is the response of tyrants, his own trembling upon narrating the truth of his story brings about yet another shift in subject positioning whereby Caleb moves from the incorporeal spectre that promises the dawn of the light of natural justice, to the corporeal son who has internalised the law's early pronouncement of him as a monster. The villainy of the early modern Hamlet, as well as its residual presence throughout the eighteenth century, echoes vociferously as Caleb narrates the 'mangled' state of his own subjectivity. Caleb's closing words, his wish that 'the world may at least not hear and repeat a half-told and mangled tale', firmly entrench him in this final textual subject location, a position that cedes to the

authority of the printing press in all its indifference to considerations of ‘Father’, ‘Son’, ‘Justice’ and ‘Vindication’ now that ‘I have now no character that I wish to vindicate’ (Godwin, 2004, p.337).

‘Fond fathers’: *The Abbess*

Caleb’s ‘enjoyment’, and his subsequent decline, anticipate Ireland’s own enjoyment of his refusal to articulate remorse for his literary crime. In his preface to *The Abbess* (1799), Ireland postulates a plausible origin from which the composition of his gothic romance stems. Beginning with his recollection of overhearing a conversation in which his authorship of the Shakespeare forgeries was repudiated, Ireland’s preface defends his status as ‘author’ not through recourse to claims of originality, but through the vindication of a mode of textual production that underlines the inefficacy of the law’s endeavours to utilise evidence to reason its way to Truth. The cult of Shakespeare is, for Ireland, the sign of this inadequacy:

Men of superior genius, of uncommon understanding, truly, sincerely, and firmly believed that Shakespeare alone, and no other, wrote those papers. I knew they would believe it. I knew how far the credulity of mankind might be imposed upon. (Ireland, 2006, p.39)

As Mathias contends that Shakespeare idolatry exists on a literary-judicial plane, bardolatry, in this reading, tends to relax the intellectual faculty which turns an incredible phenomenon – such as the existence of a hitherto unknown play authored by Shakespeare – into proven fact. For Ireland, Shakespeare has become a name divested of its textual and theatrical complexities. Moreover, ‘Shakespeare’, the idea of an author possessed of original genius, is cited to advance a definition of authorship that defends ‘plagiarisms’ of Shakespearean scenes as a way of ensuring that the retention of Shakespeare in both literature and the law guarantees the continued questioning of incredible events. Refuting his interlocutors’ contention that

he deceived ‘men of superior genius’, Ireland argues that the name ‘Shakespeare’ prompts men of letters to wilfully deceive themselves:

The number of plagiarisms which I collected from all Shakespeare’s plays did not deter me – I knew this would be the last subject of investigation. I brought forth his not-undigested, not-unconnected medley – and success crowned my bold attempt (Ireland, 2006, p.40)

Fashioning himself as the plagiarist-author, Ireland concludes his preface by presenting *The Abbess* as the fulfilment of his interlocutor’s request that he prove his credentials as an author by writing a ‘novel’ (Ireland, 2006, p.40).

Confounding the apparatus of authenticity wrought by Mathias’s and Reeve’s distinction between ‘novel’ and ‘Romance’, Ireland’s text, like Lewis’s *The Monk*, would be published with the designation ‘A Romance’. As Mathias reads Lewis’s text as a sex novel following the tradition of Cleland, so a brief summary of *The Abbess* would appear to locate it in a new tradition that dispenses with the chivalric norms of romance that are already under erasure in *Caleb Williams*. Beginning within the walls of the convent of Santa-Maria the Conte Marcello Porta sets eyes upon one of its boarders, Maddelena Rosa. Unbeknownst to the Conte in the midst of his experience of sexual attraction, the monk Ubaldo observes him and, in a series of nocturnal communications, grants the Conte access to the convent for a reason yet to be disclosed, and upon the provision that he swear a solemn oath never to disclose the means through which he gains access to the convent. Anticipating a meeting with Maddelena, it soon transpires that the Conte has been elected by the abbess of the convent, Vittoria Bracciano, to be her bedfellow: unlike the decidedly asexual hero(ines) of Radcliffe, as well as the bed-trick that commenced the dispensation of justice in *Measure for Measure*, the Conte easily succumbs to the abbess, as ‘youthful passion gained the better of reason. What can be said – the Madre was beautiful – and the Conte but a man’ (Ireland, 2006, p.107). Following his want of reason, the Conte

later encounters Maddelena, both of whom are caught conversing by Vittoria and Ubaldo who, in their turn, report the clandestine meeting to both Maddelena's father the Duca Bertocci and to the Holy Inquisition. While Vittoria is tortured upon the realisation of her slander of the Conte and Maddelena, Ubaldo's disclosure of the murderous intent of his brother, the Marchese Cazini, leads to his assassination at the hand of the Marchese himself, disguised as the Inquisitor Girolamo. Felippo (Ubaldo's true identity) discloses the tale of his nephew, Giuseppe, who is raised by his adopted father to avenge the Duca's cuckoldry of him, but who is revealed as the lost son of the Duca. The act of fratricide obviates the act of parricide, which is in turn substituted by an alliance sealed by Giuseppe's betrothal to Antonia, as well as the promise of alliance based on the union of the Conte and Maddelena.

While the asexual Giuseppe enables alliance, alliance between the families of the Conte and Maddelena is forestalled by the text's failure to bring alliance to fruition: it remains as mere 'promise' particularly as little is mentioned of the Conte's parentage. Akin to *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* and *The Monk*, the protagonists of Ireland's romance (or 'novel') are sexual subjects whose license to pleasure threatens to elide both the procreation that is necessary to maintain the laws of property inheritance and the injunction of 'fond fathers' prohibiting illicit sex. It is no coincidence that the absence of the father occurs in a text indebted to sex and the law as they feature in *Measure for Measure*. In this text the father's status as 'fond' permits the rigorous upholding of the early modern laws prohibiting illegal sex, as Vincentio, the Duke of Vienna, explains:

Now, as fond fathers,
 Having bound up the threat'ning twigs of birch
 Only stick it in their children's sight
 For terror, not to use, in time the rod
 More mocked becomes than feared: so our decrees,
 Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead;

And liberty plucks justice by the nose (Shakespeare, 1790a, p.19)

For the Duke, the presence of ‘fond fathers’ in the body politic threatens to blunt the law’s reliance on staging executions as the means of exhibiting itself as an empirical phenomenon. And yet, the Duke’s decision to alter the terms of his power over life and death both install and distance him from the role of ‘fond father’. On the one hand, his sudden proposal of marriage to the virginal Isabella prompts him to overturn his own injunction to execute Angelo for his breaking of the Viennese sex laws in favour of marriage to Mariana ‘of the moated grange’. Paradoxically, marriage itself is presented as a form of ‘coverture’ banishing illicit sex: the Duke’s command that Angelo be spared death in order to marry Mariana undercuts Angelo’s final lines in the play, ‘I crave death more willingly than mercy’ (Shakespeare, 1790a, p.127); similarly, Lucio’s slander that the Duke has a predilection for prostitutes is punished not by death, but by the command that he marry the first ‘whore’ who reveals that she is carrying Lucio’s child. As Lucio himself concludes, ‘Marrying a punk...is pressing to death, whipping, and hanging’ (Shakespeare, 1790a, p.129). Upon the disclosure of secrets – Angelo’s promiscuity, the Duke’s disguise as a friar – death becomes the desired resolution in Shakespeare’s text. But by becoming husbands, Angelo and Lucio enter an imbroglio whereby familial appellations are relied upon to stem the flow of sexual transgression.

By removing the figurative death attending marriage in Shakespeare’s play, Ireland imagines a Shakespeare who endorses the display of unresisted sexual passion. The eponymous abbess of Ireland’s romance, availing herself of the body of the Conte while utilising legalistic language to conceal her excess, is likened to Angelo through a metaphorical cross-dressing that enables her status as an unsexed female who exceeds the mental life Curties’s female Hamlet. The epigraphs of chapter five of

volume one cite two quotations from *Measure for Measure*: Isabella's proclamation of Angelo as an 'outward-sainted deputy' who, promising Claudio's freedom upon Isabella's prostitution of him, 'is yet a devil', and Angelo's promise to 'give my sensual race the rein' (Ireland, 2006, p.83). The epigraphs point to the law as an all too human construct with necessary hiding places incorporated within its structure. As structural necessity, the abbess's lair becomes the site through which the oxymoronic legalistic command to maintain secrecy is honoured while awareness of the gendered nature of the law of celibacy obviates family membership. As a law made by men, Vittoria, as the 'mother' or Madre of the convent, expresses her disdain for the law's privileging of authority over sex:

It was a law, instituted perhaps by some great, some wretched men, who satiated with the improper enjoyment of his vicious desires, retired, gloomy and discontented, to plan the wretchedness of thousands. But these human laws shall not influence *me* – my soul abhors this cheat, reared and concealed beneath the mask of piety. (Ireland, 2006, p.90)

While a womanly Angelo in terms of her desire to transgress the laws governing sex, Vittoria's status as an unsexed female is compounded through her sustained recruitment of the already masculine law's reliance on probability and veracity. In the first chapter of volume two, Vittoria's failure to elicit a false confession from Maddelena, who in turn has been accused of granting the Conte access to the convent in order to satiate her own sexual proclivities, leads to a conference with Ubaldo that culminates with the latter's 'fertile invention' (Ireland, 2006, p.119) of the law's language in his subsequent meeting with Maddelena's father, the Duca Bertocci. Ubaldo's slander of Maddelena, in her alleged promiscuous desire, is saturated by legal signification: Ubaldo considers the best way of appealing to the Duca's 'credulity, and giving his story the most evident signs of probability'; the Duca appears 'doubtful of the truth' delivered to him, and endeavours to 'detect the

falsehood'; Ubaldo's final claim that he is a reliable witness to the truth constitutes sufficient proof for the Duca to become 'relaxed in his suspicion' (Ireland, 2006, pp.118-119). Throughout *The Abbess* the law's semiotic slippages foment Vittoria's claim to be a 'woman' beyond the law, and yet, the law itself proceeds to take on the role of literary character by the end of the novel in order to suture the linguistic failure made manifest by the release of an unsexed woman. Continuing to adapt the law to their advantage in the court of the Inquisition, Vittoria and Ubaldo call upon the rule of corroboration as presented through their fiction that Maddelena bribed the portress of the convent, Ursula, in exchange for an agreement to turn the convent into the seat of sexual intercourse for her and the Conte. The law itself appears to the Inquisition in the form of the messenger Pietro Granelli, who conveys a signed confession from one Sister Beatrice – another co-conspirator of Vittoria – that confirms Vittoria's culpability as well as her propensity to distort the law's distinction between fact and fiction. In the Godwinian style of the tyrant who trembles, Vittoria reveals her guilt via her own 'tremble' in the face of the facts as they truly are (Ireland, 2006, p.259); Beatrice's confession, however, restores the law to its ideal place as the arbiter of truth:

And I do hereby swear, in the presence of my Confessor Padre Ignazio, of the convent of Santa Croce, and the Abbate Pietro Alvaro, Superior of the said Monastery, that my confession is founded on truth; that I was myself a witness to the facts herein contained, and sworn to secrecy... (Ireland, 2006, p.260)

Beatrice's concession to swearing the truth yields promise for the law's reificatory model of 'woman' as the non-desiring sign of late eighteenth-century gothic modernity. Returning to the law, and by extension the family, Beatrice's promise to concede to the rule of her Father-confessor becomes the guarantor of a mode of asexuality that is enlisted to ward off the earthly – and thereby lawless – pressures of female desiring; under the force of the law according to the Inquisition, Vittoria is

divested of the name 'Madre' to become a tortured body that passively receives the perversely violent enjoyments – torture, eating off the pavement, the humiliation of pronouncing her 'guilty deed' to the community (Ireland, 2006, p.262) – of the convent's sisters.

Unlike Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, Vittoria is not granted entry into the Shakespearean family romance according to which marriage, as if a palimpsest, conceals the tautology of transgression. At the same time, her tortured body provides the culmination of the thesis that the law itself, in its equivocality, is an effect of the Fall: Vittoria is tried not for her sexual transgression but for an act of slander that hollows out the law's semiology; the Conte's slavish adherence to the solemn promise to 'swear' abets Vittoria's resolve to conceal her desiring self. Again, *Measure for Measure* is the decisive Shakespearean text as the figurative cross-dressing that turns Angelo into Vittoria also turns the Conte into Isabella. In Act two, scene four of Shakespeare's play, the novice Isabella entreats Angelo – by this point not merely a character but 'the voice of the recorded law' (Shakespeare, 1790a, p.52) - to spare the life of her brother, Claudio, whose crime of illicit sex with Juliet has met with the force of the newly awakened law. Refusing Angelo's offer to pardon Claudio on the provision that she prostitutes herself, Isabella's vociferous belief that the law must preserve her from the possibility of sexual transgression testifies to language's inefficacy in speaking of the law in terms of matter of fact. The law that was once a 'tyrant' for seeking Claudio's death reveals itself as a desiring structure from which the ideologue cannot escape: while Isabella hypothetically speaks of the dissimilarity between 'lawful mercy' and 'foul redemption', her implicit sanctioning of her brother's death leads her to the maxim that 'we speak not what we mean' (Shakespeare 1790a, p.52). The separation of vociferous enunciation and intended

meaning creates a hierarchical structure that privileges the former act to the point where it becomes the standard-bearer for the law's desire to repeat its 'death sentences' on its transgressors.

If the 'fallen' nature of the law relies upon vociferous speech to conceal its desiring in Shakespeare's play, the law in Ireland's gothic fiction relies on the silences that hold up its structures. Still fallen, this law-that-requires-silences amplifies its fall through its renegotiation of the categories of 'man' and 'woman' that constitute the rule of sexual difference. The metaphorical cross-dressing of Angelo into Vittoria serves, in the end, only to bring the latter into an order of 'woman' that speaks only through the law made by men who 'enjoy', while the transmutation of Isabella into the Conte brings about a rule whereby secrecy as well as disclosure secures the law's immanence. Facing the Duca's interrogation of his alleged sexual proclivity, the Conte enlists the language of the law that artificially conveys its vehement benevolence: persuaded by Vittoria and Ubaldo's slander that both the Conte and Maddelena have succumbed to baseness, the Duca is faced with the plea to 'be then impartial', and his subsequent questioning of Maddelena reveals corroboration to be the strategy through which the distinction between truth and lies is revealed. And yet, the progress of rationality, with its reliance on revelation, is undermined by its parasitic dependence on language to speak the rational unencumbered by the breaching of its limits. While Vittoria recruits the language of rationality to harbour her sexuality, the Conte's adherence to Vittoria's command to remain silent permits the law to carry out its threats of violence. The Conte contemplates the possible torture of Maddelena by the Inquisition:

The revengeful Madre Vittoria and the subtle monk Ubaldo floated by turns upon his tortured imagination. What farther schemes were they not then plotting, to bring himself and Maddelena Rosa to the torture and the flame! For, he was well assured that death alone could satiate the revenge of the

implacable Madre. He, too, was the cause of all their misery. He could restore peace and happiness to the Duca and liberty to Maddelena, but did not dare to violate his sacred oath. (Ireland, 2006, p.179)

Unlike the internal tortures of the mind evident in the fictions of Ann Radcliffe, the Conte's mind itself becomes subject to the law, ceding to the potential re-externalisation of torture at the moment the law asserts its ubiquity. Envisioning Maddelena as a docile body, the docile mind of the Conte accommodates torture because its legal status conveys a silent imperative: this imperative, moreover, renders the generic trope of marriage-as-restorative – as is evident in Radcliffe – as improbable, hinging only on the repetition of marriage scenes from across her literary output as a means of corroborating marriage's restorative function. Genre itself assumes a quasi-legalistic function which is paradoxically transgressed by Ireland's portrayal of a character whose dogmatic adherence to the law defers the Radcliffean romance's injunction to expose secrecy and to enable marriage.

Limit: parricide

Ireland's rewriting of Shakespeare as the agent of scenes of illicit sex culminates in the revelation that genre itself is a desiring entity, and its satisfactions and dissatisfactions are witnessed through (the cessation of) repetition. But while Ireland transgresses the rule of gothic romance via the infinite deferral of marriage, his simultaneous calling up and obviation of parricide implies a limit that literary transgressors, too, must abide by. As the staging of parricide is directed by the cuckolded Marchese Cazini and the manipulative Ubaldo/Felippo, who recruit Giuseppe to commit parricide against his real father the Duca Bertocci, so the failure of parricide is signalled by an epigraph from *2 Henry IV* that sanctions the scene of fratricide. The epigraph becomes an injunction, issued by Shakespeare himself, to 'let

one spirit of the first-born Cain/reign in all our bosoms...’ (Ireland, 2006, p.275). As Cain, the Marchese becomes a conduit through which the forces of light and dark can be managed without recourse to parricide. Not only is the body of the murdered brother presented candidly as a bloody corpse, the fratricide himself is presented as a beacon of light that tries to stave off the unspeakable acts that linger in the dark, for the ‘horrid smile’ of the Marchese is ‘like the Sun’s faint gleam, piercing a tempest-fraught cloud...but to render the murky night still more dreadful’ (Ireland, 2006, p.276). While sunlight in the fictions of Radcliffe beckons rationality to emerge from barbarism, the fratricidal light functions to differentiate between acceptable gothic transgressions (fratricide) and the point at which transgression can no longer be managed: parricide, the death of the father. Moreover, parricide, for Ireland, is oedipal - and not Shakespearean - in provenance: the threat of parricide is signalled by an epigraph from John Dryden’s and Nathaniel Lee’s stage adaptation *Oedipus*, in which Jocasta prepares to reveal the eponymous protagonist’s culpability in the twinned acts of parricide and incest. In order to sustain the genre’s claim to legality the gothic romance has to convey its ‘fallen’ status: fratricide is permitted within its pages at the same time as it prohibits parricide. And yet, the ‘murky night’ will persist both within and beyond *The Abbess* despite Shakespeare’s own policing of transgression: the Conte will persist in the secrecy which brought Maddelena to the precipice of torture, while parricide will become a predominant theme in the later gothic fictions of Charles Maturin – in *Fatal Revenge; or, The Family of Montorio* (1807) – and Percy Shelley, *The Cenci* (1819). If Ireland utilises Shakespeare to satisfy the genre’s demand to curtail parricide, these later fictions appropriate Shakespearean intimations of parricide – most notably from *Macbeth* – to map the continued possibility of parricide (Maturin) and its entry into spectacle (Shelley).

As Ireland's infamous foray into theatre dared the censors to delete a scene from *Vortigern and Rowena* showing the murder of King Constantius at the hands of Vortigern, so his first gothic fiction offers up parricide as the absolute limit that cannot be satisfied. As Dale Townshend observes in *The Orders of Gothic*, the taboo identified by Ireland in *The Abbess* is also evident in late eighteenth-century debates on the representations of scenes that might be regarded as taboo on the stage (Townshend, 2007, p.207). In his 'Postscript' to *The Mysterious Mother*, Horace Walpole remarks that the revelation of incest in his own play, while being 'truly even more horrid than that of Oedipus', does not exceed the crime of parricide, for the annals of theatrical history corroborate his view that 'parricide is the deepest degree of murder' and 'No age but has suffered such guilt to be represented on the stage' (Walpole, 2000, p.65). Ireland's caveat to Walpole's thesis includes Shakespeare as the manager of transgression: Hamlet delays the act of parricide on his 'mother' Claudius at the bequest of the ghost of the usurped king, and Macbeth evokes parricide to accuse the sons of the murdered king Duncan. Following Shakespeare, the act of parricide in gothic writing is delineated as possible yet unrepresentable.

CONCLUSION

‘SHAKSPEARE’S SANCTION’

Spectres yet may speak,-and speak I WILL!
(Anon., Familiar verses, &c. to Sammy Ireland, 6)

During the peak of the Ireland controversy, the anonymous poem ‘Familiar verses, from the ghost of Willy Shakspeare to Sammy Ireland’ (1796) was published, and featured the spectre of Shakespeare – in a direct analogy to the ghost of King Hamlet – as called forth by Samuel Ireland (at that point suspected as being the mastermind behind his son’s acts of forgery). The ghost’s chagrin at being summoned against its will is manifest by its account of being ‘dragg’d to open air’ while the bones of the real Shakespeare enjoys its repose at Stratford Church (Anon., 1796, p.5), and yet it proceeds to state its power to arbitrate over the authenticity of the hitherto lost play *Vortigern and Rowena*, as well as the deeds and parchments derived from Shakespeare’s hand. In place of the irrevocable decay of the real Shakespeare’s corpse, the ghost of Shakespeare exercises its right to speak (*‘Spectres yet may speak,- and speak I WILL!’*), beginning with the premise that Shakespeare’s ‘Genius’ has been superseded by a culture parasitical upon the written word and its concomitant alliance with factuality. At the same time, however, the ghost is adamant that the culture of fact – as evidenced by Samuel Ireland’s obsession with handling unknown Shakespearean objects, as well as the lines of actors and critics ready to endorse or refute the authenticity of the Shakespeare papers – is inextricably part of the culture of bardolatry that saw its apotheosis in David Garrick’s Shakespeare Jubilee of 1769. Garrick is no longer to Shakespeare what Dale Townshend terms, in

his analysis of the poem ‘Shakespeare’s Ghost’ (1750), a ‘Hamlet-like son, a figure who, like his tragic counterpart, will dutifully restore his father’s wounded legacy through passionate and inspired performance of dramatic roles’ (Townshend, 2008, p.61); rather, he is now ‘Davy Garrick’, whose idolising of Shakespeare is the origin of which the Ireland’s forgeries are the effect:

Since you call’d forth the wond’ring nobles round
To see my JUBILEE on Fairy ground,
To chaunt my praises in harmonious strain,
And strut in Pageants through a shower of rain,
Ne’er has mine eye in *Warwick’s* county scann’d
So learn’d a wight as SAMMY IRELAND (Anon., 1796, 8)

Samuel Ireland becomes Hamlet to Shakespeare’s ghost, but the location of agency has shifted from the ghost of King Hamlet to a dubious son vying for commercial success on the stage. If, in Shakespeare’s play, the spectral injunction to ‘Remember’ acts upon Prince Hamlet, eighteenth-century bardolatry has silenced the real Shakespeare’s spectral deputy from the 1760s to the 1790s.

The poem anticipates a conclusion whereby the real Shakespeare is recuperated from the force of bardolatry. As the ghost asserts, ‘SHAKSPEARE’S sanction must have lasting weight’ by determining the fate of his insouciant literary sons (Anon., 1796, p.10). On the cusp of enforcing Shakespeare’s sanction, the ghost finds itself compromised by the process of mediation that ensured the survival of the name ‘Shakespeare’ in the first place; the ghost cannot confer judgement upon the authenticity of the Shakespeare papers because the distinction between the real and the textual and theatrical Shakespeares has dissolved into the paradox whereby Shakespeare’s presence has endured precisely because of a distinctly inauthentic lineage of adaptation and appropriation:

For years long past, my Muse has felt the sword –
Such hacking, slashing, cutting here and there,
Some parts press’d down, and others puff’d to air;

That I make oath, and swear it on the spot,
I know not what is mine, and what is not. (Anon., 1796, p.11)

Shakespeare's ghost is an agent, but only in the narrow sense of one who speaks of his prior passivity that is, in turn, repeated in the present act of speaking itself; the ghost, and not Hamlet/Samuel Ireland, is implored to 'swear'.

It is tempting to argue that the moralistic language of 'hacking' and 'slashing' suggests that Shakespeare has been unduly contaminated by his literary successors, but the poem concludes that the 'contamination' argument occludes Shakespeare's capacity to 'mean' beyond his historical moment; more pertinently, it elides the argument that Shakespeare endures through literary agents who rely upon Shakespeare to mediate their experience of their present times. For Horace Walpole and T.J. Horsley Curties, appropriations of the ghost of Hamlet are of central importance, for both writers rely upon ghosts divested of their agency as the means of authorising their own 'Gothic agency'. In the case of Walpole, in the wake of political and satirical invectives against his father, the ghost is rendered entirely absent and is replaced with the skull of Yorick in all its corporeality. This substitution attests to the limits of Shakespeare appropriation as faced by Walpole in two respects. First, the figure of the ghost had, by the 1740s, been firmly embedded in anti-Walpolean polemic, appropriated as a force made to speak of the former Prime Minister's abandonment of his troops in battle ('Admiral Hosier's Ghost'). Not unlike the ghost of 'Willy Shakspeare' in 1796, Admiral Hosier speaks, but the act of speaking belies the ghost's agency; it is itself the work of political appropriation. Second, Walpole's casting of himself as Prince Hamlet seeking his father after looking at Yorick's skull reveals the capacity to differ which lies at the heart of textual appropriation. If, in Shakespeare's play, the ghost of King Hamlet is a spiritual agent that has broken through the torments of Purgatory in order to command

his son to revenge his murder, for Walpole, spirituality cannot hold in a 'present' committed, in his view, to images of decay (Thomson's *The Castle of Indolence*). For Curties, the agency of the ghost of King Hamlet is determined by a commitment to violence which must be curbed in light of the radical feminist literary output of Mary Robinson during the 1790s. As the characterisation of the eponymous heroine as a female Hamlet in *Ethelwina* attests, the Gothic mode serves Curties well; its ghost begins to act upon the female Hamlet through its command to revenge his murder at the hands of his brother, but the threat posed by spectral agency on Ethelwina's essential femininity brings her to the brink of unsexing. At the same time, the *Hamlet* of the 1790s had come to bear a close affinity to the melancholic prince from the writings of William Richardson through to Malone and the Romantics, whose prolonged mourning and incessant delaying of the spectral command are evident in Ethelwina's commitment to femininity as bound up with the honouring of her lineage and non-violence. Meanwhile, the ghost's agency is suddenly re-routed towards the son (Arthur) and is finally asserted, if only after prolonged deferral.

On a similar level, 'Shakspeare's sanction' becomes the sign of a command – the imperative to honour the 'real' Shakespeare and not the rogue Shakespeares of his afterlife – which is constantly deferred. With this in mind, the spectral command to 'remember' does little to salvage the 'real' Shakespeare. The anonymous poem concludes with the ghost of Shakespeare departing upon its scenting of the morning air, bidding Samuel Ireland '*Farewell! – remember me!*' (Anon., 1796, p.11). In *Hamlet*, remembrance functions as the continuation of the ghost's agency after it has returned to Purgatory ('And thy commandment all alone shall live/Within the book and volume of my brain'); in 'Familiar verses', the object of remembrance has no command because objectivity has shifted from the idea of the 'real' Shakespeare to

the texts, events and quotations that comprised the Shakespearean canon during the eighteenth century. Moreover, such objects were appropriated by Gothic writers whose fictions severed the ghost's claim to agency through remembrance. In the case of Horace Walpole, the memory of his late father was admitted, but it also carried the figure of the ghost as the object of Robert Walpole's political demise. For Curties, 'remembrance' was relocated to the fond mourning of lost loved one, thereby ensuring Ethelwina's role as a perpetual mourner free from the call to violent action embedded within the command to 'remember'. To speak of 'Shakspeare's sanction' is, therefore, to ignore the often sophisticated incorporations of Shakespeare into the works of canonical and non-canonical Gothic writers alike.

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