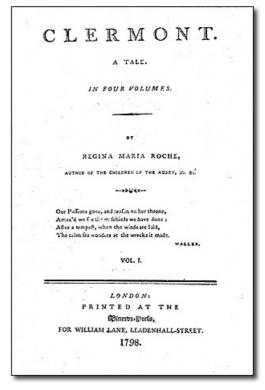_____

REVISING THE RADCLIFFEAN MODEL
Regina Maria Roche's *Clermont* and
Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*

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I

THIS paper seeks to consider the influence of Ann Radcliffe's fiction on the literary scene at the end of the eighteenth century. It will examine two very different responses to the Radcliffean paradigm, through a study of three aspects of her variety of Gothic as developed by Jane Austen and Regina Maria Roche. By contrasting the reactions of these authors to divergent strains which exist within her work, the legacy that Radcliffe bequeathed her contemporaries might be observed in the writings of other significant authors from the Romantic period. As a consequence of this, it might also become clearer how Austen's own parodic stance can be seen operating within the limits set by the structures of Radcliffe's romances.

No better example of Radcliffean Gothic exists than the immensely popular *Mysteries of Udolpho*, the novel having gone through four editions and numerous impressions between 1794 and 1799. As well as Austen's only 'Gothic' text, against *Udolpho* one can compare a comparably popular work by Regina Maria Roche: *Clermont*, which was published by the avatar of populist literature, the Minerva Press. *Clermont* is, in fact, one of the seven 'horrid novels' mentioned by Isabella Thorpe to Catherine Morland early in *Northanger Abbey*.[1] Roughly speaking, both *Clermont* and *Northanger Abbey* were written contemporaneously, presenting comparable instances of eighteenth-century reactions to Radcliffe. *Clermont* was published in 1798 as Roche's fourth novel, in the wake of her previous work, the successful *Children of the Abbey* (1796). Although Roche has since fallen into relative obscurity, Devendra Varma notes that she and Radcliffe 'were the rival female novelists of the latter part of the eighteenth and commencement of the nineteenth century'.[2] Austen's novel presents a less straightforward example, owing to the vicissitudes of its publishing history. The various critical accounts of the composition of *Northanger Abbey* settle on a date of between 1794 and 1798, with the Gothic elements most likely inserted in 1798.[3] Austen sold it for publication under the title 'Susan' to Crosby and Co in 1803, but it was not issued until 1818, posthumously published with *Persuasion*, and two years after she had bought back the copyright. *Northanger Abbey* has been

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1. Q.v., *Northanger Abbey*, ed. Marilyn Butler (1818; London: Penguin, 1995), p. 37: 'I will read you their names directly; here they are, in my pocketbook. Castle of Wolfenbach, Clermont, Mysterious Warnings, Necromancer of the Black Forest, Midnight Bell, Orphan of the Rhine, and Horrid Mysteries'. Subsequent references to the text are taken from this edition, and will be included in parentheses in the essay.

    For interesting commentaries on the 'horrid novels', q.v., Michael Sadleir, 'The Northanger Novels: A Footnote to Jane Austen', *The English Association* Pamphlet 69 (1927), 1–23; and Bette B. Roberts, 'The Horrid Novels: *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *Northanger Abbey*', *Gothic Fictions: Prohibition/Transgression*, ed. Kenneth W. Graham (New York: AMS Press, 1989; Ars Poetica Series 5), pp. 89–111. See also section III of this essay.

2. 'Introduction' to Regina Maria Roche, *Clermont: A Tale in Four Volumes*, ed. Devendra P. Varma (1798; London: Folio Press, 1968; The Northanger Set of Jane Austen Horrid Novels), p. vii. Subsequent references to the text are taken from this edition, and will be included in parentheses in the essay. For more information on Roche's writings, q.v., Natalie Schroeder, 'Regina Maria Roche, Popular Novelist, 1789–1834: The Rochean Canon', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 73 (1979), 462–8: 'Regina Maria Roche is one of the major luminaries of the generation of Charlotte Smith and Ann Radcliffe. By the critical establishment of the 1790s, such as it was, she was not as much admired as the authors of *Emmeline* and *The Romance of the Forest*, but her readers were legion' (p. 462). See also section II of this essay.

3. Q.v., Alan D. McKillop, 'Critical Realism in *Northanger Abbey*', *Jane Austen: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Ian Watt (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 52–61; also, B. C. Southam, *Jane Austen's Literary Manuscripts* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 60–2; and Cecil S. Emden, 'The Composition of *Northanger Abbey*', *RES* ns. 19 (1968), 279–87.

considered Austen's most immature and least unified work, many critics noting an inherent contradiction between its two volumes. There are, however, many aspects of the novel which demonstrate Austen's intelligent appreciation of contemporary literature and her ability to take its conventions and reinscribe them in her idiosyncratic form.

The Gothic Heroine

Marilyn Butler notes that '[t]he capacity to feel was presented as the transcendent merit of every sentimental heroine from Julie to Delphine, enough in itself to lift them above the common run of mortals'.[4] The Radcliffean protagonist is essentially a sentimental heroine caught in a nightmare world which tests her virtues to their limit. However, if she is graced with abundant virtues, then the Rochean heroine is yet more perfect, and as a consequence even more static. Of Madeline, *Clermont*'s heroine, we are told,

> her perfect knowledge of the historian's record, and just conception of the poet's beauty, rendered her a companion well qualified to diversify [her father's] lonely hours. … She was tall and delicately made; nor was the symmetry of her features inferior to that of her bodily form …
> (p. 5)

In the course of her misadventures, *Udolpho*'s protagonist, Emily St Aubert, learns to balance the imaginative sensibilities which lead her to terrifying extremes with a rational awareness of the outside world, while Madeline's sensibilities are valorised without qualification.[5] Radcliffe simultaneously celebrates the heroine's sensibilities and warns of the dangers they can cause. The essential difference between *Udolpho* and *Clermont* is that the sentimental preponderances of the Rochean heroine are not perceived to be dangerous or excessive in any way. The imagined horrors which Madeline conjures up are soon followed by realities which verify them; whereas in *Udolpho*, Emily receives from the first admonishment from her father:

> 'Those, who really possess sensibility, ought early to be taught, that it is a dangerous quality … beware of priding yourself on the gracefulness of sensibility … Always remember how much more valuable is the strength of fortitude, than the grace of sensibility.' (pp. 80–1)

In fact, Madeline's father—the eponymous Clermont—is as much an agent of sentimentalism as his daughter. Throughout *Udolpho*, Emily calls upon 'fortitude' to overcome the terrors engendered by her sensibilities, and her whole Gothic journey militates towards the realisation that her sensitive imagination is responsible for much of her terror, and her recognition of 'all the precepts, which she had received from her deceased father, on the subject of self-command … on this most severe occasion of her life' (p. 518). Madeline, however, undergoes no such transformation, and, as Natalie Schroeder notes, remains preserved in her perfection: 'Mrs Roche … as novelist, makes no critical reflections on Madeline's emotional distress'.[6] Roche's answer to the Radcliffean paradigm is to neglect the dangers to which sensibility can lead, and instead to celebrate only the gifted intuitiveness of the sentimental heroine. Despite these differences, the overwhelming impression given by Radcliffe's Gothic fiction is that virtuous sensibility is the only source of happiness, is its own reward, and may indeed received reward in this world as well as in the next.

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4.   Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 169.

5.   Q.v., Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, ed. Bonamy Dobrée (1794; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 342: consider, for instance, when Emily chastises herself 'for suffering her romantic imagination to carry her so far beyond the bounds of probability, and determined to endeavour to check its rapid flights, lest they should sometimes extend into madness'. Subsequent references to the text are taken from this edition, and will be included in parentheses in the essay.

6.   Natalie Schroeder, '*The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *Clermont*: The Radcliffean Encroachment on the Art of Regina Maria Roche', *Studies in the Novel* 12 (1980), 137.

Writing from an antithetical position to Roche, Austen assumes the critical stance inherent in Radcliffean Gothic, emphasising the chimerical nature of sensibility. Daniel Cottom argues that '[a]n accurate reading of Austen demands that fewer assumptions be made about her personal psychology and more attention paid to the disguises, silences, and submissions demanded by the society she portrayed in her novels'.[7] *Northanger*'s heroine, Catherine Morland, is a notorious example of the 'female Quixote', the heroine whose perceptions of the world are shaped by the literature she reads. Catherine, however, is far from the sentimental heroine she aspires to be:

> She had a thin awkward figure, a sallow skin without colour, dark lank hair, and strong features;—so much for her person;—and not less unpropitious for heroism seemed her mind. She was fond of all boys' plays, and greatly preferred cricket not merely to dolls, but to the more heroic enjoyments of infancy, nursing a dormouse, feeding a canary-bird, or watering a rose-bush. … She never could learn or understand any thing before she was taught; and sometimes not even then, for she was often inattentive, and occasionally stupid. (p. 13)

From the start, Austen establishes Catherine Morland as an antitype to the sentimental heroine. The adolescent Catherine begins to become interested in sensibility, however, as an arbitrary part of the maturing process of a young eighteenth-century woman, learned from reading certain kinds of books. Hence, Austen defines sentimentalism as a pose rather than nature. During the eighteenth century, sensibility was seen by many as the correct expression of femininity, but Austen attempts to prove it as a limiting fiction imposed upon women, and open to abuse. The exemplar of this potential is the conceited social-climber Isabella Thorpe, who uses the language of sentimental excess to mask her shallowness. Sentimental language is used when Austen describes the nascent friendship between Catherine and Isabella: 'They called each other by their Christian name, were always arm in arm when they walked, pinned up each other's train for the dance, and were not to be divided in the set …' (p. 33). Isabella's actions, however, belie her words; such as, for instance, when she ignores Catherine for her flirtation with Catherine's brother: 'James and Isabella were so much engaged in conversing together, that the latter had no leisure to bestow more on her friend than one smile, one squeeze, and one "dearest Catherine"' (p. 54). A speedy engagement with James follows, and is severed as quickly, when Isabella attempts to appropriate the more prosperous Captain Tilney, and failing to do so, imputes her treatment of James to a great misunderstanding. Isabella's code of propriety, her own and others', is drawn from sentimental literature, and disregards the social conventions of the real world. Austen's criticism of such excess is most explicit in her description of the first acquaintance between Catherine and Eleanor Tilney:

> in all probability not an observation was made, nor an expression used by either which had not been made and used some thousand oftimes before, under that roof, in every Bath season, yet the merit of their being spoken with simplicity and truth, and without personal conceit, might be something uncommon. (p. 66)

However, mundane such a meeting might be, it is 'uncommon' because, unlike Isabella's behaviour, it does not seek to aggrandise the ego through reflections of the self in others (the sudden intimacy of 'kindred spirits'), but is the real attempt of two people to converse socially. This philosophy is endorsed by the fact that it is Eleanor who proves to be Catherine's true friend, while Isabella merely serves her with the established platitudes learned from fiction and detached from reality. Whereas the Radcliffean heroine requires 'fortitude' to overcome her sentimental excesses, Austen replaces fictional poses, such as sensibility, with a social propriety which itself becomes the correct definition of 'femininity'.

Two Types of Evil

Austen and Roche once again polarise the divergent aspects which inhere in Radcliffe's presentation of the Gothic villain. *Clermont* is populated by a plethora of villains and sub-villains, but the most evil are the D'Alemberts, father and son. Madeline's first sight of the younger D'Alembert is as he stands over the bleeding body of the Countess de Merville, his mother-in-law and her benefactress, having attempted to assassinate her—however, at this stage his face is obscured, so he remains unrecognised to

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7.   Daniel Cottom, *The Civilized Imagination: A Study of Ann Radcliffe, Jane Austen, and Sir Walter Scott* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 87.

both heroine and reader. After the Countess dies, Madeline is unprotected and vulnerable to the typical threats made by the Gothic villain. D'Alembert's wife, the late Countess's daughter, tries to prevent him from raping Madeline by hiding her. The shared identity of the murderer and the husband is kept a secret until the very end of the novel when he has finally succeeded in kidnapping Madeline in order to marry her for lust and fiscal gain:

> The most violent rage took possession of D'Alembert … but the terror which his rage inspired, was trifling to the shock which Madeline received, when in his inflamed countenance she traced the dreadful countenance of him beneath whose poiniard she had trembled at midnight in the ruined monastery of Valdore. (p. 342)

In the retrospective strand of *Clermont* (another Radcliffean device), the narrative looks back to the dark past of the previous generation, and we discover the link between Clermont and D'Alembert *père*. He leads the young Clermont to attempt the murder of his half-brother. His motives, again are typical of the Gothic villain: Clermont's brother is heir to the estates of D'Alembert *père*'s uncle, and must be disposed of for D'Alembert to inherit the money to pay the debts of his dissipation. Clermont is led to believe that he has murdered his brother, although this is not the case, and he flees. When Clermont resurfaces many years later (in the novel's present) at his father's house, D'Alembert threatens to reveal his 'crime' unless he allows Madeline to wed his son. When Madeline first perceives him, 'she saw, or fancied she saw (which had just the same effect upon her mind), in his countenance a dissatisfaction that denoted his not feeling what he professed' (p. 270). Within four pages, he has already proposed union between Madeline and his son, been refused, and flies into a violent rage with her, 'grasping her hand, and looking at her with a fiend-like countenance' (p. 274). Whereas Radcliffe's Montoni is essentially a bandit whose evil is exaggerated by Emily's fervid imagination, the D'Alemberts come closer to the horror-Gothic conception of villainy, as depicted in M. G. Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) and Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820). Once again, Roche's response is to polarise the Radcliffean figures of her novel. Montoni is strangely attractive to Emily's eye, rising above his peers by sheer force of charisma: 'Delighting in the tumult and in the struggles of life, he was equally a stranger to pity and fear; his very courage was a sort of animal ferocity …' (p. 358). Compared to this ambiguous representation, in *Clermont* Madeline finds the D'Alemberts merely repugnant, and although finally repentant by the end of the novel, the father is no better than the son.

Northanger Abbey also contains villains, but they are deployed in far from Gothic terms. Catherine experiences two Gothic encounters well before she goes to the Abbey. The first instance occurs when she is due to meet the Tilneys for a walk, and is 'kidnapped' by John Thorpe, who lies to her, stating that Eleanor and Henry have broken their engagement with Catherine. When she passes them on the street, and attempts to stop Thorpe, he 'only laughed, smacked his whip, made odd noises, and drove on; and Catherine, angry and vexed as she was, having no power of getting away, was obliged to give up the point and submit' (p. 78). Austen ironically contrasts the fear of kidnapped Gothic heroines when they are taken to the Gothic ruin with the fact that such an event is Catherine's only consolation: 'Blaize castle remained her only comfort; towards *that*, she still looked at intervals with pleasure …' (p. 79). The deflationary tone of this passage is established by the fact that Blaize Castle was a modern folly built in 1766 (in the vein of Walpole's Strawberry Hill), something that many contemporary readers would have known. The irony is perpetuated when the trip is cancelled because of the late hour of departure and the nature of the 'villain', who is nothing more than a boorish youth. The second instance is less parodic, and more threatening, when Catherine's arrangements are thwarted by Thorpe, and her attempt to make amends is physically interrupted by the Thorpes and her brother: 'Isabella, however, caught hold of one hand; Thorpe of the other; and remonstrances poured in from all three. Even James was quite angry' (p. 90). Her response echoes Emily's desire for 'fortitude' in the face of Montoni: 'Away walked Catherine in great agitation, as fast as the crowd would permit her, fearful of being pursued, yet determined to persevere'. This serious tone is not sustained, however, as once Catherine arrives at the Tilneys' to explain, she finds herself too much out of breath to speak at first.

Significantly, it is this event which precipitates the suspicious behaviour of the major villain of the novel, General Tilney:

> To such anxious attention was the general's civility carried, that not aware of her extraordinary swiftness in entering the house, he was quite angry with the servant who had reduced her to open the door of the apartment herself. … And if Catherine had not warmly asserted his innocence, it seemed likely that William would lose the favour of his master for ever, if not his place, by her rapidity. (pp. 92–3)

Once at the Abbey, Catherine's Gothic delusions obscure her vision completely, and she explains the General's irascible behaviour and selfish decisions by constructing a fiction that he has murdered his wife. From her first day at the Abbey, she commits herself to discover the secrets that lurk within it, and once she begins to suspect the General, her imagination is obsessed with the notion. On the one hand, her intuition leads her to infer that the General is not all he would have her believe: 'in spite of their father's great civilities to her … it has been a release to get away from him. It puzzled her to account for all this' (p. 115). On the other hand, her limited knowledge magnifies his evil until in her eyes he becomes a Gothic villain:

> It was the air and attitude of a Montoni!—What could more plainly speak the gloomy workings of a mind not wholly dead to every sense of humanity, in its fearful review of past scenes of guilt? Unhappy man! (p. 163)

However, when she reveals her suspicions to Henry, it is not long before he disabuses her of such idle speculations: '"Dear Miss Morland, consider the dreadful nature of the suspicions you have entertained. What have you been judging from? … what ideas have you been admitting?"' (p. 172). Catherine accepts this disenchantment wholeheartedly, and the general is 'cleared from the grossly injurious suspicions which she must ever blush to have entertained, [although] she did believe [him], upon serious consideration, to be not perfectly amiable' (p. 174).

This commonsense attitude is scrutinised, however, when the General expels Catherine mysteriously and shamefully from Northanger Abbey: 'Turned away from the house, and in such a way!—without any reason that could justify, any apology that could atone for the abruptness, the rudeness, nay, the insolence of it' (p. 197). When Henry reveals to Catherine that the General had been promoting a union between the pair because he believed her to be an heiress, and then expelled her upon discovering she was not, she concludes, 'in suspecting General Tilney of either murdering or shutting up his wife, she had scarcely sinned against his character, or magnified his cruelty' (p. 215). Catherine is able to realise that she did not mistake the General's character, just how it would be exhibited in his behaviour. The difference between the Gothic villain and the General is not based on the evil within, but (as Henry attempts to make clear) in the manner in which that evil is realised. Austen's villains are a disruptive influence in her world, yet they are not subversive ones: the General does not have the sexual charisma or sexual energy of a Montoni; rather, he is an ill-tempered observer of forms whose fundamental evil is a sense of his own superiority. As George Levine notes, 'what is monstrous about him is only social greed and banality'.[8]

While Austen's novel demonstrates that there is real malice present in the General, unlike *Udolpho* the text suggests that the threat he poses is not the loss of her life or chastity, but of her dignity and happiness. Even the seven-hour journey she faces alone is never presented as dangerous or alarming, rather as uncivilised. The General's villainy rests on his adherence to the surfaces of supposedly proper behaviour, while it in actual fact transgresses the conventions of common decency. His mercenary attitude matches that of the avaricious Gothic bandit, Montoni; yet compared to the latter's control over the heroine and his inherent power, the General is depicted as comically prosaic. Austen is aware of the fact that eighteenth-century England is not a world which allows for the monochrome villains of the Gothic *milieu*, and to seek them is to ignore the fundamental evils which are perpetuated by people, like the Thorpes, and Captain Tilney, as well as his father. Tara Ghoshal Wallace draws an excellent contrast between Catherine's Gothicising of the villain and the reality of his evil:

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8.   George Levine, 'Translating the Monstrous: *Northanger Abbey*', *NCF* 30 (1975), 335.

> the General remains a puzzle. His aggressive courtship of Catherine is as much a mystery to us
> as it is to his children. While Catherine, baffled by his inconsistencies, looks for an explanation
> for his darker side, we try to uncover a motive for his kindness to her.[9]

The issue that Wallace raises here is that, unlike sentimental fiction, Catherine and the narrative impulse of *Northanger Abbey* move in opposite directions when analysing the nature of evil in the Austenian world; despite this, however, both ultimately arrive at the same conclusion.

The Gothic Ruin

Describing the typical Gothic ruin, Elizabeth MacAndrew notes,

> A dire and threatening place, it remains more than a dwelling. It starts out as a stone
> representation of the dark, tortured windings of the eminently civilized, and therefore
> 'unnatural' vices, ambition and cruelty …[10]

In Gothic fiction, the ruin represents the antithesis to the Augustan ideal: the triumph of chaos over order, of imagination over rationalism, of nature over man. These paradigmatic aspects establish the ruin as the definitive symbol for the Romantics' acknowledgement of the insignificance of humanity. The approach to the Gothic ruin generally occurs through its lowest point so that the most picturesque, and therefore sublime, view of it can be apprehended.[11] In *Clermont*, there are two Gothic castles within which Madeline faces the terrors of the D'Alemberts: the Chateaux de Merville and Montmorenci. Her initial view of the first is representative of the genre:

> Behind the chateau lay its old fashioned gardens … and above them, bounding the horizon,
> were seen the towering Alps, those gigantic sons of creation … The vast magnitude and
> decaying grandeur of the chateau, impressed Madeline with surprise and melancholy; which
> were almost heightened to awe and veneration on entering a gloomy-vaulted hall of immense
> size … (pp. 38–9)

After the death of the Countess, and the arrival of her daughter and son-in-law, Madeline is led by Madame D'Alembert to hide from her lecherous husband, first in the room where her benefactress died, and then in the vaults which connect to the castle: 'she felt chilled, she felt oppressed beyond expression, as she viewed the records of mortality …' (p. 188). It is not long before her life is threatened by a mysterious stranger, 'drawing a small dagger from his breast with which he … approached Madeline' (p. 190). Similarly terrifying phenomena occur in the Chateau de Montmorenci, which is even more decaying than its predecessor: Madeline sees ghostly hands, hears noises, and is threatened by the elder D'Alembert on a number of occasions. As Mark Madoff notes,

> Inside and outside is the Gothic dimension; inside and outside is the line along which the
> protagonists move, between experience and innocence, between danger and security, … between
> anarchy and civilization, between license and repression.[12]

The Gothic ruin represents the exaggeration of the villain's evil to which the heroine is forced to submit, yet also encouraged to defy. It is a place of testing, whereby the sentimental virtues are investigated, tempered with knowledge, and finally reinstated. Essentially, the ruin embodies a transition, a process in which these characteristics encounter the Sublime and combine with it to manifest ultimately in the paradigmatic heroism of the sentimental protagonist.

Catherine's obsession with Gothic castles and her anticlimactic experience of them is first exhibited in her abortive 'abduction' by John Thorpe to Blaize Castle. Austen is preparing the reader for the centrepiece of the novel—Northanger Abbey itself. On the way to the Abbey, Henry presents Catherine with a 'Gothic story' about what she can expect upon her arrival: '"Are you prepared to encounter all the horrors that building such as 'what one reads about' may produce?—Have you a stout

9.   Tara Ghoshal Wallace, '*Northanger Abbey* and the Limits of Parody', *Studies in the Novel* 20 (1988), 269.

10.   Elizabeth MacAndrew, *The Gothic Tradition in Fiction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 48–9.

11.   Q.v., Michael Charlesworth, 'The Ruined Abbey: Picturesque and Gothic Values', *The Politics of the Picturesque: Literature, Landscape and Aesthetics since 1790*, edd. Stephen Copley and Peter Garside (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 62–80.

12.   Mark S. Madoff, 'Inside, Outside, and the Gothic Locked-Room Mystery', *Gothic Fictions*, ed. Graham, p. 49.

heart?—Nerves fit for sliding panels and tapestry?"' (p. 138). Henry intersperses details from various Radcliffean romances, whilst including real details of what does exist in the house—the chest and the japanned closet—so that when Catherine does arrive she confuses reality with fiction. Austen deflates the Gothic potential of the Abbey as soon as it appears:

> To pass between lodges of a modern appearance, to find herself with such ease in the very precincts of the abbey, and driven so rapidly along a smooth, level road of fine gravel, without obstacle, alarm, or solemnity of any kind, struck her as odd and inconsistent. (p. 141)

When she finally arrives, Catherine's initial feelings leave her disappointed, because she enters 'without feeling one aweful foreboding of future misery to herself, or one moment's suspicion of any past scenes of horror being acted within the solemn edifice'. Austen's ironic comparison between the reality of the Abbey and her heroine's Gothic dreams continues the deflationary impulse of *Northanger Abbey*:

> An abbey!—yes, it was delightful to be really in an abbey!—but she doubted, as she looked round the room, whether any thing within her observation, would have given her the consciousness. The furniture was in all the profusion and elegance of modern taste. … The windows, to which she looked with peculiar dependence, from having heard the General talk of his preserving them in their Gothic form with reverential care, were yet less what her fancy had portrayed. To be sure, the pointed arch was preserved—the form of them was Gothic—they might be even casements—but every pane was so large, so clear, so light! To an imagination which had hoped for the smallest divisions, and the heaviest stone-work, for painted glass, dirt and cobwebs, the difference was very distressing. (pp. 141–2)

Despite such ironic inversions, and although Catherine tells Henry, '[t]his is just like a book!— But it cannot really happen to me' (p. 139), when she discovers the mysterious chest in her room, her words typically echo those of the Gothic heroine: 'I will look into it—cost me what it may, I will look into it—and directly too—by day-light .—If I stay till evening my candle may go out' (p. 143). What she finds within is a 'white cotton counterpane', and Austen points out the absurdity of such delusions, when Eleanor arrives at her door: 'the rising shame of having harboured for some minutes an absurd expectation, [to] which was then added the shame of being caught in so idle a search' (p. 144). However, Catherine's perceptions remain obscured by her reading: later the same day, she searches through a promising closet, and finds 'a roll of paper pushed back into the further part of the cavity, apparently for concealment …' (p. 148). Austen's dismantling of Gothic apparatus reaches its climax when the papers disclose their secret: 'Could it be possible, or did not her sense play her false?—An inventory of linen, in coarse and modern characters, seemed all that was before her!' (p. 150). Unable to find any secrets in the Abbey, Catherine transfers her Gothic fantasies onto the General, until all her romantic indulgences are shown to be false by Henry's famous remonstrance about her perceptions. The Abbey is not what Catherine has made it, and each moment of surrender to ordinary reality is followed by a resolution not to make the same errors of imagination again, but each resolution is then followed by an application of the same error. She finds the chest, then the cabinet, then the laundry bill, and finally the General. The heroine cannot locate the true meaning of evil for herself, as is manifest by her uncomprehending response to her expulsion. Whereas the Gothic ruin interrogates the values of sensibility and the progress to a world tempered with knowledge, Austen's thoroughly modern Abbey represents the deflation of the false aesthetic attitudes Catherine has adopted from her reading, from Isabella, and even from Henry. As Darrel Mansell notes, 'It is the *Udolpho* that Jane Austen is going to destroy with commonplace facts'.[13] The romanticised Abbey is, ironically, a place where romantic ideas are banished for the quotidian realities of the world, and where the Gothic delusion about the General's behaviour must be replaced with tangible fact of his evil, which is essentially the same, even if manifests itself in an entirely un-Gothic manner.

Interpreting Radcliffe

Jane Austen and Regina Maria Roche exemplify two contradictory aspects which form a fundamental part of Radcliffean Gothic. While Radcliffe's fictions celebrate the imaginative power of the heroine, they also militate against the sensibility which underpins it. Emily St Aubert's experiences lead her to

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13.   Darrel Mansell, *The Novels of Jane Austen: An Interpretation* (1973; London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1974), p. 41.

realise that, however admirable sentimental virtues might be, a perception grounded in feeling is an essentially problematised one. Roche, on the other hand, uniformly adopts those tropes of Radcliffe's fiction which validate the prescience of sentimentalism without question. While some of its excesses are brought into relief, sensibility is never as fully interrogated in *Clermont* as it is in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Roche's Gothicism ultimately resolves itself as a distillation, and simplification, of her predecessor's texts: while Roche's heroines might be braver and more resilient than Radcliffe's, they are less self-aware. Hence, Roche's role in the Radcliffean paradigm may be perceived as a retroactive one, returning to the more unilateral forms of the earlier Gothic writers. Austen, on the other hand, develops the critical aspects of Radcliffe's Gothicism, emphasising the absurdity of attempts to relate romance to reality. Austen's progression from Radcliffe is evident in the fact that, while Radcliffe disturbs eighteenth-century theories of sensibility, Austen herself challenges the particular texts which exemplify such notions—in this case, Radcliffe's own *Mysteries of Udolpho*. It is, then, from this understanding, that one can begin to place Austen identifiably within the terms of an antecedent Radcliffean tradition.

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II

REGINA MARIA ROCHE, 1764?–1845: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NOVELS

Below is a chronological listing of the fiction published by Regina Maria Roche during her career as a novelist, including a list of 'doubtful and suppositious works'. Each entry lists the full title, year of publication, publisher, and information regarding holdings listed in the *Eighteenth-* and *Nineteenth-Century Short Title Catalogues* [ESTC/NSTC]. The presence of copies in the Corvey Microfiche Edition (CME) is also indicated when possible. The letters BI before a list of holding libraries denotes that they are to be found in Britain and Ireland, and similarly the letters NA denote libraries in North America. For the purpose of consistency the abbreviations for holding libraries are the same as those used in the ESTC, even when the source of the holding is the NSTC. Where the edition which provides the entry does not appear in the ESTC or NSTC, this will be denoted by a preceding 'x' (e.g. xESTC).

1. *The Vicar of Lansdowne; or, Country Quarters. A Tale. By Maria Regina* [sic] *Dalton. In Two Volumes.* (Printed for the Author: and Sold by J. Johnson, 1789). 2 vols. 12mo.
    ESTC t071894 (BI L, NA OU, ViU).
    * Further edns: London 1800, Baltimore 1802, New York 1802, London 1825; French trans. 1789, German trans. 1790.

2. *The Maid of the Hamlet. A Tale. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Vicar of Landsdown.* (London: Printed for H. Long, [1793]). 2 vols. 12mo.
    xESTC [1st edn. not located].
    * Further edns: London 1800, Boston 1801, Dublin 1802, London 1821, 1833; French trans. 1801.

3. *The Children of the Abbey, a Tale. In Four Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche.* (London: Printed for William Lane, at the Minerva-Press, 1796). 4 vols. 12mo.
    ESTC t119309 (BI C, L; NA ViU).
    * Further edns: Philadelphia 1796, London 1797, 1798, Cork 1798, London 1800, Philadelphia 1801, London 1805, New York 1805, Philadelphia 1812, New York 1816, Philadelphia 1816, Belfast, 1826, Glasgow 1826, London 1836; French trans. 1797, German trans. 1803.

4. *Clermont. A Tale. In Four Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey, &c. &c.* (London: Printed at the Minerva-Press, for William Lane, 1798). 4 vols. 12mo.
    Corvey (CME 3-628-45156-6); ESTC t144530 (BI L; NA CtY-BR, InU-Li, ViU etc.).
    * Further edns: Dublin 1799, Philadelphia 1802, London 1836; French trans. 1798.

5. *Nocturnal Visit. A Tale. In Four Volumes. By Maria Regina* [sic] *Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey, Maid of the Hamlet, Vicar of Lansdowne, and Clermont.* (London: Printed at the Minerva-Press, for William Lane, 1800). 4 vols. 12mo.
    Corvey (CME 3-628-48463-4); ESTC t127131 (BI L; NA CaAEU, IU).
    * Further edns: Philadelphia 1801; French trans. 1801, German trans. 1802.

6. *The Discarded Son; or, Haunt of the Banditti. A Tale. In Five Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey, &c.* (London: Printed at the Minerva-Press, for Lane, Newman, and Co., 1807). 5 vols. 12mo.
    Corvey (CME 3-628-48458-8); NSTC R1415 (BI C, L).
    * Further edns: New York 1807, London 1825; French trans. 1808.

7. *The Houses of Osma and Almeria; or, Convent of St. Ildefonso. A Tale. In Three Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey, Discarded Son, &c.* (London: Printed at the Minerva Press, for A. K. Newman and Co., 1810). 3 vols. 12mo.
    Corvey (CME 3-628-48462-6); NSTC D147 (BI L).
    * Further edn: Philadelphia 1810.

8.   *The Monastery of St. Columb; or, the Atonement. A Novel. In Five Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey; Houses of Osma and Almeria; Discarded Son, &c.* (London: Printed at the Minerva-Press, for A. K. Newman and Co., 1813). 5 vols. 12mo.
      Corvey (CME 3-628-48460-X); NSTC D149.5 (BI L).
      * Further edns: New York and Philadelphia 1813; German trans. 1816, French trans. 1819.

9.   *Trecothick Bower; or, the Lady of the West Country. A Tale. In Three Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey; Discarded Son; Houses of Osma and Almeria; Monastery of St. Columb; Vicar of Lansdowne, &c. &c.* (London: Printed at the Minerva-Press, for A. K. Newman and Co., 1814). 3 vols. 12mo.
      Corvey (CME 3-628-48465-0); NSTC D151 (BI L, O).
      * Further edn: Philadelphia and Boston 1816.

10.   *The Munster Cottage Boy. A Tale. In Four Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey, Trecothick Bower, Monastery of St. Columb, &c. &c.* (London: Printed at the Minerva-Press for A. K. Newman and Co., 1820). 4 vols. 12mo.
      Corvey (CME 3-628-48461-8); NSTC 2D1379 (BI L, O).
      * Further edns: New York 1820; French trans. 1821.

11.   *Bridal of Dunamore; and Lost and Won. Two Tales. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey, Trecothick Bower, Maid of the Hamlet, Munster Cottage Boy, Vicar of Lansdown, Houses of Osma and Almeria, &c. In Three Volumes.* (London: Printed for A. K. Newman and Co., 1823). 3 vols. 12mo.
      Corvey (CME 3-628-48428-6); NSTC 2R14777 (BI C, L, O).
      * Further edn: French trans. 1824.

12.   *The Tradition of the Castle; or, Scenes in the Emerald Isle. In Four Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey, Vicar of Lansdown, Maid of the Hamlet, &c.* (London: Printed for A. K. Newman and Co., 1824). 4 vols. 12mo.
      Corvey (CME 3-628-48464-2); NSTC 2D1381 (BI L, O).
      * Further edn: French trans. 1824.

13.   *The Castle Chapel. A Romantic Tale. In Three Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey; Bridal of Dunamore; Clermont; Discarded Son; Houses of Osma and Almeria; Munster Cottage Boy; Tradition of the Castle; Trecothick Bower; Maid of the Hamlet; Vicar of Lansdowne, &c.* (London: Printed for A. K. Newman and Co., 1825). 3 vols. 12mo.
      Corvey (CME 3-628-48429-4); NSTC 2D1372 (BI L, O).
      * Further edn: French trans. 1825.

14.   *Contrast. In Three Volumes. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey; Discarded Son; Vicar of Lansdown; Bridal of Dunamore; Tradition of the Castle; Castle Chapel, &c. &c.*
      (London: A. K. Newman & Co., 1828). 3 vols. 12mo.
      Corvey (CME 3-628-48457-X); NSTC 2D1378 (BI E, L, O).
      * Further edn: New York 1828.

15.   *The Nun's Picture. A Tale. By Regina Maria Roche, Author of The Children of the Abbey, Discarded Son, Castle Chapel, Contrast, Bridal of Dunamore, Maid of the Hamlet, Clermont, Vicar of Lansdowne, &c. &c. In Three Volumes.* (London: Printed for A. K. Newman and Co., 1836). 3 vols. 12mo.
      NSTC 2D1380 (BI L).
      * Further edn: Dublin 1843.

DOUBTFUL AND SUPPOSITIOUS WORKS

The works listed below have at one time been attributed to, or associated with, Regina Maria Roche. The evidence available at present indicates that these titles are likely not to be by Roche herself, and that the 'Mrs Roche' referred to in entries 2 to 4 is either another author or a fictional device invented by their publishers, with the intent of capitalising on the fame of Regina Maria Roche. This seems especially the case since works accepted to be written by Regina Maria Roche were printed only at the Minerva Press, following her success with *The Children of the Abbey* in 1796. These last three suppositious works, published within the limited timespan of 1814–15, seem to have no links with the Minerva whatsoever, despite the fact that Roche continued her association with A. K. Newman until 1836. As well as the seven-year gap between 1800 and 1807, there seem to be, however, no works published under her (full) name from 1815 to 1819, by either Minerva or any other publisher—at present this hiatus is unaccounted for. For a fuller examination of the status of these titles, see Natalie Schroeder, 'Regina Maria Roche, Popular Novelist, 1789–1834: The Rochean Canon', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 73 (1979), 462–8.

1.		*Alvondown Vicarage. A Novel. In Two Volumes.* (London: Printed at the Minerva-Press, for Lane, Newman, and Co., 1807). 2 vols. 12mo.
		Corvey (CME 3-628-47051-X); NSTC R1414 (BI O).
		* This title had been widely catalogued as by Roche, although not in the *English Catalogue of Books*; another unusual fact which leaves the issue of authorship open to question is that the usual formula of title-chains is omitted here.

2.		*London Tales; or, Reflective Portraits.* (London: Printed for John Booth, 1814). 2 vols. 12mo.
		Corvey (CME 3-628-51094-5); NSTC D148 (BI L).
		* The copy held in the British Library has the name 'Mrs. Roche' inscribed on the title-page. Schroeder notes, 'the style is spare and unliterary in character, and (except on the title page) there is no use of mottoes or intercalated poetry, which, since *The Children of the Abbey*, Mrs. Roche had regularly employed to give her work a genteel atmosphere' (pp. 466–7).

3.		*Plain Tales. By Mrs. Roche, Author of "The Moor", &c. In Two Volumes.* (London: Published and Sold by G. Walker […] Sold also by Cradock and Joy, 1814). 2 vols. 12mo.
		xNSTC [copy located in Bristol University's Early Novels Collection].
		* *The Moor* has so far not been located.

4.		*Anna; or, Edinburgh. A Novel, in Two Volumes. By Mrs. Roche, Author of "London Tales, or Reflective Portraits," "The Moor," "Plain Tales;" &c.* (London: Printed for R. Hill […] Sold also by Cradock and Joy; and All Other Booksellers, 1815). 2 vols. 12mo.
		Corvey; CME 3-628-48427-8; xNSTC.

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III

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE NORTHANGER NOVELS

This section contains details of the 'horrid novels' mentioned by Isabella Thorpe in *Northanger Abbey*. The structure of the entries is identical to that of section II, with the exception that author's names have also been included with the entries; brackets are used to enclose the names of authors who published anonymously or those parts of names not included on title-pages.

1.   GROSSE, [Karl Friedrich August]; translated by WILL, P[eter].
      Horrid Mysteries. A Story from the German of the Marquis of Grosse. By P. Will. In Four Volumes.
      (London: Printed for William Lane, 1796). 4 vols. 12mo.
      Corvey (CME 3-628-45056-X); ESTC t166402 (BI Ota; NA CtY-BR).
      * Trans. of *Memoiren des Marquis von G***s* (1787–98).

2.   [KAHLERT, Carl Friedrich]; translated by TEUTHOLD, Peter.
      *The Necromancer: or the Tale of the Black Forest: Founded on Facts. Translated from the German of
      Lawrence Flammenberg, by Peter Teuthold. In Two Volumes.* (London: Printed for William Lane,
      at the Minerva-Press, 1794). 2 vols. 12mo.
      ESTC t014934 (BI L; NA CLU-S/C, ICN, ViU etc.)
      * Trans. of *Der Geisterbanner* (1792). Further edn: Dublin 1795.

3.   [LATHOM, Francis].
      The Midnight Bell, a German Story, Founded on Incidents in Real Life. In Three Volumes. (London:
      Printed for H. D. Symonds, 1798). 3 vols. 12mo.
      Corvey (CME 3-628-45116-7); ESTC t173059 (BI L, C; NA CaAEU, IU, NjP etc.).
      * Further edns: Dublin 1798, Cork 1798, Philadelphia 1799, London 1825; German trans.
      1800.

4.   PARSONS, [Eliza].
      *Castle of Wolfenbach; a German Story. In Two Volumes. By Mrs. Parsons, Author of Errors of
      Education, Miss Meredith, Woman as She Should Be, and Intrigues of a Morning.* (London: Printed
      for William Lane, at the Minerva Press […] and Sold by E. Harlow, 1793). 2 vols. 12mo.
      ESTC t185360 (BI O; NA IU, ViU).
      * Further edns: London 1794, 1824, 1835, 1839, 1854.

5.   PARSONS, [Eliza].
      *The Mysterious Warning, a German Tale. In Four Volumes. By Mrs. Parsons. Author of Voluntary
      Exile, &c.* (London: Printed for William Lane, at the Minerva Press, 1796). 4 vols. 12mo.
      ESTC t141205 (BI L; NA ICN, IU, MH-H, ViU).

6.   ROCHE, Regina Maria.
      Clermont. A Tale. [See entry 4 of Section II, above.]

7.   SLEATH, [Eleanor].
      The Orphan of the Rhine. A Romance, in Four Volumes. By Mrs. Sleath. (London: Printed at the
      Minerva-Press, for William Lane, 1798). 4 vols. 12mo.
      xESTC [Library of Congress online gateway <http://lcweb.loc.gov/z3950/gateway.html>
      indicates copies of 1st edn. located in Yale and Virginia (Sadleir-Black Collection of Gothic
      Novels) Universities].

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CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Anthony Mandal (BA Dunelm, MA Wales) is a fourth-year PhD student at Cardiff University, examining the literary and publishing world faced by Jane Austen in the 1810s. His thesis seeks to consider a number of pertinent questions: What were contemporary novelists writing? How easy was it for a woman writing in the nineteenth century? How successful was Austen compared to her peers? How astute was she, entering the literary marketplace at a time when female authors were at their most prolific? Answering these questions might lead to Austen being considered, not as an isolated author, but as one who was very much a part of the publishing world of the early nineteenth century.

Published contributions include entries in the forthcoming *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (3rd edn.), and *New Dictionary of National Biography*, as well as articles (including one on Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*) in Fitzroy-Dearborn's *Encyclopedia of the Novel* (1999). Other main interests include information technology and the Internet, and how these advances can be combined with traditional scholarly skills to produce dynamic tools for researchers.