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978-1-107-03406-8 - Britain, France and the Gothic, 1764–1820: The Import of Terror

Angela Wright

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BRITAIN, FRANCE AND THE GOTHIC, 1764–1820

In describing his proto-Gothic fiction, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) as a translation, Horace Walpole was deliberately playing on national anxieties concerning the importation of war, fashion and literature from France in the aftermath of the Seven Years War. In the last decade of the eighteenth century, as Britain went to war again with France, this time in the wake of revolution, the continuing connections between Gothic literature and France through the realms of translation, adaptation and unacknowledged borrowing led to strong suspicions of Gothic literature taking on a subversive role in diminishing British patriotism. Angela Wright explores the development of Gothic literature in Britain in the context of the fraught relationship between Britain and France, offering fresh perspectives on the works of Walpole, Radcliffe, 'Monk' Lewis and their contemporaries.

ANGELA WRIGHT is Senior Lecturer in Romantic Literature at the University of Sheffield. She is author of *Gothic Fiction: A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism* (2007).

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For my parents, Robert and Mary Wright

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- 1 William Hogarth, ‘The Invasion’, 1756. Plate One:
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Acknowledgements

It is tempting to claim that the genesis and production of this book was inspired by a dream, and written quickly in its aftermath, as the authors Horace Walpole and Mary Shelley claimed for their works. But this would be misleading. As their works were more firmly grounded in an enlightened, supportive exchange of ideas, so too is my work indebted to an international generosity of scholarship and editorial encouragement. First and foremost, I wish to thank Linda Bree and James Chandler for their patience and encouragement throughout the writing and editorial process. My book also benefited enormously from the constructive and supportive criticism of two anonymous readers. With their insights, I am confident that this book has been strengthened considerably. The School of English at the University of Sheffield was generous in granting me a period of study leave in order to work upon this book, and the Faculty of Arts at the University of Sheffield offered assistance in meeting the costs of copyright for the cover image. I am grateful to both for their support. I also benefitted enormously from the collegiality and feedback of my colleagues at the University of Sheffield, most particularly Anna Barton, Joe Bray, Maddy Callaghan, Matthew Campbell (now at the University of York), Jane Hodson and Hamish Mathison in the School of English, and David McCallam in the School of Modern Languages. Beyond Sheffield, thanks are also due to Gillian Dow, Gavin Edwards, Jerrold E. Hogle, David Higgins, Robert Jones, Robert Miles and Dale Townshend for constructive and supportive discussions during the composition process. I am also grateful to Sean Casey, the curator of Special Collections at the Boston Public Library, for the help and guidance that was offered when I visited to examine Ann Radcliffe's commonplace book.

Chapter 4 contains some earlier material which was published in two essays: 'How We Do Ape Thee, France! The Cult of Rousseau in Women's Gothic Writing in the 1790s' (published in *Le Gothic*, ed. Avril Horner

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and Sue Zlosnik (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 67–82) and ‘In Search of Arden: Ann Radcliffe’s William Shakespeare’ (*Gothic Shakespeares*, ed. John Drakakis and Dale Townshend (Routledge, 2008), pp. 111–30).

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