

## *Introduction: locating the Irish gothic novel*



Published in 1780 in a collection of tales titled *Novellettes, selected for the use of young ladies and gentlemen*, Elizabeth Griffith's little known but compelling short fiction 'Conjugal fidelity' narrates a domestic romance set against the backdrop of the 1641 Rebellion, or 'Irish Massacre'.<sup>1</sup> It tells of the troubled relationship between the Protestant Mr Pansfield – the descendant of 'an English family that had received a grant of some lands in that country [Co. Kilkenny] from Queen Elizabeth' – and his Catholic wife, Elvina Butler, as they weather the 'storms' then ravaging the country ('Conjugal fidelity', pp. 182, 186). In her 2006 chapter, 'The gothic novel', Siobhán Kilfeather identified the story as an early instance of Irish gothic fiction, but it has yet to receive serious scholarly analysis in studies of either eighteenth-century Irish or gothic literature.<sup>2</sup> It will seem an odd choice with which to begin a discussion of 'the Gothic novel' in Ireland, as promised by the title of this book. Yet, its continued neglect, driven by its failure easily to satisfy critical expectations for either 'Irish Gothic' or 'the Gothic novel', as detailed in this introduction, highlights the aims of this monograph: to interrogate scholarly preconceptions about the bodies of work associated with these monolithic terms and to draw a new conceptual map of Irish gothic literary production in the period 1760–1829.<sup>3</sup>

Widely used today as identifying labels for gothic literature produced in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain and Ireland, 'Irish Gothic' and 'the Gothic novel' offer a helpful shorthand for referencing the shared themes, settings, and topoi that tie authors and texts together in recognisable gothic literary traditions. 'Irish Gothic' thus speaks of fiction that explores the mixed fears and desires of a minority Anglo-Irish population threatened

– imaginatively if not actually – by the unsettled native Catholics over whom they maintained precarious control.<sup>4</sup> It is typified by the novels of Victorian writers such as Sheridan Le Fanu (1814–73), Bram Stoker (1847–1912), and Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), although its origins are often traced to Charles Robert Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820). ‘The Gothic novel’, in turn, signifies ‘[a] strain of the novel’ that developed in the latter half of the eighteenth century and enjoyed notable popular success before exhausting itself in the first few decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Commonly understood to begin with Horace Walpole’s *The castle of Otranto* (1764), its defining characteristics include, as David Punter outlines, ‘an emphasis on portraying the terrifying, a common insistence on archaic settings, a prominent use of the supernatural, the presence of highly stereotyped characters and the attempt to deploy and perfect techniques of suspense.’<sup>6</sup>

As terms, both ‘Irish Gothic’ and ‘the Gothic novel’ are valuable for the work they represent: the identification and scholarly recuperation of two interrelated bodies of popular fiction often overshadowed in contemporary critical responses and more recent analysis alike by literature considered more reputable and/or elite. We would do well to remember, though, as James Watt and Richard Haslam have both noted, that these labels are products of modern literary studies.<sup>7</sup> The inverted commas that so naturally envelop them, and which are used throughout this study, suggest their retrospective nature and underline their failure to offer a faithful reflection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century understandings of the literature they describe. They also draw attention to the unfortunate – if largely unintended – homogenising effect produced by artificial categorisations that have successfully consigned to oblivion whole swathes of outlying literary production. This process of exclusion creates, in consequence, established gothic literary canons that now need to be interrogated to account for the texts – including ‘Conjugal fidelity’ – that have fallen victim to what Franco Moretti aptly terms ‘the slaughterhouse of literature.’<sup>8</sup> These are works that are not generally considered gothic by the retrospectively defined ‘rules’ of ‘Irish Gothic’ or ‘the Gothic novel’ but which, when viewed through the lens of historical constructions of the term gothic, might reasonably be described as such. In their deviation from imposed gothic norms, ‘Conjugal fidelity’ and the other texts assessed in this study highlight the stark contrast between modern and historical perceptions of gothic literary production. In particular, as traced here and in the chapters that follow, these works reveal that the characteristics on which we base

our current understanding of the literary gothic in Romantic-era Britain and Ireland simply are not those identified by contemporary readers.<sup>9</sup>

Griffith's 'Conjugal fidelity' is an excellent example of the jarring discord between historical and present-day understandings of the literary gothic. Despite its flirtation with the explained supernatural later associated with Ann Radcliffe (1764–1823), its description of a sublime natural world, its focus on a persecuted heroine trapped within patriarchal power structures, and its evocation of a past that continues to haunt the present, the tale flouts key assumptions about contemporary gothic literature. As a short story, it defies our positioning of the novel as the gothic literary genre par excellence, a privileging made evident in the very term 'the Gothic novel'. It further upsets our conceptualisations of 'the Gothic novel' in its lack of the medieval, Catholic Continental settings associated with eminent gothicists such as Walpole, Radcliffe, and Matthew Lewis (1775–1818). It more easily falls into the category of 'Irish Gothic', appearing to adhere to prevailing, psychoanalytic readings of the form in its use of the 1641 Rebellion as its setting. Griffith's depiction of this period in Irish history gestures towards the important role Protestant historiography of 1641 played in creating what Jarlath Killeen identifies as the quasi-fictional 'martyrology' and enduring identity-in-opposition that would both define the Irish Anglican community and underwrite Irish gothic literary production in the long eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Alongside annual, commemorative sermons preached on the anniversary of the outbreak of rebellion on 23 October 1641, repeated reprintings of Sir John Temple's *The Irish rebellion* (1646) over the next 150 years registered enduring Protestant paranoia over a recurrence of 1641-scale violence.<sup>11</sup> New editions of *The Irish rebellion* appeared 'in response to Protestant insecurities at critical periods in Ireland's history', as Charlene Adair observes.<sup>12</sup> 'Conjugal fidelity' seems similarly to react to the popular unrest and heightened social tensions caused by Irish entanglement in the Free Trade debate of 1778–81 and accompanying 'political dispute between the Irish patriots and the Castle government'.<sup>13</sup> Its depiction of spiteful Catholic priests prowling the 'wretched' Irish countryside in search of victims effectively manipulates Protestant fears of Catholic restlessness in the late 1770s ('Conjugal fidelity', p. 186). It correspondingly corroborates the imagology of a righteous Protestant people preyed upon by barbaric savages found in Temple's *Irish rebellion*.

So far, so 'Irish Gothic', but Griffith's tale strips the force from its anti-Catholic message with its characterisation of both Protestant and Catholic populations as culpable for the violence with which the country is beset.

Apparently burned to death in his own home by Irish rebels because of his status as a Protestant settler landowner, his brutal mistreatment of his wife, and his fatal attack on an Irish priest, Pansfield is far from an innocent victim. Instead, he is actively presented as an unsympathetic, if not hateful, character for much of the story. At the same time, his reconciliation with his wife shortly after she sees his 'ghost' and realises that he has survived the attack against him, coincident to his own personal reformation, gestures towards the allegorical unions of the later Irish national tale, as popularised by Sydney Owenson's *The wild Irish girl* (1806) ('Conjugal fidelity', p. 184). By vilifying the prominent Protestant character in the story and by suggesting the possibility of a public resolution to sectarian violence in the private understanding reached between Pansfield and Elvina, 'Conjugal fidelity' counters Temple's 'imagology of horror' with a plot that both complicates Protestant narratives of victimhood and imagines an alternative future to continued religious factionalism.<sup>14</sup>

Griffith's story thus runs afoul of the virulent anti-Catholicism traditionally associated with the 'Irish Gothic', offering instead a message of toleration influenced by patriot politics of the 1770s and 1780s.<sup>15</sup> As it does so, it draws attention to the divergent uses and manifestations of the literary gothic in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Ireland. Not just an allegorical expression of its Anglo-Irish writers' fear of the repressed past and its people (the Catholic majority), the Irish literary gothic in this period proves a dynamic, cross-sectarian, and cross-cultural enterprise, as the following chapters demonstrate. This diversity has begun to be recognised in new research by Claire Connolly, Niall Gillespie, Richard Haslam, and Emer Nolan, who have initiated a recuperation of gothic works by Irish Catholic writers, tracing the ways in which gothic techniques could be harnessed to very different cultural and political ends in Romantic-era Ireland.<sup>16</sup> Like my reading of Griffith's 'Conjugal fidelity', such scholarship forcefully queries the normative limits of 'Irish Gothic', inviting us to engage in what Anne Williams calls '[a] thoughtful analysis of "Gothic"' that 'challenges the kind of literary history that organizes, delineates, and defines.'<sup>17</sup> To do so, this study proposes to widen and broaden the boundaries of Irish gothic literature within the remit of both Irish and gothic studies, taking its cue from Moretti's call 'to make the literary field longer, larger, and deeper.'<sup>18</sup> Its aim is to establish a 'historically longer, geographically larger, and morphologically deeper' conceptualisation of the Irish literary gothic that goes well beyond the comparatively few texts that now constitute our study of Irish writing and gothic literature alike.<sup>19</sup>

How this is best accomplished is by a recovery of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century understandings of the term gothic and the literature associated with it. It cannot be stressed enough, but ‘gothic’ was not then a codified generic label. Instead, gothic – generally with a capital ‘G’ – referred to the past as well as to the chronological and social evolution that produced present-day Britain. To speak of the Gothic past was to conjure two apparently contradictory but no less linked ideas of, on the one hand, ‘a distant, non-specific period of ignorance and superstition from which an increasingly civilized nation had triumphantly emerged’,<sup>20</sup> and, on the other, an august political inheritance derived from a vaguely conceptualised set of Germanic and Teutonic tribes, including the Anglo-Saxons, who had given birth to modern British liberty, despite their inborn barbarity.<sup>21</sup> The latter usage functioned as a method of critiquing current governmental policies and political trends, with what William Molyneux termed the ‘noble Gothick Constitution’ coming to be understood as a far-removed ‘fount of constitutional purity and political virtue from which the nation had become dangerously alienated.’<sup>22</sup>

It is with this sense of the term in mind that Walpole appended the subtitle ‘a Gothic story’ to the second edition of *Otranto*. In the historiography of ‘the Gothic novel’, his decision to do so has been hailed as the inaugural moment of the genre. But Walpole’s use of his subtitle was not purposeful literary innovation, nor was it taken as such by contemporaries, who very rarely followed his example in naming their texts.<sup>23</sup> Instead, it acted as what Emma Clery calls ‘a flippant paradox chiefly intended ... to annoy stuffy critics. After all, how could a Gothic story have a modern author?’<sup>24</sup> As Clery’s comments indicate, the pronounced negative critical response to *Otranto*, particularly in its second edition and its revelation that what Walpole had initially presented as a redaction of an ancient manuscript was actually a modern fiction, revolved around eighteenth-century conceptions of the past and its temporal and ideological relationship to the present. What caused concern was Walpole’s perceived attempt to revive a savage past and its practices in an enlightened age, an act that clearly stirred fear in readers’ hearts. As the *Monthly Review* declared, ‘It is, indeed, more than strange that an Author, of a refined and polished genius, should be an advocate for re-establishing the barbarous superstitions of Gothic devilism!’<sup>25</sup>

The generic innovation Walpole himself laid claim to must be read in light of this attention to historical progress and cultural evolution. In the preface to the second edition of *Otranto*, Walpole famously declared his

work ‘an attempt to blend the two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern.’<sup>26</sup> His effort at generic fusion was driven by contempt for realism’s ‘damm[ing] up’ of ‘the great resources of fancy’ with its ‘strict adherence to common life’ as well as an equal disdain for the ‘unnatural’ ‘actions, sentiments, conversations, of the heroes and heroines of ancient days’ (*Castle of Otranto*, p. 8). As a ‘reconcil[iation]’ of the two forms of romance, *Otranto* sought to place its characters in ‘extraordinary positions’ created by ‘the powers of fancy at liberty’ while still applying ‘the rules of probability’ to their behaviour (*Castle of Otranto*, p. 8).

In its focus on different types of prose fiction, Walpole’s revival of romance emphasised the relationship between past and present evoked by his subtitle. The ‘ancient’ romance to which he refers in his preface conjures the medieval chivalric romances and seventeenth-century French prose fiction that Clara Reeve influentially identified as ‘the polite literature of early ages’ – ‘fabulous Stor[ies] of such actions as are commonly ascribed to heroes, or men of extraordinary courage and abilities.’<sup>27</sup> For Reeve, romances were distinguished from the eighteenth-century British novel by way of the cultural stages that produced them; as Richard Maxwell observes, ‘Romances are what precede novels, in a less modern, probably more warlike, state of society; once a polite and Augustan civilization is established, romance becomes novel, a process of metamorphosis and also of sublimation.’<sup>28</sup> ‘[T]he modern Novel’, Reeve writes, ‘sprung up out of its [the romances] ruin.’<sup>29</sup> Reeve’s comments coalesce with contemporary vindications of the developing novel as distinguished from romance and other forms of prose fiction by its didactic realism – that which made the novel modern and, thus, the appropriate literary production of an enlightened British nation. As discussed further in chapters 1 and 2, to suggest that ‘a wild, extravagant, fabulous Story’ such as that presented in *Otranto* could be accommodated within the new novel form and also appeal to educated readers underlined a discomfiting lack of social progression.<sup>30</sup> Walpole’s mischievous subtitle, then, far from establishing a new literary genre, underscored cultural concerns over historical transition in the period.

Such anxieties are clearly evident in ‘Conjugal fidelity’, too. Griffith similarly frames her work as a reassertion of romance’s place in modern society. Echoing Walpole’s disdain for the manner in which ‘Nature has cramped imagination’ in eighteenth-century literature (*Castle of Otranto*, p. 9), Griffith applauds ‘the romantic spirit’ of the ‘old-fashioned times’ and decries the ‘good-sense, politeness, and the true mode of *çavoir vivre*’ of the present day:

[I]f Madam Helen were alive at this day, and were to elope, as formerly she did, with Ensign Paris, her flight might, perhaps, furnish a paragraph for a Newspaper, but would not even rouse her Captain Menelaus to challenge her paramour to a single combat, or so much as inspire any of our ballad-mongers to bewail her mishap to the tune of *The Lady's Downfall*. ('Conjugal fidelity', p. 180)

With the values of the heroic age having given way to the politeness of genteel society in the 1780s, Griffith's tale suggests, romance has become obsolete. Without it, though, Griffith asserts, the most momentous occasions become simply a matter of dry reportage ('Conjugal fidelity', p. 180). Fittingly, therefore, Griffith offers her tale as proof of the existence of female heroism in a modern era: 'does not this fair Hibernian dame, in nobleness of soul, by far surpass your Arria's and your Portia's?' ('Conjugal fidelity', p. 191). Linking Elvina to the fabled figures and feats of Greek mythology, Griffith reasserts the modern-day relevance of romance and 'fancy', just as Walpole sought to do (*Castle of Otranto*, p. 9).

Partly an ironic commentary on polite society, Griffith's tale also more earnestly establishes the tacit contrast between past and present central to Walpole's labelling of his tale 'a Gothic story'. Its manipulation of its seventeenth-century setting to comment – however indirectly – on present-day politics further speaks to contemporary understandings of the Gothic past and the concerns raised over Walpole's evocation of it in *Otranto*. Although Griffith does not specifically label her tale Gothic, she nevertheless constructs the 1641 Rebellion as a period of antediluvian religious and social strife from which modern Ireland had not yet significantly progressed. This uncomfortable conflation of past and present is precisely that which angered critics in the second edition of *Otranto*, and it positions Griffith's tale alongside Walpole's as part of a gothic literary output much larger and more diverse than is allowed by our current notions of 'Irish Gothic' and 'the Gothic novel'.

The striking connections between these two texts are worth noting for a number of reasons. First, they cast doubt on *Melmoth the Wanderer's* primary status in the history of Irish gothic literature; second, they challenge the notion of the period between *The castle of Otranto* and the later works of Radcliffe and Lewis as a largely 'fallow' one in the production of 'the Gothic novel'.<sup>31</sup> Third, they open up a conversation about the terminological confusion produced when we start to scratch at the surface of the labels 'Irish Gothic' and 'the Gothic novel'. Such a discussion dovetails with recent critical attention to the classification of gothic literary production.

In the case of 'Irish Gothic', debate has been particularly heated, if inconclusive, as scholars propose and defend the application of various identifying labels, including 'canon', 'tradition', 'genre', 'mode', and 'register'.<sup>32</sup> Gothic Studies scholars have also begun to query the idea of gothic literature as a genre begun with *The castle of Otranto*, particularly in consideration of contemporary works. Confronted with a body of work that seems, at first glance, 'so clearly recognizable', but which 'has a habit of putting itself about, suddenly emerging in texts that appear to be playing by the rules of some quite different genre',<sup>33</sup> scholars have increasingly grappled with just how precisely to define Gothic.<sup>34</sup> Unsurprisingly, the answers reached are more often than not plural; as Alexandra Warwick observes, 'if there is any general consensus, it seems to be that Gothic is a mode rather than a genre, that it is a loose tradition, and even that its defining characteristics are its mobility and continued capacity for reinvention'.<sup>35</sup>

Many of the arguments for the use of the terms 'mode' and 'register' are compelling when speaking of Romantic-era gothic literature, but they also both miss the point and propose further retrospective tags that can only ever inadequately encompass the works in question. If eighteenth- and nineteenth-century authors did not themselves adopt the terminology of 'gothic', surely we should be asking in a historically specific manner *how* that term was understood and *why*, as a consequence, contemporary texts might usefully be described as such. Asking *why* and *how* rather than *what* allows us to account for the impact of changing and evolving temporal and cultural conditions in this period. It eliminates the single-minded focus on the novel as the principal gothic literary vehicle, accounting for the intrinsic generic instability of the Romantic period.<sup>36</sup> It takes into consideration both conservative and subversive viewpoints, both fear-inducing and farcical tones and moods, both overtly supernatural and more mundane characters and events. And it helps to integrate Irish writers into a wider British and European gothic literary production from which they are all too often excluded by nature of the derivative, secondary, or minor character of their publications. Not just 'a belated tradition coming out of English gothic', Irish gothic literature actively contributes to and informs a wider, cross-cultural gothic literary production in this period.<sup>37</sup>

This is not to suggest that the Irish literary gothic is indistinguishable from English or British gothic, or indeed, that gothic is everywhere and in everything, thus essentially nullifying the term. Instead, it is to argue that, despite inevitable variations and permutations, Irish writers participated in



a widespread and inclusive literary phenomenon unrestricted by national boundaries and shaped by historically and culturally specific constructions of and reflections on the Gothic past. It thus works to overturn myopic critical attention to a core group of ‘canonical’, often specifically ‘English’, gothic texts that implies, as Terry Hale notes, that English authors were the only ones to adopt ‘a popular aesthetic of horror in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Europe.’<sup>38</sup> And, it evidences the folly of thinking about ‘Irish Gothic’ and ‘the Gothic novel’ as either separate bodies of literature or distinct genres, canons, or traditions in themselves. As the case of Griffith and Walpole suggests, Irish authors shared their cultural perception of the term gothic and the objects and activities associated with it not only with each other, regardless of religious, political, or ideological affinities, but also with their contemporaries in Britain, Europe, and further afield. The works discussed here thus construct a cosmopolitan conception of gothic literary production wherein questions of religious background, political affiliation, geographical location, and literary genre and form become less important than a mutual interrogation of the Gothic past.

#### RE-MAPPING IRISH GOTHIC LITERATURE

Replacing *what* with *how* and *why* also prompts further relevant queries, especially *who*, *where*, and *when*: who was writing gothic fiction in the Romantic period? Where and when were the stories set, published, and circulated? Who read and who decried them? Where do they fall formally, stylistically, and thematically within the wider literary production of the period? While these questions are not new in the study of gothic literature, this book approaches them with a fresh eye, considering them as part of the Moretti-inspired process of widening, deepening, and lengthening proposed earlier. Griffith’s ‘Conjugal fidelity’ helps us to grasp the scope and significance of exploring these questions unhindered by traditional scholarly focus on definitions. Querying the many generic and thematic assumptions we have about both ‘the Gothic novel’ and ‘Irish Gothic’, as already discussed in this introduction, the tale further interrogates the usual chronological parameters of these bodies of literature and proposes a much earlier, more vital Irish gothic literary production than is usually recognised. By drawing attention to the eighteenth-century Irish writers and texts sometimes included in lists of Irish gothic texts but rarely afforded sustained critical attention, ‘Conjugal fidelity’ traces the limitations of

current scholarly definitions and delimitations.<sup>39</sup> Thomas Leland's *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury* (1762) is a case in point. Recently identified as an earlier gothic novel than Walpole's *Otranto*, *Longsword* has yet to be fully integrated into the history of Irish and British gothic literature, principally because, as discussed in Chapter 1, the novel has been classed as 'historical' rather than 'gothic'.<sup>40</sup>

The chapters that follow consider a representative selection of texts, enumerated more fully in the Appendix, that evidence the cultural amnesia that continues to shape and inform our interpretations of Irish literary production in the latter half of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. These works were chosen for the manner in which they interrogate received notions of gothic literature in this period and sketch a much broader cultural practice centred on contemporary – rather than retrospective – conceptualisations of the term gothic and the literature that might be described as such. Their selection was guided by archival research in print and digital collections across Ireland and Britain as well as existing bibliographies of Irish and gothic literature. Early works such as Dorothy Blakey's *The Minerva Press 1790–1820* (1939) and Montague Summers' *A gothic bibliography* (1940) demonstrate the range of literature considered as part of a gothic literary tradition in the advent of scholarly attention to 'the Gothic novel'. Alongside Deborah McLeod's invaluable Ph.D. thesis on 'The Minerva Press' (1997), and Franz Potter's *The history of gothic publishing, 1800–1835* (2005), this scholarship uncovers many of the texts that have fallen victim both to Romantic-era disdain for gothic romances and the later canonisation processes effected by twentieth- and twenty-first-century literary studies. From a specifically Irish literature perspective, research by Rolf and Magda Loeber, in particular their indispensable *A guide to Irish fiction* (2006), has greatly expanded the limits of our literary consciousness, recovering to view a multitude of texts that now invite a re-consideration of the parameters of Irish literary production across the centuries.

Many of the lesser-known works included in these bibliographies and assessed in this book were dismissed by contemporaries as inconsequential, hack writing. Yet, they were often the most widely read fictions of their day and, as such, deserve much more careful consideration than they have generally been given in modern scholarship. Their value lies not just in their narratives, which are frequently much higher in quality than has been allowed, but also in their revelation of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century reading habits and trends. These works further provide

useful insight into print culture and the emerging literary marketplace in the Romantic period. Equally, they position Irish authors at the centre of a new transatlantic literary world by which now little-known gothic texts came to be read and enjoyed by a truly global readership. Reading these works alongside those of more well-known contemporary authors such as Maria Edgeworth (1768–1849), Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan (c. 1783–1859), Charles Robert Maturin (1780–1824), and the Banim brothers sheds new light on the rich diversity of Romantic-era Irish literary production. As it does so, it underscores the necessity of a study like this: the dismantling of restrictive, largely artificial, formal, and generic categorisations that have hindered a full comprehension of Irish and gothic literature of this period.

The virtual absence of a vast majority of the texts discussed here from the annals of literary history speaks to literary criticism's myopic focus on, in Moretti's terms, 'individual cases' rather than the 'collective'. As Moretti compellingly argues, critical emphasis on a selection of canonical texts in scholarly consideration of nineteenth-century British literary production excludes from view 99 per cent of the novels actually published in that period. Moretti proposes, in consequence, '[a] more rational literary history' via a quantitative, rather than a qualitative, approach.<sup>41</sup> In more recent work, as Ian Campbell Ross points out, Moretti has forcefully supported such an approach, arguing both for a global perspective on literature as well as one completely dependent on statistics and devoid of '*direct textual reading*'.<sup>42</sup> Moretti's globalising and quantifying perspective is in keeping with his recommendation that we study the 'collective' rather than 'individual cases', but, as Ross persuasively argues, the local and the individual still hold their place in literary analysis.<sup>43</sup> Moretti might contend that a study such as this – that is, one engaged in assessing a selection of Irish texts from a specific time period – amounts to a support of literary canons. Instead, in keeping with Ross's impassioned call for greater attention to the breadth and variety of early Irish fiction, this study aims 'not simply to enlarge ... that "canonical fraction" of texts studied but to suggest that many, many books, that neither are, nor ever have formed, part of the canon, *do* matter'. Moreover, in recovering and re-evaluating such overlooked texts, this study is not just local or national but global in its concerns: in Ross's terms, it 'urges on readers the need for an enhanced understanding not only of the European literary system but of the idea of Europe itself which, in becoming more complex, necessarily becomes less monolithic.'<sup>44</sup>

Combining Moretti's quantitative methodology with a more traditional qualitative one, therefore, this study opens up Romantic literary history, both within the study of Irish literature and within gothic literary studies. It does so by broadening Moretti's concept of 'literary geography', though in different ways than Moretti himself has done in recent years.<sup>45</sup> In his 1998 study, *Atlas of the European novel, 1800–1900*, Moretti identified both 'space in literature' and 'literature in space' as crucial to a full understanding of the literary production of any given period. '[E]ach space determines, or at least encourages, its own kind of story', Moretti argues,

There is no picaresque of the border, or *Bildungsroman* of the European in Africa: this specific form needs that specific space – the road, the metropolis. Space is not the "outside" of narrative, then, but an internal force, that shapes it from within. Or in other words: in modern European novels, *what* happens depends a lot on *where* it happens.<sup>46</sup>

Although Moretti refers specifically to geographical landscapes as the location(s) in and of literary texts, this study widens the notion of landscape to include temporal settings, formal/generic contexts, and ideological frameworks as well. It thus rephrases Moretti's compelling statement as follows: 'in modern European novels, *what* happens depends a lot on *where* and *when* it happens, literally and metaphorically.'

Paying attention to the where and when of Irish gothic literature forces us to think anew about current critical definitions of Irish Romantic literature and the literary gothic as a whole. By assessing Irish gothic works from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries cartographically or, in other words, in terms of how they can be mapped alongside contemporary works by way of their geography, their chronology or approach to chronology, their formal and generic characteristics, and their ideological intent, we can begin to understand both the significant contribution made by these works to the development of the literary gothic and the reasons for their continued marginalisation in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In keeping with Moretti's emphasis on the visual representation of literature as a method of underlining the limitations of our current understandings, this study includes several tables, charts, and maps that provide a quantification of its central arguments.<sup>47</sup> These graphics unambiguously demonstrate the terms by which eighteenth- and nineteenth-century authors understood gothic literary production. The figures in Chapter 2, for instance, enumerate the many generic labels – none of them 'gothic' – with which writers described their publications. They

further catalogue Irish use of what Robert Miles calls the ‘marketing cues’ used in titles to position texts as examples of what we now know as ‘the Gothic novel’.<sup>48</sup> Chapter 3 includes a statistical illustration of the different geographic locations of the texts considered here, emphasising the global terrain mapped by Irish writers and their contemporaries in Britain throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This figure decidedly overturns understandings of the dominance of Catholic Continental settings in ‘the Gothic novel’ while also shedding new light on the use by Irish and British writers alike of the ‘Celtic periphery’ as a gothic locale. Chapter 4’s map highlights the worldwide reach of the gothic romances of Regina Maria Roche (c. 1764–1845), outlining the remarkable, if now little recognised, ‘bibliographic everywhere-ness’ of her works, as of those of many of her Irish contemporaries publishing with London’s infamous Minerva Press, including Henrietta Rouvière Mosse (d. 1834), Sarah Green (*fl.* 1790–1825), and Mrs F.C. Patrick (*fl.* 1797).<sup>49</sup> The striking material dissemination and consequent expansive readership of Roche’s novels and other Irish Minerva Press fictions underscores the necessity of re-assessing gothic works too often dismissed as inconsequential because of their popular – rather than elite – literary status.

As suggested by these ‘graphs, maps, and trees’, each of the chapters that follows represents an attempt to engage in the kind of ‘radical remapping’ of gothic ‘territory’ called for by Anne Williams in her assertion of the essential poetic nature of Romantic gothic literature.<sup>50</sup> Considering the formal, generic, geographical, temporal, and ideological ‘settings’ of Irish gothic literature, this book explores the ‘place’ of Irish gothic literature in relation to contemporary works. By so doing, each chapter, by necessity, considers the disparity between eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century conceptions of the term gothic and more modern definitions of gothic literature, ‘Irish Gothic’ and ‘the Gothic novel’ specifically. Chapter 1 begins with an investigation of what Montague Summers early identified as ‘historical gothic’ fiction.<sup>51</sup> In particular, it considers the naming of Walpole’s *The castle of Otranto* and Leland’s *Longsword* as ‘historical novels’, exploring these texts’ shared interest in comparing and contrasting the past with the present. The first part of this chapter is especially concerned with re-locating the formal and generic origins of the body of literature we now define as gothic by examining the manipulation of the Gothic past in *The castle of Otranto*, *Longsword*, and several other early Irish gothic texts, including the works of James White (1759–99) and Anne Fuller’s novel, *Alan Fitz-osborne; an historical tale* (1786). These works’

concern with the Gothic past underlines the evident engagement with ‘the medieval world’ in the literary gothic, but, as the second section of this chapter demonstrates, such interest does not support the traditional characterisation of British gothic literature as both set in the medieval past and nostalgic for that past. Literary criticism’s attention to the gothic’s ‘nostalgic medievalism’ is, as Chris Baldick and Robert Mighall contend, fundamentally misguided: ‘[M]ost Gothic novels have little to do with “the medieval world”, especially not an idealized one; [and] they represent that past not as paradisaical but as “nasty” in its “possessive” curtailing of individual liberties.’<sup>52</sup>

The final part of Chapter 1 explores the manipulation of the relationship between past and present in Irish gothic fiction published after Walter Scott’s *Waverley* (1814) and the putative inauguration of ‘the historical novel’. It argues specifically that the gothic novel, on the one hand, and the historical novel, on the other, are not inherently distinct fictional forms, even in the age of Scott. Considering the enduring overlap of these forms in the early nineteenth century, this section emphasises the continuity between historical gothic fictions of the latter half of the eighteenth century and those of Scott and his Irish contemporaries. As it does so, it offers a reassessment of traditional paradigms of the development of the novel in early nineteenth-century Ireland. According to these, the historical novel as championed by Scott and, indeed, realist fiction as a whole, never properly succeeded in Ireland due to social, political, and historical conditions that transformed Scott’s conservative narrative of progress into a laughable prospect. Thus, it is often argued, Irish writers imitating Scott were doomed to fail, producing narratives that resist, often through the use of gothic themes and imagery, the closure and reconciliation indicative of Scott’s nostalgic, but deterministic, view of the past. This chapter argues against such assumptions, tracing instead the similarities between Scott’s use of the Gothic past and that in several important, if overlooked, examples of early nineteenth-century Irish fiction, including Roche’s *Trecothick bower; or, the lady of the west country* (1814).

Chapter 2 continues the formal and generic re-mapping of Chapter 1 with a particular focus on the terminology applied to literature now considered gothic. The first half of the chapter considers the use of the term ‘romance’ as the generic indicator favoured by authors of what we now call ‘the Gothic novel.’<sup>53</sup> This terminological choice refers to contemporary discourse on the emergent novel as distinct from earlier romance traditions and suggests the ways in which authors who used it sought to

free themselves from the constraints of didactic realism: that which the novel's early proponents had sought to establish as the defining characteristic of a form still largely considered suspect in the latter half of the eighteenth century. By describing their texts as 'romances', late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century writers appealed to the imagination and to 'the characteristic historical and/or geographical otherness of romance' as, in part, a corrective to what Walpole understood as the realist novel's too keen attention to 'common life' at the expense of imagination (*Castle of Otranto*, p. 9).<sup>54</sup> Where we now expect a gothic text to include overt supernaturalism, whether explained or unexplained, the recourse to 'romance' for contemporaries, was much more widely understood. The supernatural as theatrically deployed by Walpole, therefore, was not necessarily a defining feature of texts concerned with the Gothic past. As Watt contends, 'While some form of supernatural agency was regarded as an essential component of terror-fiction by contemporary satirists, most critics who considered individual works at any length nonetheless understood that different treatments of the supernatural varied greatly in terms of their tone and register.'<sup>55</sup> The first three-quarters of this chapter therefore proposes a more nuanced understanding of the supernatural and romance more widely in several examples of early Irish gothic fiction.

In its final quarter, Chapter 2 considers more closely Irish gothic fiction in the context of Irish Romanticism. Much of the reason why Irish gothic literary production from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries remains overlooked today, this section argues, has to do with current scholarly understanding of Irish Romanticism as dominated by regional, national, and historical literary forms that rose to prominence in the years surrounding Anglo-Irish Union (1801). Such is our concentration on the regional novel, the national tale, and the historical novel, that we very often forget that texts such as Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* (1800), Owenson's *The wild Irish girl* (1806), and Maturin's *The Milesian chief* (1812) emerged organically from the gothic fiction of the late eighteenth century.<sup>56</sup> Not only that, but these forms continued to deploy the themes, images, and tropes made familiar by earlier gothic works, such as Roche's *The children of the abbey* (1796), Fuller's *The convent; or the history of Sophia Nelson* (1786), and White's *Earl Strongbow* (1789), amongst many others. Moreover, as is suggested by the continued publication in the early nineteenth century of Irish gothic fiction, including, for instance, *Plantagenet; or, secrets of the house of Anjou* (1802), *Villa Nova; or, the ruined castle* (1804), *The discarded son; or, haunt of the banditti* (1807), not to mention Maturin's celebrated

*Melmoth the wanderer*, national, regional, and historical literary forms vitally co-existed with, rather than replaced, the literary gothic in Ireland in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. Having previously considered the historical novel in detail in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 places Irish gothic fiction alongside the national tale in order to complicate our current tendencies to view the latter as both the dominant form of Irish Romantic literary production and inherently distinct from the literary gothic.

Chapter 3 moves on from formal and generic mappings of Irish gothic fiction to a consideration of its geographical settings. Within criticism of gothic literature of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a Catholic Continental setting has come to be defined as a near necessity. Such settings are understood to underscore modern, rational Britishness by contrasting it with an atavistic Catholicism located safely outside English – if not British – national borders. Irish gothic literature often follows in this pattern, including the Catholic Continent in a geography of terror from which England is notably absent. Yet, it also frequently resists a related tendency manifest in English gothic literature of this period imaginatively to map Ireland and the ‘Celtic Fringe’ alongside France, Spain, and Italy, as a particularly gothic location.<sup>57</sup> This chapter therefore considers several Irish gothic texts that problematise the privileging of Catholic Continental and ‘Celtic Fringe’ settings as well as their use as a tool of British national vindication. It also, in its final section, assesses the privileging of travel in post-Anglo-Irish Union gothic romances concerned, like the contemporary national tale, with the geographical mapping and associated cultural vindication of Ireland. Rather than focus on the Anglo-Irish cultural encounters familiar from *The wild Irish girl*, *The absentee* (1812), and other widely known national tales, however, this chapter turns attention to texts that concentrate on Irish interactions with more far-flung communities in order to underline the role that tourism, exile, and military travel play in the assertion of Irish national significance in the early nineteenth century.

Expanding the notion of literary cartography addressed in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 considers the materiality of Irish gothic literature, taking its cue from Andrew Piper’s convincing call to ‘combin[e] an analysis of the movements and fixations of texts with the movements and fixations within texts.’<sup>58</sup> Such an approach enables a mapping of texts as ‘interpretations of and interactions with the bibliographic environment[s] in which they appeared.’<sup>59</sup> Focusing on London’s Minerva Press and, in particular, the novels of Regina Maria Roche, this chapter considers the textual



placement of these works – their locations within specific material and print contexts – as indicative of the geographical and ideological reach and impact of Irish gothic literary production in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

#### A FEW CAVEATS

In its attempt literally and metaphorically to place Irish gothic fiction back on the map of literary studies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, this book cannot pretend, nor indeed would wish, to be either definitive or exhaustive. As Claire Connolly has perceptively observed, ‘Our current sense of the quantity of Irish fiction has rather outstripped our interpretative procedures’, meaning that, ‘critical challenges outweigh bibliographical ones at present.’<sup>60</sup> In a study such as this, it would be easy, as Connolly wryly notes, to become ‘lost in the sublime of literary history’ and ‘paralysed by dreams of a total literary history.’<sup>61</sup> While this monograph brings back to view a large quantity of Irish writing currently overlooked by literary criticism, its focus is on interpreting that literature rather than producing conclusive bibliographic quantifications of it. In this, it adopts the belief that detailed close readings of individual texts can productively lead back to the kind of distant reading advised by Moretti.<sup>62</sup>

As it does so, this book works within the confines of several boundaries and definitions, even as it remains ever aware of the need to deconstruct restrictions inherent to current categorisations of ‘the Gothic novel’, ‘Irish Gothic’, and Irish Romantic fiction. In particular, it includes only Irish works, where ‘Irishness’ is defined by reference to the author’s birth in Ireland, the circumstance of the author having spent a significant portion of life in Ireland, or a given text’s initial publication in Ireland. Irish content or subject matter is not a necessary component, but neither is it sufficient to include a work lacking any authorial link to Ireland. The concern here is specifically to sketch Irish gothic fiction as, in Moretti’s terms, a ‘geonarrative system’ produced by authors with a particular national loyalty to or affiliation with Ireland.<sup>63</sup>

The authorship make-up of the following study is also disproportionately female, in keeping with the novel’s dominance by women writers in the Romantic period. Only 13 of the 114 works catalogued in the Appendix can be linked to identified male authors, thus speaking to what James Raven calls ‘the march of the woman novelist (and of the more prolific individual woman novelist)’ from the 1780s onwards.<sup>64</sup> Representative of a newly

democratised print culture wherein the production and accessibility of books was dramatically widened, these works underscore the literary gothic's importance to a new era of female writing. In their frequent evocation of the fraught realities of women's existence in a patriarchal society at the very moment that women began to enter the literary marketplace in serious numbers, these works embody the 'female Gothic' influentially identified by Ellen Moers. In other words, they harness fear in order to explore the iniquities and everyday terror associated with being a woman in Romantic Britain and Ireland.<sup>65</sup> Their frequently sophisticated treatment of issues such as marriage, female imprisonment, and women's authorship, alongside matters of Irish, British, and European culture, politics, and history dramatically disproves contemporary critical perceptions of popular gothic romances as universally unskilled hack productions. Equally, the male-authored works considered here raise questions about the frequency with which men wrote, published, and indeed read gothic romances, interrogating the manner in which the literary gothic could align with apparently more serious and masculine genres such as historiography and the historical novel while also contributing to early nineteenth-century attempts to masculinise the novel.<sup>66</sup> Some of these issues are highlighted in the chapters that follow, particularly in Chapter 4, as well as in recent publications on Irish women writers publishing with the Minerva Press.<sup>67</sup> A detailed assessment of the gendered breakdown of Irish gothic authorship and an associated re-mapping of the conventional categories of 'male' and 'female' gothic – as of the subgenres of Romantic-era fiction more widely – is nevertheless the work of another monograph.

Chronologically, this study begins in the 1760s and ends in 1829, a period that provides an effective, if also misleadingly restrictive, time frame for gothic literary production in Ireland. The earliest work it considers is Leland's *Longsword*, a text that highlights contemporary understandings of the term gothic and an associated convergence of literary forms now considered distinctive. This is not to suggest that *Longsword* is the *first* Irish gothic novel; any attempt to locate such a text is, as Killeen argues, not only futile but unnecessarily reductive.<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, this study follows Killeen's contention that the emergence of Irish gothic fiction begins to become visible in Ireland from the 1750s.<sup>69</sup> In drawing its consideration to a close in 1829, meanwhile, this study works from the belief, as asserted by Connolly, that Catholic Emancipation (1829) fundamentally transformed literary production in Ireland.<sup>70</sup> Again, this is not to deny the rich gothic *oeuvre* of later Irish authors such as Gerald Griffin (1803–40), James

Clarence Mangan (1803–49), Le Fanu, Wilde, and Stoker. Instead, it is to focus on the foundational period of Irish gothic literary production in the context of what has often been understood as ‘the rise’ of ‘the Gothic novel’ in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain and Europe.

Further, as indicated by the title, this book focuses primarily on the novel, but it understands the novel in the loose terms of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century readers and writers. ‘The “novel”’ in the Romantic period, as Raven notes, ‘has no rigid boundary – it can be pseudo-memoir, mock biography, short romance, children’s tale, or fused with several other types of fiction (some not in prose, but partly or wholly in verse or written in dramatic parts)’.<sup>71</sup> Accordingly, this study is fundamentally alert to the literary genres and forms – short fiction, nonfictional prose, poetry, and drama, that, as Connolly points out, ‘surround and shape’ the novel in this period.<sup>72</sup> Throughout, discussion of works recognised in modern terms as novels coincides with consideration of dramatic poems, historiographical works, short fiction, and a multitude of other genres and forms. This literature not only informed and often merged with the novel in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but also helped define a broader gothic literary production that went beyond the writing of novel-length fiction.

Relatedly, the work presented here is necessarily subdivided into chapters for the reading comfort of the reader, who might otherwise blanch at 200 pages of uninterrupted prose. These divisions are, in a fundamental way, artificial if unavoidable, with the unfortunate consequence of suggesting that the texts discussed in Chapter 1 have little to do with those analysed in Chapter 4. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, this study works from the central tenet that the texts examined within its pages form a collective that is, in turn, part of a larger collective or collectives of literature; they therefore necessarily and vitally overlap formally, generically, narratologically, and ideologically with each other, but also with other bodies of literature, defined nationally, generically, and formally, not considered here. For the sake of opening up Irish literature in the wider context of British and European Romanticism, however, it has been necessary, in a sense, to close it down by way of a particular focus on the texts and topics described above.

Finally, this study works from the understanding that plurality is an inescapable feature of gothic literary production. Accordingly, it very deliberately does not offer alternative definitions or labels to replace ‘Irish Gothic’ and ‘the Gothic novel’. Moreover, while it works against the tendency

to view gothic literature as a particular genre or canon, it does not advocate the systematic application of substitute ideas such as tradition, form, register, or mode, though it occasionally adopts the latter for ease of reference, particularly in Chapter 1. Otherwise, it uses what Suzanne Rintoul calls 'the [scholarly] inability to define the Gothic' to shape its own 'workable [mode] of interpretation' based on the Romantic period's own constructions of the term gothic and the cultural activity that might be associated with it.<sup>73</sup> Doing so helps us to get away from the restrictive and unrepresentative limitations signified by retrospective scholarly categorisations and allows us to appreciate the rich, historically and culturally specific plenitude of gothic literary production in the Romantic period.

With these considerations in mind, this book approaches its subject matter with the sense of humble elation described by Moretti, when he writes,

graphs, maps, and trees place the literary field literally in front of our eyes – and show us how little we still know about it. It is a double lesson, of humility and euphoria at the same time: humility for what literary history has accomplished so far (not enough), and euphoria for what still remains to be done (a lot).<sup>74</sup>

Further, in its focus on Irish gothic fiction and, more particularly, Irish gothic novels, it acknowledges at one and the same time the sheer number of hitherto overlooked texts and the continued need for greater attention to such literature in all its forms. In this, it echoes the desire expressed by Rolf and Magda Loeber in their magisterial *Guide to Irish fiction*, that this work might 'fuel enthusiasm and energy' for future research. As with the Loebers, the hope is that this discussion will prompt readers to 'marvel at the richness of what constitutes Irish fiction', while they continue, in Moretti's terms, 'to widen the domain of the literary historian, and enrich its internal problematic' by further consideration of Irish gothic literature and its cross-formal, cross-generic nature.<sup>75</sup>

#### NOTES

- 1 Elizabeth Griffith, 'Conjugal fidelity: or, female fortitude', in Elizabeth Griffith and Oliver Goldsmith (eds), *Novellettes, selected for the use of young ladies and gentlemen* (London, 1780), p. 182. Subsequent references are to this edition and are given in parentheses in the text.
- 2 Siobhán Kilfeather, 'The gothic novel', in John Wilson Foster (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to the Irish novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 80.

- 3 As discussed at greater length later in this introduction, this book avoids the use of the labels ‘the Gothic novel’ and ‘Irish Gothic’, except in inverted commas, as a method of highlighting the misleading and restrictive nature of these terms. It relies instead on largely undetermined forms: gothic and Irish gothic literature, Irish gothic literary production, the literary gothic, etc. Moreover, it capitalises the term gothic only when it is used to signify, as it did for eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century writers, an alternately barbarous and glorious past, as discussed in more detail on pp. 5–7.
- 4 For such readings, see, amongst others, Margot Gayle Backus, *The gothic family romance: heterosexuality, child sacrifice, and the Anglo-Irish colonial order* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); William Patrick Day, *In the circles of fear and desire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); Roy Foster, *Paddy and Mr Punch: connections in Irish and English history* (London: Penguin, 1995); and Julian Moynahan, *Anglo-Irish: the literary imagination in a hyphenated culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).
- 5 Robert Miles, *Gothic writing, 1750–1820: a genealogy* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 1.
- 6 David Punter, *The literature of terror*, 2 vols (2nd edn; London: Longman Group, 1996), vol. 1, p. 1.
- 7 James Watt, *Contesting the gothic: fiction, genre and cultural conflict, 1764–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 1; Richard Haslam, ‘Irish gothic’, in Catherine Spooner and Emma McEvoy (eds), *The Routledge companion to gothic* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 86. See also E.J. Clery, ‘The genesis of “Gothic” fiction’, in Jerrold E. Hogle (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to gothic fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 21.
- 8 See Franco Moretti, ‘The slaughterhouse of literature’, *MLQ: modern language quarterly*, 61.1 (2000), 207–27.
- 9 Watt, *Contesting the gothic*, p. 1.
- 10 Jarlath Killeen, ‘Making monsters: creating the Catholic Other in Sir John Temple’s mythology of the 1641 rebellion’, *Gothic Ireland: horror and the Irish imagination in the long eighteenth century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), pp. 28–54.
- 11 Charlene Adair counts at least ten new editions of *The Irish rebellion* between 1646 and 1812, including 1713 (Dublin), 1716 (Dublin), 1724 (Dublin), 1746 (London), 1766 (Cork), and 1799 (Dublin), all designed to remind the Protestant population of Catholic untrustworthiness and to stir up anti-Catholic feelings, particularly at times of unrest; Adair, ‘The trial of Lord Maguire and “print culture”’, in Eamon Darcy, Annaleigh Margey, and Elaine Murphy (eds), *The 1641 depositions and the Irish Rebellion* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), p. 180. On the similar function of sermons preached on 23 October, see Toby Barnard, ‘The uses of 23 October 1641 and Irish Protestant celebrations’, *English historical review*, 106 (1991), 889–920.

- 12 Adair, 'The trial of Lord Maguire', p. 180.
- 13 Martyn J. Powell, *Britain and Ireland in the eighteenth-century crisis of empire* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 164.
- 14 Killeen, *Gothic Ireland*, p. 54.
- 15 On the diminution of 'the absolute, all-engrossing importance that the Protestant-Catholic conflicts had had throughout the seventeenth century' following the Jacobite Rebellion (1745) and under the influence of Irish Patriotism, see Joep Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael: studies in the idea of Irish nationality, its development and literary expression prior to the nineteenth century* (Cork: Cork University Press and Field Day, 1996), pp. 308–15. For the suggestion that this argument may not apply to the closing decades of the eighteenth century, see Sean Connolly, 'Patriotism and nationalism', in Alvin Jackson (ed.), *The Oxford handbook of modern Irish history* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 33.
- 16 See Claire Connolly, *A cultural history of the Irish novel, 1790–1829* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Niall Gillespie, 'Irish Jacobin gothic, c. 1796–1825', in Christina Morin and Niall Gillespie (eds), *Irish gothics: genres, forms, modes, and traditions, 1760–1890* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 58–73; Richard Haslam, 'Maturin's Catholic heirs: expanding the limits of Irish gothic', in Morin and Gillespie (eds), *Irish gothics*, pp. 113–29; and Emer Nolan, *Catholic emancipations: Irish fiction from Thomas Moore to James Joyce* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2007).
- 17 Anne Williams, *Art of darkness: a poetics of gothic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 13.
- 18 Franco Moretti, *The novel*, 2 vols (London: Verso, 2005), vol. 1, p. x.
- 19 Ian Campbell Ross, 'Mapping Ireland in early fiction', *Irish university review*, 41.1 (2011), 1.
- 20 Watt, *Contesting the gothic*, p. 14.
- 21 Clare O'Halloran, *Golden ages and barbarous nations: antiquarian debate and cultural politics in Ireland, c. 1750–1800* (Cork: Cork University Press and Field Day, 2004), pp. 41, 56.
- 22 William Molyneux, *The case of Ireland ... stated* (Dublin, 1698); quoted in O'Halloran, *Golden ages and barbarous nations*, p. 57; Watt, *Contesting the gothic*, p. 14.
- 23 As Clery points out, only one 'significant work' to follow *Otranto* actually used the descriptor 'Gothic' in its title: Clara Reeve's *The old English baron: a gothic story* (1778), a revision of Reeve's earlier tale, *The champion of virtue* (1777); Clery, 'The genesis of "Gothic" fiction', p. 21.
- 24 Clery, 'The genesis of "Gothic" fiction', p. 21.
- 25 *Monthly Review*, 32 (May 1765), 394.
- 26 Horace Walpole, *The castle of Otranto*, ed. W.S. Lewis, introd. E.J. Clery (1764; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 8. Further references are to this edition and are given in parentheses in the text.

- 27 Clara Reeve, *The progress of romance, through times, countries, and manners; with remarks on the good and bad effects of it, on them respectively; in a course of evening conversations* (1785), in Gary Kelly (ed.), *Bluestocking feminism: writings of the Bluestocking Circle, 1738–1785, Volume 6: Sarah Scott and Clara Reeve* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999), pp. 163, 173.
- 28 Richard Maxwell, 'The historiography of fiction in the Romantic period', in Richard Maxwell and Katie Trumpener (eds), *The Cambridge companion to fiction in the Romantic period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 9.
- 29 Reeve, *The progress of romance*, p. 172.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 171.
- 31 Noting that 'the 1780s have been almost universally misrecognized as a fallow period before the boom of the 1790s', Clery argues that this is actually a period of 'escalating debate on the origins and character of romance', as manifest in both *The castle of Otranto* and 'Conjugal fidelity'. The resulting 'romance wars', Clery further contends, were directly relevant to the development of gothic literature; Clery, 'The genesis of "Gothic" fiction', p. 34.
- 32 For a succinct summation of the different arguments surrounding this terminological dispute, see Christina Morin and Niall Gillespie, 'Introduction: de-limiting the Irish gothic', in Morin and Gillespie (eds), *Irish gothics*, pp. 1–3.
- 33 Kilfeather, 'The gothic novel', p. 83.
- 34 Alexandra Warwick, 'Feeling gothicky?', *Gothic studies*, 9.1 (2007), 6–7.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 6.
- 36 See David Duff, *Romanticism and the uses of genre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 161, 45.
- 37 Julia M. Wright, *Representing the national landscape in Irish Romanticism* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2014), pp. 166, xxvi.
- 38 Terry Hale, 'French and German gothic: the beginnings', in Hogle (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to gothic fiction*, p. 63.
- 39 Siobhán Kilfeather, Jarlath Killeen, Rolf and Magda Loeber, and W.J. McCormack are among the handful of scholars to identify late eighteenth-century texts in their assessments of Irish gothic literary production. See, in particular, Kilfeather, 'The gothic novel'; Siobhán Kilfeather, 'Origins of the Irish female gothic', *Bullán*, 1.2 (1994), 34–45; Jarlath Killeen, *The emergence of Irish gothic fiction: history, origins, theories* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014); Rolf Loeber and Magda Stouthamer-Loeber, 'The publication of Irish novels and novelettes, 1750–1829: a footnote on Irish gothic fiction', *Cardiff Corvey: reading the Romantic text*, 10 (2003), 17–44, [www.romtext.org.uk/articles/cc10\\_n02](http://www.romtext.org.uk/articles/cc10_n02), accessed 4 October 2016; and W.J. McCormack, 'Irish gothic and after (1820–1945)', in Seamus Deane (ed.), *The Field Day anthology of Irish writing*, vol. 2 (Derry: Field Day, 1991), pp. 831–949.

- 40 Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 'The publication of Irish novels and novelettes,' p. 28. Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber also identify the anonymously published *The adventures of Miss Sophia Berkley* (Dublin, 1760) as another Irish precursor to *The castle of Otranto*. As it turns out, though, *Sophia Berkley* is actually a pirated edition of *The history of Amanda* (London, 1758); see Christina Morin and Jarlath Killeen, 'The new adventures of Miss Sophia Berkley: revisiting Ireland's "first" gothic novel,' *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, 29 (2014), 155–63.
- 41 Franco Moretti, *Graphs, maps, trees: abstract models for literary history* (2005; London: Verso, 2007), p. 4.
- 42 Franco Moretti, 'Conjectures on world literature,' *New left review*, 1 (2000), 57; quoted in Ross, 'Mapping Ireland in early fiction,' p. 4. Original emphasis.
- 43 Ross, 'Mapping Ireland in early fiction,' p. 4.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 45 Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European novel, 1800–1900* (London: Verso, 1998), p. 3.
- 46 *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 70. Original emphasis.
- 47 Moretti, *Graphs, maps, trees*, p. 2.
- 48 Robert Miles, 'The 1790s: the effulgence of gothic,' in Hogle (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to gothic fiction*, p. 41.
- 49 Andrew Piper, *Dreaming in books: the making of the bibliographic imagination in the Romantic age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 65. Piper uses this phrase in his discussion of the centrality of the novella collection in the Romantic period and its ability 'to address the problem of literary repetition and the bibliographic copy'. Here, it is repurposed to suggest the remarkable circulation of Roche's fiction and that of many of her contemporaries.
- 50 Williams, *Art of darkness*, p. 1.
- 51 See Montague Summers, 'Historical gothic,' *The gothic quest: a history of the gothic novel* (1938; New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), pp. 153–201.
- 52 Chris Baldick and Robert Mighall, 'Gothic criticism,' in David Punter (ed.), *A companion to the gothic* (London: Blackwell, 2001), p. 214.
- 53 Watt, *Contesting the gothic*, p. 3. Other common 'generic pointers' used by authors to signify gothic content, as Robert Miles has shown, include 'historical romance, legends, tales, memoir, [and] traditions'; Miles, 'The 1790s: the effulgence of gothic,' p. 41.
- 54 Watt, *Contesting the gothic*, p. 5.
- 55 *Ibid.*
- 56 On the separation of regional and national fiction from gothic fiction in the literary history of Irish Romanticism, see Christina Morin, "'Gothic" and "national"? Challenging the formal distinctions of Irish Romantic fiction,'



- in Jim Kelly (ed.), *Ireland and Romanticism: publics, nations and scenes of cultural production* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 172–87.
- 57 Kilfeather, ‘Origins of the Irish female gothic’, 42.
- 58 Piper, *Dreaming in books*, p. 11. Original emphasis.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- 60 Connolly, *A cultural history of the Irish novel*, p. 18.
- 61 *Ibid.*
- 62 I am grateful to Orla Murphy for highlighting this possibility at a research seminar I was invited to give at University College Cork on 3 December 2014.
- 63 Moretti, *Atlas of the European novel*, p. 15.
- 64 James Raven has detailed the proportion of male to female authorship in the latter half of the eighteenth century, observing, ‘Novels by identified male writers outnumber those by women writers by more than two to one in the 1770s’. By the 1780s, though, these figures begin to change, and the ratio of men to women starts to balance out and, indeed, reverse; ‘Historical introduction: the novel comes of age’, in James Raven and Antonia Forster (eds), *The English novel 1770–1829: a bibliographical survey of prose fiction published in the British Isles. Volume 1: 1770–1799* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 48, 49.
- 65 See Ellen Moers, ‘Female gothic’, *Literary women* (1963; London: The Women’s Press, 1978), pp. 90–110.
- 66 On the masculinisation of the novel in Romantic-era fiction, see, in particular, Ina Ferris, *The achievement of literary authority: gender, history, and the Waverley Novels* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991) and Jacqueline Pearson, ‘Masculinizing the novel: women writers and intertextuality in Charles Robert Maturin’s *The wild Irish boy*’, *Studies in Romanticism*, 36.4 (1997), 635–50.
- 67 See Christina Morin, ‘“At a distance from [my] country”: Henrietta Rouvière Mosse, the Minerva Press, and the negotiation of Irishness in the Romantic literary marketplace’, *European Romantic review*, 28.4 (2017), 447–60; and ‘Irish gothic goes abroad: cultural migration, materiality, and the Minerva Press’, in Marguërite Corporaal and Christina Morin (eds), *Traveling Irishness in the long nineteenth century* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 185–203.
- 68 Killeen, *The emergence of Irish gothic fiction*, p. 71.
- 69 *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- 70 Connolly argues that Catholic Emancipation ‘ended a formative phase of the history of the Irish novel’; Connolly, *A cultural history of the Irish novel*, p. 196.
- 71 James Raven, ‘The anonymous novel in Britain and Ireland, 1750–1830’, in Robert J. Griffin (ed.), *The faces of anonymity: anonymous and pseudonymous*

- publication from the sixteenth to the twentieth century* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 142.
- 72 Connolly, *A cultural history of the Irish novel*, p. 14.
- 73 Suzanne Rintoul, 'Gothic anxieties: struggling with a definition,' *Eighteenth-century fiction*, 17.4 (2005), 709.
- 74 Moretti, *Graphs, maps, trees*, p. 2.
- 75 Rolf and Magda Loeber, with Anne Mullin Burnham, *A guide to Irish fiction, 1650–1900* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006), p. cv; Moretti, *Graphs, maps, trees*, p. 2.