

**READING RUSSIA.  
A HISTORY OF READING  
IN MODERN RUSSIA**

**Volume 2**

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## THE GOTHIC NOVEL READER COMES TO RUSSIA

Katherine Bowers

Gothic writer Orest Somov describes a woman who falls victim to the gothic novel craze in the satirical story *Mommy and Sonny* (*Matushka i synok*, 1833). While observing a year of mourning following her husband's death, Margarita Savishna

read novels, of which she ordered a great supply from Moscow, basing the choice of titles on the positive testimony of the announcements placed in the supplements to the *Moskovskie vedomosti* [*Moscow News*], composed by resourceful publishers and booksellers. ... Margarita Savishna passionately loved robbers' castles, the glint of daggers, the kidnapping of unfortunate heroines, and the secret pacts of murderers under the windows of innocent victims doomed to be killed, meanwhile confined in a tiny room of the east or west tower. In a word, the imagination of Margarita Savishna, a woman of firm character and strong nerves, delighted only in novelistic blood, breathed with the atmosphere of the dungeon, fed on the smell of murder. So to say, she lived on terror.<sup>1</sup>

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O. Somov, "Mommy and Sonny," translated by J. Mersereau, Jr., in *Russian Romantic Prose* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1979), 220. Subsequent citations refer to this translation. For the original text

This passage's humor lies in its juxtaposition of Margarita Savishna's vivid inner life—rife with dramatic landscapes, desperate deeds, and dangerous individuals—and her daily domestic life as a provincial landowner and widow, a life far removed from the “robbers' castles, the glint of daggers, the kidnapping of unfortunate heroines,” etc. of her imagination. Somov's story satirizes readers caught up in popular lowbrow fiction.

In the discussion of the heroine's reading habits, the passage provides a precis of the relationships between generic convention (the gothic elements), reader experience (Margarita Savishna's imagination), critical response (Somov's satire), and literary marketplace (the Moscow booksellers) that all converge in the practice of reading gothic novels in Russia. First, Margarita Savishna orders the novels from Moscow, based on publishers' lists and booksellers' recommendations, which results in a somewhat arbitrary reading list based not on personal taste so much as on market trends and surpluses. This then reflects the state of the book market in Russia outside of the big cities like St Petersburg and Moscow. Second, the reader's character is discussed in relation to her reading habits; her “firm character and strong nerves” allow her to engage in the pursuit of “novelistic blood.” Somov's discussion is meant humorously here, but, as I will discuss, critics were quick to judge a reader's character by their reading material, particularly where lurid and immoral gothic novels were concerned. Third, the effect on the reader is both physiological and affective, a nod to the important relationship between reader and narrative which developed in gothic fiction.

Gothic novels were not a Russian invention, nor were they considered to be ‘good literature’ by critics. Yet, they were extremely popular—one of the first examples of mass-produced popular fiction, both in Western Europe and Russia—and served to influence the development of Russian literature significantly.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter I will contextualize the development of the gothic novel reader, a cliché that appeared alongside the novels in eighteenth-century Britain and which followed the genre to Russia. As I will demonstrate, the gothic novel reader is a historically contextualized

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see O. M. Somov, “Matushka i synok,” *Al'tsiona: almanakh na 1833-i god.* (St. Petersburg, 1833), 128-186.

2 On gothic reception in Russia, the most significant critical source is Vadim Vatsuro's posthumous *Goticheskii roman v Rossii* (Moscow, 2002). On the gothic novel's influence on later Russian literature, see N. Cornwell (ed.), *The Gothic Fantastic in Nineteenth-Century Russian Literature* (Amsterdam, 1999), particularly the chapters by Ignat Avsey, Leon Burnett, and Ann Komaromi; N. D. Tamarchenko, A. A. Poliakova (eds.), *Goticheskaia traditsiia v russkoi literature* (Moscow, 2008), especially Parts 2 and 3; K. Bowers, “Shadows of the Gothic: Adapted Terror in Russian Fiction, 1792-1905,” PhD diss. (Evanston, IL, 2011); M. Maguire, *Stalin's Ghosts: Gothic Themes in Early Soviet Literature* (Oxford, 2012); V. Sobol, “The Uncanny Frontier of Russian Identity: Travel, Ethnography, and Empire in Lermontov's ‘Taman’,” *Russian Review*, 70, 1 (2011), 65-79; and V. Sobol, “Monakh v Madride: Otvzuki goticheskogo romana Met'iu G. L'iuisa ‘Monakh’ v p'ese A.S. Pushkina ‘Kamennyi gost’,” *Filologicheskie nauki*, 5 (2015), 75-84.

imagined reader, the appearance of which in criticism, both British and Russian, led to a cultural understanding of what gothic novels are, how their readers experienced them, and what type of person would read them that transcended national borders.

British and Russian readers and critics of gothic novels are separated by at least a decade, sometimes more, due to the belated entry of gothic novels into the Russian book market. Yet, as their reactions are so similar, for the purposes of my study, I consider these reader reactions to be one body of source material. Taking a comparative approach, I will foreground my discussion of how the gothic novel came to Russia with a history of its aesthetic development in Britain. After an overview of what gothic novels are and how gothic novelists related to their readership, I will discuss gothic fiction's arrival in Russia through translation, Russian writers who engaged in this new genre, its critical reception in Russia, and the experience of Russian readers. Finally, the chapter will address the legacy of gothic fiction among Russian readers in terms of genre memory. This chapter is not a history of the gothic novel in Russia; for that, I recommend readers consult Vadim Vatsuro's comprehensive and excellent study *The Gothic Novel in Russia (Goticheskii roman v Rossii, 2002)*.<sup>3</sup> The assessment of the quality of Russian translations of English gothic novels is also beyond the scope of this chapter. Instead, what I aim to do in the following pages is trace the threads—aesthetic, generic, cultural, critical, and economic—that led to the creation of the imagined gothic novel reader in the Russian cultural context.

#### I. 'THE MACHINERY OF GHOSTS AND GOBLINS': GOTHIC AESTHETICS AND READER AFFECT

The gothic novel reader's journey to Russia begins in England, where the first gothic novel was created, nearly 30 years before the first gothic translation appeared on the Russian book market. In this section of the chapter I will give an overview of the first gothic novel's aesthetic conception. Because gothic is a genre that is designed to manipulate readers' emotions in a significant way, an understanding of how this manipulation is constructed in the genre's aesthetic formulation is necessary to understand gothic reader affect.

One morning in June 1764, writer and politician Horace Walpole woke up at Strawberry Hill, his neo-medieval fantasy estate on the banks of the Thames, from a dream:

I had thought myself in an ancient castle (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story), and that on the

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<sup>3</sup> See note 2 for full reference.

uppermost bannister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate.<sup>4</sup>

Walpole's account reveals several design elements that later became enshrined as gothic generic convention. Engaging in 'automatic writing' like this was a way of attempting to address the subconscious mind, so that "what flowed from his pen would be close to the unconscious sources of his nightmare."<sup>5</sup> Walpole's comment that his head is filled "with Gothic story" refers to his passion for all things medieval: history, architecture, literature, legend, art, even politics. These elements—the subconscious, fantasy, and the medieval—come together in the novel he wrote, inspired by his dream, *The Castle of Otranto*: the first gothic novel.

Walpole published the first 500 copies of *The Castle of Otranto* in late December 1764, claiming the work was a found manuscript "translated by William Marshal, Gent. From the original Italian of Onuphrio Muralto, Canton of the Church of St. Nicholas at Otranto." This alleged provenance lent the volume credibility and it quickly became a success. The work incorporates a medieval Italian setting and concerns Manfred, the lord of Otranto, and his family's right to the estate. After the supernatural death of his son, Manfred grows concerned about a prophecy that the true heir of the castle will claim his rightful place. Various horrific, exciting, and mysterious scenes ensue as Manfred works to counteract this presage by imprisoning his daughter-in-law and attempting to force her hand in marriage, planning to murder his wife and accidentally killing his daughter in the process, and, finally, repenting when, in the end, the true heir of Otranto is revealed.

The novel immediately resonated with readers and their responses to it show us what the gothic can effect in readers not yet influenced by gothic generic expectation and cliché. The graveyard poet Thomas Gray, known for his lyric meditations on death and the afterlife, wrote to Walpole on 30 December 1764 that the work "engages our attention here, makes some of us cry a little, and all in general afraid to go to-bed o'nights."<sup>6</sup> Reacting to the first French translation in 1767, critic and diplomat Friedrich Melchior von Grimm wrote:

Let one be ever so much of a philosopher, that enormous helmet, that monstrous sword, the portrait which starts from its frame and walks away, the skeleton of the hermit praying in the oratory, the vaults, the subterranean passages, the moonshine, -- all

4 H. Walpole, "969. To the Rev. William Cole," in *The Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Oxford*, 8 vols. (London, 1857), vol. 4, 328.

5 M. Tropp, *Images of Fear: How Horror Stories Helped Shape Modern Culture (1818-1918)* (London, 1990), 13.

6 T. Gray, *The Works of Thomas Gray*, 2 vols. (London, 1825), vol. 1, 266 (Letter LXIV).

these things make the hair of the sage stand on end, as much as that of the child and his nurse; so much are the sources of the marvellous the same to all men.<sup>7</sup>

Both Gray and von Grimm discuss the universality of Walpole's creation in terms of the feeling it arouses: terror. And yet, both readers are compelled to read onwards; Gray mentions that the novel has engaged his attention, while von Grimm uses the term 'marvellous,' referring to the work's intriguing novelty and imagination. Walpole had hit upon an entertaining mode of terror, one that some critics mentioned specifically. In a 1764 review, one critic wrote,

Those who can digest the absurdities of Gothic fiction, and bear with the machinery of ghosts and goblins, may hope, at least, for considerable entertainment from the performance before us: for it is written with no common pen; the language is accurate and elegant; the characters are highly finished; and the disquisitions into human manners, passions, and pursuits indicate the keenest penetration and the most perfect knowledge of mankind.<sup>8</sup>

From this review it is clear that *The Castle of Otranto* was received as much as an entertaining romp as it was a frightening tale. The fear factor contributed to the volume's entertainment value; as Martin Tropp observes, "Whether fantastic or factual, horror stories attract their audience by frightening it, two seemingly contradictory impulses."<sup>9</sup> The idea of generic convention also enters clearly into this review when its author speaks of "the machinery of ghosts and goblins." To address reader demand for the popular work, Walpole published 500 copies of the novel's second edition in April 1765, revealing his authorship and the work's true provenance in it as well as a new subtitle, "A Gothic Story." This subtitle gave the gothic genre its name.

Walpole's preface to the second edition discusses the work's popularity among readers and gives some explanation about his intentions in writing the fantasy: "It was an attempt to blend the two kinds of Romance, the ancient and the modern,"<sup>10</sup> that is, to create a work that fused the superstition, violence, adventure, and supernatural fantasy of the medieval romance with the eighteenth-century English novel set in the familiar and realistic present. The medieval setting was a key part of this formula; it enabled the

<sup>7</sup> F. M. von Grimm, *Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes*, 4 vols. (London, 1815), vol. 2, 292.

<sup>8</sup> Anonymous review, *The Monthly Review, or Literary Journal*, 32 (Feb. 1764), 97.

<sup>9</sup> See Tropp, *Images of Fear*, 4.

<sup>10</sup> Walpole, "Preface to the Second Edition," *The Castle of Otranto*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (London, 1769), xiv.

author to draw on “miracles, visions, necromancy, dreams, and other preternatural events,” which he saw as absent from his contemporary fiction but embedded in both the literature of the past and the beliefs associated with it (for example, Catholic mysticism).<sup>11</sup> Walpole’s novel was not the first work to focus on a medieval setting, nor was it the first to narrate gratuitously violent or blatantly supernatural events. Beyond the eighteenth-century novels in this vein, including Tobias Smollett’s *Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom* (1753), Thomas Leland’s *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury* (1762), or William Hutchinson’s *The Hermitage* (1772), there are, of course, the examples from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature, most prominently William Shakespeare’s plays featuring a medieval past, supernatural plot elements, and significant violence such as *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*. Walpole’s novel, however, served to signify the outline of a genre dwelling on “things gloomy, macabre, and medieval.”<sup>12</sup> Walpole’s gothic novel included both a set of conventions and a narrative mandate to manipulate its reader’s emotions.

## 2. A RECIPE FOR A GOTHIC NOVEL: GENERIC DEVELOPMENT AND READER ENGAGEMENT

How does the gothic novelist accomplish this manipulation of the reader? The gothic genre is best known for its array of conventions, many of them touched on by Margarita Savishna in the passage I cited from Somov’s story: a landscape featuring brooding castles, ruined monasteries, mysterious caves, and gloomy mountains and cliffs; a villain who tries to enact his nefarious plans on innocent victims; a variety of dangers, both natural and potentially supernatural. In Somov’s humorous poem “Plan for a Novel à la Radcliffe” (Plan romana à la Radcliff, 1816), a list of these elements appears:

Robbers, an underground prison,  
 A tower, half a dozen owls;  
 Gleaming through ravines the moon has risen,  
 Wolves are baying, the wind howls;  
 Awful dreams torment my heroes  
 Fiery dragons, flying griffins from myth;  
 Fear, horror after them flows...  
 There you have it, a novel à la Radcliffe!<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Walpole, “Preface to the First Edition,” *The Castle of Otranto*, vii.

<sup>12</sup> T. Castle, “Ann Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho*,” in *Boss Ladies, Watch Out! Essays on Women, Sex and Writing* (London, 2002), 56.

<sup>13</sup> This rhymed translation appears in A. Tosi, *Waiting for Pushkin: Russian Fiction in the Reign of Alexander I (1801-1825)* (Amsterdam, 2006), 84-85. The original may be found here: O. S., “Plan romana a la Radcliff,” *Khar'kovskii Demokrit* (1816), vol. 5, 61.

The emphasis in Somov's plan for a gothic novel is on the senses: sight—the moon gleams; hearing—wolves bay, the wind howls; and feeling. Beyond the mention of tormenting nightmares and mythological creatures, Somov names the primary affective operators in gothic fiction, fear and horror. The poem's humor lies in its calling attention to the gothic novel's formulaic quality, that the array of conventions is similar (or the same) in each text. While the repetition of tropes and themes to the point of cliché seems as though it would bore, the positioning of tropes in different relationships creates new productive models, and the predictability of surprising and frightening elements assures readers' engagement. Walpole's winning formula for this is to emphasize the role of terror in the novel's structure; as he notes in the preface to the first edition of *Otranto*,

Everything tends directly to the catastrophe. Never is the reader's attention relaxed. The rules of the drama are almost observed throughout the conduct of the piece. The characters are well drawn, and still better maintained. Terror, the author's principal engine, prevents the story from ever languishing; and it is so often contrasted by pity, that the mind is kept up in a constant vicissitude of interesting passions.<sup>14</sup>

Intriguingly, Walpole discusses the formulation of his story in terms of genre, referring to Aristotle's *Poetics*, but rather than keeping pity and fear in equilibrium, the English author privileges terror as 'the principal engine.' Keeping his reader in a state of affective vacillation between the Aristotelian categories of pity and terror, that is, in eighteenth-century genre terms, drawing on techniques from horror (or its forebear revenge tragedy) and sentimentalism, Walpole created a page turner.

When Walpole first published *The Castle of Otranto*, the work represented a wholly new reading experience. Later readers, having read a bevy of novels in the same vein, could readily identify narrative patterns and clichés in the text. Sir Walter Scott, in his preface to an 1811 Scottish edition of Walpole's novel (nearly fifty years removed from the novel's inaugural edition), cautions his readers that,

the character of the supernatural machinery in the *Castle of Otranto* is liable to objections. Its action and interference is rather too frequent, and presses too hard and constantly upon the same feelings in the reader's mind, to the hazard of diminishing the elasticity of the spring upon which it should operate. The fund of fearful sympathy which can be afforded by a modern reader to a tale of wonder, is much diminished by the present

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<sup>14</sup> Walpole, "Preface to the First Edition," *Otranto*, vii-viii.

habits of life and mode of education. Our ancestors could wonder and thrill... but our habits and feelings and belief are different, and a transient, though vivid impression is all that can be excited by a tale of wonder even in the most fanciful mind of the present day.<sup>15</sup>

Here Scott critically examines the reader's reaction to the novel and why it does not engage modern readers to the same degree it did Walpole's original public. Scott attributes the diminished sense of 'wonder' he feels upon reading the work to temporal distance, but his criticisms of Walpole come from generic distance, the experience of reading an originating work after reading its generic imitators and followers. Strikingly, Scott considers the work not in terms of aesthetic merit, but in its effect on readers. His closing comments underscore the importance of reader affect.

If Horace Walpole, who led the way in this new species of literary composition, has been surpassed by some of his followers in diffuse brilliancy of description, and perhaps in the art of detaining the mind of the reader in a state of feverish and anxious suspense, through a protracted and complicated narrative, more will yet remain with him than the single merit of originality and invention.... The applause, in fine, which cannot be denied to him who can excite the passions of fear and of pity, must be awarded to the author of the *Castle of Otranto*.<sup>16</sup>

My working definition of the gothic breaks down and builds on Scott's point that gothic novels detain "the mind of the reader in a state of feverish and anxious suspense, through a protracted and complicated narrative," underscoring the role of the reader in the experience of the text:

Looking beyond the gothic's hauntings and mysteries ... several key characteristics emerge as definitive for the genre: 1) the text must focus on the solution of a mystery: the reader is propelled to continue reading out of curiosity, anticipating horrors or terrors that are hinted at but constantly deferred; 2) the text must refer to some kind of transgression or broken taboo, the exploration of the repercussions of which informs the work as a whole; and, finally, 3) the text is preoccupied with the depiction and/or evocation of emotions such as fear, anxiety, and revulsion, and

<sup>15</sup> W. Scott, "Introduction," in H. Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* (Edinburgh, 1811), xxxv-xxxvi.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxvi.

these psychologies both inform the text and attempt to evoke a strong emotional reaction from the reader.<sup>17</sup>

Gothic writers connected with readers by provoking emotional responses: suspense, horror, anxiety, fascination, dread, laughter, disgust. The gothic novelist's main aim is to prey on readers' emotions through suspense, to make them feel dread and terror, postponing resolution as long as possible to keep them turning pages. The novels are predicated on the exploration of fear, and the best of them provoke a visceral reader response. Tropp studies the appeal of horror fiction, positing that works of horror "continue to speak to their audience because they echo fears that have remained with us... Their power comes from more than the tapping of ancient and private sources of nightmare; they use those materials to connect individual lives with the group experience of culture."<sup>18</sup>

The best gothic novels during this period were produced from, as Mark S. Simpson observes, "a particular frame of mind which questioned traditional values of good and evil, of virtue and reward and which sought to test philosophical, religious, and ethical beliefs through the postulation of a basically uncertain and incomprehensible world."<sup>19</sup> Arguably, the works also transmitted this worldview to their readers, a relationship made possible through readers' affective responses. To this end, gothic novelists added sensational and taboo elements. For example, in addition to murder, supernatural occurrences, and illegitimate inheritance claimants, *The Castle of Otranto* introduces transgressive sexual desires and relationships. Transgression became a driving force of the genre, a crucial element in its task to horrify and terrify readers; as Fred Botting notes, gothic is "the writing of excess" which evinces a "fascination with transgression and anxiety over cultural limits and boundaries."<sup>20</sup> After all, it is a short step from Walpole's suggestion of a kind of technical incest, when Manfred attempts to marry his widowed daughter-in-law, to Matthew Lewis's later gothic novel *The Monk* (1796), in which the hero, Ambrosio, seduces his own sister.

Walpole's success was possible because 1760s England was home to a thriving literary marketplace, which included presses and booksellers, circulating libraries, subscription libraries, literary journals and magazines, and a critical tradition, the circumstances that made literature a possible profession. Literary critics positively reviewed *The Castle of Otranto*, encouraging

17 K. Bowers, "The City Through a Glass, Darkly: Use of the Gothic in Early Russian Realism," *The Modern Language Review*, 108, 4 (2013), 1237-1253, 1238. This definition is my own. For its underpinnings, see D. Punter, *The Literature of Terror: The Modern Gothic* (New York and London, 1996), 146; F. Botting, *Gothic* (New York, London, 1996), 2-3; and, especially, Maguire, *Stalin's Ghosts*, 10-14.

18 Tropp, *Images of Fear*, 5.

19 M. S. Simpson, *The Russian Gothic Novel and its British Antecedents* (Columbus, 1986), 10.

20 Botting, *Gothic*, 2-3.

more would-be readers to try the volume. Subsequent gothic works followed Walpole's model and developed its conventions, themes, and tropes. Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron* (1777, originally titled *The Champion of Virtue*) referred directly to *Otranto* as a forebear, both with the subtitle "A Gothic Story" and in her Preface:

This Story is the literary offspring of *The Castle of Otranto*, written upon the same plan, with a design to unite the most attractive and interesting circumstances of the ancient Romance and modern Novel, at the same time it assumes a character and manner of its own, that differs from both; it is distinguished by the appellation of a Gothic Story, being a picture of Gothic times and manners.<sup>21</sup>

Reeve also borrowed Walpole's plot for her medieval fantasy novel about a usurped birthright and a secret heir. Others, like Ann Radcliffe, the subject of Somov's poem above, created new models from those originally set out by Walpole. Radcliffe, nicknamed 'The Enchantress' for her entrancing fictional worlds, published five novels between 1789 and 1797, including *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), her most famous, as well as *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) and *The Italian* (1797). Radcliffe's novels, like Walpole's, are set in a temporally distant, exotic, and potentially sublime place, often in Italy, and feature innocent heroines who must contend with immoral guardians, bandits, violence, hauntings, and other tribulations. In *Udolpho*, heroine Emily St Aubert is driven from her home, orphaned, robbed, imprisoned by an unscrupulous guardian, and set upon by bandits, yet also falls into reveries as she travels through the beautiful countryside of southern France and the Alps. Tapping into Walpole's formula of balancing suspenseful terror with sentimental feeling, Radcliffe quickly became the most famous writer in England; her works traveled abroad in French, German, and eventually Russian translation, among others.<sup>22</sup>

Reeve and Radcliffe are but two outstanding examples among a multitude, a veritable deluge of gothic novelists, who would openly copy from works in print. Tropp, describing the book market in England in the late eighteenth century, evocatively writes, "The sheer number of these works, their similarities, and their availability to all classes of the reading public impressed the main elements of the horror story upon the culture with a nearly indelible force. Individual tales with their own peculiarities were sub-

<sup>21</sup> C. Reeve, "Preface to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition," *The Old English Baron: A Gothic Story*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, (London, 1789), v.

<sup>22</sup> On French translations of Radcliffe, see T. Hale, "Translation in Distress: Cultural Misappropriation and the Construction of the Gothic," in A. Horner (ed.), *European Gothic: A Spirited Exchange* (Manchester, 2002), 24-28. On Russian translations, see Vatsuro, *Goticheskii roman*, 113-150.

merged under an ocean of imitations, each one a variation of the simple formula that chilled spines and sold books.”<sup>23</sup> While the first critics of *The Castle of Otranto* found the work to be unique and fascinating, faced with an inundation of imitations, later critics began to decry the gothic novel and its successors, both for their formulaic quality and ‘bad writing’ and for their potentially dangerous effects on readers, criticism that was repeated when gothic fiction came to Russia. While the English and Russian book markets developed along different models and at different historical moments, they both experienced a similar “gothic wave,” the Russian wave a delayed echo of its English counterpart.<sup>24</sup>

### 3. GOTHIC MIGRATION: GOTHIC NOVELS COME TO RUSSIA

The gothic wave hit Russia in 1792. *The Castle of Otranto* was the first gothic novel, but the first of the genre to appear in Russian translation was its literary offspring, Reeve’s *The Old English Baron*, which appeared as *The Knight of Virtue: a Story from the Most Ancient Notes of English Chivalry* (*Rytsar’ dobrodeteli: Povest’, vziataia iz samykh drevnikh zapisok angliiskogo rytsarstva*), translated by Kornilii Lub’ianovich and published in St. Petersburg in 1792. William Beckford’s *Vathek* (written 1782, published 1786), translated as *Caliph Vathek, an Arabian Tale* (*Kalif’ Vatek. Arabskaia skazka*), appeared shortly after. Beckford’s Oriental fantasy tells the story of a caliph who renounces Islam and, corrupted by a demon, carries out a number of gruesome crimes in order to gain supernatural powers. Both of the Russian translations were created from French versions. Reeve’s novel had been translated into French in 1787 while Beckford’s was originally written in French and subsequently translated into English by Samuel Henley; the English translation of *Vathek* was published in 1786 under the title *An Arabian Tale from an Unpublished Manuscript*, while the French original was published the same year in Paris (but dated 1787) as *Vathek, Conte Arabe* (*Vathek, the Arabian Count*). A translation of Sophia Lee’s gothic novel *The Recess, or a Tale of Other Times* (1785) quickly followed in the same year, translated from French and published in Russian as *Underground, or Matilda* (*Podzemel’e, ili Matil’da*) in Moscow (later the novel acquired the more literally translated title of *The Recess, or a Tale of Other Times* [*Ubezshishche, ili Povest’ inykh vremen*]). Lee’s historical adventure novel details the adventures of Mary, Queen of Scots’s secret twin daughters as they emerge from a hiding place under an abandoned abbey where they have been raised and seek their for-

23 Tropp, *Images of Fear*, 15.

24 Vatsuro calls the period 1800-1810 the Russian ‘gothic wave’ [goticheskaia vol’na]. He first uses this term in V. Vatsuro, “Literaturno-filosofskaia problematika povesti Karamzina ‘Ostrov Borngol’m,’” in G. Makogonenko, P. Berkov, I. Serman (eds.), *Derzhavin i Karamzin v literaturnom dvizhenii XVIII – nachala XIX veka* (Moscow, 1969), 191-192.

tune in the world; the work depicts political intrigues in court, a battlefield, sea voyages, a gruesome execution, and other elements calculated to thrill readers.

Russian readers, like the English and French readers who encountered these works before them, found the novels to be exciting, suspenseful, and fantastic, temporally removed as they were from the present and set in exotic and romanticized locations such as a medieval English castle, a medieval Arabian caliphate, and the Elizabethan world, broadly conceived. In short order the Russian book market was flooded with novels of all types, including English gothic novels in Russian translation. Russian gothic works derived their conventions from this flurry of English imports, a trend that reached its peak in 1810.<sup>25</sup> Poet and critic Vasilii Zhukovskii pondered the appeal of the new novels when he wrote in the journal *Vestnik Evropy* (*Herald of Europe*) in 1808:

What are the booksellers shouting about in their gaudy advertisements? About novels—gothic, entertaining, sentimental, satirical, moral, etc. What do the visitors to Nikol'skii Street in Moscow buy? Novels. What merit do these celebrated titles have that beguile readers' curiosity?<sup>26</sup>

The novels' popularity is clear from Zhukovskii's description, as is his skepticism of the deluge inserted into his final rhetorical question.

The undisputed ruler of the gothic wave in Russia was Ann Radcliffe. Radcliffe, mentioned above, was one of the most celebrated writers in England between 1789, when her first novel was published, and 1797, when she retired from her literary career.<sup>27</sup> In Russia, too, her novels were extremely popular. The first Russian translation of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* appeared in 1802, and in that year alone, according to V. S. Sopikov, seven Russian translations of Radcliffe's novels entered the market.<sup>28</sup> This figure is particu-

<sup>25</sup> On the reception of English gothic novelists in Russia, see Vatsuro, *Goticheskii roman*, 7-168: on the reception of Clara Reeve, see 52-68; on the reception of Sophia Lee, see 69-77. Vatsuro does not discuss the reception of William Beckford other than to mention *Vathek's* publication. See also REBECCHINI, "Reading Foreign Novels," in the present volume.

<sup>26</sup> V. A. Zhukovskii, "Pis'mo iz uezda k Izdatel'iu," *Vestnik Evropy*, 1 (January 1808), 5. My translation.

<sup>27</sup> Robert Miles writes, "After 1789—after Radcliffe—the deluge. Europe was flooded with specimens of the 'terrorist school' of novel writing, with what we—following Walpole—have come to call the 'Gothic novel'. Literary crazes of such proportions by their very nature have complex origins. They do not have single 'authors.' And yet Radcliffe's contemporaries were clear in their views: it was she who had galvanized Walpole's moribund literary experiment, setting it stalking about the land, to the peril of young ladies. More than that, she was a huge, Europe-wide success. She was also one of the most influential novelists of her generation." See R. Miles, *Ann Radcliffe: The Great Enchantress* (Manchester, 1995), 2.

<sup>28</sup> V. S. Sopikov, *Opyt rossiiskoi bibliografii*, 4 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1813), cited by A. Tosi, "At the Origins of the Russian Gothic Novel: Nikolai Gnedich's *Don Corrado de Gerra* (1803),"

larly striking when one considers that she had only published five novels by 1802! Radcliffe's Russian translators worked from French translations, not from the original English. Alessandra Tosi describes Radcliffe's popularity among Russian readers in terms of translation: "Radcliffe reached such a high level of popularity that her name alone on a book cover was perceived as a guarantee of commercial success; hence the number of works by other authors (including Lewis's *The Monk*) attributed to the 'celebrated Radcliffe.'"<sup>29</sup> Iu. I. Masanov, examining Russian book catalogues for the period 1820-1830, identifies seventeen unique novels (and implies there are more) listed as Radcliffe's, many of them translations of other gothic novelists or original works by Russian writers with Radcliffe's name added for a sales boost.<sup>30</sup>

The most popular gothic novels in Russia were those that circulated in French or Russian translation during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but Russian writers also produced gothic works during this period. Among these are Nikolai Karamzin's gothic tales "Bornholm Island" ("Ostrov Borngol'm", 1794) and "Sierra-Morena" (1795); Vasilii Narezhnyi's gothic dramas such as *The Dead Castle* (*Mertvyi zamok*, 1801), and parts of his picaresque novel *A Russian Gil-blas* (*Rossiiskii Zhil'blas*, 1814); Petr Shalikov's story "The Dark Grove, or the Memorial of Tenderness" ("Temnaia roshcha, ili Pamiatnik nezhnosti", 1801); Nikolai Gnedich's novel *Don Corrado de Gerrera; or, The Victim of Vengeance and the Barbarism of the Spaniards* (*Don Korrado de Gerrera*, 1803); Gavril Kamenev's ballad "Gromval" (1804); and Zhukovskii's narrative poems "Liudmila" (1808) and "Svetlana" (1813). Gothic also influenced works in other genres. Karamzin's gothic stories were heavily sentimental, a pairing inspired by Radcliffe's sentimentalism, and in this vein writers such as Mariia Izvekova incorporated gothic tropes into otherwise sentimental novels, as in *Emilia* (*Emiliia*, 1806) and *Milena, or the Rare Example of Goodness* (*Milena ili Redkii primer velikodushchiia*, 1809).

All of these texts clearly demonstrate the influence of the English gothic writers, particularly Walpole, Lewis, and most of all Radcliffe. Radcliffe and Lewis represent two strains of gothic writing, the Schools of 'Terror' and 'Horror,' respectively.<sup>31</sup> The School of Terror, represented by Radcliffe's writing, has its origin in the notion of the sublime as outlined by Edmund

in Cornwell (ed.), *The Gothic-Fantastic*, 62, n.14.

<sup>29</sup> Tosi, *Waiting for Pushkin*, 327.

<sup>30</sup> See Iu. I. Masanov, *V mire psevdonimov, anonimov i literaturnykh poddelok* (Moscow, 1963), 99-102. Masanov's study includes a photograph of the frontispiece from the 1802 St Petersburg edition of Lewis's *The Monk* attributed to Radcliffe. Vatsuro has a chapter on "Pseudoradcliffiana" that includes some discussion of what these fake Radcliffe novels were in terms of plot, themes, etc. See Vatsuro, *Goticheskii roman*, 301-311.

<sup>31</sup> This is a traditional line of gothic literary scholarship; see, for example, the discussion of the two schools in M. Summers, *The Gothic Quest: A History of the Gothic Novel* (New York, 1964), 49. Later scholars have worked to reconceptualize this model, as in Anne Williams's gendered reading of gothic models in *Art of Darkness: A Poetics of Gothic* (Chicago, 1995).

Burke and features an innocent heroine who experiences a series of terrifying events; the reader sympathizes with her and evoking fear for her well-being is as much a part of the author's narrative strategy as provoking fear in the reader. The School of Horror, on the other hand, is epitomized by Lewis's *The Monk*, a novel, which depicts the devil's corruption of a monk, Ambrosio, who is then convinced and tempted to increasingly horrific deeds, described in graphic and fearful detail. The reader of a novel from this tradition is scandalized as much as horrified, and fear comes from the perverse escalation of crimes and sins detailed in the narrative. Radcliffe, in manuscript notes published posthumously, delineates the two schools in this way: "Terror and Horror are so far opposite, that the first expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a higher degree of life, the other contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them."<sup>32</sup> In this vein, for example, Karamzin's works, which describe the narrator's pure feelings, clearly fall in the Radcliffe tradition,<sup>33</sup> while Gnedich's novel, which borrows heavily from Schillerian *Sturm und Drang* for its gruesome horrors, is in Lewis's line.<sup>34</sup>

The Russian book market at the time differed significantly from the English and French markets. Where the English market had been in place for over a century, the Russian market was relatively newly formed, growing from just fifteen booksellers in the mid-1770s to more than fifty by the 1790s and over a hundred at the turn of the nineteenth century.<sup>35</sup> The introduction of gothic fiction to Russia coincided with both this sharp rise in the market's capacity and the loosening of censorship and the regulation of private printing following Alexander I's ascension to the throne in 1801. As more private printing presses were established, literary journals flourished as well. A direct result was the rise of the novel, and by extension, the rise of the gothic novel—these events occurred more or less concurrently in Russia, while the rise of the novel and the rise of the gothic novel in England had been separated by several decades.

#### 4. 'FOOLISH, YET DANGEROUS, BOOKS': ON THE DANGERS OF (GOTHIC) NOVEL READING

Eighteenth-century critics in both England and Russia sharply judged novels (not just gothic novels) for their immorality and deleterious effects.

<sup>32</sup> A. Radcliffe, "On the Supernatural in Poetry," *The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal* (1826), 149.

<sup>33</sup> On Radcliffe's influence on Karamzin, see Vatsuro, *Goticheskii roman*, 82-88.

<sup>34</sup> On Lewis's influence on Gnedich in *Don Corrado de Gerra*, see Tosi, "At the Origins of the Russian Gothic Novel," 66-79. On Lewis's influence on Pushkin in "The Stone Guest," see Sobol, "Monakh v Madride," 75-84.

<sup>35</sup> See G. Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700-1800* (Princeton, 1985, reprinted 2014), 164.

These critiques came to inform the construction of the imagined reader in both nations and were predicated on the assumption that novel readers are susceptible to the moral depravity and frivolity present in the works.

These concerns began to appear in criticism well before Walpole published *The Castle of Otranto*. An early English critic of the form, Samuel Johnson, cautioned in 1750 that

These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions ... not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion.... If the power of example is so great, as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken that ... the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.<sup>36</sup>

Similarly, in 1783, just at the cusp of the gothic's rise in England, James Beattie remarks on the potential danger to novel readers that:

Romances are a dangerous recreation ... A few, no doubt, of the best may be friendly to good taste and good morals; but far the greater part are unskillfully written, and tend to corrupt the heart and stimulate the passions. A habit of reading them breeds a dislike to history, and all the substantial parts of knowledge; withdraws the attention from nature, and truth; and fills the mind with extravagant thoughts and too often with criminal propensities.<sup>37</sup>

Johnson and Beattie demonstrate that concerns about novel reading leading to overstimulation and violent or criminal tendencies had been present long before gothic novels appeared. Russian critics wrote of similar fears. One anonymous critic writing in the *Ladies' Journal* (*Damskii zhurnal*) in 1823 remarked that he treated all novels "guardedly" because

... the habit of reading about incredible incidents, the amazing adventures of charlatans with vaunted characters that are non-existent in nature; finally, love, always excessive yet plausi-

<sup>36</sup> S. Johnson, *The Rambler*, 4 (31 March 1750), 21-22.

<sup>37</sup> J. Beattie, "On Fable and Romance," in *Dissertations Moral and Critical*, 3 vols. (London, 1809), 3, 112-113.

bly derived in this genus of works ... gives a false understanding of society, relaxes the soul and brings youth into an idealized world, where it cannot learn at all how to behave in the real world, is made ridiculous, and sometimes even unhappy, going beyond the limits prescribed by sound reason.<sup>38</sup>

The anonymous Russian critic's worries about the dangers of novel reading clearly echo the concerns of his English counterparts decades earlier. The juxtaposition of these reviews demonstrates the similarity of the critical landscape after the early rise of the novel in both countries.

Early reviews of gothic novels often describe the dangers of reading in these terms as well. For example, this review of Charlotte Smith's novel *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* (1788) reiterates the same points as above about the dangers of novel reading and its potential for the destruction of morality, reason, and social responsibility.

We must observe, that the false expectations these wild scenes excite, tend to debauch the mind, and throw an insipid kind of uniformity over the moderate and rational prospects of life, consequently *adventures* are sought for and created, when duties are neglected, and content despised.<sup>39</sup>

The critics' concerns about reader morality easily transferred from the reader of any novel to the reader of the gothic novel, aided by the lurid and scandalously depraved material present in the gothic. Whereas critics of the novel cautioned against reading that "fills the mind with extravagant thoughts," the critic of the gothic novel claims that the work "debauches the mind," underscoring the immorality implicit in the act of gothic reading. Both in England and in Russia the gothic novel reader was typically imagined to be a woman.

##### 5. 'THE HEART OF A WOMAN': THE FEMALE READER IN THE CRITICAL IMAGINATION

One reason for fears about the dangerous effects of novel reading both in terms of over-stimulation of the imagination and neglected duties was a social shift along gender lines, as the following complaint from 1795 demonstrates.

<sup>38</sup> Cited in V. V. Sipovskii, *Iz istorii russkago romana i povesti* (St. Petersburg, 1903), 279. My translation.

<sup>39</sup> Review of *Emmeline, The Orphan of the Castle* by Charlotte Smith, in *Analytical Review*, 1 July 1788, 333.

Women, of every age, of every condition, contract and retain a taste for novels ... the depravity is universal. My sight is everywhere offended by these foolish, yet dangerous, books. I find them on the toilette of fashion, and in the work-bag of the sempstress; in the hands of the lady, who lounges on the sofa, and of the lady, who sits at the counter. From the mistresses of nobles they descend to the mistresses of snuff-shops—from the belles who read them in town, to the chits who spell them in the country. I have actually seen mothers, in miserable garrets, crying for the imaginary distress of an heroine, while their children were crying for bread: and the mistress of a family losing hours over a novel in the parlour, while her maids, in emulation of the example, were similarly employed in the kitchen. I have seen a scullion-wench with a dishclout in one hand, and a novel in the other, sobbing o'er the sorrows of Julia, or a Jemima.<sup>40</sup>

With the rise of the novel, reading became seen as a woman's pastime, and not just that of upper-class women. In English literary history the female reader and her socio-cultural influence and situation has been a significant topic of study.<sup>41</sup> In the Russian context we know that the literacy rate was smaller and mainly only upper-class women were reading novels, but considerable gaps in knowledge about female readership exist.<sup>42</sup> The present chapter, however, illustrates that the same gendered conception of the typical novel reader existed in both cultural contexts. An anonymous Russian satirical poem, "Liza the Novel Reader" (Liza-Romanist, 1816), for example, laments the rise of women reading novels, linking the phenomenon directly to immorality:

We know how Russians lived in olden times,  
Not knowing today's amusements: they would raise children  
instilling only virtue,  
and our girls didn't read novels!<sup>43</sup>

Of all the varieties of novels, gothic novels were generally seen as among the worst, if not the worst. They were notorious both for their dreadful aesthetic qualities, including thoughtless, hackneyed prose, and their dreadful

40 Anonymous, *Sylph*, 6 October 1795.

41 The literature on this is extensive. On the field and its gaps, see J. Fergus, *Provincial Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2008), 2-15.

42 On the female reading public in Nicolaevan Russia, see M. Beaven Remnek, "A Larger Portion of the Public: Female Readers, Fiction, and the Periodical Press in the Reign of Nicholas I," in B. T. Norton, J. M. Gheith (eds.), *An Improper Profession: Women, Gender, and Journalism in Late Imperial Russia* (Durham, NC, 2001), 26-52.

43 Anonymous, "Liza-Romanist", *Khar'kovskii Demokrit*, 5 (1816). My translation.

subject matter, which included scenes of exaggerated horror, gratuitous violence and gore, and immoral behavior including seduction, lust, adultery, and incest.

Not all critics viewed novel reading in a negative light. Karamzin's essay "On the Book Trade and the Love of Reading in Russia" ("O knizhnoi torgovle i liubvi ko chteniiu v Rossii", 1802) directly addresses the benefits of novel reading:

This type of writing [the novel] undoubtedly captivates a larger portion of the public, engaging the heart and imagination, picturing the world and people, who are similar to us, in interesting situations, depicting the most powerful and at the same time the most common passion in its varied activities. Not everyone can philosophize or take the place of the heroes of history; but everyone loves, has loved, or wants to love, and finds in the romantic hero his own self. It seems to the reader that the author speaks to him in the language of his own heart; in one novel he nourishes hope, in another—a pleasant recollection. In this type of book, as known, we have more translated than original works and, consequently, foreign authors have surpassed the fame of the Russians... I do not know about others, but I am happy so long as they read. And novels, the most mediocre—even written without any talent—contribute in some way to enlightenment... All pleasurable reading influences the mind, without which the heart cannot feel, nor the imagination conceive. In very bad novels there is still a certain logic and rhetoric: He who reads them will speak better and more coherently than the utter ignoramus who has never opened a book in his life.<sup>44</sup>

Karamzin saw potential in the novel—as a genre that manipulates readers' feelings through narrative devices—in its universality, that is, its appeal to the common feelings that all humans share: for example, love, fear, happiness, sorrow. Karamzin's approval of novel reading, broadly, resonates with positive sentiments about gothic novel reading. In this same vein, one English reviewer of Radcliffe's final novel, published posthumously in 1826, reflected,

It may be true that her persons are cold and formal; but her readers are the virtual heroes and heroines of her story as they read; and when they rise from the perusal, instead of having become

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44 Translated by H. M. Nebel, Jr., "On the Book Trade and Love of Reading in Russia," in *Selected Prose of N. M. Karamzin* (Evanston, 1969), 187-189. The original can be found in N. M. Karamzin, "O knizhnoi torgovle i liubvi ko chteniiu v Rossii," *Idem, Izbrannye sochineniia*, 2 vols. (Moscow, Leningrad, 1964), vol. 2, 178-179.

intimate with a rich troop of characters, they seem to have added a long series of interesting adventures to their individual history.<sup>45</sup>

Karamzin and journal editor and publisher Nikolai Novikov contributed significantly to the rise of the novel in Russia through their publishing projects aimed at women readers, like Novikov's 1779 literary journal, *Modnoe ezhemesiachnoe izdanie, ili Biblioteka dlia damskogo tualeta* (*Fashionable Monthly Edition, or the Library for the Lady's Toilette*), the first periodical aimed at a female audience in Russia. For this reason, Olga Glagoleva calls them "the founders of female reading in Russia."<sup>46</sup> Glagoleva observes that, "by the beginning of the nineteenth century the reading of novels had become so common a pastime for women that in the eyes of contemporaries the image of a young lady was inseparable from romantic reading."<sup>47</sup>

Gothic fiction entered the Russian literary scene at a time when Russian literature was in transition, moving away from the somewhat rigid generic models of the eighteenth century towards the sentimental and pre-romantic genres popular in Western Europe. Sentimental tales appealed to the traits that good women of the time should have, namely that "the female soul, in contrast to the male, was gentle and sensitive by nature."<sup>48</sup> Gitta Hammarberg argues that Novikov even went so far as to construct an idealized female reader.

Novikov's constructed woman reader was attracted to a narrow register of styles, genres, and themes; she favoured melodramatic plots with love-deaths, monastic seclusions, elopements, cross-dressing, mistaken identity, and so on, all centred on a love plot. Her range is further circumscribed by didactic content aimed at preserving traditional gender roles: she is taught to avoid erotic temptation, to preserve her chastity, to select a husband, and act as a mother and child-rearer. She is offered a classical and cosmopolitan education through mythological or exotic settings and personages (from the fashionable 'Orient' to Huron Indians, Swedish miners, Spanish adventurers, or Scottish damsels), but this broad agenda is narrowed by a stereotypical 'exotic' aura, and most, if not all, of these pieces follow

45 Anonymous, "Mrs. Radcliffe's Posthumous Romance," *The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal*, 16 (London, 1826), 533.

46 O. E. Glagoleva, "Imaginary World: Reading in the Lives of Russian Provincial Noblewomen (1750-1825)," in W. Rosslyn (ed.), *Women and Gender in 18th-Century Russia* (Aldershot, 2003), 132.

47 *Ibid.*, 142.

48 *Ibid.*, 140.

Karamzin's dictum that 'even peasant women [Huron maidens, Scottish lasses, etc.] know how to love.'

Because the constructed woman is modest, chaste, faithful, sensitive, and humble, most erotically inclined women in the texts are mythological or foreign, and authors frame their behavior in moralising rhetoric.<sup>49</sup>

While women were idealized and cast in the role of sentimental reader and heroine, gothic novels posed a threat to gender roles. This 1804 piece by Vladimir Izmailov, using the pseudonym O. O. O., criticizes Radcliffe's 'unwomanly' imagination.<sup>50</sup>

The English woman Radcliffe devoted her pen to the most terrifying fantasies, such as could be contrived not by the heart of a woman but by the imagination of the most inflamed fanatic. We can only hope that the English Muses, having frightened us for a moment with the wild horrors of Radcliffe's imagination, will soon charm us with pleasant descriptions in the taste of Marmontel.<sup>51</sup>

According to Izmailov, the threat posed by Radcliffe's imagination is not the 'wild horrors' she writes, but the fact that these come—unnaturally—from a woman's mind and pen. Izmailov's critique of Radcliffe as gothic writer is one that also appears in both English and Russian criticism of gothic readers.

This line of thought considered gothic novel reading a direct cause of medical infirmities such as 'delicate nerves' and 'imbecility.' Jacqueline Howard observes, from the English periodicals, that:

Reading the reviews of the time, ... one is immediately struck by both the severity and condescending indulgence of a coterie of male critics who frequently express contempt for novels *per se*. ... Concern is also expressed about "the influence that novels have over the manners, sentiments and passions of the rising generation"; works are usually praised only if they are informative, instructive, or "afford some intellectual improvement".

49 G. Hammarberg, "The First Russian Women's Journals and the Construction of the Reader," in W. Rosslyn, A. Tosi (eds.), *Women in Russian Culture and Society, 1700-1825* (Basingstoke, New York, 2007), 86.

50 On Izmailov's criticism of gothic criticism more broadly see Vatsuro, *Goticheskii roman*, 268-271.

51 "Vzgliad na povesti, ili skazki," *Patriot*, May-September 1804; reprinted in Sipovskii, *Iz istorii russkago romana i povesti*, 243; translated in Tosi, "At the Origins of the Russian Gothic Novel," 66.

The “young and unformed”, including “many a boarding school miss” and those with “delicate nerves”, are felt to be particularly at risk before “the horrid ideas of supernatural agency” and “visionary terrors”, as well as the murderers, assassins, and robbers, which abound in gothic fiction. ... Gothic novels, including *Udolpho*, are “literary abortions”; reading them gives rise to “imbecility of mind”, particularly amongst females as “the female mind is more readily affected by the tendency of such works”.<sup>52</sup>

Russian critics made similar remarks disparaging women novel readers and writers in clinical terms. Petr Makarov, writing about Lewis’s *The Monk* (published under Radcliffe’s name) wrote that gothic novels, “having no purpose, providing no true representation of society or people, revealing no new moral truths or new aspects of the human heart, do not have any use for any society and may be very damaging!”<sup>53</sup> He observed that “a protracted experience of horror works on the nerves... [and] can sometimes lead to unhappy results; in this we call to witness all doctors.”<sup>54</sup> Further, he cautioned, “We know women, who haven’t slept for three nights while reading *The Abbey of St Claire*, or *Mysteries of Udolpho*. Books of that sort should carry the epigraph: *et la mère en défendra la lecture à la fille* (the mother will forbid the daughter from reading it).”<sup>55</sup> Makarov’s fear is not that women will be overcome by gothic novels, but that the fact that they are overcome will cause them to shirk their proscribed domestic duties. Strikingly, Makarov gave a positive review to Mariia Arbutova’s translation of Regina Maria Roche’s *The Children of the Abbey* (1796; in Russian 1802-1803), which he praised for its sentimental features.<sup>56</sup> This last point intrigues as it suggests that gothic novels by women could be acceptable if they adhered to the conventions of sentimentalism, focusing on emotion rather than horror, perhaps following Novikov’s idealized sentimental woman reader.

In an 1823 issue of *Damskii zhurnal* (*Ladies’ Magazine*), an article appeared called “On the Difference of Opinions Regarding Novels” (*O razlichii mnenii otnositel’no romanov*) which laid out the opposing critical points of view on the topic. On the one hand, following Karamzin, “reading (selected) novels affords knowledge of society and the human heart,” while, on the other, the author concluded, it remains the case that “there is nothing more

52 J. Howard, *Reading Gothic Fiction: A Bakhtinian Approach* (Oxford, 1994), 148-149. The quoted material in Howard’s summary comes from a selection of anonymous critical reviews that appeared in *Monthly Review*, *Critical Review*, and *Scots Magazine* between 1789 and 1802. For the full citations, see Howard, p. 149, notes 10-15.

53 P. Makarov, “Retsenziia na Monakha,” *Moskovskii Merkurii* (1803), 218-219. My translation. On Makarov’s criticism of gothic fiction broadly, see Vatsuro, *Goticheskii roman*, 263-268.

54 Makarov, “Retsenziia na Monakha,” 218. My translation.

55 Ibid.

56 See Tosi, *Waiting for Pushkin*, p. 88, note 92.

horrible for a young person than reading such works.”<sup>57</sup> Again, this debate echoed critical arguments that had been taking place in English periodicals for decades at this point, and, while many critics saw moral and, potentially, physical danger in gothic reading, the novels remained popular with readers. The tension between critics and readers is aptly and humorously expressed by this anonymous author of “Terrorist Novel Writing,” a rhetorical and satirical piece that appeared in the English press in 1797:

I allude, sir, principally to the great quantity of novels with which our circulating libraries are filled, and our parlour tables are covered, in which it has become the fashion to make *terror* the *order of the day* by confining the heroes and heroines in old gloomy castles, full of spectres, apparitions, ghosts, and dead men's bones....

A novel, if at all useful, ought to be a representation of human life and manners, with a view to direct the conduct in the important duties of life, and to correct its follies. But what instruction is to be reaped from the distorted ideas of lunatics, I am at a loss to conceive. Are we come to such a pass, that the only commandment necessary to be repeated is, “Thou shalt do no murder?” Are the duties of life so changed, that all the instruction necessary for a young person is to learn to walk at night upon the battlements of an old castle, to creep hands and feet along a narrow passage, and meet the devil at the end of it? Is the corporeal frame of the female sex so masculine and hardy that it must be softened down by the touch of dead bodies, clay-cold hands, and damp sweats? Can our young ladies be taught nothing more necessary in life, than to sleep in a dungeon with venomous reptiles, walk through a ward with assassins, and carry bloody daggers in their pockets, instead of pin-cushions and needle-books?

... Meanwhile, should any of your female readers be desirous of catching the season of terrors, she may compose two or three very pretty volumes from the following recipe:

*Take* – An old castle, half of it ruinous.

A long gallery, with a great many doors, some secret ones.

Three murdered bodies, quite fresh.

As many skeletons, in chests and presses.

An old woman hanging by the neck, with her throat cut.

Assassins and desperadoes, *quant. suff.*

Noises, whispers, and groans, threescore at least.

<sup>57</sup> Cited in M. R. Nenarokova, “Evropeiskie prototipy Vladimira Dubrovskogo: Krug chteniia russkogo dvorianstva pervoi poloviny XIX veka,” in *Genezis zarubezhnoi massovoi literatury i ee sud'ba v Rossii. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Moscow, 2015), 206. My translation.

Mix them together, in the form of three volumes, to be taken at any of the watering places before going to bed. *Probatum Est*.<sup>58</sup>

In this passage, the critic dismisses the formulaic gothic novel as so much junk, an undifferentiated panorama of gloomy castles, ghosts, skeletons, and frightened heroines. It may provide fodder for humorous jabs as seen in the critic's closing satirical recipe, but the danger is not in imitation so much as in moral bankruptcy and a privileging of imagined terrors over a depiction set in a world that reflects the real one. However, in closing his critique with a recipe, the critic points to readers' enjoyment.<sup>59</sup> After all, we savor a recipe, and repetition is the mark of a pleasing one, just as three volume novels are a pleasing bedtime diversion.

## 6. 'SHE LIVED ON TERROR': GOTHIC READERS AND THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINED TERROR

In this section I will compare the experience of fictional gothic novel readers: Somov's Margarita Savishna and Jane Austen's Catherine Morland. Both Austen and Somov wrote parodies in which the gothic reader plays a central role. Although the possibility that Somov read Austen is remote, the depiction of the gothic novel reader in both works is similar, clearly shaped by the same observed cultural assumptions despite their obvious differences in terms of cultural context. The comparison of the two fictional readers' responses to gothic novels will develop a framework for the imagined gothic novel reader, a framework which will in turn inform the memoir accounts of gothic reading that follow in the next section.

By the 1810s provincial Russians were able to acquire gothic fiction in the way Margarita Savishna does in Somov's "Mommy and Sonny":

She ... read novels, of which she ordered a great supply from Moscow, basing the choice of titles on the positive testimony of the announcements placed in the supplements to the *Moscow News*, composed by resourceful publishers and booksellers. Although such announcements do not serve as proof of the literacy of those who write them, to compensate for that, how many inflated, artful praises, how many exclamations, how many series of periods they contain! Margarita Savishna... always scanned

<sup>58</sup> Anonymous, "Terrorist Novel Writing," *The Spirit of the Public Journals* (London, 1797), 227-228.

<sup>59</sup> See K. Bowers, "A Recipe for a Gothic Novel," *The Recipes Project*, 10 December 2015, <https://recipes.hypotheses.org/7219> (accessed March 14, 2020).

them greedily, attracted by the latest products of the Moscow book industry which they advertised.<sup>60</sup>

Margarita Savishna reads with pleasure, but indiscriminately, basing her reading choices on advertising above all. Somov's narrator remarks, tongue in cheek, that his heroine read "at random all the novels and tales translated or composed" in Russia, which lent her a reputation for being the "most intelligent and educated lady" among her neighbors.<sup>61</sup> Throughout the story, Somov pokes fun at the haphazard reading patterns of the provinces, which reflect market trends, showing the ridiculous contrast between gothic fiction and Russian realia, for example in this passage about the fate of Margarita Savishna's son following her discovery of his illicit romance.

Margarita Savishna had already returned home, already put Valery in the north tower, which she had recently had constructed on one corner of her house according to a plan which she had read in some novel about cutthroats. The outside of the tower had been covered with pine shingles, painted an unusual off-granite color, and the joints had been covered with moss to give a more ancient and threatening appearance.... Ilyushka Lykoderov, a tall, corpulent, broad-shouldered peasant had been promoted from forester to jailer. With heavy tread he paced in front of the tower's outer doors, wearing a dark grey under-vest and a tall fur peak cap, with a black fringe on the crest, made to resemble a helmet. It was a frightening sight to see Ilyushka Lykoderov standing in the moonlight, motionless as a ghost and dreaming, supported by the shaft of his pole-axe, his long shadow projected in black against the gloomy wall of the north tower.<sup>62</sup>

Margarita Savishna's incorporation of gothic tropes into her daily life is reminiscent of Catherine Morland, the self-conscious heroine of Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1817), who reads too many gothic novels and begins to see villains and evil plots everywhere, which leads to social embarrassment. Catherine Morland and Margarita Savishna are both archetypes of gothic novel readers, imagined from cultural stereotypes about what gothic novels can do to readers' minds. Where Catherine Morland's mistakes are charmingly naïve and result in a happy ending in Austen's depiction, the last glimpse the reader has of Margarita Savishna is a grotesque one: "As before she reads novels and gets fatter by the year, thus overturning the opinion of

60 Somov, "Mommy and Sonny," 220.

61 *Ibid.*, 213.

62 *Ibid.*, 229.

physiologists and poets that hatred and vengeance dry a man up and slowly undermine his life.”<sup>63</sup> Somov’s humor here is self-conscious, considering that he was, himself, a noted author of gothic prose from the late 1810s until his death in 1833.

Both Catherine Morland and Margarita Savishna are heroines of works that spoof the gothic novel reader, but both sincerely love reading gothic novels. When Catherine and her friend, Isabella Thorpe, discuss the terrors of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, the most common word in their dialogue is “delight.”

“I am just got to the black veil.”

“Are you, indeed? How delightful! Oh! I would not tell you what is behind the veil for the world! Are not you wild to know?”

“Oh! Yes, quite; what can it be? But do not tell me—I would not be told upon any account. I know it must be a skeleton, I am sure it is Laurentina’s skeleton. Oh! I am delighted with the book! I should like to spend my whole life in reading it.”<sup>64</sup>

Catherine’s engagement with the book to the point that she declares “I should like to spend my whole life reading it” rests on the machinery of suspenseful terror that Radcliffe deploys. The black veil, a trope made famous by *Udolpho*, conceals a mystery not revealed in full to the reader for hundreds of pages after its introduction in that novel. The suspense of the mystery is arguably more important for the novel’s narrative force than the mystery’s resolution, which is anticlimactic for the reader after so much build-up. Similarly, Margarita Savishna’s attachment to gothic fiction is physical.

Margarita Savishna passionately loved robbers’ castles, the glint of daggers, the kidnapping of unfortunate heroines, and the secret pacts of murderers under the windows of innocent victims doomed to be killed, meanwhile confined in a tiny room of the east or west tower. In a word, the imagination of Margarita Savishna, a woman of firm character and strong nerves, delighted only in novelistic blood, breathed with the atmosphere of the dungeon, fed on the smell of murder. So to say, she lived on terror.<sup>65</sup>

While this passage does not include some of the visceral readers’ responses from the time (hair standing on end from terror, for example), it

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> J. Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (Oxford, 1988), 39-40.

<sup>65</sup> Somov, “Mommy and Sonny,” 220.

does incorporate a physical vocabulary to discuss Margarita Savishna's reaction: her imagination "breathed [*dyshalo*] with the atmosphere of the dungeon, fed [*pitalos*] on the smell of murder" and she "lived on terror" [*zhila uzhasami*]. Furthermore, Somov's use of the words that typically signify the essential activities of living—breathed, fed, lived—to describe the sensationalistic and outlandish gothic elements of Margarita Savishna's inner life speaks to the strong lure of gothic fiction for its readers in its ability to create an alternate and believable reality.

## 7. 'SOME KIND OF PLEASANT FEAR': REMEMBERING GOTHIC AFFECT

In this section I will present some excerpts from memoirs in which gothic readers recall the affective experience of reading. The accounts presented below are not contemporaneous, but from a perspective looking back on the experience of reading gothic fiction at the beginning of the nineteenth century, sometimes multiple decades removed; many of the accounts here are those of adults recalling childhood memories. It is important to reflect that these accounts were published in memoirs, and thus some curation has inevitably taken place in addition to the distance and distortion naturally occurring as a result of the passage of time. These are not fresh reactions, but, still, these accounts are valuable in that they speak to the aspects of gothic novel reading that the readers themselves found important: the pleasure of reading the novels, of visceral fear but also the thrill of romantic adventure, the humor of clichéd writing, and, ultimately, genre memory.

Ekaterina Sushkova, a memoirist known for her biography of the poet Lermontov, describes using her aunt's library as a child. At the top of a shelf in her enormous library, Sushkova finds some French volumes by Madame de Genlis and Ann Radcliffe. As she remembers reading the tomes, Radcliffe's ghosts and terrors are foremost in her description: "With what freezing of my heart I learned the theory of apparitions—sometimes it seemed to me that I saw them—they caused me fear, but some kind of pleasant fear."<sup>66</sup> Sushkova's "pleasant fear" recalls the delightful terrors that fascinate Catherine and Isabella in *Northanger Abbey*. Sushkova goes beyond the notion that ghosts may exist, suggesting that the act of reading creates an imagined world so real that ghosts seem to appear before her, blurring the boundaries of reality.

Mikhail Dmitriev, a poet, critic, and memoirist best remembered for his translations of Ossian and Luís de Camões, remembers reading gothic fiction in his youth. His neighbors in Simbirsk province, the Kashpirovs, had a small library of "new novels and some works by Kotsebue, translated into

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<sup>66</sup> E. A. Khvostova, *Zapiski: 1812-1841*, Iu. G. Oksman, ed. (Leningrad, 1928), 63. My translation.

Russian.” Dmitriev’s aunts borrowed from the library, and Dmitriev in turn read the novels they took, which he “thirsted” [*zhadnost’iu*] after (phrasing recalling the physicality of Margarita Savishna’s experience with gothic novels). Dmitriev recalls:

The fashionable novels of the time were those of Madames de Genlis and Radcliffe. I didn’t like the delicate works of the former I did not like as they always seemed saccharine, but my aunts shed a lot of sensitive tears over them. But the horrors and secrets of Madame Radcliffe fascinated me, like all the readers of that time.<sup>67</sup>

Dmitriev juxtaposes de Genlis, a prolific French writer known for her sentimental theme, with Radcliffe’s more calculated machinery of fear. He describes Radcliffe’s secrets and horrors as “fascinating,” the result of the gothic formula, Walpole’s ‘machinery’ of carefully balanced terror, suspense, and sentiment. Dmitriev also places his reading into the context that it is what ‘everyone’ at the time was reading, linking the act of reading popular literature to community practice.

Aleksandr Nikitenko, a critic, censor, and academic, recalls reading gothic novels as a child and teenager, and the effects they had on his development:

The novels were largely in translation and mostly bad, without the slightest hint of psychological development in the characters. They fascinated me exclusively with romantic adventures and the fiery feelings depicted in them. With what trembling I penetrated into dark dungeons following Ann Radcliffe...! But I gained little from this course of reading: ... first, the fact that for a long while afterwards I was afraid to stay alone in a dark room, and second that, meeting a new woman, I rushed to elevate her into a pearl of creation and fall in love with her.<sup>68</sup>

Nikitenko’s account speaks to the perceived poor quality of gothic novels—their lack of psychological development—and yet they fascinate him. His description of reading Radcliffe is both suspenseful and experiential; in reading he is, like Sushkova, drawn into the imagined world of the novel, and his response is physiological, “trembling.” Nikitenko’s judgment of gothic novels as “mostly bad” suggests he has succumbed to the critics’ view of them as low-quality literature, a position seemingly at odds with his excitement at reading the novels. His wry comments on the “use” of gothic

67 M. Dmitriev, *Glavy iz vospominanii moei zhizni* (K. G. Bolenko, E. E. Liamina, T. F. Neshumova, eds.) (Moscow, 1998), 52. My translation.

68 A. V. Nikitenko, *Moia povest’ o samom sebe i o tom, ‘chemu svidetel’ v zhizni byl’: Zapiski i dnevnik (1804-1877)*, M. K. Lemke, ed., 2 vols. (St Petersburg, 1904), vol. 1, 53. My translation.

fiction, the results of his reading, also humorously echo the fears voiced by critics that the novels will hinder personal development in young people and cause them to shirk their duties.

Filipp Vigel', author of copious memoirs (originally published 1864) documenting early nineteenth-century life and a member of the literary society Arzamas, mentions his reaction to reading gothic fiction several times. The first instance occurs in the early 1800s in Moscow while employed in the archives of the College of Foreign Affairs, before Arzamas. Vigel's co-workers were also of a literary bent, and they shared reading material.

They supplied me with French books, for the most part novels, and I imagined I was doing useful reading when I devoured them at night. I often was driven beside myself by the horrors of Mrs Radcliffe, whose torturously pleasant narrative model worked on the irritable nerves of my friends.<sup>69</sup>

In Vigel's recollection, the same elements appear that occurred in the responses already mentioned: the writer "devoured" the novels, Radcliffe's narrative is "torturously pleasant," the author was "driven beside himself" by the novel, and reading the books was a form of community building. The notion of "useful reading" also appears, although the use of reading gothic fiction is not further addressed and the comment "I imagined I was doing useful reading" seems possibly to be a humorous yet self-critical jab, particularly given the following clause about devouring the novels. Vatsuro notes that it is unclear which of Vigel's colleagues supplied him with gothic novels, but the crucial fact here is that Vigel', a future Arzamasian, was reading gothic fiction and gothic fiction was entering literary discourse.<sup>70</sup>

The second episode in Vigel's memoirs is his reaction to Zhukovskii's ballad "Svetlana", and this passage connects gothic fiction to broader literary development and discourse in Russia. Vigel' writes:

Corpses, apparitions, devilry, murders, all bathed in moonlight—yes it all appears in fairy tales, and moreover English novels. In place of a heroine [Hero], waiting with tender trepidation for drowned Leander, he gives us wild and passionate Lenora with the galloping corpse of her lover! [The author's] marvelous talent makes us not only read his ballads without disgust, but even to love them. I don't know if he has spoiled our taste, but, at least, he has given us new sensations, new pleasures. Here is the beginning of romanticism for us.<sup>71</sup>

69 F. F. Vigel', *Zapiski*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1891-1893), vol. 1, 167. My translation.

70 See Vatsuro, *Goticheskii roman*, 115.

71 Vigel', *Zapiski*, 1, 342-343. My translation.

The author's enthusiasm for the poem is clear, and he swiftly positions Zhukovskii's work as belonging to the gothic genre based on the list of conventions that begins this passage and their connection to "English novels." Like the earlier responses, this passage juxtaposes the sentimental with the gothic tale, and also speaks to the critical point that the gothic is immoral and scandalous. The comparison of meek Hero with wildly passionate Lenora underscores the flip in gendered roles, but Vigel' assures his readers that he experiences this perversion of traditional gender roles "without disgust," which is made possible through gothic fiction. Vigel's point that Zhukovskii has provided "new sensations, new pleasures" seems to harken back to Karamzin's observation that all reading of imagined literature is positive as it enables the human mind to engage in new experiences. Vigel's final comment in this extract—"Here is the beginning of romanticism for us"—places yet more value on Zhukovskii's gothic ballad; it also demonstrates a sense of literary precedent.

Prince Petr Shalikov, in an essay called "Countryside" (Derevnia, 1819), describes one of the activities at a house party:

We go into the garden. The dark paths, the tall grass, the half-ruined summerhouse, the enticing labyrinth, the ancient vases, the savagery of the place, the deep silence, the bleak hushed noise of the trees held something terrible for us and we exclaimed in one voice: "Here are les mysteres [sic] d'Udolphe!" Laughter followed the romantic memory and pleasure sparked in everyone's eyes.<sup>72</sup>

For Shalikov, Radcliffe (and gothic fiction) evokes a pleasant memory in which both terror and entertainment are bound together. Notably, Shalikov also wrote gothic fiction; he is the author of "The Dark Grove, or the Memorial of Tenderness" (1801). In his reminiscence, the other party guests also engage with the memory, sharing in Shalikov's exclamation and laughter, forging a community of gothic novel readers. Shalikov's memory is not about reading gothic fiction, however, but one born from genre memory, that is, the *experience* of reading (and possibly writing) gothic fiction—its tropes and how those conventions and narrative devices made the reader feel.

Genre memory, a concept significantly theorized by Mikhail Bakhtin in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Art* (*Problemy tvorchestva Dostoevskogo*, 1929), refers to the idea that "A genre lives in the present, but always remembers its past, its beginning."<sup>73</sup> It is constantly being renewed as additional literary works are created that continue the generic tradition. By extension, a writer (or

<sup>72</sup> P. Shalikov, *Sochineniia Kn. Shalikova*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1819), 2, 45-46. My translation.

<sup>73</sup> M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, translated by Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis, 1984), 104.

reader) does not need to know every work of a genre to understand that genre's function; he must only understand the function of the genre, and this may be derived as much from the memory of one's own reading as from the saturation of culture with elements of the genre.<sup>74</sup> Genre memory plays a role in many of the readers' accounts presented above, allowing readers to describe their imagined flights of fancy as a result of reading in the same language gothic novelists would use. It is genre memory that enables the gothic parodies discussed above to function effectively, for their intended audiences to understand them; the writers are spoofing not one novel of Radcliffe's, but all of them, and the pseudo-Radcliffiana as well. Genre memory also proves important for the legacy of gothic reading on Russian literature and culture.

## 8. GOTHIC SHADOWS, GOTHIC MEMORY

In *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* (*Zimnie zametki o letnikh vpechatleniakh*, 1863), Fedor Dostoevskii recalls having gothic novels read aloud to him as a child.

I used to spend the long winter hours before bed listening (for I could not yet read), agape with ecstasy and terror, as my parents read aloud to me from the novels of Ann Radcliffe. Then I would rave deliriously about them in my sleep.<sup>75</sup>

Dostoevskii's experience of gothic reading bears all the characteristics of the other reader responses to the genre presented in this chapter; he describes being in a state of "ecstasy and terror," a state characterized by a physical response, he begins agape and in the end is deliriously raving. This early experience reading gothic fiction, which would have occurred in the 1820s, more than a decade after the 'gothic wave' in Russia, speaks both to the genre's staying power within Russian culture and to its impact.

These delirious gothic ravings of the young Dostoevskii stayed with the writer. In an 1861 letter to his friend Iakov Polonskii, Dostoevskii admits that his dream of traveling to Italy is grounded in his early reading of Radcliffe's novels.

How many times have I dreamed, since my childhood, of visiting Italy. Ever since I read the novels of Radcliffe, which I had

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 120-122.

<sup>75</sup> F. Dostoevsky, *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*, translated by D. Patterson (Evanston, 1997), 1-2. The Russian text can be found in F. M. Dostoevskii, *Zimnie zametki o letnikh vpechatleniakh*, Idem, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 30 tomakh*, 30 vols. (Leningrad, 1972-1990), vol. 5, 46.

already read by the age of eight, various Alfonsos, Catherines and Lucias have been whirling around in my head.<sup>76</sup>

Much has been written about Dostoevskii's gothic influence, from Leonid Grossman's "Composition in Dostoevskii's Novels" (*Kompozitsiia v romane Dostoevskogo*, 1925) to contemporary scholarship,<sup>77</sup> but beyond literary analysis, references to gothic novels appear throughout Dostoevskii's works, implying broad saturation. Dostoevskii's letter to Polonskii states that, by 1829, he had read all of Radcliffe, and his final novel *The Brothers Karamazov* (*Brat'ia Karamazovy*, 1880) includes an overt reference to *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. In the courtroom scene of Book XII, Fetiukovich gives a long speech in defense of Dmitrii, who has been accused of patricide. He evokes *Udolpho* in an attempt to cast aspersions on the prosecution's assumptions.

It's just this consideration that has led the prosecutor to assume that the money is hidden in some crevice at Mokroe. Why not in the dungeons of the castle of Udolpho, gentlemen? Isn't this supposition really too fantastic and too romantic?<sup>78</sup>

The passage assumes that its reader is familiar not only with Radcliffe's novel, but also with the cultural context surrounding it. Fetiukovich is a somewhat ridiculous character with a tendency towards hyperbole. Fetiukovich's exaggerations are part of his rhetorical toolkit; he disparages the dungeons of Udolpho as a romantic fantasy, and one that a serious person would not entertain; in this sense, his reading of Udolpho chimes with

<sup>76</sup> This translation appears in R. Feuer Miller, "Dostoevskii and the Tale of Terror," in *Dostoevskii and Britain*, ed. W. J. Leatherbarrow (Oxford, 1995), 140. The Russian text can be found in Dostoevskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 30 tomakh*, vol. 28/2, 19.

<sup>77</sup> See, for example, L. Grossman, "Kompozitsiia v romane Dostoevskogo," *Sobranie sochinenii*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1928), vol. 2, 9-59; G. Steiner, *Tolstoy or Dostoevsky: An Essay in Contrast* (New Haven, 1960), 188-220; R. Gaustad, "Rebuilding Gothic on Russian Soil: The Roles of Religion and Intertwining of Minds in Dostoevskii's *The Landlady*," in K. A. Grimstad, I. Lunde (eds.), *Celebrating Creativity: Essays in Honor of Jostein Børtnes*, (Bergen, 1997), 205-215; the essays by Ignat Avsey and Leon Burnett in *The Gothic-Fantastic in Nineteenth Century Russian Literature*, 211-256; the work of Robin Feuer Miller, especially *Dostoevsky and The Idiot: Author, Narrator, and Reader* (Cambridge, MA, 1981), 108-120, "Dostoevskii and the Tale of Terror," in *Dostoevskii and Britain*, 139-158, and *Dostoevsky's Unfinished Journey* (New Haven, 2007), 128-147; essays by A. A. Mikhaleva and N. D. Tamarchenko in *Goticheskaia traditsiia v russkoi literature*, 164-213; I. Vinitsky, *Ghostly Paradoxes: Modern Spiritualism and Russian Culture in the Age of Realism* (Toronto, 2009), 119-135; Bowers, *Shadows of the Gothic*, 74-143; Bowers, "The City Through a Glass, Darkly," 1237-1253; and A. Urakova, S. Fokin (eds.), *Po, Bodler, Dostoevskii: Blesk i nishchita natsional'nogo geniia* (Moscow, 2017). This list is not comprehensive, but gives a chronological overview of scholarship examining Dostoevskii's gothic influences.

<sup>78</sup> F. Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, translated by C. Garnett (New York, 1996), 830. The Russian text can be found in Dostoevskii, *Brat'ia Karamazovy*, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 30 tomakh*, vol. 15, 158.

those of many critics before him. By 1880, however, the ‘gothic wave’ when Radcliffe’s books were bestsellers that virtually everyone read was seventy years in the past. The scene, however, suggests that the memory of gothic fiction persisted significantly enough that a reference to the ‘dungeons of Udolpho’ would be perfectly understandable.

Beyond Dostoevskii, a number of other writers—too numerous to name—engaged with gothic literature in their writing, essentially incorporating gothic genre memory into the Russian literary tradition. Literary incidences appear in some of the most influential and important novels of the nineteenth century, ranging from Tat’iana reading Onegin’s marked gothic novels after his departure from the country to Bazarov’s absurd statement that “The Russian peasant is the mysterious unknown that Mrs. Radcliffe once analyzed at such length. Who can understand him? He doesn’t understand himself!”<sup>79</sup> In addition to the first ‘gothic wave,’ a second wave of so-called gothic-fantastic literature swept Russia in the 1820s and 30s. Authors such as Vladimir Odoevskii, Aleksandr Bestuzhev-Marlinskii, and especially Aleksandr Pushkin and Nikolai Gogol’ created Russian romanticism on a gothic foundation, delving into the genre in works such as *The Queen of Spades* (*Pikovaia dama*), “The Bronze Horseman” (“Mednyi vsadnik”), *The Nose* (*Nos*), and *The Portrait* (*Portret*). As time passed, the original gothic novel readers in Russia moved on to other genres, but the imagined gothic novel reader persisted in the Russian cultural imagination. Eventually, as Russian writers adapted gothic narrative devices for their own purposes, the imagined gothic reader merged with the imagined reader. The imagined reader at the end of the nineteenth century was readily able to identify gothic cues in Russian narratives and enjoy being immersed in a tale.

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<sup>79</sup> Ivan Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons*, translated by Constance Garnett (New York, 2001), 166. The Russian passage may be found in I. S. Turgenev, *Ottsy i deti*, Idem, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem v 30 tomakh*, 30 vols. (Moscow, 1978), vol. 7, 147.