UNIVERZITA KARLOVA - FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

ÚSTAV ANGLOFONNÍCH LITERATUR A KULTUR

Setting in Poe's Short Stories and Its Relationship to Characters
Umístění děje v povídkách Edgara Allana Poea a jeho vztah k postavám

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

Vedoucí bakalářské práce
(supervisor):

Prof. PhDr. Martin Procházka, CSc.

Zpracovala (author):

Klára Nekvasilová

Studijní obor (subject/s):

Anglistika a amerikanistika

Praha, August 2018

Declaration:

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou práci vypracoval/a samostatně, že jsem řádně citoval/a všechny použité prameny a literaturu a že práce nebyla využita v rámci jiného vysokoškolského studia či k získání jiného či stejného titulu.

I declare that the following BA thesis is my own work for which I used only the sources and literature mentioned, and that this thesis has not been used in the course of other university studies or in order to acquire the same or another type of diploma.

……………………………………………………………………………………..

Acknowledgements:

Permission:

Souhlasím se zapůjčením bakalářské práce ke studijním účelům.

I have no objections to the BA thesis being borrowed and used for study purposes.

……………………………………………………………………………………..

Abstrakt:

Práce analyzuje prostorové umístění děje ve vybraných povídkách Edgara Allana Poea. Navíc se zabývá i problematikou časového umístění děje. Analýza čerpá zejména z děl Daniely Hodrové „Místa s tajemstvím" a „Poetika míst." Pro práci byly vybrány Poeovy povídky „Sud vína amontilladského," „Černý kocour," „Zrádné srdce," „Eleonora," „Pád domu Usherů," „Maska červené smrti," „Oválný portrét," „Jáma a kyvadlo" a „Ligeia." Bakalářská práce zjišťuje, jak prostorové umístění děje v těchto povídkách souhlasí s konceptem „místa s tajemstvím," který Daniela Hodrová ve svém díle zkoumá a definuje. Současně se práce zaměřuje i na koncept „postavy s tajemstvím," jelikož dle Hodrové jsou postavy a místa v literárních dílech neoddělitelně propojeny. Hlavním cílem práce tedy je nejen prokázat, že prostory v Poeových povídkách spadají do kategorie „místa s tajemstvím," ale především prozkoumat, jak se postavy a místa v jednotlivých povídkách vzájemně ovlivňují.

Práce je započata třemi teoretickými kapitolami, které slouží jako základ pro následnou analýzu. Nejprve jsou díla Edgar Allan Poea a Daniely Hodrové zařazeni do kontextu. V případě E. A. Poea se jedná o kontext romantické a gotické literatury, která je představena jak v anglickém, tak v americkém kontextu. Daniela Hodrová je uvedena současně s osobnostmi, které se zabývaly tématem umístění děje a jejichž práce ovlivnila přístup Hodrové. Práce tedy stručně předkládá myšlenky Michaila Bachtina, Jurije Lotmana a Gastona Bachelarda. Následně je vysvětlena terminologie, kterou Hodrová ve své práci používá, především termíny „místo s tajemstvím" a „postava s tajemstvím." Následná analýza se nejprve soustředí na koncept „postav s tajemstvím," zvláště na Poeovy vypravěče, postavy ovlivněné šílenstvím, maskované postavy, a nakonec na dvojčata a dvojníky. Zkoumán je také význam jmen Poeových postav. Následující část bakalářské práce se zaměřuje na tvar a rozložení míst v Poeových povídkách, předně na jejich podobnost s labyrintem či vězením. Podobně je poté zkoumán i samotný text povídek včetně různých zvláštností. Mezi ně patří například opakování slov a frází, motta, či vložené básně. Posléze práce zkoumá samotné prostorové umístění děje ve vztahu k postavám, konkrétně místo jako „zrcadlo" postav a jejich duševních stavů, a poté naopak místo jako ovlivňující faktor, který působí na chování a emoce postav. Prostorové umístění děje je částečně zkoumáno také jako samostatná literární postava a vlastník vzpomínek. Nakonec práce zkoumá také význam časového umístění děje, tedy propojení času, místa a postav. Práce rozlišuje mezi časem lineárním a cyklickým, a také subjektivním a objektivním. Následně se zabývá motivy stáří, noci a podzimu.

Abstract:

The thesis provides an analysis of spatial setting in selected short stories by Edgar Allan Poe, and is based mainly on Daniela Hodrová's works "Places with a Secret" and "The Poetics of a Place." Additionally, the thesis also considers temporal setting. In the thesis, short stories "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Black Cat," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "Eleonora," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Masque of the Red Death," "The Oval Portrait," "The Pit and the Pendulum" and "Ligeia" are be observed with an attempt to explore how does the spatial setting in them correspond to the concept of "a place with a secret" which Hodrová examines and defines in her work. Simultaneously, the concept of "a character with a secret" is studied, since it deeply intertwines with the idea of "a place with a secret," and the two cannot be possibly separated. Accordingly, the thesis attempts to uncover how does the setting and the characters affect and reflect each other.

As for the structure of the thesis, it commences with three theoretical introductory chapters which serve as a base for the later analysis. The chapters place Edgar Allan Poe and Daniela Hodrová into context. E. A. Poe is presented in connection to romantic literature and Gothic fiction, regarding both the English and the American context. Daniela Hodrová is introduced together with scholars who dealt with the topic of literary setting, and whose influence can be observed in Hodrová's approach. The thesis therefore briefly presents the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin, Yuri Lotman and Gaston Bachelard. Subsequently, the terminology of Daniela Hodrová is explained, particularly the terms "a place with a secret" and "a character with a secret." Thenceforth, the first chapters of the analysis focus on "characters with a secret", especially on Poe's narrators, characters experiencing madness, masked characters, and the twins and doubles. Furthermore, the significance of characters' names is studied. Following section of the thesis examines the structure of places in the stories, focusing especially on their resemblance to a labyrinth or a prison. The thesis thence provides a similar analysis of the textual structure of the stories, observing various textual convolutions, such as repetitions, epigraphs, and inserted poems. Afterwards, the spatial setting itself is examined in relation to the characters, firstly as a reflection of the characters and their minds, and then contrastingly as an influencer which alternates the characters' behavior or emotions. The setting may also be embodied in a character who is a bearer of memories. Final section of the analysis then discusses the significance of temporal setting. The thesis distinguishes between linear and cyclic time, as well as subjective and objective time. Lastly, the motives of old age, night, and autumn are scrutinized.

Contents:

1 Theoretical Introduction

1.1 Edgar Allan Poe in Context

1.1.1 Romanticism

In order to study the works of Edgar Allan Poe, it is essential to consider the historical context, especially concerning various literary influences of the period. Since Poe lived in the first half of the nineteenth century, he was significantly affected by Romanticism, a movement, or rather a mindset, which occurred in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century in Europe as well as America.[1] Romanticism primarily opposed the classicist belief in the superiority of reason and accentuated the prominence of emotion. The shift of interest is easily observable in Poe's interest in psychological processes of his characters. When the term "Romanticism" is pronounced, the first associations which emerge are mainly those linked to its demonstrations in English poetry, which presented the romantic thoughts in the most condensed form. The works S. T. Coleridge were especially significant for Poe, as Coleridge strictly differentiated between poetry and prose.[2] The division between the two genres later became a topic explored by Poe in his essays. The romantics also discussed the power of nature in connection with the notion of "the sublime," defined by Edmund Burke as an ability to evoke the strongest emotions of awe, but also fear, danger, horror and terror.[3]

As for America, literature of the romantic period significantly varied in terms of its center of interest. Literary canon of the time can generally be divided into several subcategories, each of them being concerned with a specific topic. Before the attention is directed to the Gothic fiction, two groups of Poe's contemporaries should be introduced. Firstly, the authors William Cullen Bryant, James Fenimore Cooper, William Gilmore Simms and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow focused on the representation of the colonial past, and especially on the portrayal of Native Americans and their relationship with the white colonists. The approach towards indigenous people was rather convoluted at that time, since while Native Americans were treated with respect in scholarly accounts, the complexity of their oral tradition was largely unrecognized, and the nations colonizing the continent

---

[1] J. E. Luebering, "Periods of American Literature," *Britannica.com*, Encyclopaedia Britannica <https://www.britannica.com/list/periods-of-american-literature > 28 July 2018.

[2] S. N. Gillani, "S.T. Coleridge: Criticism of Wordsworth's Theory of Poetic Diction," *Engliterarium.com*, Engliterarium <http://www.engliterarium.com/2008/11/s-t-coleridge-criticism-on-wordsworths.html> 29 July 2018.

[3] "The Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Picturesque," *Faculty.winthrop*.edu, <http://faculty.winthrop.edu/kosterj/engl203/overviews/sublime.htm> 28 July 2018.

requested a radical transformation of the Native Americans from hunters into farmers.[4] The four authors took different views on the topic of the original American population, since some portrayed them as direct enemies of the American settlers, while others acknowledged them as possible allies or, in most cases, like the representatives of the past culture overcome by the civilization brought by the colonists. Spatial setting in their works frequently serves as a feature contrasting the cultivated and the uncivilized, and the portrayed places often represent a battlefield on which the Native American tribes combat the white settlers, but also one another.

Secondly, American Romanticism is linked to Transcendentalism, a philosophical movement represented in literature by the authors Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Comparably to the English romantics, the transcendentalists emphasized the importance of natural world; however, they associated nature's significance with a specific spirituality, which Emerson called "the Idealism."[5] According to them, a human soul improves and gains access to the ideal being, defined by Emerson as "the Over-soul,"[6] if it exists in unity with nature.[7] In order to accomplish this unity, it is essential to radically change one's approach towards religion, tradition, society, government and property.[8] Based on the interest in social issues and politics, the era of Transcendentalism, or the "American Renaissance," is correlated with the beginnings of the modern American understanding of cultural and political democracy.[9] Lastly, while the setting in the works of the transcendentalists is not firmly demarcated, it often manifests their general interest in nature. For instance, Thoreau's *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*, portrays the powerful and pure natural world not only as related to human spirituality, but also as a valuable companion in daily life.

1.1.2 Gothic fiction

Finally, the romantic period is linked to the beginnings of Gothic fiction represented in American literature by Charles Brocken Brown and Edgar Allan Poe. Unlike the English romantic poets, the transcendentalists or the authors interested in the colonial times and

---

[4] Martin Procházka et al., *Lectures on American Literature* (Praha: Karolinum, 2011) 65-66.
[5] Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Transcendentalist," *Archive.vcu.edu*, American Transcendentalism Web <https://archive.vcu.edu/english/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/emerson/essays/transcendentalist.html> 8 Aug 2018.
[6] Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Over-Soul," *Archive.vcu.edu*, American Transcendentalism Web <https://archive.vcu.edu/english/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/emerson/essays/oversoul.html> 8 Aug 2018.
[7] Alireza Manzari, "Nature in American Transcendentalism," *English Language and Literature Studies* 2.3 (2012): 1792.
[8] Procházka et al. 81.
[9] Procházka et al. 82.

Native Americans, the authors of Gothic fiction sought to evoke powerful emotion, yet not to provide an explanation or clarify "a sensed order."[10] The term "Gothic" was primarily associated with architecture, and it was firstly utilized in literary context by Horace Walpole as a subtitle to his novel *The Castle of Otranto*.[11] The novel commenced the development of English Gothic fiction, a genre characterized by various devices such as "haunted castles, supernatural occurrences (sometimes with natural explanations), secret panels and stairways, time-yellowed manuscripts, and poorly lighted midnight scenes."[12] While Gothic novels are sometimes catalogued into three subcategories, namely sentimental-Gothic, Terror-Gothic and Historical-Gothic novels,[13] this classification is largely unpractical since most of the works fall, at least partially, into more than one subcategory. In general, the aim of a Gothic novel is to evoke terror, an emotion which was classified by Edmund Burke as the ruling principle of the sublime which is induced by anything that "threatens to injure or kill us."[14] Nevertheless, the definition provided by Burke is often criticized as an oversimplification of the complex psychological nature of pain and fear.[15] Ann Radcliffe, English Gothic writer, provides a more elaborate definition, differentiating between terror and horror, and explaining that "the first expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life; the other contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them."[16]

In English Gothic fiction, setting is an essential element which serves to construct the terrifying and mysterious atmosphere of the works, often being linked to a broad use of emotionally tinged adjectives, such as barren, gigantic, long, monumental, hollow etc.[17] As can observed in *The Castle of Otranto*, the spatial setting provokes the imagination of its observers and their fear is further projected onto its dark curves.[18] This use of spatial setting is linked to the theatrical character of the English Gothic fiction. The portrayed places serve basically as a stage prop, yet through their connection to the characters, they become more than a mere supplement to the plot.[19] Attention is mostly drawn to a description of ancient castles which "delineate a physical space which will accept many different projections of

---

[10] Robert D. Hume, "Gothic versus Romantic: A revaluation of the Gothic Novel," PMLA 84.2 (1969): 289, JSTOR < https://www.jstor.org/stable/1261285>, 29 July 2018.
[11] Zdeněk Hrbata and Martin Procházka, *Romantismus a romantismy* (Praha: Karolinum, 2005) 138.
[12] Hume 282.
[13] Hume 283.
[14] David B. Morris, "Gothic Sublimity," *New Literary History* 16.2 (1985): 300-301, JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/468749>, 28 July 2018.
[15] Morris, 301.
[16] Hume, 284.
[17] George E. Haggerty, "Fact and Fancy in the Gothic Novel," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 39.4 (1985): 384, JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3044711>, 28 July 2018.
[18] Hrbata and Procházka 138.
[19] Hrbata and Procházka 141.

unconscious material" largely corresponding to the "childish perceptions of adult threats."[20] The setting is also formed by the intention to transport the plots far from the reader, thus most of the works are set approximately in the sixteenth century, commonly not in a strictly specified year, and in foreign European and exotic countries, including Southern France, Spain, Italy, Germany, or the Orient.[21] The castles are typically inhabited by characters defined as "villain-heroes,"[22] who contrast with the depressed yet likeable Byronic hero, a recurring character of many romantic works. Finally, Gothic fiction often uses the theme of incestuous sexuality, presenting "a desire which in its unremitting repetitions and hidden agenda continuously threatens characters with a crime they cannot – by mere precautions – avoid."[23]

Regarding American Gothic fiction, its later stages are mainly associated with southern writers active after the Civil war, whose aim was to depict Southern poverty, violence, and religion.[24] Earlier writers of American Gothic fiction, including Poe, were significantly inspired by Gothic fiction of England, but they managed to transform it into its specifically American version, which principally emphasized the psychological aspect of terror. Gothic fiction significantly differed from the works of American Transcendentalism, since it dealt mainly with the rapture of the self, rather than with the desired unity of the individual.[25] Human being in American Gothic fiction becomes an internally divided individual. In this respect, the Gothic authors focused on the depiction of rationality being conquered by irrationality, and the decay of human reason.[26] The significance of Gothic architecture is lost in American Gothic fiction, as the motif of an old European castle is mainly used ironically, as a cliché.[27] The importance of setting was, however, definitely not lost. Besides Poe, American Gothic fiction is represented by Charles Brocken Brown, an author who, through his style of writing, managed to evoke emotions in the reader similar to those of Brown's characters.[28] Brown's works connect the Gothic genre with a criticism of

---

[20] Norman N. Holland and Leona F. Sherman, "Gothic Possibilities," *New Literary History* 8.2 (1977): 282, JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/468522>, 29 July 2018.
[21] Hume 287.
[22] Hume 286.
[23] Morris 305.
[24] "The European and American Gothic Fiction," *Britishbookcentre.wordpress.com,* British Book Centre, 16 Sept 2017 <https://britishbookcentre.wordpress.com/2017/09/16/the-european-and-american-gothic-fiction/> 29 July 2018.
[25] Procházka et al. 81.
[26] Hrbata and Procházka 151.
[27] Hrbata and Procházka 151.
[28] Procházka et al. 74.

the contemporary society,[29] depicting "dark forces" originating in the gap between private and public life, and examining the discrepancy between utopian ideologies and contemporary political situation in the U.S.[30] His writing, similarly to Poe, shows interest in the psychological terror of the characters' conscious and unconscious mind.

1.1.3   Edgar Allan Poe

Poe's works contain ideas introduced by the English romantics as well as features typical for the Gothic fiction, yet the tales remain in many aspects distinctive. Firstly, Poe chose to utilize the form of a short story, which largely emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century.[31] In relation to Romanticism, Poe significantly differs from the romantic poets in his treatment of the sublime and consequently he is occasionally included in the category of "Dark Romantic" authors, who approach the sublime in a manner which creates an effect of "transcendence accessible through 'perverseness,' 'disease,' 'madness,' and the 'uncanny.'"[32] Obviously, Poe significantly differs from the authors whose concern was the representation of colonial past and Native Americans, yet the connection between them and Poe can be found in the interest in the other, the unknown. Poe, however, sees this "other" within oneself, and reduces the topic of the relationship between nations and societies to the depiction of the fight between various parts of one's mind, be it the reason and imagination, or the conscious and unconscious.[33] The connection between Poe and the transcendentalists can be then observed in an attempt to depict the intangible, the spiritual, the psychological. Nevertheless, Poe's intention is not to rationalize how one should behave in order to achieve unity, but to depict what happens once psychological stability is lost.

Poe also manages to combine the terrifying with the grotesque, and possibly even transform one into the other, since an exaggerated use of horror features was defined by Poe as the origin of his grotesque.[34] "The Cask of Amontillado," for instance, combines terror with irony and black humor: Fortunato, who is about to be murdered, is dressed as a clown, and assures his killer that he will not die because of cough, which Montresor sinisterly

---

[29] Hrbata and Procházka 147.

[30] Procházka et al. 75.

[31] Melissa McFarland Pennell, *Masterpieces of American Romantic Literature* (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006) 50.

[32] Rachel Boccio, "'The Things and Thoughts of Time': Spatiotemporal Forms of the Transcendental Sublime in 'The Fall of the House of Usher,'" *Edgar Allan Poe Review* 18.1 (2017): 63, EBSCO <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=adf8eb33-f02e-483d-bb5a-839126858a75%40sessionmgr4010>, 29 July 2018.

[33] Procházka et al. 73.

[34] Hrbata and Procházka 152.

confirms.[35] In the final scene, the only sound permeating the vaults are the jingle bells, thence sound normally associated with joy here ironically indicates that Fortunato either cries, or shivers in shock.[36] Additionally, Poe modernizes the concept of Gothic fiction by incorporating various technological and scientific features into his tales, as demonstrated by the killing machinery in "The Pit and the Pendulum."[37]

Poe, unlike Brown, does not use the Gothic genre to criticize contemporary society, and his timeless characters are often more easily approachable for a modern reader than the characters of English Gothic, since they are not strictly defined by their social class, or dehumanized through the means of their status, possibly except Prince Prospero. Poe's characters are comparable to the English Gothic villain-heroes who are often inclined to the evil. Nonetheless, Poe enriches these characters by paying excessive attention to their psychology, especially considering the narrators. Gothic elements are used by Poe in order to raise questions about "the psychological states of [one's] behavior and the power of the unconscious to influence perceptions and behavior."[38] Therefore, his characters are often presented in a manner which encourages the reader to partly sympathize with the narrator. In "The Pit and the Pendulum," the reader automatically commiserates with the convicted prisoner, since the events are presented in a manner that enables the reader to feel the fear of the narrator almost directly. "The Tell-Tale Heart" narrator kills a man solely for the hatred against his eye – yet, the elaborate depiction of his mentality throughout the process transform the character into more than a straightforwardly condemnable murderer. On the other hand, female characters often remain only vaguely sketched. As depicted in "The Fall of the House of Usher," "Eleonora" or "Ligeia," the women are mainly significant through their connection to the male characters. They are depicted as the men's love interests, and since the women generally die early into the plot, they are perceived as a factor contributing to the mental chaos of the men, causing grief and painful nostalgia. Poe also mostly avoids any direct depiction of sexuality, and his characters experience love which is, at least seemingly, platonic.

Finally, the setting in Poe's tales is not limited to ancient castles built in European countries, since the tales are set in varied environments, including ordinary-looking houses or powerful natural landscapes. Poe mainly uses spatial setting as an extension of the characters' minds, or as its materialization. Moreover, the characters of Poe not only project their fears

---

[35] Poe, *Selected Tales* (London: Penguin Group, 1994) 376.
[36] Poe, *Selected Tales* 381.
[37] Hrbata and Procházka 152.
[38] Pennel 50.

onto the sinister setting, which was typical for the characters of English Gothic fiction, but the setting in Poe's stories actually actively participates. As to be explored, Poe's setting can be perceived as a character by itself, though it comes to life through the characters which inhabit and observe it, and is therefore inherently linked to their mentality, arising from the inner psychological imbalances.

1.2   Setting as a literary element

1.2.1   Daniela Hodrová

While studying the concept of a literary setting, one is confronted with multiple scholars who dedicated at least part of their work to the topic. Why, then, should the methodology of Daniela Hodrová be considered the most fitting for the examination of setting in the case of Poe's tales? Daniela Hodrová's works provide a terminology that is elaborately defined and accompanied with multiple examples, and her methodology is therefore highly coherent. Daniela Hodrová also frequently refers to other scholars, providing a supplementary insight into various theories concerning spatial setting. Nevertheless, the most essential concept introduced by Hodrová is the interconnectedness between the spatial setting and the characters, which comprises the very base of Hodrová's theory. As noted, the setting in Poe's tales gains its significance from its connection to the characters; it affects or reflects them, works with them or against them. Accordingly, Hodrová's theory proves to be the ideal choice, examining exactly the relations fundamental for the understanding of Poe's literary use of spatial setting. Finally, while the exactness of Hodrová's terminology relies on her comprehension of other theories and on the elaborate definitions and exemplifications of the terms, Hodrová also provides space for a personal interpretation. She generally uses open definitions and exemplifications: for instance, she gives examples of objects which can be labeled as objects with a secret, such as a picture, a text, or even a body, yet she does not specify the objects which cannot be placed into this category. Thus, her work not only provides means of classification, but also motivates for further contemplation.

1.2.2   Mikhail Bakhtin

The literary theory of Daniela Hodrová is best understood in the context of other literary scholars who similarly pursued the element of setting, and who unquestionably influenced her works. Firstly, Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian philosopher and literary scholar, firstly considered the element of setting in *Rabelais and His World*, defining a carnival as an

event which subverts socioeconomic and political organization.[39] Bakhtin is especially famous for the establishment of terms polyphony, homophony, heteroglossia and chronotope. Polyphony, or also dialogical principle, describes a literary use of various unmerged voices which are not subordinated to the voice of the author, contrastingly with homophony, referring to a situation in which the narration is held by one solitary voice.[40] The notion of heteroglossia is largely linked to Bakhtin's belief that all exists only in context or in a constant dialogue, and everything therefore participates in a dynamic order. Heteroglossia, accordingly, is a concept which "emphasizes the combination of existing statements or speech-genres [which] construct a language, or a text," and according to which each literary work consists of various, previously presented features.[41] Bakhtin consequently concludes that "the originality is in the combination, not the elements."[42] Finally, the most essential for the thesis is the term chronotope, by Bakhtin refers to an amalgamation of space and time, which he believes not to be two separate entities, but categories that "constitute a fundamental unity."[43] According to Bakhtin, a literary work is not only a combination of narrated events, but also a "construction of a particular fictional world or chronotope."[44] He claims that a chronotope is a plot-forming element which has representational and semantic significance and "provides the basis for distinguishing generic types."[45] While Bakhtin never provided a specific definition of the term, chronotopes were later categorized into minor chronotopes, major chronotopes, chronotopic motifs (since Bakhtin sometimes used "motif" and "chronotope" interchangeably), and chronotopes of whole genres.[46] In his work, Bakhtin dealt with five minor chronotopes: the encounter on the road, the threshold, the provincial town, the parlor or the salon, and finally the Gothic castle.[47] He sees the chronotope of the Gothic castle as principally contrasting with the chronotope of the threshold. A Gothic castle is consumed by historical time, as it bears memories of its history in its appearance and is brought to life by the legends linked to its residents.[48] As for Bakhtin's connection with Daniela Hodrová,

[39] "Mikhail Bakhtin," *NewWorldEncyclopedia.org*, New World Encyclopedia, 24 Sept 2016 <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Mikhail_Bakhtin> 28 July 2018.
[40] Andrew Robinson, "In Theory of Bakhtin: Dialogism, Polyphony and Heteroglossia," *CeasefireMagazine.co.uk*, Ceasefire, 29 July 2011 <https://ceasefiremagazine.co.uk/in-theory-bakhtin-1/> 29 July 2018.
[41] Robinson.
[42] Robinson.
[43] Nele Bemong, et al., *Bakhtin's Theory of the Literary Chronotope: Reflections, Applications, Perspectives* (Gent: Academia Press, 2010) 3.
[44] Bemong 4.
[45] Bemong 5.
[46] Bemong 6.
[47] Bemong 41.
[48] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Román jako dialog* (Praha: Odeon, 1980) 366.

his influence can be observed in her consideration of setting as partially linked to genre, or in her understanding of a text as a dynamic unit. Additionally, Hodrová's concept of a place with a secret is moderately comparable to Bakhtin's chronotope, even though Hodrová combines the categories of space and characters instead of space and time. Lastly, in most of her works, she also deals with various types of "minor chronotopes," including the Gothic castle, but also the school, the factory, the idyllic cottage and the mysterious city, particularly Prague. Since Hodrová translated Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination*, in which Bakhtin deals with the notion of a chronotope, Hodrová was well acquainted with his terminology.

1.2.3   Yuri Lotman

Secondly, Yuri Lotman, a literary scholar of the Tartu school, also addresses the problem of literary setting in his work *The Structure of the Artistic Text.* Lotman is associated with the concept of secondary modelling system, which represents a "conceptual framework for the analysis of various forms of art."[49] Myth, folklore, or ritual are secondary modelling elements, being built onto the linguistic system of language, yet also representing a structure of elements and rules.[50] Accordingly, Lotman distinguishes between primary signs and secondary signs belonging to two diverse semantic spheres, yet occasionally merging in a metaphor, which consequently serves as a mediation between the two semiospheres.[51] In *Universe of the Mind*, Lotman explains that a literary work is a meaning-generating mechanism, claiming: "Nowadays *Hamlet* is not just a play by Shakespeare, but it is also the memory of all its interpretations, and what is more, it is also the memory of all those historical events which occurred outside the text but with which Shakespeare's text can evoke associations."[52] Therefore, similarly to Bakhtin, Lotman perceives a text as a dynamic unit. Additionally, Yuri Lotman constructed an elaborate theory concerning culture and even invented types of cultural typologies, distinguishing for instance between cultures oriented towards a beginning and an end, or cultures oriented at signs and against signs.[53] However, for the purpose of the thesis, it is especially valuable to outline Lotman's perception of literary setting. In the chapter "The Problem of Artistic Space" in *The Structure of the Artistic*

---

[49] Irene Rima Makaryk, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) 209.
[50] Makaryk 209.
[51] Winfried Nöth, "Yuri Lotman on Metaphors and Culture as Self-referential Semiospheres," *Semiotica* 161.4 (2006): 250.
[52] Petri Liukkonen, "Yuri Lotman," *AuthorsCalendar.info*, Author's Calendar, 2008 <http://authorscalendar.info/lotman.htm> 28 July 2018.
[53] Makaryk 210.

Text, Lotman proves the omnipresence of spatiality in an experiment demonstrating that a word "all," if being imagined, in most cases evokes an idea of a large space with no boundaries.[54] Analogously, Lotman mentions various spatial positions and observes how they, through a metaphor, become referents to non-spatial concepts. For instance "high-low," "right-left," or "near-far" can refer to ideas such as "valuable-not valuable," "good-bad," "one's own-another's."[55] Therefore, many concepts used in culture are partially of spatial nature.[56] Since Lotman's theory is significantly concerned with the oppositions and contrasts, a notion of a boundary gains on importance, dividing "the entire space of the text into two mutually non-intersecting subspaces."[57] Lotman's influence on Hodrová is observable in her emphasis on boundaries, which Hodrová depicts, similarly to Lotman, as being dynamic, not merely dividing two places or opposite notions, but also serving as their meeting point. The understanding of a literary work as a meaning-generating mechanism, as promoted by Lotman, is also supported by Hodrová, who notes that a work is only properly understood in context, including history, literature and even non-literary reactions of the society.

1.2.4   Gaston Bachelard

Finally, Gaston Bachelard is predominantly known as a philosopher of science, yet in his last work *The Poetic of Space,* he studies various forms of a place, especially stressing the idea of one's safe space, a home. In his earlier works, Bachelard introduced the concept of epistemological obstacles, which stand between two opposing notions, such as a body and a mind.[58] Bachelard believed that the history of science constitutes of formation of these boundaries, and subsequently of an epistemological rupture – destruction of these boundaries.[59] *The Poetics of Space* was Bachelard's final work published two years after his death,[60] and was highly influential not only in literary theory, but also in architecture or design. Bachelard scrutinizes the notion of home, emphasizing the memories from one's childhood and natural primitive desire for safety, which is then projected onto one's home in

---

[54] Yuri Lotman, *The Structure of the Artistic Text*, trans. Ronald Vroon (Michigan: Brown University Press, 1977) 217.
[55] Lotman 218.
[56] Lotman 224.
[57] Lotman 229.
[58] "Gaston Bachelard," *NewWorldEncyclopedia.org*, New World Encyclopedia, 5 Dec 2012 <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Gaston_Bachelard> 28 July 2018.
[59] "Gaston Bachelard."
[60] Gillian Darley, "Intimate Spaces," *Aeon.co,* Aeon, 17 Oct 2017 <https://aeon.co/essays/how-gaston-bachelard-gave-the-emotions-of-home-a-philosophy> 29 July 2018.

features such as seats close to fire.[61] The idyllic space of warm, round and safe home is by Bachelard contrasted to the urban architecture, which he criticizes by claiming: "In Paris there are no houses, and the inhabitants of the big city live in superimposed boxes. […] *Home* has become mere horizontality."[62] Bachelard encourages not to examine a house or a room rationally, but rather to "read a room," rethink it and "open a door to daydreaming."[63] He does not neglect the role of various smaller features of a room, such as drawers, cupboards or locks, yet he warns about using them as "gratuitous metaphors."[64] *The Poetics of Space* should not be comprehended as a book describing characteristics of a comfortable place, but rather as designating space as "the abode of human consciousness, and the problem for the phenomenologist is to study how it accommodates consciousness—or the half-dreaming consciousness Bachelard calls reverie."[65] The concepts introduced by Bachelard are reflected in Hodrová's division between safe and unsafe spaces, or in her consideration of smaller features, such as locks or pieces of furniture. These are usually labelled by Hodrová as objects with a secret.

1.3   Terminology of Daniela Hodrová

1.3.1   Understanding of Literary Work

In order to proceed to Daniela Hodrová's classification of a place with a secret, it is crucial to understand how she defines its medium – a literary work. According to Hodrová, a literary work is constructed by a complex net of relations, which connect not only various parts and levels of the work itself, but also the two main personas linked to it: firstly, a creator of a work, a writer, and, secondly, its reader.[66] It is indispensable to recognize this net of connections as a dynamic unit which varies in time and even as a consequence of various understandings and perceptions of a literary work.[67] All of the connected parts are equally important and it is impossible to examine just one feature of a literary work without considering its numerous other aspects.[68]

---

[61] Darley.
[62] Joan Ockman, "*The Poetics of Space* by Gaston Bachelard," *HarvardDesignMagazine.org*, Harvard Design Magazine <http://www.harvarddesignmagazine.org/issues/6/the-poetics-of-space-by-gaston-bachelard> 29 July 2018.
[63] Darley.
[64] Darley.
[65] Ockman.
[66] Daniela Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* (Praha: KLP, 1994) 5.
[67] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 5.
[68] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 5.

In practice, this thesis focuses primarily on the notion of a place, on spatial setting; however, in order to provide an appropriate analysis, it is inevitable to also reflect on other aspects, such as plot, characters, literary genre, literary style etc. Not only does literary work hold in itself a complicated system of connections, all literary works are also held in a larger web which reaches beyond their boundaries, as each of them gains its meaning through its relationship to various traditions which formed the work and affected its perception.[69] Finally, perceived in context of other works, any literary work is in fact endless and eternal, as it contains in itself all literature that has been written in the past or will be written in the future.[70]

1.3.2 Basic Classification of Spatial Setting

Spatial setting, similarly to a literary work, has to be studied in context, since any setting is based on and connected to other existent or fictional places and their relations. Furthermore, literary works are classified and categorized based on various criteria, such as their genre, form etc., and comparable criteria apply to a spatial setting. The first and concurrently the oldest classification of a spatial setting which is described by Daniela Hodrová is the dual model, which is constituted by an opposition of secular/profane and sacred places. Since the two types are strictly divided and they fundamentally differ in their characteristics, the boundary between them bears a great importance for a literary work.[71] In their form, sacred places were either comparable to metaphorical, strictly enclosed islands existing in the secular world, such as churches, or they were set outside the secular world, which is the case of a heaven or a paradise.[72] In both cases, sacred places are always unique and dissimilar to secular places, either by their location or by their appearance.[73] In a sacred place, a character experiences their existence intensely through the process of meditation or a ceremony, and additionally gains the ability to communicate with divine beings, deities and the universe.[74]

This timeworn division can be applied especially on works written during the medieval Christian period. Hodrová recognizes the model as rather problematic, mainly because it is built on a concept of two binary opposites, which partially contradicts the notion

---

[69] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 5.
[70] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 5.
[71] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 5.
[72] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 5.
[73] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 6.
[74] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 6.

of interconnectedness of various aspects in a literary work.[75] The doubts connected to the dual models later led to a gradual weakening of boundaries between the two types of places: sacred places were secularized, which can be illustrated, for instance, by worshiping of tombs and birthplaces of famous individuals.[76] These transitions and changeable nature of places proved that a dual classification is insufficient and impractical. Additionally, the division between a sacred and a profane place became gradually more based on subjective emotional experience, which gave existence to a new liberal model, where sacred places are in fact former secular places. In this model, a secular place is transformed into a sacred place by a character who undergoes a sacred experience.[77] Furthermore, the understanding of the sacred is modified since God as an aboveground unreachable being is substituted by a more universal state of divinity.[78] Another emerging concept, an inner temple, gave way to a model in which places do not have to exist separately or next to one another, but inside each other, which weakened the boundaries between them even more.[79] In the second discussed model, the idea of a boundary or a gate can be substituted by a rapture through which the experiencer enters the other world, yet the transition between the two worlds is no longer that of a physical change of place, but rather a transformation of understanding, or of perception of reality.[80]

1.3.3 Place with a Secret

The concept of a place with a secret, however metaphorical and debatable, is certainly beneficial for understanding spatial setting in literary works. The most essential characteristic of a place with a secret is its connection to a certain "state of consciousness,"[81] which the place with a secret expresses or symbolizes; a place with a secret is, therefore, "a place of individual human experience."[82] Therefore, a place with a secret has to be associated with a living entity – without it, there would be no consciousness that would function as the origin of a transformation of a physical place to a place with a secret. In her work, Daniela Hodrová connects "a usual place" with a hylotropic conscience, which is oriented at the material and the objective.[83] Correspondingly, a place with a secret is linked with a holotropic conscience,

---

[75] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 6.
[76] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 6.
[77] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 6.
[78] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 7.
[79] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 7.
[80] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 7.
[81] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 9.
[82] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 11.
[83] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 10.

which is oriented at the complex and complete picture of reality with all of its parts, including the religious and the sublime.[84] In some cases, a place with a secret possesses a characteristic that could be described as primarily human, which is its ability to become a bearer of memories; however, unlike memory of a character, memory of a place is much more comprehensive, as a place holds reminiscences of all of its past and present inhibitors, and even visitors.[85] Moreover, the interconnection between a place and a human being can even grow into a complete fusion. A human soul can thus become a place with a secret, or a place with a secret can be personalized to a level of becoming an additional character to a literary work. Apart from having the ability to reflect the mental state of characters, a place with a secret also has an immense influence on characters. Once entering into a place with a secret, characters begin to exist "outside themselves," and in some cases, this leads to their "doubling", or mental division.[86]

According to Hodrová, a place with a secret is also defined by a specific structure. Typical arrangement of a place with a secret is a labyrinth[87] in which the characters wander, as they are unable to understand its essence. Henceforward, certain places cannot be defined as places with a secret, for example idyllic places or utopian places, as these are usually methodically organized and easily comprehensible in terms of their structure.[88] Additionally, objects which are situated in a place with a secret can be characterized as "objects with a secret," since, similarly to a place, they usually carry some hidden metaphorical meaning. Daniela Hodrová provides an example from *Máj* by Karel Hynek Mácha, in which a skull physically represents a top or an arch of a skeleton, and additionally it carries a metaphorical value as a representative of the indestructible part of human body – the soul.[89] A special type of an object with a secret is a text within a literary work, as it often reflects on the work and provides a metacommentary.[90] An image, often a portrait, became a significant literary motif especially in literary works of Romanticism, neo-Romanticism and symbolism. An image with a secret, similarly to a text, also functions as a reflection, yet it usually does not mirror the entire literary work, but only a concrete character.[91]

Hodrová provides several categories of a place with a secret, for instance a city or a town, a mountain, a church, or a house. As stated earlier, a transformation of an ordinary

---

[84] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 10.
[85] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 10.
[86] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 12.
[87] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 12.
[88] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 23.
[89] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 49.
[90] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 148.
[91] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 148.

place into a place with a secret can ensue gradually, and therefore the metaphorical boundaries between the two types of places can be rather blurred. On the other hand, the motif of a boundary is crucial in numerous literary works. Ironically, the most important borderlines typically have an open character and they are linked to an action of entering, for example a gate, a door, a window or even a key hole.[92] The border between a place with a secret and an ordinary place can be thus both physically and metaphorically fragile or even translucent, and it does not serve to separate the two types of setting, but rather to contrast them. Finally, a place with a secret can be transformed back into an ordinary place, for instance when its mystery is rationally explained and consequently its ambiguity is lost.[93]

1.3.4   Character with a Secret

Ultimately, there would be no place with a secret without characters. Hodrová explains that a character with a secret, similarly to a place with a secret, bears some metaphorical importance and it is usually a character which embodies "the other," "the unusual."[94] The degree of the metaphorical aspect of a character partially depends on a literary genre, as it tends to be much grander in a lyric than in an epic literary work.[95] A character with a secret can be both positive or negative in its nature and personality – in fact, there is often great ambiguity to the character, and in extreme cases, this ambiguity leads to a division of personality illustrated by doppelgängers.[96] Besides a doppelgänger, Hodrová defines other basic types of a character with a secret, such as a wanderer, a robber or a sorcerer. Many of these categories, however, are not applicable on works of Edgar Allan Poe.

Nevertheless, one type of a character with a secret certainly has to be defined: a monster. An essential feature of a monster is its connection to time, as this type of character frequently embodies the past, and in some cases, this correlation constructs "a time monster," immortal character which generally appears with evident regularity.[97] Furthermore, a monster is often a visualization or an embodiment of a spatial setting.[98] In its nature, this type of character is basically built on a notion of contrast. It can symbolize chaos, and at the same time, the apparent disorder can in fact be an unknown, misunderstood order.[99] Moreover,

---

[92] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 116.
[93] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 10.
[94] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 118.
[95] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 127.
[96] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 125.
[97] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 173.
[98] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 162.
[99] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 165.

since a monster is a character with a secret, it inherently represents "the other," however, it is often created by a cleaving consciousness, and is therefore shaped on the basis of an "ordinary" literary character. Finally, a monster can have many identities: the earlier mentioned doppelgänger, a deceased character who comes back to life, a masked character whose identity is covered and therefore unknown, or a character who succumbed to madness. Similarly to other characters with a secret, a monster is often ambiguous, as illustrated by characters suffering from madness. As noted by Hodrová, in the past, insanity was perceived as distancing an individual further from the truth, yet later, a parallel was built between an insane person and a mystic in a psychedelic state of mind, uncovering the concealed truth which stays hidden to the logical thinking.[100] Edgar Allan Poe uses many types of monsters in his short stories, frequently as narrators, and this category is therefore essential for defining Poe's characters in the context of Hodrová's terminology.

1.3.5   Omitted Topics and Controversial Claims

Finally, without an objective to criticize the work of Daniela Hodrová, it is beneficial to consider some aspects which Hodrová does not include in her classification, even though they could be related to the concept of a place with a secret. Firstly, the factor of temporal setting should be observed. Daniela Hodrová does not completely overlook the aspect of time, as she speaks of motifs of seasons and night, especially focusing on the midnight and the full-moon, for example in connection to *Máj* by Karel Hynek Mácha.[101] While she recognizes the effect of temporal setting on the atmosphere of the oeuvre, particularly emphasizing the features of light and shadow, she does not elaborate her thoughts beyond context of concrete works, and she does not include the aspect of time as a feature of a place with a secret. In Poe's works, however, the time aspect cannot be denied. Edgar Allan Poe not only portrays the battle between shadow and light, but in some of his stories, he personalizes time as an independent character, such as in "The Masque of the Red Death." Therefore, the thesis will study the aspect of time, its transformations and even its personifications in some of the selected stories.

Additionally, Daniela Hodrová claims that a material place and a place with a secret exist simultaneously, and that the secret can disappear once rationally explained.[102] Still, she does not speak of any situation in which a place with a secret is destroyed or consumed, and

---

[100] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 167.
[101] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 42.
[102] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 10.

therefore she understandably does not discuss the effect of similar event on the secret. This idea will be contemplated upon while analyzing form of a setting and its destruction in "The Fall of the House of Usher" or "The Black Cat." Also, according to Hodrová, the connection between a place with a secret and a character – creator of the secret – is in most cases easily observable,[103] which is a claim that can be objectively confirmed only with great difficulties. Lastly, it can be also asserted that Hodrová underestimates the involvement of a narrator when she states that a narrator is usually not an experiencer, but an observer.[104] This statement can be subverted, as Poe's narrators often actively participate in the events described in the plot, and moreover, they are commonly also the main characters.

1.4   The Thesis

1.4.1   Methodology and Aims

In general, the thesis aims for an explanation of the significance of the spatial as well the temporal setting in the selected stories by Edgar Allan Poe. The objective is to examine Poe's setting in terms of its form and function in the stories. Various characteristics of a setting will be explored with an attempt to uncover their symbolical meaning, which generally arises from the relationship between a place and a character. In order for these aims to be accomplished, the thesis employs Daniela Hodrová's approach, focusing especially on her concept of a place with a secret. Based on Hodrová's terminology, the thesis will explain Poe's use of places with a secret and observe various manifestations of the "secret." The terminology is therefore utilized not only in order to categorize various features of Poe's tales, but also to indicate the direction for further interpretation. The thesis does not seek to enumerate characters with a secret or places with a secret, but to define their specific characteristics observable in the individual stories. Finally, the terminology of Hodrová is not merely applied, but also questioned throughout the thesis, and finally extended with the chapter dealing with the temporal setting.

It needs to be noted that Daniela Hodrová is a Czech author, thence she is not widely known in international terms. Her works are also often primarily (yet certainly not exclusively) concerned with the works of Czech literature. Consequently, when the spatial setting in Poe's literature is scrutinized, the studies are predominantly based on works of worldly known scholars, such as the earlier mentioned Mikhail Bakhtin or Yuri Lotman.

---

[103] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 11.
[104] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 81.

Additionally, while the spatial setting in Poe's tales was numerously analyzed in the past, it was often studied only as a secondary topic. The lack of works similar to the thesis, however, should not be understood as an obstacle, but rather as an opportunity to present an original examination of Poe's works.

1.4.2   Structure of the Thesis

The analysis is concerned with some of the most well-known stories by Edgar Allan Poe: "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Black Cat," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "Eleonora," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Masque of the Red Death," "The Oval Portrait," "The Pit and the Pendulum" and "Ligeia." The analysis does not focus on Poe's detective stories or landscape tales, since these significantly differ in style, tone and overall effect from the famous stories examined here. The analysis is divided into three main sections, scrutinizing Poe's characters, the spatial setting, and finally the temporal setting. Since Hodrová bases her theory on the connection between a place and a character, it is necessary to firstly reach a certain level of comprehension regarding Poe's characters before the setting itself can be studied.

The first chapter examines various types of characters in Poe's tales, commencing with the narrators. Since the plot is presented through their viewpoint, their understanding is essential for the further comprehension of the stories. The main concern is to describe some recurring patterns linked to the narrators, such as their gender or typical unreliability. Additionally, Hodrová's classification of the narrators as passive observers is questioned. The analysis continues with an investigation of the recurring motif of insanity. Most importantly, Hodrová's classification of madness as monstrosity is explicated, distinguishing between insanity as a negative disruption of mind, and insanity as a quality which expands one's understanding of reality. Onward, the manifestations of madness in the stories are explored, and the connection between lunacy and violence is examined. Hence, the more concrete subtypes of the character with a secret are observed, commencing with the masked characters. The subchapter differentiates between two main types of masks in the stories and discusses the issue of a classification of the Red Death as a masked character, offering other plausible hypotheses. Secondly, the character of a doppelgänger is examined. Physical as well as an intangible, hallucinatory doubles are studied, the source of the doubling is considered, and the difference between the actual doubling and a mere similarity is exemplified. Finally, the first chapter ends with a consideration of the characters' names, their possible source, meaning or

ironic nature.

The following chapter examines the spatial setting in the tales. At first, structure of Poe's setting is observed, focusing especially on a place as a labyrinth, since this arrangement is defined by Hodrová as typical for a place with a secret. The thesis considers both horizontal and vertical labyrinths and explains the importance of a motif of a gate. Hodrová also states that almost all places in Poe's tales are transformed into a prison, hence the idea of oppressiveness of a setting is studied. After examining the form of a place, the analysis also highlights the labyrinthine features the textual structure of the stories. Therefore, the thesis observes various features of the tales, such as narration within narration, repetitions, epigraphs, and inserted poems, with an attempt to depict their connection to the characters and the spatial setting, and their effect on the plot and the reader. The following subchapters portray the spatial setting as a mirror, or as a double of the characters. Subsequently, the house is defined as a place bearing memories which mirrors its current as well as past residents, and possible materializations of the memories as objects with a secret are presented. The following section is focused on places which actively participate in the stories, positively or negatively affecting the characters, and therefore acting as catalyzers of the plot. The last subsection logically attempts to resolve whether places with a secret can be transformed into ordinary places, or in other words, whether they can be deprived of their figurative meaning.

The final chapter of the analysis is concerned with the temporal setting in Poe's tales. It elaborates on Hodrová's theory, since her consideration of temporality is limited to a few individual examples. Similarly to the other chapters, the temporal aspect is firstly studied in general, and thenceforth the concrete motifs are examined. The chapter starts with a general differentiation between linear and cyclic time, and objective and subjective time. Bakhtin's idea of static and dynamic chronotopes is contrasted with the concept of varying speeds of time; the circularity is then demonstrated, for instance, on the similarities between the beginnings and ends of the stories. The subjective perception of time is considered as a factor influencing the pace of the narration, as well as a source of subjective, metaphorical interpretations of objective time and its fragmentation. The motif of historicity which frequently reappears in the tales is then explained. Finally, the motifs of night and autumn are studied, concerning especially their link to death and destruction. The thesis analyses the symbolism of the contrast between darkness and light, alteration of which represents the most basic form of temporality. Additionally, the thesis also explicates the symbolism of colors, which have not only spatial, but also temporal function. They indicate the transformation from dark to light, and are often linked to the motif of an evening, a twilight, or autumn.

Additionally, the colors in the tales often signify not only the change of time, but also a transformation of mood, being therefore linked to the concept of subjective time. The opposition of light and darkness is further studied as a metaphorical reference to the good and the bad, or life and death.

2   Character with a Secret

2.1   Narrator as Character

As explained, since a place with a secret is inherently shaped by its connection to a human being, it is vital for its understanding to explore the typical features of characters as well as their general role in a literary piece. Edgar Allan Poe filled his stories with various types of places with a secret, and correspondingly, many characters with a secret inhabit Poe's reality. For the purpose of the thesis, it is especially beneficial to look at the characters who fall under the definition of a monster, such as doppelgängers or masked characters. However, before proceeding to the specific types of a monster, it is essential to consider a character whose importance is arguably the greatest, as the stories are molded through his consciousness and by his words – the narrator.

The first significant feature which connects most of the narrators is their gender, as they are almost exclusively male. It has to be noted, however, that in some cases, the gender of the narrator is classified based on a generic assumption: for instance, in "Eleonora," "Ligeia" or "The Black Cat," the understanding of narrators' gender is based on their relationships with female partners. The supposition that Poe generally utilizes male narrators also agrees with his depiction of women. Male characters in Poe's stories generally behave cruelly and their brutality often reaches as far as committing a murder, while female characters in Poe's stories are mostly depicted as beautiful and intelligent, yet their role is mostly restricted to the one of a love interest. They are also exceptionally passive, as demonstrated by the female character of "The Oval Portrait," obediently sitting as a model for her husband, who gradually deprives her of her life. The exception is the wife in "The Black Cat," whose attempt to stop his husband from murdering the cat leads to his furious response of assassinating her, and undoubtedly also "Ligeia," who presumably shows the supernatural ability of coming back to life.

Another prominent feature of the narrators is their unreliability. The speakers generally reveal their experience with drug use by remarks linked either to opium or alcohol, and therefore their accuracy should be doubted. For illustration, the narrator of "The Fall of the House of Usher" refers to the drugs multiple times: the initial scenery evokes in him depression which he compares to "the after-dream of the reveler upon opium,"[1] and the speech of Roderick Usher reminds him of a "lost drunkard" or an "eater of opium."[2] These

---

[1] Poe, *Selected Tales* 76.
[2] Poe, *Selected Tales* 81.

statements imply that the speaker is rather familiar with the effects of the two drugs, and his knowledge of the misery caused by an opium withdrawal indicates his personal experience. In "The Pit and the Pendulum," the narrator believes to be numbed by drugs added to water by his imprisoners, and finally, the drug aspect plays a role in "The Black Cat," where the speaker classifies his mental aggravation as an effect of an alcohol addiction, exclaiming "what disease is like Alcohol !"[3] Drug use, or even drug addiction, certainly affects the narrators' perception of reality, and therefore, the events presented in the stories are likely altered by their effect.

As noted earlier, Daniela Hodrová claims that narrators often only observe actions of the plot and comment on them, but they mostly do not actively participate.[4] This claim is plausible in association with a third-person omniscient narrator, yet in the case of "The Fall of the House of Usher," provided by Hodrová as an example,[5] the passivity of the narrator is questionable. While the speaker is certainly not as involved in the situation as Roderick or Madeline Usher, he is unquestionably disturbed, and a notable part of the story is constructed by not only the narrator's contemplations upon his and Roderick's mentality, but also by his actions. The observative narrator as described by Hodrová can be found in "The Oval Portrait," and possibly also in "The Masque of the Red Death," nevertheless, in most of the stories the narrator actively participates in the plot, being a catalyzer of action or its primary source. The murderers in "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Black Cat," suffering lovers in "Ligeia" and "Eleonora," and the prisoner in "The Pit and the Pendulum" – all of these narrators are not mere observers, as they are either forced to cope with the situations in the plot, or they initiate them. To conclude, the narrators should not be disregarded as passive witnesses, yet based on their addictions and unhealthy mind, their credibility always needs to be questioned.

2.2   Insanity and Monstrosity

Insane characters are, according to Hodrová, one of many subtypes of a monster, and their general role is to represent of "the other" through which the irrational is demonstrated.[6] Lunacy is a characteristic typical not only for Poe's narrators, but also other characters, as demonstrated by Roderick Usher. Nonetheless, the perception of insanity has radically transformed, as an insane character – in the more modern understanding – is no longer

---

[3] Poe, *Selected Tales* 312.
[4] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 81.
[5] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 86.
[6] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 167.

identified as a person conflicting the reality, but rather as an individual who, through the madness, gains access to the truth.[7] Tobias Dahlkvist adds: "Ever since antiquity, the notion that there exists a link between genius and madness has been widespread; to the romantics, in particular, the notion that the creativity of the genius has its roots in a domain beyond the realms of sound normality was popular."[8] Daniela Hodrová further claims that the changing approach towards insanity is analogous to the transforming perception of a monster, who can be defined as a character with greatly developed holotropic and hylotropic conscience and an ability to appear in a variety of forms and functions.[9]

Monstrosity, therefore, does not unreservedly define an aspect of mental or other negative deformation but indicates a concept which is new: an unfamiliar appearance that produces an emotional reaction in the observer who is confronted with the unknown. As argued by Jacques Derrida, the notion of monstrosity can be used to define a new text which emerges as "a monstrous mutation without tradition or normative precedent."[10] A monster can be understood as that which "leaves us without power," however the notion of monstrosity is difficult to stabilize by means of single definition.[11] Finally, Derrida notes that if materialized in a heterogenous body, "monstrosity may reveal or make one aware of what normality is," mainly because it represents the unknown, which still does not indicate that what is considered to be monstrous is inherently also "abnormal."[12]

The association of insanity with monstrosity is further complicated by means of constant repetition, which causes insanity to become a traditional motif of Poe's fiction. On the other hand, insanity represents the other in its connection to the reader, who, presumably, mentally differs from the characters presented in the stories. The complexity of the concept of madness is further proven by the conflicting portrayal of insanity as a generally positive characteristic, and its constant refutation by the characters. The interpretation of madness as an asset is presented by the narrators of "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "Eleonora." In the latter, the speaker depicts insanity as debatably "the loftiest intelligence," and adds the famous statement: "They who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who

---

[7] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 167.
[8] Tobias Dahlkvist, "'Alcoholic and Epileptic Nightmares': Cesare Lombroso, Poe and the Pathology of Genius," *Poe* Studies 49 (2016): 99, ProQuest
<http://gateway.proquest.com.ezproxy.is.cuni.cz/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:abell:R05493367:0&rft.accountid=35514>, 17 July 2018.
[9] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 168.
[10] Peter Krapp, "Prepare Yourself to Experience the Future and Welcome the Monster," *Hydra.Humanitiec.uci.edu* <http://hydra.humanities.uci.edu/derrida/monster.html> 31 July 2018.
[11] Krapp.
[12] Krapp.

dream only by night."[13] In most cases, however, the narrators vehemently try to prove their sanity. The speaker in "The Black Cat" denies his irrationality with an insistent vigor, commencing the narration by proclaiming that he would be mad to expect belief, and immediately adding "Yet, mad I am not."[14] The narrators of "Eleonora" and "Ligeia" represent an exception, being rather accepting towards their classification as madmen.

Accordingly, if insanity is not classified as a negative disruption of intellect but rather as a state of mind which approximates a character to the truth, it manifests itself through the strengthening of senses. In the stories, the increased perception can be exemplified by the intense awareness of the environment affecting the narrators of "The Fall of the House of Usher" or "Eleonora." It might be mistakenly claimed that insanity as a monstrosity, with all its negative connotations, is demonstrated in the horrific actions of the narrators, yet these deeds ought to be assigned not to madness, but "perverseness," which Poe mentions in "The Black Cat" as a spirit of which "philosophy takes no account."[15] In "The Imp of the Perverse," Poe depicts the spirit perverseness as an "overwhelming tendency to do wrong for the wrong's sake,"[16] which can motivate a character to commit murder, or to unnecessarily confess to the sin. Since the narrator of "The Black Cat" avoids admitting his insanity yet confesses to being possessed by a spirit of perverseness, it is apparent that the two notions require to be differentiated. Additionally, the murders which are frequently attributed to insanity might be more accurately associated with the drug abuse. For instance, "The Black Cat" narrator blames alcohol for his behavior and defines his addiction as a disease.[17] Comparably, the narrator of "The Tell-Tale Heart," proclaims: "The disease had sharpened my senses – not destroyed – not dulled them."[18] He denies being mad, therefore "the disease" plausibly refers to a drug addiction. Conclusively, Poe's portrayal of madness possibly suggests that without the influence of drugs or perverseness, the characters can perhaps benefit from their insane mind.

2.3   Masked Characters

A masked individual represents the unknown, and fittingly, Hodrová notes that a character in disguise usually occurs in relation to death.[19] The use of masks in Poe's works

---

[13] Edgar Allan Poe, "Eleonora," *PoeStories.com* <https://poestories.com/read/eleonora> 18 July 2018.
[14] Poe, *Selected Tales* 311.
[15] Poe, *Selected Tales* 313.
[16] Poe, *Selected Tales* 358.
[17] Poe, *Selected Tales* 312.
[18] Poe, *Selected Tales* 267.
[19] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 166.

ranges from the masks that are physical to emblematic, behavioral masks. The behavioral masks are often easily penetrable, especially if being worn by a narrator, whose speech generally uncovers his hidden character. For instance, the narrator in "The Cask of Amontillado" puts on a mask of friendliness with the intention to fool Fortunato, bring him into the vaults, and murder him. Nevertheless, the mask is only put on for Fortunato, as the reader is informed of Montresor's violent intentions from the very beginning of the tale.

Regarding the physical masks, their presence is generally linked to the spatiotemporal setting of the stories, as both "The Cast of Amontillado" and "The Masque of a Red Death" are set during an event characteristic by the masking. It is useful here to refer back to Bakhtin's classification of a carnival as an occasion during which the social order is disrupted or subverted.[20] The masked characters are temporarily freed from their established role in the society, and the masks serve as a shield protecting them from reality. Fortunato, who is disguised as a clown, appears to use his mask as the last option of solace in his final moments, attempting to explain his burial as "a very good joke."[21] Analogously, the characters or "The Masque of the Red Death" dress themselves as dreams in an attempt to temporarily escape the nightmare-like reality. In the end, their masks prove to be rather exact, as all of the characters are no longer alive when the morning comes.

Arguably the main character of the second story, the Red Death, might appear to be a masked character, yet it is debatable whether the appearance is truly a masquerade, or whether the character is a horrific personification of the disease. The question is further complicated by the fact that Poe changed the original title of the story, substituting "mask" by "masque." He instantaneously removed the classification of the Red Death as an undoubtedly masked character, and simultaneously emphasized its significance, possibly indicating that the Red Death is the host of the ball. A plausible explanation might be that the Red Death is in fact a personification of the disease, and its appearance is therefore mistakenly regarded as a mask by the characters, probably based on their expectations given by the event. The classification of the Red Death as a supernatural creature is supported by its unexpected arrival at midnight, and the inexorable dying which commences with its presence. The Red Death cannot be a human murderer in disguise – when the guests attempt to avenge Prospero, they find that the character has no "tangible form."[22] Consequently, the initial perception of the guests can be

---

[20] "Mikhail Bakhtin."
[21] Poe, *Selected Tales* 380.
[22] Poe, *Selected Tales* 198

subverted, as the Red Death is not a person masked as a disease, yet a disease disguised in a human-like form.

Moreover, Denise Shimp Magnuson develops the idea of the Red Death as the narrator of the story. Manguson hence classifies the opening lines of the story, which describe that "no pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous,"[23] as a "proud hyperbole,"[24] which does not serve only to set the horrific tone of the story, but also as the Death's self-introduction. Furthermore, since the story is written in first person narrative, and the ball is portrayed from the point of view of someone who participated in the event, the only possible narrator would be the Red Death, given that there were no other survivors. The story hence offers an example of prosopopoeia, a figure of speech defined by Pierre Fontanier as "staging, as it were, absent, dead, supernatural or even inanimate beings" which "are made to act, speak, answer" and can become "confidants, witnesses, accusers, avengers, judges."[25] Lastly, since the Red Death has no physical, touchable form, an alternative comprehension of the disease as a hallucination of the characters is imaginable. In that case, the Red Death can be interpreted as a visualization of the characters' fear of death, which is accentuated as a result of the red and black room and the sound of the ebony clock.

2.4   Doppelgängers

Comparably to a masked character, a doppelgänger is categorized by Hodrová as a subtype of a monster.[26] Nevertheless, a doppelgänger, unlike a masked character, does not hide a characteristic or an emotion, but embodies it. Many differing definitions of a doppelgänger have been proposed; for instance, Gry Faurholt distinguishes between two types: "the alter ego or identical double of a protagonist who seems to be either a victim of an identity theft perpetrated by a mimicking supernatural presence or subject to a paranoid hallucination," and "the split personality or dark half of the protagonist, an unleashed monster that acts as a physical manifestation of a dissociated part of the self."[27] Lucia Ortiz Monasterio then differentiates an alter ego from a doppelgänger, claiming that the latter "does not need to have a material form," as demonstrated by *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr.*

---

[23] Poe, *Selected Tales* 192.
[24] M. Denise Schimp Magnuson, "The Narrative Mask of the Red Death," Masques, Mysteries and Mastodons: A Poe Miscellany (2006): 32, EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/papers/psbbooks/pb20061f.htm>, 17 July 2018.
[25] Michael Riffaterre, "Prosopopoeia," *Yale French Studies* 69 (1985): 107, JSTOR < https://www.jstor.org/stable/2929928>, 30 July 2018.
[26] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 170.
[27] Gry Faurholt, "Self as Other: The Doppelgänger," *DoubleDialogues.com*, Double Dialogues, 2016 <http://www.doubledialogues.com/article/self-as-other-the-doppelganger/> 19 July 2018.

Hyde, where the double is "the bifurcation of the same person."[28] It needs to be noted that the comprehension of a double, similarly that of a monster, is rather problematic, since even the description provided by Hodrová proves to be "dual" (while not necessarily contradictory). On the one hand, Hodrová claims that the presence of a doppelgänger always comes with some disunity in a human being, as through the doubling, a character becomes only a fragment.[29] On the contrary, she also proposes that the doubling does not necessarily indicate a disruption of one's identity, as a double can, in fact, provide a better understanding of one's hidden features.[30] Since doppelgängers are inherently connected, the relationship between them is, in most cases, rather ambiguous, as they are both attracted and repulsed by each other.[31]

Regarding the tales of Poe, the character of a doppelgänger is easily recognizable in the "The Fall of the House of Usher." The Usher twins are tied by many features – shared family history, similar appearance, and possibly even the disease. Importantly, the mansion in which Roderick and Madeline live reflects their duality by the fracture, which divides the house into two halves. The description of Madeline's illness emphasizes the fragmentary nature of her character, as the malady is defined as "a gradual wasting away of the person."[32] Analogously, while Madeline's catalepsy contrasts with Roderick's "excessive sensitivity to stimuli,"[33] the gradual changes in Roderick's character, demonstrated by the transformation of his manner of speech, also indicate that the disease contributes to the disintegration of Roderick's mind. The ambiguous relationship between Madeline and Roderick corresponds with the complicated relationship of doubles described by Hodrová, since Roderick expresses affection for his sister (their relationship is often even regarded as incestual), yet he also buries her alive, and despite the fact that he is aware of his mistake before Madeline's final appearance, he makes no effort to salvage her. Wendy Stallard Flory, who defines Madeline as Roderick's doppelgänger, clarifies his behavior by stating:

> Roderick, knowing that Madeline is about to die, tries subconsciously to evade actual
> contact with her death by putting her into the vault before she has actually died, and

---

[28] Luzia Ortiz Monasterio, "The Role of the Dopelgänger in Today's Identity Crisis," *Faena.*com, Faena Aleph, 17 March 2015 <http://www.faena.com/aleph/articles/the-role-of-the-doppelganger-in-todays-identity-crisis/>, 19 July 2018.

[29] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 170.

[30] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 126.

[31] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 175.

[32] Poe, *Selected Tales* 83.

[33] Wendy Stallard Flory, "Usher's Fear and the Flaw in Poe's Theories of the Metamorphosis of the Senses," *Poe's Studies* 7.1 (1974): 18, EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1974103.htm>, 19 July 2018.

yet his guilty terror indicates that he realizes that they must die together. The mind has to share the experience of the death of the physical body; so Madeline relentlessly seeks out Usher, and he dies from the shock of the confrontation with this spectacle of the physical body at the point of death.[34]

Accordingly, Madeline can perhaps be regarded as embodying terror, and especially Roderick's immense fear of death, which is an interpretation supported even by the narrator's depiction of his short encounter with her, which left him feeling oppressed with "a sensation of stupor."[35] Roderick, accordingly, acts as if being repulsed and terrified by his sister, yet because of the undeniable connection, he also feels affection towards her. The understanding of Madeline as Roderick's fear personified also justifies his behavior in context of the earlier mentioned classification of madness as a favorable state of mind. If fear is understood as a factor possibly leading to insanity, Roderick's love for Madeline represents his glorification of fear, and accordingly his idealization of madness. Comparably, the narrator claims to be horrified by the mansion from the very first moment, but instead of considering a departure, his detailed contemplations on the scenery suggest that he appreciates the terror which gradually gains possession over his mind. Finally, Roderick's burial of Madeline symbolizes his efforts to battle his fear, an attempt which ends with Roderick's death after being directly confronted with his inability to succeed. The classification of Madeline as an embodied emotion should not be confused for a dismissal of the authenticity of the character, or her reduction on a vision or a hallucination emerging from Roderick's disrupted mind. The physical existence of Madeline is verified by the burial of her body. Madeline, therefore, is a doppelgänger developing from Roderick's own, possibly unconscious projection of his fear onto the character of his sister.

Contrastingly, the story "Ligeia" provides an example of doppelgängers who are binary opposites, and the contrast between them is even emphasized by the change of the setting, as the narrator moves to another house after he marries Rowena. Observably, Ligeia, narrator's mistress with dark eyes and "the raven-black, the glossy, the luxuriant and naturally-curling tresses"[36] visually opposes the paleness of blonde Rowena. Moreover, feelings of the narrator towards the two women are of a completely different nature: while he adored Ligeia, and her portrayal constitutes of the narrator's admiring remarks on her beauty

---

[34] Flory 18.
[35] Poe, *Selected Tales* 83.
[36] Poe, *Selected Tales* 49.

and intellect, his aversion towards Rowena is described by him as "a hatred belonging more to demon than to man."[37] Although the narrative could suggest an evil nature of Rowena's character, it is also explained that Rowena's dislike towards the narrator originates from the "fierce moodiness of [his] temper."[38] Unlike the Usher twins, who are born and die together, Ligeia can only live once Rowena dies, and she therefore has a reason to quicken Rowena's death. If Ligeia is a murderer of Rowena, the two women could be comprehended as doppelgängers similar to the famous characters of dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Ligeia representing the evil, and Rowena embodying the good. Consequently, the women could be interpreted as doppelgängers of the narrator, emerging from his suppressed selves. Finally, an alternative understanding of the characters classifies Rowena and Ligeia as mere opium hallucinations.[39] The physicality of neither of the characters can be verified, as there are no other participants in the story other than the women and the unreliable narrator. Accordingly, Rowena and Ligeia can be comprehended as phantasms originating in the narrator's drug addiction, or in some type of mental disease, such as schizophrenia.

A seemingly paradoxical example of doppelgängers in Poe's tales is represented by the murderers and their victims. In this case, the seeming discrepancy between the two is generally false, even though the relationship of doubling is difficult to behold not only to the reader, but also to the characters themselves. Nevertheless, it can be claimed that the victims represent the murderers' humanity, which is inevitably lost after the act of killing. James W. Gargano, for instance, provides the example of Montresor, the narrator of "The Cask of Amontillado," and explains:

> Far from being his author's mouthpiece, the narrator, Montresor, is one of the supreme examples in fiction of a deluded rationalist who cannot glimpse the moral implications of his planned folly. Poe's fine ironic sense makes clear that Montresor, the stalker of Fortunato, is both a compulsive and pursued man; for in committing a flawless crime against another human being, he really (like Wilson and the protagonist) commits the worst of crimes against himself.[40]

---

[37] Poe, *Selected Tales* 48.
[38] Poe, *Selected Tales* 58.
[39] John R. Byers, "The Opium Chronology of Poe's 'Ligeia,'" South Atlantic Bulletin 45.1 (1980): 40/44, JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3198836>, 31 July.
[40] James W. Gargano, "The Question of Poe's Narrators," *College English* 25.3 (1963): 180, JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/373684?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents>, 19 July 2018.

By entombing Fortunato, the narrator buries a part of himself. In fact, Montresor is possibly aware of the impact of his deed, as he shows to be rather panicked by his own actions in the end, screaming Fortunato's name, and declaring that after hearing only the bells of Fortunato's costume, his heart "grew sick."[41] Nonetheless, Montresor immediately rationalizes his moment of sentiment as an effect of the cold air in the vault, and his ability of false rationalization is effective, as he accomplishes to resume his life, only sharing the story fifty years after the murder. On the other hand, if an analogous understanding of a murder is applied on the "The Tell-Tale Heart," it is apparent that the narrator is incapable of justifying his deed, since guilt overtakes his mind and he confesses to the policemen. The paradox of the still beating heart of the killed old man can be conceivably perceived as a result of the narrator's imagination, as supported by Gargano, who explains: "The watches in the wall become the ominously beating heart of the old man, and the narrator's vaunted self-control explodes into a frenzy that leads to self-betrayal."[42] A second interpretation proposes that the heart which the narrator hears is, in fact, his own, its beat being quickened by the narrator's gradually increasing panic. In that case, the narrator's false assumption of the sound belonging to the heart of the murdered man suggests that there is a connection between the victim and the speaker, however the narrator's confused mind does not allow him to fully grasp the nature of the relationship. Lastly, the murders committed by the narrator of "The Black Cat" can represent a gradual murder of the self, as described by Richard C. Frushell in his essay "'An Incarnate Night-Mare': Moral Grotesquerie in 'The Black Cat.'" Frushell claims that by torturing and killing the cat, the narrator's self is transformed, yet "he still retains at least the trappings of rational and feeling man."[43] Nevertheless, by murdering his wife, the speaker "has symbolically killed all his humanness," and he became "a moral and psychological grotesque of himself."[44] Therefore, in is not only the cat and the wife, but also the transformed self that becomes the narrator's doppelgänger.

Finally, characters similar to doppelgängers can be found beyond the frame of a single story. For example, Madeline Usher and the Red Death, are connected by their ability to cause death, and additionally by their dreadful appearance. In "The Masque of the Red Death," the disease is portrayed as being dressed in a vesture "dabbled in blood."[45] This image is highly reminiscent of the appearance of Madeline Usher in her final moments, when her white robe

[41] Poe, *Selected tales* 381.
[42] Gargano 179.
[43] Richard C Frushell, "'An Incarnate Nightmare': Moral Grotesque in 'The Black Cat,'" *Poe Studies* 5.2 (1972): 44, EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1972205.htm >, 19 July 2018.
[44] Frushell 44.
[45] Poe, *Selected Tales* 196.

is stained with blood as an effect of the attempts to escape the coffin. Moreover, Roderick Usher is, similarly to Prince Prospero, isolated from the outer world, being enclosed in his mansion, and his fate is comparable to the one of Prospero, as they are both unable to escape death which is personified by the Red Death and Madeline. Regarding this example, however, the classification of a doppelgänger might prove to be excessive. The motif of the characters' inner disintegration as well as the interconnectedness between them is not significantly developed, and therefore their relationship may be based on observable similarities, yet not on actual doubling.

2.5   Names

Finally, the complexity of Poe's characters is accentuated by their naming. Even though many of Poe's characters remain anonymous, the names present in the stories are frequently significant for the understanding of the stories. In "The Black Cat," the cat's nickname Pluto can be associated with the Roman god of the underworld, an equivalent of Greek god Hades.[46] The literary role of the cat actually corresponds with the name, as by the violent actions towards Pluto, the speaker commits a gradual murder of his humanity. The second cat which appears in the story is remarkably similar to Pluto, including the lost eye, thence it is not naïve to presume a connection between the two animals, possibly arguing that the second cat is in fact resurrected Pluto. The cat's immortality as well as its act of exposing the murder and thence restoring justice conforms with the understanding of the cat as an embodiment of the god, or possibly as the god's messenger.

Also, many names used in the stories are bizarrely ironic, adding to the grotesqueness of the stories. The irony usually originates in the fact that the names are in total contradiction with the fate of their owners: for instance, Prince Prospero might be wealthy, yet his inability to rule properly, as demonstrated by his escape from reality by means of isolation, and his final death, critically oppose the idea of prosperity. Comparably, the optimistic name of Fortunato contrasts with his unfortunate death, as he is buried alive in a vault by Montresor whom Fortunato believed to be his friend. In "The Cask of Amontillado," the ironic name of Fortunato corresponds with the story's overall tone, as many passages in the tale demonstrate Poe's use or irony and brutal humor. For instance, as Montresor and Fortunato enter the vaults, Fortunato, having experienced a sudden fit of cough, tries to calm Montresor, his future murderer, by words: "The cough is a mere nothing, it will not kill me. I shall not die of

---

[46] "Pluto," *Crystalinks.com*, Crystalinks: Metaphysics and Science Website, 2012
<http://www.crystalinks.com/plutorome.html> 19 July 2018.

a cough."[47] The narrator's answer – simple "truth – truth"[48] – emphasizes the sinisterly ironic tone of the story.

Lastly, in rare cases, speculations propose the possibility that Poe's characters are based on actual historical personages. For example, "The Fall of the House of Usher" is assumed to be inspired by an event linked to a mansion built by a son of the first American book-publisher, Hezekiah Usher, who was accused of witchcraft and forced to temporarily leave America.[49] The Boston house of Hezekiah was torn down in 1830, and as described by Jane Ganahl, "two bodies were found embraced in a cavity in the cellar—and a story told of a sailor and the young wife of the older homeowner who were caught and entombed in their trysting spot by her husband."[50] While "The Fall of the House of Usher" certainly cannot be labelled as a realistic story, the true horror-like event which possibly inspired Poe accentuates the authenticity of the story, and simultaneously also its eeriness.

---

[47] Poe, *Selected Tales* 376.

[48] Poe, *Selected Tales* 376.

[49] Gwyneth McNeil, "Hezekiah Usher," *Geni.com*, Geni, 7 Dec 2017 <https://www.geni.com/people/Hezekiah-Usher/6000000013375077014> 19 July 2018.

[50] Jane Ganahl, "I Could Not Bring My Passions from a Common Spring," *SFOpera*.com, San Francisco Opera Association, <https://sfopera.com/1516-season/the-fall-of-the-house-of-usher/program-articles/i-could-not-bring-my-passions-from-a-common-spring/> 19 July 2018.

3   Place with a Secret

3.1   Form

3.1.1   Spatial Setting as a Labyrinth

Before proceeding to the examination of a place with a secret in its concrete realizations, it is beneficial to analyze its general structural organization. As emphasized by Hodrová, places with a secret are typically not organized in a rational and easily comprehensible order, in contrast with, for instance, utopian places.[1] Hodrová thence notes that a place with a secret is usually structured as a labyrinth.[2] The organization of the labyrinth is twofold: either vertical, or horizontal.[3] Gothic castles often combine the two schemes, as there is a horizontal labyrinth spreading from the center of the castle to its distant parts, while vertically organized labyrinth is formed by the opposing depth of an attic and height of a tower.[4]

Considering the selected stories by Poe, it can be claimed that Poe usually utilizes, or at least emphasizes, one of the two schemes, rather than combining them. For instance, the spatial setting of "The Masque of the Red Death" represents a horizontal labyrinth constructed by the divergent seven rooms. Poe also often operates with the contrast provided by a vertical labyrinth, such as in "The Cask of Amontillado," where the characters gradually descend under the surface of the ground. Importantly, the story also contains a motif of a gate, which Hodrová believes to bear special significance in connection with the topos of a labyrinth. Passing through a gate, in many cases, is not only an act of physical movement by which a character enters a literary place – it also symbolizes the reader's entering into the story.[5] In the tale of Amontillado, therefore, passing through the gate symbolizes the true beginning of the sinister story of murder. Additionally, it can be claimed that Poe's tales depict the descend under earth as an act of approaching death. In "The Fall of the House of Usher," the narrator describes that Madeline is entombed in a crypt "lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was [his] own sleeping apartment."[6] In contrast, Madeline's later resurrection is accompanied by her ascension to the room of the narrator, and when she and Roderick finally both surrender to death, the entire

---

[1] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 23.
[2] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 12.
[3] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 72.
[4] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 72.
[5] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 113.
[6] Poe, *Selected Tales* 88.

mansion falls into the unknown depths of the earth.

Furthermore, Hodrová notes that Edgar Allan Poe in his works often indirectly transforms any type of a place, and even an object, into a prison.[7] It needs to be noted that while prison was historically perceived as a profane, low place, its comprehension gradually changed, and a prison was thence understood as a place of meditation and contemplation on life.[8] The portrayal of a house as a prison is easily observable in "The Fall of the House of Usher," as all the characters of Roderick and Madeline are limited both by the house and by their illness. The story is mainly comprised of a mental contemplation of the narrator, whose "imprisonment" in the house forced him to reflect on his sanity and consider the powers which can be possibly possessed by the place. The abbey in "The Masque of the Red Death" might be regarded as a prison comparable to the Usher's mansion, yet the mentality of the characters is entirely disregarded. On the other hand, their physical movement, the disorganized wandering through the various rooms of their prison, could represent their mental state of confusion and panic evoked by the fear of the disease.

Additionally, Daniela Hodrová notes that a prison generally implies a closed type of a setting, as opposed to nature which should be characterized by its openness.[9] The limitations of Poe's prison-like spatial setting are, nonetheless, applied to nature as well, producing an omnipresent claustrophobic effect. The sky in "Eleonora" loses its open character and becomes a boundary, which is caused by a voluminous cloud reaching earth, "day by day, lower and lower, until its edges rested upon the tops of the mountains."[10] The narrator notes that the cloud shut him and Eleonora "within a magic prison-house of grandeur and of glory,"[11] hence he perceives the imprisonment as a favorable condition. The image portrayed by the narrator of "The Fall of the House of Usher" depicts the clouds which "hung oppressively low,"[12] which resembles the situation in "Eleonora" in that the natural environment changes into a boundary, however the claustrophobic effect of this transformation is not appreciated by the speaker. He sees the clouds as a factor contributing to his sensation of the inability to escape, which is further accentuated to the windows inside the house, which are placed too high to reach. Ultimately, the narrator recognizes the enclosure in the prison-like labyrinth as a potential cause of madness and even death. The irony of Poe's pseudo-prison, then, lies in the fact that it only becomes oppressive when recognized as such,

---

[7] Daniela Hodrová, *Poetika míst* (Jinočany: H&H, 1997) 107.
[8] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 16.
[9] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 103.
[10] Poe, "Eleonora."
[11] Poe, "Eleonora."
[12] Poe, *Selected Tales* 76.

and the presumed incapability to escape is accordingly more linked to the characters' minds which represent abstract labyrinths of thoughts.

3.1.2 Text as a Labyrinth

In addition to the spatial setting, the structure of Poe's texts also resembles a labyrinth in which the characters are enclosed. The form of a short story which Poe chooses as a medium represents a limitation comparable to the boundaries of Poe's prison-like places, however, it also contributes to the effect of terror which Poe desires to evoke. In his essay "The Philosophy of Composition," Poe stresses that the length of a literary work is one of its most fundamental features, since if a work requires two sittings for its reading to be completed, "the affairs of the world interfere, and everything like totality is at once destroyed."[13] The shortness of the tales thence contributes to their unity regarding the atmosphere and overall effect. Since Poe is limited by the short story format, he utilizes various devices to structure the texts and give them a functional multidimensionality. For example, Poe frequently uses dashes, which enable him to construct extensively long yet highly organized sentences without negatively affecting the tension of the stories.

Repetition as a literary device is also utilized in various tales. Altogether, the repetitions in Poe's tales can be roughly divided into two subcategories: irregular repetitions of words or phrases, and repetitions which are regular in the timing of their appearance and also partially in form. The irregular repetition of phrases or words can be observed in most of Poe's tales, and the words most frequently repeated are, unsurprisingly, "mad" or "madness." To demonstrate, we can find seven variations of the words in "The Tell-Tale Heart," and in other stories, "mad" usually appears at least three times. Similar repetition is also utilized in "The Fall of the House of Usher," in which the narrator repeats various words, including "dull," "gray," "silver," "black," "dark" or variations of the words "oppressive." The device of irregular repetition mainly enables the narrator to inconspicuously emphasize certain aspects which he perceives as essential to the story. Since "The Tell-Tale Heart" predominantly depicts thoughts of an insane narrator, the repetition of "mad" highlights this aspect, indirectly contradicting the narrator's denial of madness. In "The Fall of the House of Usher," the house is not only a background, but also an omnipresent motif which, as suggested by the title, is conceivably the most essential concern of the entire plot. The

---

[13] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," *PoetryFoundation.org*, Poetry Foundation, 13 Oct 2009 < https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/69390/the-philosophy-of-composition> 25 July 2018.

repetition of words describing the mansion and its surroundings continuously directs one's attention to the spatial setting and its depressive atmosphere.

The more regular repetition can be observed in "The Pit and the Pendulum," where three similarly long paragraphs of the story commence with a word "down" followed by a dash and a phrase describing the nature of the movement: its steady, relentless and unceasing decrease.[14] This type of repetition is observably more consistent, both in its placement and in its form, and serves partially to organize the text, but also to gradate the plot, as the tension is stressed by the repetitive references to the continuous movements of the pendulum. The repetition additionally reflects the thinking process of the narrator. He chaotically wanders through the labyrinth of his mind, attempting to ascertain how to free himself and repeatedly getting lost in the process, since his mind is continually paralyzed by the pendulum which presents a danger of brutal death. Finally, the utilization of regular repetition is reminiscent of a rhyme or a refrain. While Poe strictly defined poetry as a form mediating "the Beauty," in contrast to prose which conveys "the Truth,"[15] the repetitions perhaps relate the two genres. Peter K. Garrett also notes that Poe's essay "The Philosophy of Composition" "has often been taken as a theoretical manifesto for the modern short story, superior to the novel because closer to the intensity and purity of lyric poetry."[16] Therefore, the boundary between poetry and prose is partially blurred in a short story, and the tales can therefore possibly convey both the Truth and the Beauty.

The borderline between prose and poetry is also disrupted by the poems embedded in some of Poe's stories, including "Ligeia" and "The Fall of the House of Usher." The poems in the tales serve various purposes. As noted by Elena Anastasaki, through their placement in the middle of the stories, the poems function as "as an omen of the bad fortune ahead, foreshadowing the sinister ending of the tales."[17] The employment of poetry further enables the stories to convey both the Truth and the Beauty, even though the process is rather complex. Anastasaki states that since the poems were composed by Ligeia and Roderick, they provide a somewhat unmediated picture of the characters, and accordingly, they convey more truthful picture than the stories themselves, as the narration is seriously influenced by the

---

[14] Poe, *Selected Tales* 261-262.
[15] Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition."
[16] Peter K. Garrett, "A Force of a Frame: Poe and the Control of Reading," *The Yearbook of English Studies* 26 (1996): 57, JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3508645> 25 July 2017.
[17] Elena Anastasaki, "Embedded and Embodied Poetry in Edgar Allan Poe's 'Ligeia' and 'The Fall of the House of Usher,'" *A Journal for Critical Debate* 23.2 (2014): 207, EBSCO <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=3b34d25a-fe28-46b6-ab4d-6c232d8ac366%40sessionmgr4009&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1lZHMtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=edsgcl.434321401&db=edsglr>, 23 July 2017.

speakers' unreliability.[18] The poems, thence, presents a truthful depiction of the characters, however "attained through beauty and intuition, rather than rational truth."[19] The poems can also be comprehended as doubles of the stories, as supported by Hodrová, who claims that "a text within a text" functions basically as a mirror, doubling and reflecting the larger format within which it is placed.[20] Moreover, the poems not only reflect the content of the stories, but they function as the plots' core, embodying the central motifs of the stories. In the case of "Ligeia," the image depicted by the poem is rather complicated, however the theatre played by mimes and watched by angels can be perhaps regarded as a metaphor referring to the earthly world, the mankind being only puppets playing a show for the transcendental observers. The slaughter of the mimes by the Conqueror Worm can symbolize Ligeia's murder of Rowena. In "The Fall of the House of Usher," the connection between the story and the poem is much more straightforward, since the picture provided by the poem – the gradual decay of a palace and its residents – is analogous to the deterioration of the Usher's mansion. Lastly, it can be claimed that the poems, based on their location in the center of the stories and the fact they represent their core, can be interpreted as the secret hidden in the labyrinth of Poe's text.

The epigraphs in the stories "Ligeia," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Pit and the Pendulum," and "Eleonora," also accentuate the complexity of the tales. Through allusions, according to Hordrová, a text becomes fragmentary and therefore loses its universal unity.[21] The characters portrayed in the stories are often victims of a fragmentary mind, and the text thus mirrors the characters' mentality. It needs to be noted that the epigraphs are significantly linked to the spatiotemporal setting by the aspect of their supposed historicity and their origin. "The Pit and the Pendulum" and "Eleonora" are introduced by Latin quotes, the tale "Ligeia" begins with an epigraph which includes archaic English expressions. Besides the languages, the noted sources of the epigraphs also enhance the historical tone: a seventeenth-century English writer Joseph Glanvill is referenced as the author of the epigraph to "Ligeia,"[22] a thirteenth-century philosopher Raymond Lully is credited as the author of the quote in "Eleonora,"[23] and the Latin text in "The Pit and the Pendulum" is labelled as a sign which can found on a gate to a Jacobin Club market in Paris.[24] In most cases, however, the

---

[18] Anastasaki 210-211.
[19] Anastasaki 212.
[20] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 148.
[21] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 158.
[22] Poe, *Selected Tales* 48.
[23] Poe, "Eleonora."
[24] Poe, *Selected Tales* 251.

historicity is only fictional, as the alleged sources seem to be concocted. The epigraph in "Ligeia" attributed to Joseph Glanvill, was never found in Glavill's works, and therefore was most likely composed by Poe himself.[25] Correspondingly, the epigraph to "The Pit and the Pendulum" refers to an entrance to the Parisian market, yet when the story was translated by Charles Baudelaire, he noted that the market mentioned in the tale never had any gate.[26]

The purpose of the fictitious epigraphs can be clarified by multiple hypotheses, one of them being that the false audacity of the quotes is comparable to the one of the tales. The narration, analogously to the epigraphs, might appear truthful, but proves to be altered by the narrators' insanity, perverseness and drug abuse. In addition, the epigraphs can be comprehended as a symbolical gate to the textual labyrinth, differing from the poems in that the quotes do not refer to the stories as a whole, but they often include one concrete motif which will later appear in the plot. For instance, the poem cited in the epigraph of "The Fall of the House of Usher," depicting a resonating heart, according to R. S. Gwynn, "applies to his hypersensitive, guitar-plucking protagonist, Roderick Usher."[27] Similarly, the Latin quote opening the story "Eleonora," translated as "the soul is saved through preservation of a specific form,"[28] can be applied to the immortality of Eleonora's soul later revealed in the story. Finally, the quotes, being often presented by Poe as produced centuries before his life, written by European authors, or placed in European countries, distance the plot of the stories in time and place further from the reader. The epigraphs thence serve the purpose of establishing a historical and mysterious atmosphere, and they partially substitute the stereotypical setting of English Gothic fiction which Poe tried to avoid.

The last essential aspect regarding the form of Poe's tales is the use of narration within narration. This narrative technique generally has the outcome of distancing the listener from the actions portrayed, and hence supports the sensation of helplessness. The narration in "The Cask of Amontillado" is set fifty years after the murder, and the narrator therefore presents actions which cannot be altered or undone. In "The Oval Portrait," the narrative technique not only distances the happenings from the reader, but it also connects the plot with the textual aspect of the tale. According to William J. Sheick, the two levels of narration reflect the shape of an oval which repeatedly arises in the story:

---

[25] Anastasaki 214.

[26] Edgar Allan Poe, *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires*, trans. Charles Baudelaire (Paris: M. Lévy frères, 1857) 112.

[27] R. S. Gwynn, "Haunted Palaces, Trembling Strings," *The Sawanee Review* 114.4 (2006): 582, JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27549902>, 23 July 2018.

[28] Miriam Fernández-Santiago, "Edgar Allan Poe's Narrative Use of Literary Doubling," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 4.1 (2013): 76.

The fictive space of "The Oval Portrait" is geometrically shaped in that it suggests a series of more or less circular layers. There is, first of all, the turret into which the narrator retreated from the outside world, a circular setting objectifying the narrative manner of the tale. […] The portrait itself is an oval of intensified vagueness, and the perceptive viewer should notice still smaller ovals. […] In the portrait is the oval of the young girl's face, and the features of her face include the ovals of her eyes.[29]

Sheick later verbalizes his belief that the oval structure has in its center the eyes of the portrayed lady, which can be therefore classified as "the elusive center of the structure of the story,"[30] and accordingly, also as the heart of the oval-shaped labyrinth.

3.2   Places Mirroring Characters

3.2.1   Nature

As noted earlier, the importance of the motif of a boundary, especially a gate, is accentuated in connection to the labyrinthine form of a place with a secret. Nevertheless, Hodrová also notes that boundaries between a place with a secret and its surroundings can often be indistinct, and additionally, the border between a place and one's conscience can also become blurred or completely erased.[31] In such cases, the interconnection of the characters and the spatial setting is predominantly demonstrated by the fact that the characters' surroundings, be it the nature, the houses, or the rooms, transform into a mirror of their residents, reflecting their mentality and its transformations. Regarding the natural setting of Poe's tales, the motif of nature as a mirror is remarkably noticeable in the tale "Eleonora." While the story depicts the narrator's relationship with Eleonora, a prominent part of the narrative is constructed by an elaborate portrayal of the transformations of the valley. The natural scenery can be undoubtedly associated with Eleonora, since every natural alteration is linked to a change in her character. Initially, during the narrator's and Eleonora's childhood, the valley is depicted as picturesque yet remote, surrounded by "giant hills that hung beetling around about it."[32] Eleonora's personality, being described only briefly, is inaccessible to the reader just as the valley is isolated from the outer world. The first radical

---

[29] William J. Scheick, "The Geometric Structure of Poe's 'The Oval Portrait,'" *Poe Studies* 11.1 (1978): 6, EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1978102.htm>, 25 July 2018.
[30] Sheick 6.
[31] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 11.
[32] Poe, "Eleonora."

change of the valley happens when Eleonora and the narrator fall in love: star-shaped flowers start growing in the trees, daisies are substituted by ruby-red asphodels, the green of the grass deepens, a tall flamingo appears, silver and gold fish fill the river, and the cloud approaches the earth. The image offered by this passage shows the intensifying liveliness of the scenery, suggesting the growth of Eleonora's personality and her maturing, also possibly demonstrated by the substitution of innocent looking daisies by red asphodels. The deepening colors and the descending cloud, on the other hand, conceivably foreshadow her future doom. When Eleonora dies, the natural scenery transforms for the last time, and most of the liveliness is lost as the grass fades and all animals depart the valley. In addition, the narrator claims that "dark, eye-like violets"[33] substituted the asphodels. The eye-shape of the violets is essential, as it evokes a sensation of being watched, possibly referring to the spiritual presence of deceased Eleonora. Accordingly, the valley can be comprehended as Eleonora's doppelgänger.

It can be contemplated upon whether the landscape reflects Eleonora, or actually the narrator. As claimed by Sharon Furrow: "Poe uses imaginary landscapes to depict man's alienation from his external environment either as metaphors for an ideal paradise or as allegories of interior journeys into the psyche."[34] In the case of "Eleonora," the changes of the valley can be associated with the narrator's discovery of the love he feels towards his cousin. The initial image shows beauty but also innocence and calmness, as the narrator is still unaware of his affection towards Eleonora. When he recognizes the emotion of love, the valley becomes more vivacious and dynamic, and finally, when the valley fades and all life is gone, the image corresponds with the narrator's grief and depression. Lastly, it needs to be remembered that according to Hodrová, the transformations of a place with a secret are frequently only illusions originating in one's imagination.[35] Therefore, all the transformations of the valley can be, in fact, merely the narrator's visions, possibly originating in his self-confessed insanity.

3.2.2 Rooms

Comparably to the nature which Poe thoroughly studied in some of his landscape tales, such as in the "The Landscape Garden," rooms and interiors were also scrutinized by

---

[33] Poe, "Eleonora."
[34] Sharon Furrow, "Psyche and Setting: Poe's Picturesque Landscapes," *Criticism* 15.1 (1973): 16, JSTOR < https://www.jstor.org/stable/23100095>, 24 July 2018.
[35] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 73.

Poe, especially in his famous essay "The Philosophy of Furniture." In fact, C. T. Walters even regards Poe's depiction of a landscape as analogous to a room, as he states: "With the eye of an artist, [Poe] abstracts the pastoral landscape transforming it into a parlor where skies become ceilings, where meadows and forests form the equivalent of rugs and tapestries."[36] The significance of rooms is particularly prominent in short stories "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Masque of the Red Death" and finally "The Fall of the House of Usher." To begin with, the prison depicted in "The Pit and the Pendulum" greatly affects the narrator's mentality, yet simultaneously, the setting is partially a reflection of his panic and mental chaos. The quickening movement of the sinister pendulum echoes the quickening of the narrator's heart as well as his thoughts, as he contemplates on how to free himself from the rope. Nonetheless, when he manages to escape from the danger of the pendulum, he immediately faces another complication, as the walls approach him and pressure him closer to the hole in the center of the prison. Simultaneously, the terrifying faces on the walls, which he was unable to properly see before, become colorful and vivid, reflecting the narrator's final realization of forthcoming death.

The complex depiction of the rooms in "The Masque of the Red Death," including both their assembly and the appearance of their interiors, is sometimes criticized for evoking the need of allegorical reading while being incomprehensible in its reference. For example, Joseph Rosenblum claims:

> There are seven rooms, and the description moves from east to west; both are conventional elements in any allegory. But once the narrator begins supplying details, he becomes lost. He seems to sense that these rooms should be given symbolic colors, but he can't determine an arrangement. He repeats one — purple and violet are identical — and he fails to make any logical progression from, say, light to dark or red to purple (the arrangement of the spectrum). Nor does he know how to furnish his rooms.[37]

Nevertheless, there are many interpretations of the seven rooms, including that of Walter Blair, who „sees them as representing the seven ages of man," H. H. Bell and Edward William Pitcher, who "regard the rooms as seven decades," or Mabbott, who offers a

---

[36] C. T. Walters, "'The Philosophy of Furniture' and Poe's Aesthetics of Fictional Design," *The Edgar Allan Poe Review* 5.1 (2004): 66, JSTOR < https://www.jstor.org/stable/41498736>, 24 July 2018.
[37] Joseph Rosenblum, "'The Masque of the Red Death' as a Diddle," *Masques, Mysteries and Mastodons: A Poe Miscellany* (2006): 27, EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/papers/psbbooks/pb20061e.htm>, 25 July 2018.

selection of hypotheses, comprehending the rooms as a representation of seven days of the week, seven deadly sins or seven parts of a day.[38] Finally, the rooms can be interpreted as a symbolical materialization of a human body, providing a color scheme in which the repeated red, purple and violet can be associated with the color of human veins and blood. The seventh room can be then perceived as the heart, feasibly the heart of Prospero, its blackness representing the concealed fear which overtakes his soul, and the clocks epitomizing the heartbeat of both Porspero and his subjects.

Finally, in "The Fall of the House of Usher," the rooms are characteristic by their enclosed atmosphere. As claimed by Hodrová, windows and doors usually provide a room with the aspect of openness, as they enable the residents to communicate with the outer world; however, if the windows and the doors are unattainable or completely removed, the symbolic character of a room is emphasized.[39] The first chamber which the narrator enters has windows which cannot be reached, accentuating Usher's mental as well as physical enclosure and isolation. Additionally, the objects which are chaotically distributed around the room reflect the disturbed remains of Roderick's rationality. The narrator's room is similarly depressive, the windows being covered by torn curtains, yet the fact that the windows are at least accessible provides a symbolical hint of a possibility of escape.

The last room to be mentioned is the fictional tomb portrayed by Roderick's painting. According to Hodrová, an image represents an object with a secret which usually reflects a place or a character.[40] G. R. Thompson provides a further explanation of the room, as he states:

> Usher's weird painting of what might be a tomb for the burial of the body of Madeline, imaging nothing but rays of light rolling throughout a passage without outlet, is also reflective of the death and burial of consciousness and rationality themselves; thus it is a painting of Usher's internal void, which is objectified by the final collapse of the House into the image of itself in the pool.[41]

Therefore, the vault painted by Roderick, similarly to his poem, provides a partially unmediated access to his mentality.

---

[38] Rosenblum.
[39] Hodrová, *Poetika míst* 219.
[40] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 148.
[41] G. R. Thompson, "The Face in the Pool: Reflections on the Doppelgänger Motif in 'The Fall of the House of Usher,'" *Poe Studies* 5.1(1972) 17, EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1972106.htm>, 25 July 2018.

3.2.3 House as a Bearer of Memories

The previously mentioned idea of a place as a mirror enables a further characterization of a place as a bearer of memories. In Poe's tales, this human-like characteristic is usually attributed to houses with a long family history, frequently filled with various objects with a secret. The first setting to be characterized as a bearer of memories are the vaults depicted in "The Cask of Amontillado," being placed under Montresor's house and functioning as a tomb of his descendants, therefore being demonstrably linked to the narrator and the history of his family. As Montresor and Fortunato enter the deepest part of the vaults, the narrator portrays the sinister image of the tomb, describing:

> Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth side the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size.[42]

The bodies could possibly belong to Montresor's ancestors, yet since the narrator never confirms their origin, Fortunato is perchance not the first victim to be brought into the vaults. The skeletons can be classified as momentous objects with a secret, referring to the motifs of mortality and decay. In addition, through Jungian classification of a cellar as a representation of the unconscious,[43] the bodies can be comprehended as an incarnation of the narrator's suppressed memories. The understanding of a corpse as an object with a secret representing a memory is further exemplified in "The Tell-Tale Heart," where the narrator buries the body with an attempt to remove the memory of his action. Nevertheless, his guilt compels the narrator to confess to the murder.

Undoubtedly, the family mansion in "The Fall of the House of Usher" is also an example of a setting as a bearer of memories. The house is noticeably reminiscent of the castles portrayed in the Gothic novels of Ann Radcliffe or Horace Walpole, and corresponds with Bakhtin's claim that a Gothic castle, as well as nature surrounding it, is brought to life by the history of its residents.[44] The crumbling rocks from which the mansion is constructed can be perceived as a representation of all the deceased family members, the house standing only

---

[42] Poe, *Selected Tales* 378.
[43] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 72.
[44] Bakhtin 366.

because the memory of them stays alive in the Usher twins. The most direct proof of the interconnectedness between the mansion and the family is provided by the collapse of the house, which happens simultaneously with the destruction of the Usher kin. Furthermore, the mansion can be classified not only as Roderick's doppelgänger, or a physical manifestation of the family history, but also more generally as a materialization of a human personality. Colin Martindale expands this idea in an article "Archetype and Reality in 'The Fall of the House of Usher,'" claiming:

> If the House of Usher stands for the personality as a whole, we may see the occupants at least partially as different aspects of this personality. Jung argues that the two basic aspects of the self — conscious and unconscious — tend always to be symbolized as male and female figures respectively, often as brother and sister or mother and son.[45]

The characters can thence be perceived as two aspects of the self, embodying in themselves the thoughts and the memories of the "house's mind."

3.3   Places Affecting Characters

Conclusively, places with a secret presented in Poe's tales have the ability to not only mirror the characters, or passively bear memories, but they can also become the main initiators of the plot, affecting rather than reflecting their occupants. For instance, the idyllic setting of "Eleonora" not merely reflects the characters and their affections – it also at least partially entails their love, isolating the characters and affecting them by the romantic landscape. As the narrator and Eleonora are separated from the world beyond borders of the valley, their maturing minds, naturally longing for love, direct their attention to the only possible target of affection. In contrast, the stories "The Pit and the Pendulum" and "The Fall of the House of Usher" utterly correspond to Hodrová's claim that places depicted in Gothic literature regularly change their nature, transforming from a place of safety into the main source of danger.[46] For illustration, the prison depicted in "The Pit and the Pendulum" is feasibly the most crucial "character" of the story, being the main cause of the narrator's distress. Not only is the narrator deprived of his freedom, he is also situated in a menacing vault where every object serves the sole purpose of punishing and eventually killing the

---

[45] Colin Martindale, "Archetype and Reality in 'The Fall of the House of Usher,'" *Poe Studies* 5.1 (1972): 10, EAPOE < https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1972103.htm>, 25 July 2018.
[46] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 70.

imprisoned. Even the paintings on the walls have the purpose of petrifying the character, affecting his imagination, and evoking sinister visions of his future. The setting accordingly disables the narrator from a rational evaluation of the situation and makes it profoundly difficult for him to calmly plan his escape.

On the other hand, the power of the setting can be certainly questioned based on other stories of Poe. In "The Pit and the Pendulum" as well as "The Fall of the House of Usher," the narrators manage to escape the places which seem to greatly affect their mentality, yet even though they gain physical freedom, the elopement's effect on their distressed minds is not further explored. In other tales, including "The Black Cat" or "Ligeia," the departure from a place appears to have no significant effect on the characters. The narrator of "Ligeia" is still dependent on the love he feels for his deceased mistress, and the murderer in "The Black Cat" has certainly not given up on brutality and violence. The most observable transformation in a character linked to the change of environment is depicted in "Eleonora," since the narrator is freed from his grief and the pre-death promise only after leaving the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass.

3.4   Destruction of a Place with a Secret

It can be questioned whether a place with a secret is truly a separate entity created by the characters, or whether the metaphorical value of a place as well as its power originate in the characters' imagination. Analogously, a question arises of how a place with a secret can be destroyed or transformed into an ordinary place. A mere destruction of a physical place does not appear to be sufficient, since, for instance, the ruins of the house in "The Black Cat" can be still perceived as a place with a secret, being linked to the narrator's past and reflecting his actions by the imprint of a cat on the remaining wall. If the symbolical value of a place is created by its connection to its residents, the destruction of the secret would accordingly be linked to their death. Nevertheless, while the Usher's mansion falls apart concurrently with the death of Madeline and Roderick, part of the secret is preserved in the nature, which proves to be a place with a secret both by its supernatural appearance and by its actions, including the destruction and the final consumption of the house. Finally, the most plausible hypothesis suggests that a place with a secret is primarily connected to the character of a narrator, and can be transformed into an ordinary place only after his death or once being rationally comprehended by him. Since none of the stories studied by the thesis portray a definite death of a narrator, and since the rational comprehension of a place is impossible given the

narrators' madness, it can be claimed that the metaphorical value of a place with a secret is generally preserved in Poe's tales.

4 Temporal Setting

4.1 Linear and Cyclic Time

As noted in the introductory chapter, Daniela Hodrová does not provide a thorough, complex analysis of the temporal setting, and the aspect of temporality is not considered while defining a place with a secret. It can be argued that the absence of the examination of the temporal setting is not problematic, as, for instance, Gothic novels only rarely provide a concrete time frame of the plot. Nonetheless, a complete omission of the temporal aspect would be a vast mistake while analyzing the works of Edgar Allan Poe. The temporal setting of the stories influences both the spatial setting and the characters, and in some cases, time is even materialized or personalized.

Primarily, Poe's portrayal of time in terms of its pace and direction should be considered. Concerning the basic narratological classification, most of Poe's tales are organized chronologically, thenceforth a story typically begins with events which are set furthest in the past, and the plot then proceeds on a relatively direct temporal line. On the other hand, there are indices which suggest that Poe's narrators, in the moment of their narration, are situated in time succeeding the depicted events. This can be observed on the linguistic features of the stories, such as the use of past tense, and sometimes, the temporal distance is directly confirmed by the narrators themselves. For example, in the tale "Ligeia," the narrator elucidates that "long years have elapsed"[1] since his first acquaintance with lady Ligeia, and similarly, the narrator of "The Black Cat" clarifies that his narration serves to "unburden his soul,"[2] as he is to be executed the following day. Thus, the use of time presents an interplay of contrasts by means of utilizing features of both chronological and retrospective narration.

As stated, most of the events presented by the narrators are chronologically organized, yet the pace of time changes throughout the stories. While certain events are described in great detail, other parts of narration constitute of hurried explanations of happenings which had taken place within a large period of time. The sudden changes of the pace of time can be detected in "The Tell-Tale Heart," where the narrator introduces his situation by explaining he has been watching his victim for an entire week, and then lengthily describes only the one night fatal for his victim. The narrator of "Ligeia" elaborately depicts the dying processes of both of his wives, yet the period during which he actually lives with them, especially with

---

[1] Poe, *Selected Tales* 48.
[2] Poe, *Selected Tales* 311.

Rowena, is largely disregarded by him. In "The Masque of the Red Death," the narrator omits the description of events preceding the masked ball. Afterwards, he only quickly portrays the event, describes the layout and the interiors of the seven rooms, and pronounces the petrifying effect of the ebony clock. The narration is mostly focused on the section of the night which commences after the arrival of an uninvited guest, the Red Death. Finally, the pace of time becomes the central motif of "The Pit and the Pendulum", where "the mathematical game of horror is simulated by the change of the movement of the Pendulum."[3] When the pendulum is far above the narrator, he contemplates on his situation and tries to organize his thoughts in a state of utter panic. As the pendulum moves closer and its movement appears quicker, the actions of the narrator, his idea of salvation and finally his liberation from the ropes, are described in a much more speeded, thrilling manner. "The Pit and the Pendulum" illustrates one of the typical features of time in Poe's stories – the constant and inevitable movement forward, which often rapidly quickens in the final moments of the tales. The linear movement of time is frequently climaxed by a depressive picture of decay, destruction, or death, as illustrated by "The Masque of the Red Death" or "The Fall of the House of Usher."

Nevertheless, the never-ceasing movement of time is questioned by Rachel Boccio in the article "'The Things and Thoughts of Time': Spatiotemporal Forms of the Transcendental Sublime in 'The Fall of the House of Usher.'" Boccio uses Bakhtinian concept of a chronotope according to which diverse topoi are associated with different genres, and also with distinctive time schemes. Boccio hence studies Bakhtinian notions of the castle-time and the road-time, road representing a place where the movement of time is "fundamentally linear, progressive, advancing," and therefore "the temporality of the road is one of past, present, future, in which the future is privileged."[4] Contrastingly, a castle exemplifies "a frozen, recursive, repetitive temporality that stands resolute and starkly opposed to the forward rush of the road."[5] Similar distinction is also proposed by Daniela Hodrová, who labels a house as "a static place", and a road as "a dynamic place."[6] Still, Hodrová does not further develop this thought, and additionally, she does not directly associate the contrast between the static and the dynamic with temporality. Rachel Boccio, on the other hand, applies the concept of a chronotope on the story "The Fall of the House of Usher," and claims that the house represents a circular direction of time, in contrast with the road which denotes a linear movement of time. The circularity is illustrated, for instance, by Roderick's wandering

---

[3] Procházka et al. 77.
[4] Boccio, 59.
[5] Boccio 61.
[6] Hodrová, *Poetika míst* 18.

around the house, yet the circular timeline is often "straightened out, and reason is restored by the narrator's chronological account, his forward advancement along the narrative road."[7]

The notion of temporal circularity should certainly be considered, nonetheless, the classification of the mansion as a place where the linear time does not exist except the interventions of the narrator is probably an over-simplification which can be easily rebutted. A more proper understanding would perhaps be that the mansion and the road represent two coexisting velocities of time. The road is associated with movement, such as the initial arrival and the final escape of the narrator, and the pace of time on the road is therefore rapider than inside the mansion. The house, a bearer of memories of both its inhabitants and their ancestors, is connected to a long family history. Events taking place inside the family mansion are, consequently, distributed on a much lengthier timeline, and in addition, the depiction of events is often combined with the peritextual inserts and the descriptions of the narrator's thoughts, which causes that the house appears static in comparison to the road. The circularity of time inside the mansion is directly contradicted by numerous transformations presented in the story. For instance, Roderick Usher is only captured in his final state of illness, yet during the course of the story, he transforms from an individual with bright moments of existence, during which his confident manner of speech resembles the one of "a lost drunkard" or an "eater of opium,"[8] into a murmuring and scared individual who only awaits his unescapable death. In addition, a radical transformation of the house is shown in the story. In the initial passage, the storyteller pronounces that the mansion is constructed by crumbling stones, yet the building appears solid, representing a "perfect adaptation of parts."[9] The final disintegration of the house and its disappearance in the ground only contribute to its association with the direct and unceasing linear time completed by a great decay.

Nonetheless, as foreshadowed, the idea of cyclic time in opposition to linear time is also principal and should not be neglected. Rachel Boccio states: "Through the rigors of short form, Poe conceived an 'exciting' and exceptional temporal paradox, a coherence of tightly bound and mutually exclusive registers: one linear and advancing, the other circular and repetitive."[10] While the strict attribution of cyclic time to the house was questioned, it is undeniable that the cyclic time appears alongside the linear time in many stories of Poe. The presence of cyclic time in "The Fall of the House of Usher" can be observed in the fact that the story starts with the narrator observing the house and the nature surrounding it, and ends

---

[7] Boccio 64.
[8] Poe, *Selected Tales* 81.
[9] Poe, *Selected Tales* 79.
[10] Boccio 56.

with an extremely similar scene. Unquestionably, the scenery changed, and one could also argue that the narrator's character significantly developed, nevertheless, both in the beginning and in the end, the narrator embodies an individual who attempts to use his rationality in order to resist the mystic powers of the place. In the story's beginning, the narrator claims that the powers he attributes to the setting are merely a creation of his imagination, and similarly, before his escape, he rationally proposes to calm Roderick by reading, and explains the natural chaos to him as a "merely electrical phenomena."[11] Finally, it is thought-provoking to partially contradict what has just been said, and contemplate upon whether the final destruction of the house is truly the conclusion. It is, obviously, the conclusion of the story, yet hypothetically, it is possible that another house will be once built on the same property, and the line of the linear time will be curved into a circle, as new family will inhabit the place, possibly facing the same powers of the environment.

Similar phenomenon of circularity of time reaching beyond the frame of a story can be observed in "Ligeia." The transformation of Rowena has noticeably circular character, as the color in her cheeks keeps showing and subsequently vanishing before she arises as Ligeia. Even the plot of the story can be defined as circular. The tale commences with a depiction of Ligeia and her death, and the narrator then portrays the room in which he marries Rowena and in which she eventually dies. Thence, once again, a scene of death is portrayed, and finally, Rowena is reborn as deceased Ligeia. Ultimately, it is impossible to foresee the events which will happen after Ligeia's rebirth, only various hypotheses can be proposed. The narrator's madness caused by witnessing such an unnatural transformation can be predicted, but the narrator can also possibly accept the situation with joy and recommence the life with his long-lost love. If the second option ensues, will Ligeia accept her fate if she potentially falls ill again, or will she resurrect herself once more? To conclude, the linearity of time in Poe's stories is evidently perceptible, but its finality can be, in most cases, questioned.

4.2   Subjective and Objective Time

While scrutinizing the temporal aspect of Poe's tales, it also needs to be noted that there is a significant difference between time as a physical unit and subjective time as perceived by the characters. The objective time is predominantly demonstrated by the aging of the characters, their mortality, and also by the reappearing temporal motifs of autumn and night, which are to be studied in the following subchapters. Nevertheless, the time depicted by Poe is mostly subjective, being affected by the narrators' emotions, particularly by the intensity

---

[11] Poe, *Selected Tales* 91.

with which they experience the narrated events. As noted previously, the pace of time in Poe's tales often fluctuates, as longer periods of time can be described only by a few sentences, while short moments can be lengthily portrayed in a frame of multiple pages. Generally, the prolonged depictions of events are linked to the greater intensity of the narrators' emotional response. The narrator of "The Tell-Tale Heart" only shortly mentions the nights preceding the murder, yet he provides a complex depiction of the night which undoubtedly affected him the most. Similarly, in "The Fall of the House of Usher," the speaker depicts the night of his escape in detail, since it represents the time of the culmination of his terror.

Interestingly, even the objective time can gain a figurative meaning. In "The Masque of the Red Death," the ebony clock should represent the physical time, yet the narrator states that the sound of it makes the orchestra "constrained to pause,"[12] as if being paralyzed by terror. The sound is accordingly not a mere indicator of the physical time, but rather serves as an emblem of reality penetrating the walls of the unapproachable abbey. Therefore, the sound can be comprehended as a countdown, reminding the characters of the inevitability of death: if they do not die because of the disease, they will eventually die because of their age. The entire concept of time hence changes into a dangerous threat linked to the characters' mortality.

Lastly, the division of objective time into seasons is substituted by a subjective fragmentation of time, which can be observed in the story "Eleonora." As noted, the characters are affected by the physical time, as confirmed by their aging, however, the valley appears to be isolated from any objective continuity of time which would demonstrate itself by seasons. The nature in "Eleonora" changes relatedly to the transformations of the characters' and their relationship. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the story's fragmentation resembles four seasons. Spring would be then represented by the period of the characters' childhood, summer by their blooming love, autumn comes after Eleonora's death, and winter commences by the narrator's departure into a city. Eleonora's cancellation of the narrator's promise, therefore, gives him the chance to commence another period of his life. This interpretation can be thus used in order to exemplify Poe's utilization of the cyclic time.

4.3 Fascination with Age

In connection to the linearity, the stories often include the motif of old age. For instance, in both "Ligeia" and "The Fall of the House of Usher," the characters come from an

---

[12] Poe, *Selected Tales* 194.

extensively long family line. Additionally, the buildings portrayed in "The Oval Portrait" and "The Masque of the Red Death" are undeniably reminiscent of the ancient castles portrayed by Horace Walpole or Ann Radcliffe. The feature of historicity in Poe's short stories gains significance in context of the novelty of America. In time of Poe's creative literary activity, England already had a long history and tradition, while America had only been discovered a little above three hundred years ago.

The historical aspect is primarily used by Poe as an elaboration of the mysterious atmosphere of the stories, especially in connection to concrete characters. Since the families of both Ligeia and the Usher twins are described as ancient, the mysterious nature of the characters is deepened by their unknown (and unknowable) family history. Similarly, the old houses can be associated with the idea of mysterious past. For a place defined as a bearer of memories, the past is of a great importance, nonetheless it can be observed only in its present effects. Finally, the motif of old age is essential in connection with the notion of linear time which gradually approaches decay, destruction or death. In this scheme, the old age also means reduced temporal distance from the tragic end.

4.4   Night

Poe's stories also often include the temporal motif of a night. In Poe's tales, a night becomes a gnostic and mystic motif described by Hodrová as an "eternal night" which precedes the creation, and which is contemporaneously the end: a night which is "a cradle and a grave" in one.[13] While night-time is ordinarily associated with sleep, calmness and stillness, Poe depicts night as the most active time of a day. In fact, natural sleep is almost completely missing in Poe's tales. If sleep is mentioned, which happens only rarely, it is generally evoked by drugs or alcohol which can be consumed either voluntarily, or unknowingly, as shown in "The Pit and the Pendulum." Since, for Poe, the night is the time of mental and physical activity, most of his stories are set during a night-time, or the plot at least climaxes at night. Additionally, the motif of an evening emerges in Poe's tales as night's presage, a temporal space before the climax. In the "The Fall of the House of Usher," for instance, the narrator enters the scene after travelling alone for a "whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day," and his first encounter with the house happens when "the shades of the evening drew on."[14] That evening, the mansion and its surroundings firstly partially uncover their power, which is to be

---

[13] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 42.
[14] Poe, *Selected Tales* 76.

fully shown only when the night comes. A twilight represents a basic temporal transition between daytime and nighttime, and manifests itself in the alteration of light and darkness.

The darkness, which is habitually almost physical and touchable, is the most distinctive feature of a night. In order to be studied, the darkness has to be associated with its contrary, the light. In the darkness, the light gains an ability to direct a sight of an observer at certain objects which would otherwise remain unseen. As described by Wilson O. Clough: "Not only is dark night usually the setting for Poe's tales of horror, but rays of light from torches or from lamps generally furnish illumination."[15] This phenomenon can be observed in the story "The Oval Portrait," in which the narrator, ill and mentally affected by opium, moves his candelabrum and the rays of light shine upon the portrait that was previously hidden in shadows. The significance of divergence between light and darkness is further developed when the narrator describes that the features of the portrayed women appeared vivid and life-like, in contrast to the "vague yet deep shadow which formed the background."[16] Similarly, in "The Tell-Tale Heart," the narrator directs the light of his candle only on the object which irritates him the most, "the evil eye," which prevents him from seeing the face of the old man and subsequently changing his intentions.

Additionally, most of the deaths in the tales happen during a nighttime: Fortunato, prince Prospero, Rowena, the victim in "The Tell-Tale Heart," Roderick and Madeline Usher – they all die at night, and in many cases, at midnight. Night thence represents a time during which a gate between the world of the living and the realms of the dead is unlocked. Nevertheless, in Poe's stories, boundaries are often crossed both ways, either literally, such as by entering and escaping a mansion, or metaphorically, which is the case of dying and coming back to life. For instance, deceased Eleonora speaks to her lover in the night winds, and in the end of the tale, she informs the narrator that the promise of loyalty he gave to her is now annulled. A more physical return is represented by the resurrection of Ligeia, which, according to the speaker, began at about midnight. Importantly, midnight is synchronously the end and the beginning of a day. Correspondingly, death can also be comprehended as both an end and a beginning, since in many works of Gothic or horror fiction, death is a boundary between two types of existence, the physical and the spiritual, and it can be passed through in both directions.

---

[15] Wilson O. Clough, "The Use of Color Words by Edgar Allan Poe," *PMLA,* 45.2 (1930): 600, JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/457812>, 9 July 2018.
[16] Poe, *Selected Tales* 189.

Finally, the contrast of light and darkness can be comprehended as analogous to the opposition of the good and the evil. As the ever-present darkness of night fills the setting, the characters generally tend to easily surrender to their dark thoughts. Moreover, the symbolism of light and darkness further develops into the symbolism of colors. For instance, the contrast between whiteness and blackness can be observed in "The Pit and the Pendulum," where the narrator depicts the black clothing worn by the judges, and then he instantaneously proceeds to a depiction of the whiteness of their lips. The association of the two colors with the judges is rather symbolical, as the black and the white can be understood as the good and the evil, a differentiation of which is the base of the judges' work. Ironically, the judges choose an inhumane punishment for the narrator, and thence the evil conquers the good, just as the darkness of the night prevails over the light.

4.5   Autumn

Lastly, the motif of autumn is linked to the increasing darkness a slow process of dying. The lifelessness of the autumnal scenery is particularly intensified by the color scheme. Wilson O. Clough thoroughly analyzes the use of various colors in the shorts stories of Poe, and exposes that Poe utilizes especially the colors of white, grey, black and red or brown.[17] Poe's portrayal of autumn is particularly linked to the first three colors of the list. For example, "The Fall of the House of Usher" takes place during autumn, and the narrator describes "white trunks of decayed trees,"[18] "black and lurid tarn"[19] and "gray sedge."[20] In parallel with the colors, there is also the contrast of brightness and shadow, the latter certainly prevailing in the scene, as verified by the narrator's depiction of the "shadowy fancies" or "shades of the evening."[21] The shadows of the twilight and the autumnal color scheme denote not only a temporal transition of a day into a night, or summer into winter, but also the change in the narrator's mentality. As the narrator sees the mansion, he suddenly experiences an "utter depression of soul,"[22] and it can be therefore claimed that the shadows and the colors are analogous to the dark, depressed thoughts which overtake over the narrator's mind. Consequently, the motifs of night and autumn can be comprehended as linked to the earlier explored notion of subjective temporality.

---

[17] O. Clough 603.
[18] Poe, *Selected Tales* 76.
[19] Poe, *Selected Tales* 77.
[20] Poe, *Selected Tales* 77.
[21] Poe, *Selected Tales* 76.
[22] Poe, *Selected Tales* 76.

The muted colors also serve for contrastive purposes. As well as the power of light is accentuated when bordered by darkness, other colors present in the story become much more vibrant when placed next to their dull counterparts, and their symbolical meaning is therefore emphasized. This can be observed in the poem placed within the story "The Fall of the House of Usher." The initial picture conveyed by the poem shows a stately palace in "the greenest of our valleys,"[23] which has on the roof "yellow, glorious, golden" banners.[24] The wealth and joyfulness of the image is associated with the vivid colors, which significantly contrast with the deadly white, gray and black, which are used by the narrator to describe the Usher's mansion and the nature surrounding it.

The lifeless colors of autumn also contrast with the red, which fills the depressive final scene in the poem. Analogously, the red moon shines upon the conclusive destruction of the Usher mansion. Additionally, the red color can be vividly imagined when lady Madeline enters the narrator's room with "blood upon her white robes."[25] As pronounced by O. Clough, there are two fundamental understandings of red in literature: in Christian context, red represents sin and blood, while for the Greeks, red was a symbol of life and love.[26] Edgar Allan Poe utilizes red in both contexts, as in "Eleonora," the ruby-red asphodels grow as the love between the narrator and Eleonora grows deeper, and they disappear after Eleonora dies. In contrast, red in "The Fall of the House of Usher" serves as a symbol of blood and violence. Red as a color linked to the emotion of terror is portrayed in "The Masque of the Red Death," where red is associated with the disease, and the room which no one dares to enter is decorated in red and black color. Conclusively, the colors in the stories are often the feature which connects the spatial setting, the temporal setting, and the characters.

---

[23] Poe, *Selected Tales* 85.
[24] Poe, *Selected Tales* 85.
[25] Poe, *Selected Tales* 95.
[26] O. Clough 598.

5   Conclusion

The main purpose of the thesis was to analyze selected short stories by Edgar Allan Poe in terms of their setting. Since the spatial setting in Poe's tales proves to be undeniably linked to the characters who inhabit it, the analysis was primarily based on Daniela Hodrová's work *Places with a Secret*, where Hodrová combines literary features of the characters and the setting into a concept of a place with a secret. The thesis also endeavored to illuminate the features of Poe's characters which enable their classification as characters with a secret. Additionally, the thesis aimed for a clarification of the temporal aspect.

The thesis firstly introduced Edgar Allan Poe and Daniela Hodrová by placing them next to other writers and literary scholars who chiefly influenced their work. Features of Romanticism and Gothic fiction were examined in the introduction, including the ideas firstly presented in English literature as well as their transformations and manifestations in the American literature. The thesis also defined the qualities which differentiate Poe from the other introduced authors. The principal use of Hodrová's methodology consisted of the comparison of Hodrová with other scholars, the summary of her terminology, and finally the application of the terminology on Poe's tales. Firstly, the personages Mikhail Bakhtin, Yuri Lotman and Gaston Bachelard were introduced together with the main concepts presented in their theories, and the ideas which influenced Hodrová were highlighted. In the following section provided the general overview of Hodrová's terminology, and thence the concepts of a character with a secret and a place with a secret were applied on the selected stories.

The thesis studied Poe's tales "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Black Cat," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "Eleonora," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Masque of the Red Death," "The Oval Portrait," "The Pit and the Pendulum" and "Ligeia." The analysis commenced with a scrutiny of Poe's narrators, who were studied in terms of their gender, reliability, and a level of participation in the plot. The notion of insanity was then explored alongside with monstrosity. The thesis considered the historical and the modern understanding of lunacy and surveyed its relation to "the perverse" or the recurring drug abuse. Thence, masked characters and doppelgängers were explained in terms of their general definition and then observed in the selected stories. The thesis also studied the origin and the possible significance of the names of various characters. Afterwards, the arrangement of places with a secret was examined, followed by an examination of the textual structure of the tales. The subsequent chapters considered the spatial setting as a mirror, a bearer of memories, and an influencer of the characters. Finally, the analysis was completed with an

examination of the temporal setting. The main concern was the contrast between linear and cyclic time as well as objective and subjective time. The thesis also explained Poe's interest in old age and the temporal motifs of night and autumn.

As for the conclusions drawn from the individual chapters, the analysis verified that Poe's narrators are generally male speakers whose credibility ought to be questioned, especially in connection to their recurring drug addiction. It needs to be noticed that their disturbed perception of reality affects their narration, and consequently also their depiction of the setting. Poe's artistic enquiry of psychological imbalance between the rational and the irrational is often directly demonstrated by the narrators. It was also validated that most of Poe's narrators actively participate in the plot, often being the initiators of action. Subsequently, lunacy was defined not as a source (or a climax) of a negative damage of thinking, but rather as an alteration of human reason which possibly enables the characters to attain knowledge of the universal truth. The influence of drugs and the spirit of perverse, unfortunately, cause one's tilting towards the evil. The insanity itself primarily causes increased sensibility, which is then demonstrated by the characters' intense perception of their surroundings.

The masked characters were revealed to wear physical masks as well as behavioral masks constructed by their denial of insanity or superficial friendliness. Material masks were explained to be concurrent with a specific type of a setting, such as a carnival or a masked ball. Finally, the impulsive classification of the Red Death as a masked character was replaced by its interpretation as a personification or a hallucination. The thesis then demonstrated that Poe's tales include numerous types of doubles. Madeline and Roderick Usher exemplify doppelgängers who look alike and who are connected in their birth, life, and death. The mansion, which basically imprisons both of them, represents their common past, and shares with them their unfortunate fate. Contrastingly, the doubles of Rowena and Ligeia are wholly dissimilar considering their appearance as well as their relationship with the speaker. While the concept of doubling can be placed between the two women, the thesis also associates them with the narrator's distorted character. Rowena and Ligeia can be thus comprehended as the good and the evil tendencies of the speaker, which, in this case, never exist contemporaneously. Regarding the spatial setting of the tale, the diversity between Rowena and Ligeia is furthermore demonstrated by the narrator's movement into a new place once marrying Rowena. Finally, the murderers and their victims can also be comprehended as doppelgängers: the murder always represents an act against oneself, leading to (at least partial) loss of the assassins' humanness. The subsequent burial is often analogous to the

struggle of suppressing guilt. Additionally, an affiliation between Madeline and the Red Death, and Roderick and Prince Prospero was observed, and while the similarities between the characters were verified, it was noted that their resemblance can hardly be comprehended as dualism. Lastly, the scrutiny of the characters' names showed that the mansion of the Usher family was possibly inspired by a house built by a historical personage Hezekiah Usher. The realistic inspiration connects the plot with the world of the reader, and subsequently makes the tale more distressing. Pluto, the name of a cat in "The Black Cat," belong to the Roman god of the underworld, and therefore adds symbolic significance to the animal, especially in connection to the narrator's violent behavior against the cat, and its ensuing revivification. Finally, some names can be considered as features of the grotesque, adding ironic quality to the tales, as demonstrated by Fortunato, who is certainly not fortunate, or Prospero, who prospers only financially.

The analysis of the spatial setting defined its structure as an abstruse labyrinth which is partially comparable to the complex minds of the characters. Both horizontal and vertical labyrinths were exemplified, and it was noted that Poe depicts a descent down as analogous to a movement towards death. Poe's places were shown to possess characteristics of a prison, oppressing the characters and therefore stimulating the distortion of their minds. Additionally, the textual structure of the tales also becomes labyrinthine by use of various textual convolutions. Firstly, narrations within narrations distance the reader from the violent actions of the narrator and evoke the emotion of powerlessness. Repetitions of phrases or words reflect the narrators' confusion, but they also organize the plot and intensify the petrifying tension. Poems placed within the stories reflect the main topics of the tales, and they allow a rare unmediated access to the mentality of characters other than the narrator. Lastly, the epigraphs introduce the plot while also assisting in historicizing the tales, functioning similarly to the ancient remote setting presented in English Gothic fiction.

The thesis thence observed the setting as mirroring the characters. In the story "Eleonora," the natural scenery certainly has a mirroring function, although it is uncertain whether the valley reflects Eleonora, the narrator, or the relationship between them. Regarding the rooms in Poe's stories, their enclosed character is often analogous to the mental and occasionally also physical enclosure of their residents. As suggested in connection to the seven chambers in "The Masque of the Red Death," the rooms can mirror the complex mentality of the characters, but also a physical human body. The analysis demonstrated that if a place is related to its present occupants but also to their predecessors, it can develop into a bearer of memories. The abstract remembrances are then often embodied in objects with a

secret, including dead bodies. Additionally, the mansion of the Usher family might be possibly comprehended as a living organism, the memories being represented by the characters of Roderick and Madeline.

Ultimately, a place with a secret can also affect the characters. For instance, the idyllic nature in "Eleonora" appears to contribute to the loving relationship of its dwellers. Contrariwise, a place can become the main source of danger, as verified by the mechanic vault in "The Pit and the Pendulum." Nevertheless, the affecting power of a setting can be questioned, as in many cases, character move from one place to another and their mentality remains mostly unaltered. Finally, the analysis explained that the figurative character of Poe's places with a secret remains mostly preserved, since a place gains part of its symbolical meaning from its perception by the narrators. The secret can be lost once rationally comprehended, yet this task proves to be unmanageable for the narrators. Additionally, a place can possibly become ordinary after the narrators' death, yet the transformation is never depicted in the stories.

The last chapter of the thesis pursued to verify that the temporal aspect is also indisputably linked to the characters and the spatial setting. Linear time is demonstrated by the transformations of the characters and the setting, and the timeline presented by Poe generally ends with a prodigious collapse. On the other hand, Poe's utilization of cyclic time is confirmed by the similarities between the beginnings and the ends of the stories, and also by the repetitive scenes, such as Rowena's slow dying process and her succeeding resurrection as Ligeia. Time, similarly to the setting, gains significance through its connection to the characters, and the subjective perception of time prevails over the objective, physical time. Subjectivity of time is then revealed in the changing pace of the narration, the metaphorical meaning given to time by the characters in "The Masque of the Red Death," or the subjective fragmentation of time in "Eleonora." The aspect of old age is emphasized in Poe's tales in connection to the characters' family history or the individual places, since the concept of historicity adds mysterious tone to the stories, but also works in correlation with the concept of linear time, bringing the characters and the setting closer to the final decay. The thesis also inspected the repeated temporal motifs of night and autumn. In the tales, night is linked to the idea of darkness, which dominates in the setting but also in the characters' minds. The transformation of light into darkness thence often signifies the mental processes of the characters, and their gradual subduction to the depressive or evil thoughts. Poe depicts night as a battlefield of the good and the evil, and as an open gate between the world of the living and the realms of the dead. The lifeless color scheme and silenced natural world of

autumn is then used by Poe in order to accentuate the gloomy atmosphere of the tales. Finally, the colors are also inherently connected to Poe's characters. They can reflect their inner darkness but also their love, or they can provoke an emotional reaction. Therefore, the colors often connect the features of the temporal setting, the spatial setting and the characters.

The conclusions made by the analysis could be certainly further elaborated, for instance by the inclusion of other tales of Poe and an advanced comparative study. Furthermore, the terminology of Daniela Hodrová could be used in order to scrutinize Poe's landscape tales and detective stories, which would provide a broader understanding of Poe's literary canon. Of course, the methodology of Hodrová could be also applied on works of other authors. In that case, it would be especially thought-provoking to match Edgar Allan Poe with some author of English Gothic fiction in pursuance of demonstrating the differences between Poe's places and the Gothic castles. Lastly, it is also appealing to compare Bakhtin's notion of chronotope and Hodrová's concept of a place with a secret, considering the terms themselves, but also the approach of their inventors towards their definition and exemplification.

The multifarious setting of Poe's tales was proved to behave as an extension of the characters, but also as their enemy, or an independent character. The multiple roles of the setting should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. Poe's setting frequently embodies the qualities which the characters struggle to subdue, hence the distress evoked by a place is often caused by a direct exposure to the suppressed parts of one's mind. It is beneficial now to recall the thought presented by Daniela Hodrová in the very beginning of her work *Places with a Secret*: a literary work is dynamic, all of its parts are connected, and each feature is equally imperative.[1] The thesis proved that the spatial setting should be examined with other features, including the characters, the temporal aspect, or the textual form of the tales. Additionally, the contribution of a reader, whose activity is essential for the interpretation of a literary work, should not be neglected. Conclusively, all of the studied features cooperate on the formation of Poe's elaborate scrutiny of human mind.

---

[1] Hodrová, *Místa s tajemstvím* 5.

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

Poe, Edgar Allan. "Eleonora." *PoeStories.com.* <https://poestories.com/read/eleonora> 18
    July 2018.

Poe, Edgar Allan. *Selected Tales*. London: Penguin Group, 1994.

Secondary Sources:

Anastasaki, Elena. "Embedded and Embodied Poetry in Edgar Allan Poe's 'Ligeia' and 'The
    Fall of the House of Usher.'" *A Journal for Critical Debate* 23.2 (2014): 207-229.
    EBSCO <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=3b34d25a-fe28-
    46b6-ab4d-
    6c232d8ac366%40sessionmgr4009&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1lZHMtbGl2ZS
    ZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=edsgcl.434321401&db=edsglr>. 23 July 2017.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Román jako dialog.* Praha: Odeon, 1980.

Bemong, Nele, et al. *Bakhtin's Theory of the Literary Chronotope: Reflections, Applications,*
    Perspectives. Gent: Academia Press, 2010.

Boccio, Rachel. "'The Things and Thoughts of Time': Spatiotemporal Forms of the
    Transcendental Sublime in 'The Fall of the House of Usher.'" *Edgar Allan Poe*
    Review 18.1 (2017): 54-72. EBSCO
    <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=adf8eb33-f02e-
    483d-bb5a-839126858a75%40sessionmgr4010>. 29 July 2018.

Byers, John R. "The Opium Chronology of Poe's 'Ligeia.'" *South Atlantic Bulletin* 45.1
    (1980): 40-46. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3198836>. 31 July.

Clough, Wilson O. "The Use of Color Words by Edgar Allan Poe." *PMLA,* 45.2 (1930): 598-
    613. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/457812>. 9 July 2018.

Dahlkvist, Tobias. "'Alcoholic and Epileptic Nightmares': Cesare Lombroso, Poe and the
    Pathology of Genius." *Poe* Studies 49 (2016): 98-119. ProQuest
    <http://gateway.proquest.com.ezproxy.is.cuni.cz/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-
    2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:abell:R05493367:0&rft.
    accountid=35514>. 17 July 2018.

Darley, Gillian. "Intimate Spaces." *Aeon.co.* Aeon, 17 Oct. 2017.

    <https://aeon.co/essays/how-gaston-bachelard-gave-the-emotions-of-home-a-
philosophy> 29 July 2018.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "The Over-Soul." *Archive.vcu.edu*. American Transcendentalism
Web.

    <https://archive.vcu.edu/english/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/emerson/essays/ov
ersoul.html> 8 Aug 2018.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "The Transcendentalist." *Archive.vcu.edu*. American
Transcendentalism Web.

    <https://archive.vcu.edu/english/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/emerson/essays/tra
nscendentalist.html> 8 Aug 2018.

Faurholt, Gry. "Self as Other: The Doppelgänger." *DoubleDialogues.com*. Double Dialogues,
2016. <http://www.doubledialogues.com/article/self-as-other-the-doppelganger/> 19
July 2018.

Fernández-Santiago, Miriam. "Edgar Allan Poe's Narrative Use of Literary Doubling."
Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences Jan. 2013: 71-82.

Flory, Wendy Stallard. "Usher's Fear and the Flaw in Poe's Theories of the Metamorphosis of
the Senses." *Poe's Studies* 7.1 (1974): 17-19. EAPOE
<https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1974103.htm>. 19 July 2018.

Frushell, Richard C. "'An Incarnate Nightmare': Moral Grotesque in 'The Black Cat.'" *Poe
Studies* 5.2 (1972): 43-44. EAPOE
<https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1972205.htm >. 19 July 2018.

Furrow, Sharon. "Psyche and Setting: Poe's Picturesque Landscapes." *Criticism* 15.1 (1973):
16-27. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23100095>. 24 July 2018.

Ganahl, Jane. "I Could Not Bring My Passions from a Common Spring." *SFOpera*.com. San
Francisco Opera Association. <https://sfopera.com/1516-season/the-fall-of-the-house-
of-usher/program-articles/i-could-not-bring-my-passions-from-a-common-spring/> 19
July 2018.

"Gaston Bachelard." *NewWorldEncyclopedia.org*. New World Encyclopedia, 5 Dec. 2012.
<http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Gaston_Bachelard> 28 July 2018.

Gargano, James W. "The Question of Poe's Narrators." *College English* 25.3 (1963): 177-
181. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/373684?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents>.
19 July 2018.

Garrett, Peter K. "A Force of a Frame: Poe and the Control of Reading." *The Yearbook of English Studies* 26 (1996): 54-64. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3508645>. 25 July 2017.

Gillani, S. N. "S.T. Coleridge: Criticism of Wordsworth's Theory of Poetic Diction." *Engliterarium.com*. Engliterarium. < http://www.engliterarium.com/2008/11/s-t-coleridge-criticism-on-wordsworths.html> 29 July 2018.

Gwynn, R. S. "Haunted Palaces, Trembling Strings." *The Sawanee Review* 114.4 (2006): 578-587. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27549902>. 23 July 2018.

Haggerty, George E. "Fact and Fancy in the Gothic Novel." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 39.4 (1985): 379-391. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3044711>. 28 July 2018.

Hodrová, Daniela. *Místa s tajemstvím*. Praha: KLP, 1994.

Hodrová, Daniela. *Poetika míst*. Jinočany: H&H, 1997.

Holland, Norman N., and Leona F. Sherman. "Gothic Possibilities." *New Literary History* 8.2 (1977): 279-294. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/468522>. 29 July 2018.

Hume, Robert D. "Gothic versus Romantic: A revaluation of the Gothic Novel." *PMLA* 84.2 (1969): 282-290. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1261285>. 29 July 2018.

Hrbata, Zdeněk and Martin Procházka. *Romantismus a romantismy*. Praha: Karolinum, 2005.

Krapp, Peter. "Prepare Yourself to Experience the Future and Welcome the Monster." *Hydra.Humanitiec.uci.edu.* <http://hydra.humanities.uci.edu/derrida/monster.html> 31 July 2018.

Liukkonen, Petri. "Yuri Lotman." *AuthorsCalendar.info*. Author's Calendar, 2008. <http://authorscalendar.info/lotman.htm> 28 July 2018.

Lotman, Yuri. *The Structure of the Artistic Text*. Translated by Ronald Vroon. Michigan: Brown University Press, 1977.

Luebering, J. E. "Periods of American Literature." *Britannica.com*. Encyclopaedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/list/periods-of-american-literature > 28 July 2018.

Magnuson, M. Denise Schimp."The Narrative Mask of the Red Death." *Masques, Mysteries and Mastodons: A Poe Miscellany* (2006): 31-37. EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/papers/psbbooks/pb20061f.htm>. 17 July 2018.

Makaryk, Irene Rima. *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.

Manzari, Alireza. "Nature in American Transcendentalism." *English Language and Literature Studies*. Sep. 2012: 1792-1801.

Martindale, Colin. "Archetype and Reality in 'The Fall of the House of Usher.'" *Poe Studies* 5.1 (1972): 9-11. EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1972103.htm>. 25 July 2018.

McNeil, Gwyneth. "Hezekiah Usher." *Geni.com*. Geni, 7 Dec. 2017. <https://www.geni.com/people/Hezekiah-Usher/6000000013375077014> 19 July 2018.

"Mikhail Bakhtin." *NewWorldEncyclopedia.org*. New World Encyclopedia, 24 Sep. 2016. <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Mikhail_Bakhtin> 28 July 2018.

Monasterio, Luzia Ortiz. "The Role of the Dopelgänger in Today's Identity Crisis." *Faena*.com. Faena Aleph, 17 March 2015. <http://www.faena.com/aleph/articles/the-role-of-the-doppelganger-in-todays-identity-crisis/> 19 July 2018.

Morris, David B. "Gothic Sublimity." *New Literary History* 16.2 (1985): 299-319. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/468749>. 28 July 2018.

Nöth, Winfried. "Yuri Lotman on Metaphors and Culture as Self-referential Semiospheres." *Semiotica.* 17 Dec. 2006: 250-263.

Ockman, Joan. "*The Poetics of Space* by Gaston Bachelard." *HarvardDesignMagazine.org*. Harvard Design Magazine. <http://www.harvarddesignmagazine.org/issues/6/the-poetics-of-space-by-gaston-bachelard> 29 July 2018.

Pennell, Melissa McFarland. *Masterpieces of American Romantic Literature.* Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006.

"Pluto." *Crystalinks.com*. Crystalinks: Metaphysics and Science Website. <http://www.crystalinks.com/plutorome.html> 19 July 2018.

Poe, Edgar Allan. *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires*. Translated by Charles Baudelaire. Paris: M. Lévy frères, 1857.

Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Philosophy of Composition." *PoetryFoundation.org*. Poetry Foundation, 13 Oct 2009. < https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/69390/the-philosophy-of-composition> 25 July 2018.

Procházka, Martin et al. *Lectures on American Literature.* Praha: Karolinum, 2011.

Riffaterre, Michael. "Prosopopoeia." *Yale French Studies* 69 (1985): 107-123. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2929928>. 30 July 2018.

Robinson, Andrew. "In Theory of Bakhtin: Dialogism, Polyphony and Heteroglossia." *CeasefireMagazine.co.uk*. Ceasefire, 29 July 2011. <https://ceasefiremagazine.co.uk/in-theory-bakhtin-1/> 29 July 2018.

Rosenblum, Joseph. "'The Masque of the Red Death' as a Diddle." *Masques, Mysteries and Mastodons: A Poe Miscellany* (2006): 24-30. EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/papers/psbbooks/pb20061e.htm>. 25 July 2018.

Scheick, William J. "The Geometric Structure of Poe's 'The Oval Portrait.'" *Poe Studies* 11.1 (1978): 6-8. EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1978102.htm>. 25 July 2018.

"The European and American Gothic Fiction." *Britishbookcentre.wordpress.com.* British Book Centre,16 Sep. 2017. <https://britishbookcentre.wordpress.com/2017/09/16/the-european-and-american-gothic-fiction/> 29 July 2018.

"The Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Picturesque." *Faculty.winthrop.*edu. <http://faculty.winthrop.edu/kosterj/engl203/overviews/sublime.htm> 28 July 2018.

Thompson, G. R. "The Face in the Pool: Reflections on the Doppelgänger Motif in 'The Fall of the House of Usher.'" *Poe Studies* 5.1 (1972) 16-21. EAPOE <https://www.eapoe.org/pstudies/ps1970/p1972106.htm>. 25 July 2018.

Walters, C. T. "'The Philosophy of Furniture' and Poe's Aesthetics of Fictional Design." *The Edgar Allan Poe Review* 5.1 (2004): 57-79. JSTOR <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41498736>. 24 July 2018.