

Howard Phillips Lovecraft, a Literary Apprentice of Poe: Inner Fears in Outer Space

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá problematikou míry ovlivnění děl Howarda Phillipse Lovecrafta pracemi Edgara Allana Poea. Podobnost i rozdílnost prací obou autorů, která se týká jejich konceptů strachu, je porovnána skrze analýzu jejich povídek. Úvodem této práce budou vysvětleny pojmy Gotické literatury a dále prozkoumány životy výše zmíněných autorů, s úmyslem najít elementy, jež by mohly mít vliv na zformování jednotlivých konceptů strachu a následně analyzovat tři povídky od každého z nich a určit nakolik byl Lovecraftův koncept vnějšího strachu ovlivněn Poeovým konceptem strachu vnitřního.

Klíčová slova: Lovecraft, Poe, gotická literatura, vnitřní strach, vnější strach, duch perversnosti

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis deals with the issue of to what degree was Howard Phillips Lovecraft influenced by the work of Edgar Allan Poe. The similarities and differences of the concepts of fear are explored through the analysis of their short stories. At the beginning of this thesis, the notion of the genre of Gothic literature and its sub-genres will be explored. Secondly, the biographies of each author will be analysed in order to determine elements that could have influenced authors' concepts of fear and lastly, three short stories of each author will be analysed for the purpose of determining the degree of influence of Poe's inner fear concept on Lovecraft's outer fear concept.

Keywords: Lovecraft, Poe, Gothic literature, inner fear, outer fear, spirit of perverse

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INTRODUCTION

“The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown.”¹ This quote is a way to describe the world of Howard Phillips Lovecraft which expresses the fear of something unknown that is lurking in the dark. In opposition to this would probably stand Edgar Allan Poe with his “Darkness there and nothing more.”² – that could be interpreted in a way that there is no evil in the darkness waiting for us, for the evil lies within us.

The comparison of the works of Poe and Lovecraft has been a topic of many researches and there can be found a great number of works on various approaches to the contrasting of the concept of inner and outer fear as for example the work of José Carlos Gil “Poe and Lovecraft: Interior and Cosmic Terror”³. Narrowing the topic to the analysis of to what extent was Lovecraft’s concept of outer fear influenced by Poe’s concept of inner fear provides those who are interested in this matter with a different perspective. Even Lovecraft himself, being a fan of Poe, dealt with the analysis of Poe’s work in his essay “Supernatural Horror in Literature” (1927).⁴

The analysis of the inner and outer fear concepts in this work is done through the exploration of the authors’ lives, more precisely of elements that could have contributed to the formation of authors’ concepts of fear with the emphasis on creation of inner fear concept in Poe and outer fear concept in Lovecraft. Specific focus will be given to the themes of madness in their stories, their interests and education – in Poe visible in his use of intertextual references and in Lovecraft in his fascination with astronomy which evolved into fascination with outer space. Furthermore, the significance of religious influences will be explored, mainly in regard to Lovecraft’s Cthulhu mythos. The last but not the least important part consists of the role that women played in the authors’ works. As will be found out, women bore importance to both authors but their influence is more significant in Poe’s stories than in Lovecraft’s. For the purpose of analyzing the aforementioned influences, I chose three short stories from each author that all portray their concepts of

¹ Howard Phillips Lovecraft, *Collected Essays: Volume 2*, ed. S T. Joshi (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2004), 82.

² Edgar Allan Poe, *The Portable Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. J. Gerald Kennedy (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 422.

³ See José Carlos Gil, “Poe and Lovecraft: Interior and Cosmic Terror,” *In Anglo Saxonica Ser.III N.1* (2010): 37-43.

⁴ Howard Phillips Lovecraft, *Collected Essays: Volume 2*, ed. S T. Joshi (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2004), 82-135.

fear to some degree. Furthermore, there are time differences of several years between the times when each story was written and this is essential mainly for the analysis of Lovecraft's works because these time differences capture the aim of this the fading influence of Poe's inner fear concept on Lovecraft's work, which gradually developed to portray Lovecraft's own concept of outer fear. In addition to this, not only the previously mentioned elements but symbolism contributes to the differentiation of the concepts of fear in this thesis, as well. Symbols are essential for Poe's works and help to analyse Poe's concept of inner fear.

The aim of this thesis is to establish the connection between the creation of the fear concepts in Poe's and Lovecraft's works and the selected events and influences in their lives. Furthermore, it aims at determining of the degree of influence of Poe's inner fear concept on Lovecraft's concept of outer fear.

1 GOTHIC LITERATURE

To be able to determine the writing style of both Poe and Lovecraft, it is necessary to explain the notion of gothic and its development. It later influenced the creation and evolution of ghost and horror fiction stories by slowly changing its themes and symbols.⁵ This is connected to the concept of Macabre which is based on the realisation of a person's own deepest fear.⁶ This concept, furthermore, involves fear and death.⁷

1.1 British Gothic Literature

British gothic literature began to appear towards the end of the Eighteenth century, when everything seemed to be rationally explicable. The comparison of Enlightenment and Gothic could serve as a source of explanation what Gothic means. David Punter and Glennis Byron in their book "The Gothic" put terms Gothic that stood for chaos, convoluted and exaggerated and Enlightenment which on the other hand represented order, purity and clearly defined rules into oppositions which oppositions could serve as an example of how the society and literature were changing.⁸ The need for the old-fashioned instead of progress to the modern marked the beginning of the Gothic revival era in architecture, which dragged the interest of readers towards the medieval. The desired result was to create a piece of work that would convey the feeling of terror, mystery and cruelty of those times in the reader. Supernatural became one of the basic elements as well, bringing the unexplainable horror of seeing a ghost or an apparition to the reader. Hand in hand with the aforementioned elements, comes the setting of dungeons, medieval castles, forests, secret tunnels, graveyards and many more. The themes of Gothic literature are for example madness or forbidden desires. The role of a protagonist was usually given to malevolent, wicked and demonic character, who bore the most hideous qualities. One of the first works representing this genre could be either Tobias Smollett's *Ferdinand Count Fathom* (1753) or Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otrando* (1764), which is probably more known.⁹ The actual importance of the Gothic style was described in Bishop Hurd's *Letters*

⁵ See J. A. Cuddon and C. E. Preston, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 4th ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2000), 355-361.

⁶ See Stephen King, "What's Scary: A Forenote to the 2010 Edition," in *Danse Macabre* (New York: Gallery Books, 2010), xi-xxxii.

⁷ See Stephen King, *Danse Macabre* (New York: Gallery Books, 2010), 1-16.

⁸ See David Punter and Glennis Byron, *The Gothic* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 7-8.

⁹ See J. A. Cuddon and C. E. Preston, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 4th ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2000), 355-357.

on *Chivalry and Romance* (1762).¹⁰ According to *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms*, the most important representatives of British Gothic fiction are Clara Reeve and her novel *The Old English Baron* (1778), Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), followed by Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and others. Elements of the gothic also appear in the Romantic literature (1789 - 1832) and create a mixture of the supernatural with emotions and personal experience. Some writers even adopted the exotic, bizarre, and macabre elements of the Gothic literature.¹¹ Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) for example contains the mad scientist as a gothic element and the force of nature as a romantic element.¹² Not only Romanticism, but also Victorian literature (1830 - 1890) obtained some elements from Gothic literature. An example of such a combination could be for instance Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), which presents a reader with romantic elements illustrated by moors, the previously mentioned gothic elements, specifically ghosts, and also realistic elements such as representatives of rural England in times of Industrialisation.¹³

1.2 American Gothic Literature

The Gothic fiction managed to grow in America as well, this happened around the end of the Eighteenth and the beginning of the Nineteenth century with the works such as Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* (1798). Furthermore, Brown also became the influence for Edgar Allan Poe.¹⁴ In the beginnings, American writing style mimicked that of Britain. It was also because America was still influenced by British culture.¹⁵ Americans transferred the background and affairs of the new world into the writing, therefore the American Gothicism contained elements of puritanism, slavery and the notion of the American frontier; in other words there were themes of hatred, secrecy and guilt. For example the puritan elements can be seen in Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* or the fights with Indians in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*. Some of the supernatural transferred in the form of witch trials to the American gothic

¹⁰ See David Punter and Glennis Byron, *The Gothic* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 8.

¹¹ See Chris Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 223.

¹² See David Punter and Glennis Byron, *The Gothic* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 199.

¹³ See *Ibid.*, 212-215.

¹⁴ See J. A. Cuddon and C. E. Preston, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 4th ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2000), 358.

¹⁵ See Allan Lloyd-Smith, *American Gothic Fiction: an Introduction* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2004), 3.

literature as well and was presented in the novel *Rachel Dyer* by John Neal.¹⁶ Scholars provide many approaches to this matter but there are elements that appear repetitively, for example darkness, ambiguity, abstraction and so on.¹⁷

1.3 Southern Gothic Literature

As mentioned previously, Gothic literature finds its inspiration in the past and this does not differ in the Southern subgenre of Gothic literature, which began to form in the first half of the Twentieth century. In addition to that, slight changes occurred in the elements of this subgenre. Old castles which were, for example, superseded by decayed mansions and aristocratic decline. South dealt with the bizarre, grotesque, in connection with slavery, violence, corruption and weirdness and perversion of Southern aristocracy.¹⁸ The loss of identity and class, which is irrecoverable, is implemented into the fallen apart plantation premises.¹⁹ One of the representatives of Gothicised American South is William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" (1930).²⁰ The portrayal of the fall of the aristocratic south is for instance apparent in Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947). Besides these characteristics, this style contained a taste of humour as in Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" (1953).²¹ The element of perversion can be best seen in Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839). It is possible to assume that "The Fall of the House of Usher" is the best example of Southern Gothic, based on the opinion of Richard Gray, which is as follows:

"The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839) is set in an anonymous landscape, or rather dreamscape, but it has all the elements that were later to characterize Southern Gothic: a great house and family falling into decay and ruin, a feverish, introspective hero half in love with death, a pale, ethereal heroine who seems and then is more dead than alive, rumours of incest

¹⁶ See Mary Ellen Snodgrass, *Encyclopedia of Gothic Literature* (New York: Facts on File, 2005), 7.

¹⁷ See Nadal, Marita. "The Fall of the House of Usher": A Master Text for (Poe's) American Gothic." *Journal of English Studies* 7 (2009): 55-70. accessed August 20, 2014. dialnet.unirioja.es/descarga/articulo/3258238.pdf.

¹⁸ See Jerrold E. Hogle and Jessica Bomarito, *Gothic Literature: A Gale Critical Companion Vol. 2* (Detroit: Thomson/Gale, 2006), 293-294.

¹⁹ See Peggy Dunn Bailey, "Female Gothic Fiction, Grotesque Realities, and Bastard Out of Carolina: Dorothy Allison Revises the Southern Gothic," *Mississippi Quarterly* 63, no. 1/2 (Winter/Spring 2010): 269-290. accessed August 20, 2014.

²⁰ See David Punter and Glennis Byron, *The Gothic* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 116-117.

²¹ See Mary Ellen Snodgrass, *Encyclopedia of Gothic Literature* (New York: Facts on File, 2005), 323.

and guilt –and, above all, the sense that the past haunts the present and that there is evil in the world and it is strong.”²²

Although Edgar Allan Poe (1809 - 1849) does not fit in the time period, he was actually a forerunner of the Southern Gothicism.²³

²² Richard Gray, *A History of American Literature* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004), 118.

²³ See *Ibid.*, 118.

2 THE STIMULI OF INNER AND OUTER FEAR

As mentioned before, the inner and outer fear is the main topic of this thesis and in order to determine the degree of Poe's inner fear in Lovecraft's outer fear, it is necessary to explore the lives of Edgar Allan Poe and Howard Phillips Lovecraft. It can be found that there are certain similarities which will be mentioned later in the analysis; nevertheless some major differences are apparent in their childhood especially. This chapter also guides its reader from black cats, through insanity, leading to outer space tentacles.

2.1 The Early Years

Poe would probably never become a writer of gothic and horror fiction if it was not for the life that had been cruel to him since the very birth. There were many situations in his life that could influence his style of writing and the themes one can find in his works. As Poe himself wrote in one of his tales "Never to suffer would never to have been blessed".²⁴ Regarding Lovecraft's life, as will be stated later, he was likewise formed by the environment which in comparison to Poe's was very different. Their life experiences are connected to the inner and outer fear, also because of their attitude to fear.

2.2 Madness

Madness is an important and most recurrent element in the works of Poe and Lovecraft too. Exploring influences that might have contributed to the portrayal of themes of madness and fear is therefore of essence. What is more, since the very childhood, the aforementioned authors were surrounded by unfortunate events such as losing their relatives to either madness or alcohol or illnesses.

Edgar Allan Poe was born on January 19, 1809 in Boston. He had art running in his veins because both of his parents were actors. His mother, Elizabeth Poe, was a successful and highly admired actress, yet his father's acting abilities did not last for long and he slowly gave in to alcoholism, which was probably of the reasons why he disappeared sometime around 1809 and left Elizabeth with 2 boys and an unborn child to their fate.²⁵ Poe's parents never settled down and neither were they rich therefore the children were not

²⁴ See Edgar Allan Poe, *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe in Five Volumes: Volume Two* (Pennsylvania: A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, 2001), 61-70, accessed December 12, 2014, http://books.ebooklibrary.org/members/penn_state_collection/psuecs/poe2v.pdf.

²⁵ See Sonia Maria Gomez Ferreira, "Edgar Allan Poe: The Non-Scientific Scientist" (Master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1978), 27, accessed October 20, 2014, <https://repositorio.ufsc.br/bitstream/handle/123456789/106037/321901.pdf?sequence=1>.

provided for and this led to Edgar's older brother, Henry Poe, being taken in by his father's grandparents. Alcohol was later once again present on the scene partially causing the death of Henry and it also presented a problem for Edgar.²⁶ Edgar Poe was only three years old when he was taken in by John and Frances Allan. He was welcomed at first but later on, John and Edgar did not get on well as their relationship grew cold for reasons which are probably unknown.²⁷

In connection to one of Poe's stories "The Black Cat", it is possible to assume that Edgar blamed his father for the death of his mother. As the narrator of the story might represent Poe's father and Poe's mother would be depicted by the narrator's wife who gets killed accidentally by the narrator. It seems that Poe's father, probably unintentionally, contributed to the death of his mother by leaving them moneyless and on their own. My assumption is that the fear and uncertainty of what a person might do and is capable of contributed to Poe's psychological perception of fear, therefore making it an internal fear. In Poe's case, the absence of a father and having a step-father like he did, might have produced hate and distrust toward men as the male characters in the analysed stories are the bad ones, twisted, violent, run away from problems or try to hide them. What is more, the issue of alcoholism contributes to Poe's internal fear, particularly to the notion of what a person is capable of under the influence of alcohol. This claim is based on the narrator of "The Black Cat", who was an alcoholic himself.

Similarly to Poe, Howard Phillips Lovecraft experienced the lack of a father in his life too. Despite being older than Poe when he lost his father to an illness, that was found out about after a seizure of paralytic dementia, which was probably caused by syphilis. After this episode, his father was admitted to The Butler Hospital. Lovecraft's father figure was then replaced by his maternal grandfather Whipple Van Buren Phillips. After his father's death in 1893, Howard and his mother Susan stayed at the Phillips house which could be an equivalent of a gilded cage because Howard had everything he wished for, yet, maybe thanks to his mother, it can be claimed that Howard's psychological development was not stable.²⁸

²⁶ See Ibid., 27-28.

²⁷ See Ibid., 29-30.

²⁸ See Donald Tyson, *The Dream World of H.P. Lovecraft: His Life, His Demons, His Universe* (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 2010), 17-20, ebook.

When it comes to Lovecraft's childhood, it was developing similarly to Poe's when the emotional part is considered. Apart from his mother, Lovecraft received treatment resembling Poe's, from the rest of the family, despite being the center of all their attention, his mother was the only one giving him the love a child should be exposed to. The members of his family were rather emotionally distant and Lovecraft was, on one hand, the center of everyone's attention and on the other abandoned in a house full of people. The death of Lovecraft's father inflicted on his mental health and caused what Tyson called a mental episode. The loss of the paternal role in Lovecraft's life was not absolute as his grandfather fulfilled this role partially for him.²⁹

Lovecraft also feared his own genetic flaws, in other words, human genetic degeneration caused by incest. This fear was justifiable because his father died insane and his grandfather Phillips had married his own cousin and Lovecraft's mother was emotionally unstable, therefore he himself blamed his bloodline for his weaknesses.³⁰

Almost all the members of Lovecraft's family were, as stated before, emotionally distant from him and this is visible for example in "The Tomb" where nobody cared about the narrator until it was too late. What is more, Lovecraft's narrators are sometimes accompanied by non-family companions, probably to make up for the family, but despite this, the narrators usually have to make a decision in a crucial situation by themselves, therefore they are alone in the end. This can be observed in *The Whisperer in Darkness* where Wilmarth's friend Akeley gets killed by aliens and Wilmarth is on his own.

As mentioned before, Lovecraft feared the genetic flaws caused by close family marriages and an example that works with the theme of inbreeding and incest can be "The Lurking Fear" which also portrays a kind of an extreme result of such doings. It is also possible that Lovecraft's nervous breakdowns could be accounted to a genetic degeneration which might have been caused by inbreeding. An example of his mental weakness can be found at the end of "The Rats in the Walls" where the narrator suffers some kind of blackout which might be inspired by Lovecraft's mental episode mentioned by Tyson.

If information stated above is compared, Poe's fear seems to be based on internal impulses such as one's addiction to alcohol and sickness of mind that wake up Poe's *Spirit of Perverse* and Lovecraft on the other hand seems to be affected by both external

²⁹ See *Ibid.*, 24-40.

³⁰ See *Ibid.*, 158-159.

influences which could be an emotional distance of his family and internal influences such as genetic flaws. Based on this, it is visible that Lovecraft only cares about his own well-being whether Poe not only includes his own state of mind but also tries to include the people who surround him and add their problems into his writing. What is more, both Lovecraft and Poe suffered an absence of father in their lives and this could be one of the impulses for creating negative perspective of the world. For Poe, this notion could be induced by hostility of his step-father which occurred later.

2.3 Interests and Education

The interests and acquired education were formative for both writers and according to information stated hereinafter; there are visible differences in how they were educated and how other opportunities such as travelling influenced their writing.

Edgar Allan Poe attended the dame's school of Clotilda Fisher, Mr. William Edwing's Academy for boys and soon after he started his education there, his stepfather decided that he would start another business in the United Kingdom.³¹ At first, it was impossible for him to receive any better education because the Allans' financial situation was not good but later John managed to provide Edgar with schooling of higher quality. Staying in England, it was possible for Edgar to witness industrialisation before any of the people in America could.³² Poe was a boy of many talents as he learned Latin and Greek at young age and also took star-gazing lessons. Here, his passion for languages, science and astronomy begins to be visible. In February 1826, Edgar Allan Poe started his education at the University of Virginia where he attended French, Italian and Spanish classes.³³ Unfortunately, Poe's trouble with alcoholism started here and he also got into gambling debts and he was not able to continue with his studies.³⁴ Poe then enlisted the US army and later decided to enroll West Point Military Academy in 1830.³⁵ The academy's rules forbade drinking alcohol among other things which resulted in Poe's disobedience and led to his dismissal.³⁶

³¹ See Sonia Maria Gomez Ferreira, "Edgar Allan Poe: The Non-Scientific Scientist" (Master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1978), 29-30, accessed October 20, 2014, <https://repositorio.ufsc.br/bitstream/handle/123456789/106037/321901.pdf?sequence=1>.

³² See *Ibid.*, 30-31.

³³ See *Ibid.*, 32.

³⁴ See *Ibid.*, 32

³⁵ See *Ibid.*, 33-35

³⁶ See *Ibid.*, 35

The contrary to Poe's education process was the way Lovecraft could acquire knowledge. It was because of his family's fortune that allowed him to have all the books he wanted and it caused him to be an avid reader. As a child he read many adventure books and one of these, namely *The Arabian Nights*, later led him to an interest in things with the Arabian theme. This gave some inspiration to the creation of a character named Abdul Alhazred and *The Necronomicon*, which is a fictional grimoire. Another step on his way was the Greek mythology together with paganism and its importance lies in the birth of the Cthulhu Mythos and Lovecraft's Gods named The Old Ones.³⁷

The break-even point in his writing was the discovery of E.A. Poe's stories in 1898.³⁸ In one of the letters to his fellow correspondents Vernon Shea, Lovecraft wrote "Poe has probably influenced me more than any other one person."³⁹ This statement makes the question whether Lovecraft was influenced by Poe clear but what it does not make obvious is to what extent was Lovecraft's outer fear inspired by Poe's inner fear. What is more, being one of the greatest influences, this inspiration in Poe caused Lovecraft some trouble in the beginning, which is obvious from another excerpt of a letter to Clark Ashton Smith, where he wrote:

My principal fault with beginnings is to make them too Poesque & sententious. Since Poe affected me most of all horror-writers, I can never feel that a tale starts out right unless it has something of his manner.⁴⁰

He also inherited many books from both sides of his family through which he became interested in archaic literary works that brought him an archaic vocabulary. Moreover, he developed an interest in chemistry and astronomy, of which the latter one was very strong and at the same time a cause of inspiration for many of his works. Burritt's *Geography of the Heavens* was a study book of astronomy and what he himself called "The most prized volume in my library." but he probably would not be interested in it, if it was not for the mystery of planets as that was his concern. It could have been science but it was rather the

³⁷ See Donald Tyson, *The Dream World of H.P. Lovecraft: His Life, His Demons, His Universe* (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 2010), 25-26, ebook.

³⁸ See S.T. Joshi, *A Dreamer and a Visionary: H. P. Lovecraft in His Time* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2001), 24

³⁹ H. P. Lovecraft, *Selected Letters III: 1929-1931*, ed. August Derleth and Donald Wandrei (Sauk City, WI: Arkham House Publishers, 1971), 378.

⁴⁰ H. P. Lovecraft, *Selected Letters III: 1929-1931*, ed. August Derleth and Donald Wandrei (Sauk City, WI: Arkham House Publishers, 1971), 218-219.

interest in secrets of the universe that captivated him.⁴¹ Even though he craved to explore the universe, in his early life he was not much of a traveller, which seems to be a rather contradictory force affecting this desire. As will be stated later, he did move to New York when he got married, but he always liked to keep close to Providence.⁴² Lovecraft started to receive school education in 1902 but never acquired of it from schools, probably because of issues such as remoteness, bullying or being a rich boy and then gradually losing the fortune.⁴³ The bullying was probably one of the reasons why he dropped out of school. His whole family had to move to a less luxurious house after the death of his grandfather and this probably triggered the bullying. Lovecraft behaved as if he had been a superior both in social status and knowledge and losing his grandfather, in other words family income, caused Lovecraft being laughed at, for he was not that rich boy anymore. It is possible that this incident was the core of the collapse, which he suffered in 1908. This hiatus lasted until 1914 and made Lovecraft even more socially distant.⁴⁴

If one considers Lovecraft's characters, it was as if he lived an interesting and thrilling life though his characters, which can be described as educated and adventurous gentlemen seeking knowledge. An adventurous type of a character can be considered a contrary to what he was like. He probably wanted to be able to travel, explore and discover things but it was impossible, for example because his shyness, remoteness and an overprotective influence of his mother. Remoteness is one of the things that can be observed in his characters as despite their adventurous nature, they seem to be loners. This element also fades gradually therefore the latter a work, the more adventurous and less remote the characters become. As an example can be taken the protagonist of "The Tomb" who distances himself from people and stays alone with his thoughts and obsession. The protagonist of "The Whisperer in Darkness", on the other hand is rather adventurous, even though most of his communication happens via letters. These two protagonists show the difference and it is based on the fact that "The Tomb" was one of Lovecraft's earliest short stories and "The Whispered in Darkness" one of the latest ones. What is more, Lovecraft's characters usually show signs of his own interests and such can be seen in "The Whisperer in Darkness", where the narrator of the story whose name is Albert Wilmarth, investigates

⁴¹ See Donald Tyson, *The Dream World of H.P. Lovecraft: His Life, His Demons, His Universe* (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 2010), 31-36, ebook.

⁴² See *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁴³ See *Ibid.*, 32.

⁴⁴ See *Ibid.*, 33-55.

a series of incidents connected to outer space and aliens. Furthermore, Lovecraft's level of education brings scientific elements to his stories and this induces their mysteriousness. This can be observed in the previously mentioned short story as one of the characters, namely Akeley, tries to photograph an alien and while attempting to do so, he describes its body using scientific terms. This also shows that his characters are usually educated men and in this case Wilmarth worked at university. As Tyson states, Lovecraft wanted to gain a university degree but due to his migraines, he was not able to.⁴⁵

To conclude Lovecraft's interests and education and connect it to his concept of fear, i.e. the outer fear, it is necessary to take into account his interest in mythology, space and education. Thanks to mythology, he was able to create his own deities who come from outer space and represent an unknown and unexplored threat to humanity. If education is considered, the previously mentioned educated and adventurous character is created and if such a character is united with the unknown threat, the result is the outer space fear, i.e. the fear of the unknown. To give an example, the protagonist of "The Whisperer in Darkness" studied mythology and knows about local legends that speak of aliens in the Vermont hills. When he finds out that these legends are real, his life becomes threatened by an external and unexplored force.

Poe, despite taking star-gazing lessons and being interested in astronomy, a thing which attracted both writers, based the concept of fear in his stories on internal processes happening in people's minds rather than external influences. It is not clear whether Poe too used his characters to reflect his own interests but his problems and addictions seem to be the main topic he deals with. An example of an addiction can be found in "The Black Cat" where alcoholism, which caused Poe a lot of trouble and was one of the formative elements of Poe's spirit of perverse. Similarly to Poe, Lovecraft had a troubled mind too but his works do not seem to explore any addictions or sicknesses of mind that he might have suffered of but references to his interests reappear throughout the analysed works.

Another matter is the environment of Gothic-like London that could have been one of the first inspirations for Poe to become a writer of gothic fiction and maybe creating gloomy and secretive characters.

⁴⁵ See Ibid., 51.

2.4 Religion

The role of religion in Lovecraft's works is probably more visible than in Poe's, despite that, it is necessary to mention these religious influences because they are not only a part of Lovecraft's life but also a part of his stories. Lovecraft's session with religion was filled with skepticism. Around 1899 he attended Sunday school classes which consisted of Bible reading. In his essay *A Confession of Unfaith*, Lovecraft claims that the myths did not make much sense for him and therefore he could not accept them.⁴⁶ His passion later became Mahometanism which is a compound of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity promoted by Mahomet through the Bible of this religion that is called Koran.⁴⁷ If Poe's religiousness comes to the consideration, there is probably no clear evidence of it. He had been exposed to various religious impulses before he died but no written clues can presumably confirm that he was religious. There would be no wonder if he was not hence all the suffering in his life.⁴⁸ His characters show signs of neither Christianity, nor paganism therefore it is possible, considering his interest in science, that Poe substituted religion for science.⁴⁹ If compared, it is possible to say that Lovecraft was active in researching various religious influences whether Poe was probably not. Scientifically they were bound with each other in some aspects.

2.5 Women

Women form one of the most important elements in the works of Poe and whilst the aforementioned is very visible in his writings, Lovecraft's works bear a minimal degree of it. It can be noted that women were rather a subject in Lovecraft's life than in his stories. The element of women is a part of the concept of Poe's inner fear and it is mainly the fear of their loss. Despite the fact that women do not appear in Lovecraft's works, the relationship of both Poe and Lovecraft to women formed their perception of world.

For Poe, the first marking point of this matter was the loss of his mother, who died of tuberculosis in 1811. The next was his foster mother Frances, who probably equipped

⁴⁶ See *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁷ See John Hayward, *The Book of Religions Comprising the Views, Creeds, Sentiments, or Opinions, of All the Principal Religious Sects in the World, Particularly of All Christian... Together with Biographical Sketches* (Amazon Digital Services, 2011), 244-257.

⁴⁸ See "Edgar Allan Poe and Religion," The Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore, last modified January 14, 2014, accessed December 15, 2014, <http://www.eapoe.org/geninfo/poerelig.htm>.

⁴⁹ See Sonia Maria Gomez Ferreira, "Edgar Allan Poe: The Non-Scientific Scientist" (Master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1978), 41, accessed October 20, 2014, <https://repositorio.ufsc.br/bitstream/handle/123456789/106037/321901.pdf?sequence=1>.

Edgar with more inspiration for his future stories as she was ill all the time and she had to attend hydrotherapies.⁵⁰ Even his sister Rosalie could have provided some stimuli as she was never mentally strong and is known to have died in 1874.⁵¹ Sarah Elmira Royster is another very influential woman of Poe's life. She became an inspiration for some of his works and got secretly engaged to Poe in 1825, but this love was probably socially and financially inappropriate. A poem called Tamerlane is supposed to contain the grief over the loss of Royster's love.⁵²

In 1836, he married his fourteen-year-old cousin Virginia who was later suffering from hemorrhages and therefore was a source of stress for Poe.⁵³ She became the fourth and probably the most influential woman of his life. If the life with Virginia is to be compared with Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher", it is possible to find a resemblance between Virginia and Madeline. As Madeline seemed to be a source of stress for her brother, Virginia's situation stressed Poe as mentioned above. After Virginia's death, Poe met Royster once again in 1848 and wanted to marry her. Despite her feelings for him, Royce hesitated and Poe left to Baltimore in 1849.⁵⁴

In contrast to Poe, Lovecraft did not search for the love of women and he was given more time to spend with his mother; and that is why women do not play such an important part in Lovecraft's short stories as in Poe's.

There is not much about the influence of his maternal grandmother on him but one of the shocks that Howard suffered, during his childhood, was her death in 1896. It was probably because the whole house fell into mourning and that evoked gloom in him because he was no longer the center of all the attention of the members of his family.⁵⁵

Lovecraft's mother was an emotionally unstable person and overprotective but the question is whether she really loved him or whether it was another sign of her mental instability, because she was not shy commenting offensively on the looks of her son. As

⁵⁰ See Sonia Maria Gomez Ferreira, "Edgar Allan Poe: The Non-Scientific Scientist" (Master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1978), 29-30, accessed October 20, 2014, <https://repositorio.ufsc.br/bitstream/handle/123456789/106037/321901.pdf?sequence=1>.

⁵¹ See *Ibid.*, 27-28.

⁵² See Jeffrey Meyers, *Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000), 19-34.

⁵³ See Sonia Maria Gomez Ferreira, "Edgar Allan Poe: The Non-Scientific Scientist" (Master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1978), 36, accessed October 20, 2014, <https://repositorio.ufsc.br/bitstream/handle/123456789/106037/321901.pdf?sequence=1>.

⁵⁴ See Dawn B. Sova, *Critical Companion to Edgar Allan Poe: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work* (New York: Facts on File, 2007), 384-385.

⁵⁵ See Tyson, *The Dream World of H. P. Lovecraft: His Life, His Demons, His Universe*, 36-37, ebook.

she grew old, she also could not bear the human contact between herself and Howard and the feelings for him seemed to be rather cold from her side and despite this, he loved her.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, after 25 years, his mother, upon being admitted to Butler Hospital in 1919, deceased as well, which almost destroyed him. Despite living on his own, he was never truly able to detach himself from her and therefore, soon after her passing, Lovecraft considered committing a suicide. His own words form a proof of the attachment to his mother and also of the low self-confidence he carried inside.⁵⁷

During my mother's lifetime I was aware that voluntary euthanasia on my part would cause her distress, but it is now possible for me to regulate the term of my existence with the assurance that my end would cause no one more than a passing annoyance.⁵⁸

When he partially recovered from his loss, some thoughts including women appeared but it was, and Lovecraft was probably unaware of it, a possible search for a replacement of his mother.⁵⁹ The last of Lovecraft's fateful women, so to speak, was Sonia Haft Greene. Rheinheart Kleiner, who was a friend of Lovecraft's, introduced them at the National Amateur Press Association in Boston in 1921.⁶⁰ As mentioned before, Sonia was of Jewish origin but she was also rich. There were three core things, all of which were probably a premonition of an unhappy marriage and these were money, Lovecraft's racial prejudice, and his sexual indifference to women. The wonder about Lovecraft's marriage was not only about Jewishness but also about Lovecraft's indifference to anything sexual.⁶¹ Their relationship, though, was based on romance and closeness.⁶² In 1929, Howard and Sonia arranged a divorce and since then they met each other once again and for the last time in 1933.⁶³

If the role of women in Poe's stories is considered, a sickness is usually involved.⁶⁴ This sickness provides an attraction for Poe's spirit of perverse which is fatal not to the possessed but to the female character. As an example can be taken the character of

⁵⁶ See *Ibid.*, 17-54.

⁵⁷ See *Ibid.*, 210-211.

⁵⁸ See Gavin Callaghan, *H. P. Lovecraft's Dark Arcadia: The Satire, Symbolism and Contradiction* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2013), 150.

⁵⁹ See Tyson, *The Dream World of H. P. Lovecraft: His Life, His Demons, His Universe*, 224-225, ebook.

⁶⁰ See *Ibid.*, 91.

⁶¹ See *Ibid.*, 44-63.

⁶² See *Ibid.*, 98.

⁶³ See *Ibid.*, 99-107.

⁶⁴ See Sonia Maria Gomez Ferreira, "Edgar Allan Poe: The Non-Scientific Scientist" (Master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1978), 29-30, accessed October 20, 2014, <https://repositorio.ufsc.br/bitstream/handle/123456789/106037/321901.pdf?sequence=1>.

Berenice, from the short story of the same name, or even Madeline Usher from “The Fall of the House of Usher” as both of these either were or fell sick during a story and die by the hand of a person possessed by the spirit of perverse. Poe’s life was influenced by women and it was both love and loss that inspired his writing.

Similarly to Poe, Lovecraft’s life was influenced by a few women too and according to his biography it was their losses that struck him more rather than his affection for them. Nevertheless, no women appeared in the analysed works of Lovecraft therefore it can be assumed that these losses struck Lovecraft in real life but he did not need to express their importance to him by writing about them. Yet, this element cannot be excluded entirely because the losses of grandmother and mother caused his weak mental health to become even more unstable. He also seemed to perceive women as a means to financial security, hence his relationship with Sonia who paid all the bills and he lived a life of luxury.⁶⁵

Poe, on the other hand, loved his women deeply and probably wanted make a reference to them by making female characters a part of his stories. Not always did they contribute to a narrator’s madness but in “Berenice” and “The Fall of the House of Usher” it is visible that they were one of the strongest elements that induce a narrator’s madness.

⁶⁵ See Tyson, *The Dream World of H. P. Lovecraft: His Life, His Demons, His Universe*, 99-107, ebook.

3 ANALYSIS OF INNER AND OUTER FEAR CONCEPTS

The central concept, with which this thesis works, is the concept of fear. Both Poe and Lovecraft's writings induce fear and the analysis can happen on many levels but the thing that matters the most is to identify sources of fear that are important for either of the authors. For purposes of this thesis I will be working with symbols connected to the theme of fear in Poe's short stories. As stated in Cuddon's *Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms* "A literary symbol combines an image with a concept."⁶⁶ In other words, it can convey emotions or abstract ideas through a particular image. Symbols can be either public or private; furthermore, when a public symbol is used, it means that the idea behind it can be generally known or obvious. A private symbol, on the other hand, represents a personal feeling of a writer.

3.1 The Inner Fear

Lawrence defines the inner fear as an analysis of one's soul and perverseness that waded through Poe's mind, in other words a terror of the soul.⁶⁷ Poe explored human psychology through his characters and even though he did not name the illnesses of mind, he was clearly able to describe them.⁶⁸ In connection to this, he bore a belief that humankind has evil dispositions, in other words, perverseness and the capability of doing evil things. This notion is one of the foundation stones of the Inner fear. How perverse leads to destruction is observable in many of Poe's works.⁶⁹

Poe himself attempted to define the term "The spirit of perverse" in one of his short stories called "The Black Cat" and the definition is as follows:

"Yet I am not more sure that my soul lives, than I am that perverseness is one of the primitive impulses of the human heart—one of the indivisible primary faculties, or sentiments, which give direction to the character of Man. Who has not, a hundred times, found himself committing a vile or a silly action, for no other reason than because he knows he should not?"

⁶⁶ See J. A. Cuddon and C. E. Preston, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 4th ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2000), 884-886.

⁶⁷ See D H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, ed. Ezra Greenspan, Lindeth Vasey, and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 65-66.

⁶⁸ See Brett Zimmerman, *Edgar Allan Poe: Rhetoric and Style* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2005), 7.

⁶⁹ See Sonia Maria Gomez Ferreira, "Edgar Allan Poe: The Non-Scientific Scientist" (Master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1978), 74-75, accessed October 20, 2014, <https://repositorio.ufsc.br/bitstream/handle/123456789/106037/321901.pdf?sequence=1>.

Have we not a perpetual inclination, in the teeth of our best judgment, to violate that which is Law, merely because we understand it to be such?"⁷⁰

As Poe stated in the quoted excerpt, perverseness might be interpreted as a primitive impulse of a human heart, therefore I assume it means the loss of boundaries that a person has. In other words, it might be a loss of reason transforming into madness which leads to a commission of a vile crime. My presumption is that the inner fear is connected to the primitivism that a person carries inside as one of the primary faculties which Poe mentioned in the excerpt.

3.1.1 Berenice

The first story that will be analysed is "Berenice" (1835) in which Egaeus, who is both a protagonist and narrator, suffers from mental disorder that will be the cause of his madness and his cousin Berenice's death. As stated before, it is narrated by Egaeus, therefore it is a first-person narrative. The narrator himself claims that he has been ill since the very childhood and the sickness described by him is called Monomania. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, such an illness limits the afflicted person to being focused on one thing only.⁷¹ Although neither of them was in love with the other, the narrator claims that the illness produced affection for Berenice's deteriorating physical appearance, in him. It can be perceived as the first sign of the spirit of perverse awakening but the trigger of the illness will be her teeth.

Monomania is also one of the themes of this short story and as mentioned before, it makes a person focus on one object and the person affected by this disorder gradually becomes obsessed with that object and their mind will not be at peace until they possess it. It can be observed on a solitary room that the narrator stays in for most of the story. He is closed there with his thoughts which, due to monomania, are focused on Berenice's teeth; therefore the narrator's madness is boosted by being separated from external influences.

Throughout the story, there are references to Latin texts which tell us not only about Poe's level of education but also seem to foreshadow the end of this story as for example *De carne Christi* by Tertullian. An excerpt of this work seems to support the idea of

⁷⁰ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Portable Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. J. Gerald Kennedy (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 194.

⁷¹ "Merriam-Webster Online," accessed February 10, 2015, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/monomania>.

foreshadowing Berenice's premature burial. The excerpt that the narrator quotes is as follows:

„Et mortuus est dei filius; credibile prorsus est, quia ineptum est.

Et sepultus resurrexit; certum est, quia impossibile.

The Son of God died: it is immediately credible--because it is silly.

He was buried, and rose again: it is certain--because it is impossible.”⁷²

Berenice is prematurely buried and then after her grave is violated; it is found out that she did not die. In my opinion, “De carne Christi” is mentioned in the list of works that occupied the narrator's mind in order to support the theme of death and serve as a foreshadowing tool.

“De amplitudine beati regni dei” (1554) is another text mentioned in the story. It is a work about the salvation of humankind.⁷³ This essay might express the narrator's fear that because of his illness he cannot be redeemed, in a religious sense; and that he cannot be freed of his illness. It can also be connected to Poe's spirit of perverse which suggests that we are born with dispositions to committing evil deeds and this way Poe wanted to express that Egaeus's monomania is the evil disposition and he cannot be saved. Considering the notion that the humankind cannot be redeemed; this work induces the internal fear.

Another of the works is called “City of God” (426 AD) composed by St. Augustine. As Theodor E. Mommsen notes at the end of his article taken from *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Augustine said that “two things run the course together, the evil which is derived from the parent [Adam]”.⁷⁴ This supports the notion of the spirit of perverse by mentioning what Poe noted before; that we are born with evil dispositions which make us commit terrible deeds and therefore contribute to the inner fear which also contains the anxiety of what a human being is capable of.

The last quoted work is an epitaph by Ebn Zaiat, which appears at the beginning of “Berenice” and towards the end of the story. It is quoted in Latin but the English translation is as follows: “My companion said to me, if I would visit the grave of my friend, I might somewhat alleviate my worries.”⁷⁵ This quotation is a part of a book lying

⁷² Roger Pearse, “Tertullian: De Carne Christi,” accessed January 14, 2015, http://www.tertullian.org/works/de_carne_christi.htm.

⁷³ See Peter Hughes, “Celio Secondo Curione,” August 12, 2008, accessed January 21, 2015, <http://uudb.org/articles/celiosecondocurione.html>.

⁷⁴ See Theodor E. Mommsen, “St. Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress: The Background of the City of God,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no. 3 (June 1951): 346-374.

⁷⁵ See Uilleam Blacker, ed., *Memory and Theory in Eastern Europe*, Palgrave Studies in Cultural and Intellectual History (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 208.

in the solitary room, near the place where Egaeus is sitting towards the end of the story and when he reads this, he realises the fact that he mutilated the body of Berenice; therefore the terrible deed induces Egaeus's madness.

The first three quotations are religiously based and even though it does not necessarily mean that Poe was a religious man, we can assume that connecting Egaeus's monomania to religious approach marks his condition as something evil and therefore it induces the notion of fear.

"Berenice" also abounds with symbols that support the inner fear. The main symbol of this story is teeth and these are the object of the narrator's obsession and in my opinion they struck the narrator's attention most of all because they were probably the only shiny and bright objects in the narrator's gloomy life and they were also a thing of perfection. The degree of his obsession with Berenice's teeth is expressed by the following part of the story:

"Not a speck on their surface -- not a shade on their enamel -- not an indenture in their edges -- but what that period of her smile had sufficed to brand in upon my memory. I saw them now even more unequivocally than I beheld them then. The teeth! -- the teeth!"⁷⁶

If we look at the date when "Berenice" was written and consider what was happening in Poe's life in years 1834-1835, we might see a connection between Poe's life and the story. In 1835, Poe made it clear that he loved his 12 year old cousin Virginia and was sending her love letters. In 1835, he sent her a letter which was as follows

"Virginia, My love, my own sweetest Sissy, my darling little wifey, think well before you break the heart of your cousin."⁷⁷

According to Dawn B.Sova, this letter seemed to be rather threatening. Virginia and Poe got married in 1836 and he was trying to make her as happy as possible and develop her intellectually and socially.⁷⁸ From the aforementioned letter it is possible to deduce that Poe's love for Virginia was deep, passionate and seemingly obsessive. The Story of "Berenice" is about an obsessive disorder, as stated before, and even though it is impossible to say whether Berenice's character was based on Virginia, Poe could

⁷⁶ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe in Five Volumes: Volume Two* (Pennsylvania: A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, 2001), 225-226, accessed December 12, 2014, http://books.ebooklibrary.org/members/penn_state_collection/psuecs/poe2v.pdf.

⁷⁷ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Portable Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. J. Gerald Kennedy (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 461.

⁷⁸ See Dawn B. Sova, *Critical Companion to Edgar Allan Poe: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work* (New York: Facts on File, 2007), 6-7.

transform his real life obsession with Virginia into the obsession the narrator has with Berenice's teeth and create this story of monomania.

All in all, "Berenice" contains issues of a person's mind and the unpredictability of humankind. It also presents a sickness of mind and unpredictability as evil by letting it to be a cradle of immoral and corrupt deeds. The corrupt deed in this short story is performed by Egaeus who is "possessed" by the spirit of perverse represented through monomania. Developed attraction to Berenice's deteriorating body and mainly her teeth, which were untouched by the illness, became a trigger for Egaeus's monomania. This, therefore, may evoke fear and disgust and furthermore strengthen the notion of inner fear in a reader.

3.1.2 The Fall of the House of Usher

Another of Poe's stories that will be analysed is "The Fall of the House of Usher". The story begins with the narrator arriving at the Usher mansion and later revealing terrible secrets involving the Usher twins Roderick and Madeline. Roderick's madness becomes the cause of Madeline's premature burial and the narrator's flight from the mansion.

From the very beginning, the narrator presents a reader with rich descriptions of the Usher mansion, the adjacent property and even the atmosphere that the land is surrounded by. These portrayals are rather gloomy, depressing and melancholic. In my opinion, they are tools with which Poe attempts to induce the frightful ambience and prepare the reader for terror that is about to come.

Similarly to "Berenice", this work contains references to other works, one of which is a part from a song *Le Refus* by Pierre-Jean de Béranger. The difference between the original and Poe's version is the exchange of "mon" for "son" which then, according to my translation, changes the meaning from "my" to "his/her". The full translation of this quotation is "My heart is like a waiting lute; When touched, it resounds."⁷⁹ The reason for dealing with this quotation in my assumption is that it either serves as a foreshadowing tool or it is supposed to represent the relationship between Madeline and Roderick Usher. Firstly, this excerpt might foreshadow Madeline's premature burial. This idea is based on the first line which states "My heart is like a waiting lute;" meaning that Madeline's heart is waiting therefore it seems to have stopped but can be brought back to life. The second idea is based on Poe's version of the excerpt where "my" swapped for "his/her" resembles

⁷⁹ Pierre-Jean de Béranger, *One Hundred Songs of Pierre-Jean de Béranger, with Translations by William Young* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1847), 226.

a forbidden kind of love or love that is not meant to be between Roderick and Madeline. Both of these things torture Roderick's mind and one probably causes the other. He thinks his affections for Madeline to be a damnable illness, therefore his mind is in agony and as a result, he buries his twin sister prematurely. Towards the end of the story, the narrator himself thinks that Roderick is keeping some terrible secret, assuming from his behaviour and I assume, this secret induces Roderick's madness. At the very end, Roderick himself says:

“-- Oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am! – I dared not – I dared not speak! We have put her living in the tomb!”⁸⁰

Based on that, Madeline's premature burial was not an accident but Roderick's intention. This is also implied and induced by the excerpt of a story that the narrator reads for Roderick in order to soothe his mind. The story describes slaying of a dragon by Sir Launcelot Canning.

“I now tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them – many, many days ago – yet I dared not – I dared not speak! And now- to-night – Ethelred – ha! ha! – the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield! – say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault!”⁸¹

The correlation between the story read by the narrator and the Usher twins is that whenever the dragon gives out a shriek in the story, Madeline cries out too and because her premature burial was Roderick's doing, her cries induce his madness and make the narrator realize that something is wrong and that she might be alive. In my opinion, the connection between the story read by the narrator and Madeline is the simultaneous shrieks that induce Roderick's madness as well as the secret does.

I believe that Roderick is trying to disguise the true nature of his situation by characterising it to his companion as some horrible and indescribable illness. He knows what has been happening in his family for generations and probably feels guilty. Nevertheless, the inbreeding already affected his and Madeline's mind and he probably wants to stop it once and for all. It is again possible to see the unpredictability of human

⁸⁰ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe in Five Volumes: Volume Two* (Pennsylvania: A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, 2001), 105, accessed December 12, 2014, http://books.ebooklibrary.org/members/penn_state_collection/psuecs/poe2v.pdf.

⁸¹ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe in Five Volumes: Volume Two* (Pennsylvania: A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, 2001), 105, accessed December 12, 2014, http://books.ebooklibrary.org/members/penn_state_collection/psuecs/poe2v.pdf.

mind and what a person is capable of doing. What is more, the meaning that the house represents in “The Fall of the House of Usher” might be connected either to Roderick Usher’s mind or the whole line of the Usher family. The house is not dilapidating only on the outside but also on the inside; hence the narrator’s feeling of gloom and breathing deep air after entering the house. Another thing that is also connected to Roderick’s mind and the madness he experiences is a picture of a dark tunnel or vault that the narrator speaks of. If it was a tunnel, it might represent Roderick’s desire to escape the madness but if it was a vault, then it could foreshadow Madeline’s premature burial.

Yet again, we can see the recurrent character of a dying woman which is typical of Poe and this is the second story including a premature burial. As mentioned before, Poe suffered losses of women he loved and so he depicts this element in his works. The matter of premature burials can, in my opinion, be explained too. His mother, stepmother and wife were all killed by an illness therefore died prematurely. The use of gloomy settings strengthens Usher’s madness and the state of his mind seems to be connected to surroundings. Poe also quotes works of other authors that hide the unspoken truth, such as the excerpt of the poem mentioned at the beginning of this sub-chapter. The spirit of perverse arises from the terrible secret of the Usher family and the guilt resulting from the secret becomes a trigger. This leads to Madeline’s premature burial because Roderick wanted to get her out of his sight and the secret off of his mind. The premature burial also induces the theme of death, and the theme of madness is induced by the read excerpt of “Mad Trist” by Sir Launcelot Canning and the idea that he buried Madeline alive.

3.1.3 The Black Cat

This work conveys a story of a man who loves animals but gradually grows to hate them because of his problem with alcohol. This hate is aimed especially at a cat that was his faithful companion but because of his addiction it got turned into his enemy. The narrator’s obsession with killing the cat ends up in killing his own wife instead.

This short story is different from the previous two. One of the differences is that it lacks a mention of relatives, meaning that it excludes close family relationships, i.e. any perversion, such as incest, that includes family relatives in some way. The main topic of this short story seems to be an exploration of anger which arises from certain causes, therefore, if for example the narrator is considered, it is possible to say that his fits of anger

were caused either by alcohol, drugs, a bi-polar disorder or a depression.⁸² The ever-changing mood could be a signal of a bi-polar disorder. We can base this claim on the fact that at one moment, he perceives the black cat as his best and a faithful companion but then he gets annoyed by it and intends to hurt it. More probable option, though, is alcohol, which in this case serves as a loosener of the spirit of perverse. The spirit is, in this short story, represented by anger and intention to harm. The feeling that triggers the narrator's evil actions against the cat is irritation evoked by the animal. What is more, these alterations of mood were not only aimed at the cat but also at his wife. In my opinion, the narrator's alcoholism might be based on Poe's own problems with alcohol or there is the possibility that he suffered from depressions or a bi-polar disorder and observed this on himself.

There are several cruel actions carried out against the cat and these happen whenever "the spirit of perverseness" takes over the narrator. The aforementioned actions are gouging an eye out of its socket, hanging the cat, and the attempt to kill it with an axe. When the narrator committed the first deed, he felt nothing but anger but when he was hanging the cat on a tree, the narrator himself said:

"-- hung it with the tears streaming from my eyes, and with the bitterest remorse at my heart – hung it because I knew that it had loved me, and because I felt it had given me no reason of offence – hung it because I knew that in so doing I was committing a sin –"⁸³

This story is not the only one containing religious references and it makes the lack of evidence of Poe's religiousness very dubious. It is possible that Poe is only using these references as a tool to stress the badness of evil deeds.

In the last act, the narrator kills his wife in rage, due to her interference, with an axe which was meant to strike the cat. The madness took over him, so that he did not mind his wife being dead, and was even pleased with how he disposed of her body. I assume that Poe attempted to describe his own mental and alcohol problems through the narrator of the story. Concluded in other words, the evil dispositions of humankind form the perverseness which contributes to the fear of what is hidden inside of us and what people are able to do in various situations.

⁸² See Joseph Goldberg, "Mood Swings and Bipolar Disorder," WebMD, September 11, 2014, accessed January 25, 2015, <http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/mood-swings>.

⁸³ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe in Five Volumes: Volume Two* (Pennsylvania: A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, 2001), 82, accessed December 12, 2014, http://books.ebooklibrary.org/members/penn_state_collection/psuecs/poe2v.pdf.

According to English folklore, black cats can bring bad luck, for example if one crosses someone's path, and they are also connected to witchcraft.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the symbolism of the cat of Poe's represents much more in combination with the name it was given and other circumstances. Firstly, the cat's name was Pluto which is another name for, the Greek god of the underworld, Hades. Secondly, the narrator's house in the story caught fire after he hung the cat on a tree and after the fire, there was an imprint resembling a cat with a noose around its neck. Based on the combination of these elements, I assume that Poe's stories were not as without religion as the previously gathered evidence suggests. The narrator himself also mentions perverseness in connection with religion such as when he is hanging the cat:

"-- a deadly sin that would so jeopardize my immortal soul as to place it – if such a thing were possible – even beyond the reach of the infinite mercy of the Most Merciful and Most Terrible God."⁸⁵

My assumption is that Poe blames God through the narrator for his suffering. It does not necessarily mean that Poe was a religious man but "The Black Cat" seems to contain a reference to religion, furthermore, this would not be the first story to contain a trail of religion. Despite the aforementioned evidence, I assume that the cat itself serves as a trigger for the spirit of perverse that dwells in the narrator. In other words, it seems as if its goodness makes the spirit of perverse want to harm it.

Another symbol is represented by houses that the narrator and his wife live in, and the condition of these dwellings. I think that these are supposed to represent the state of the narrator's mind. At the beginning, there is a lovely house and the narrator's mind seems to be unspoilt, but later, when he begins to experience fury and fits of anger, the house burns down. This can also be seen as a punishment for killing the cat, which would correlate with the imprint of a hung cat on the wall. After that, they move into an old house which probably reflects the latter deterioration of the narrator's mind. Lastly, there is the cellar wall that would become a grave for his wife. The walls are loosely constructed and can easily fall apart therefore I presume this to be the final stadium of the deterioration of the narrator's mind because he walled his wife in, having no regrets of the evil deed he

⁸⁴ See Jacqueline Simpson and Steve Roud, *A Dictionary of English Folklore* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 62-63.

⁸⁵ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe in Five Volumes: Volume Two* (Pennsylvania: A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, 2001), 82, accessed December 12, 2014, http://books.ebooklibrary.org/members/penn_state_collection/psuecs/poe2v.pdf.

committed. The levels of deterioration of the narrator's mind correspond with the seriousness of the evil deeds which is getting stronger.

Concluding the symbols of "The Black Cat", they might represent the inconsistency of human mind and how easily it can grow evil, under the weight of an illness or an addiction, without any remorse. This story was written in 1843 which was a few years before Poe's death. It is possible that the narrator is Poe himself, writing down observations of his own behaviour and state of mind.

Tout ensemble, the three analysed stories all contain elements of inner fear, which is based on unpredictability of human mind that germinates from mental disorders and addictions or as Poe would call it "the perverse". Basically, "The Black Cat" deals with the problem of alcoholism that wakes the spirit of perverse up in the narrator who ends up killing his own wife. Then there is "Berenice" whose teeth are the object of the narrator's obsession that escalates into Berenice's premature burial and later mutilation. The spirit of perverse was in this case represented by narrator's monomania. "The Fall of the House of Usher" deals with the topic of inbreeding, possible incest between the twins, intentional premature burial and eventual death. The inbreeding and possible incest are the form of the spirit of perverse here. As mentioned before, the perverse can be interpreted as evil dispositions with which we are born and things like madness, deteriorated mind, mental disorders and such make it easier for a person to lose boundaries and unleash the spirit of perverse. This action, therefore, leads to commission of a vile crime. If we consider the characters involved, every story contained a woman who died at the end, never naturally and seemingly always by the hand of a man possessed by the spirit of perverse. Although the case of Berenice's death being caused by Egaeus might be a dubious claim, he seemed to have suffered a blackout at the end of the story; therefore I assume that he could do something to her so she would seem dead. In addition to this, the spirit of perverse always seems to possess a man rather than a woman, which could be connected to the fact that females in Poe's life tended to fall victim to a disease, namely tuberculosis. Therefore women were the victims in his stories. Men on the other hand were the ones possessed by the spirit of perverse.

Then there are elements that are connected to characters' minds, others evoke anger in them, or make them feel obsessed and function as triggers. For example the cat, Berenice's teeth, or Roderick's guilt can be called triggers of the spirit of perverse.

Last, but not the least, madness which possesses a narrator is present in all three stories. In "Berenice" the madness is induced by Egaeus's evil deed, Roderick's madness

is caused by the Usher family's secret and also by bearing the guilt of burying Madeline alive, and in "The Black Cat", the madness is gradually induced by alcohol and the unbearable presence of the cat. All these elements of Poe's stories lead to the internal fear that is caused by the spirit of perverse, which grows from addictions and disorders and make a person to be unpredictable in their actions.

3.2 Outer Space and the Fear of the Unknown

In order to understand how the inner fear and the fear of the unknown and outer space differ, it is necessary to have read the works, but an attempt to describe Lovecraft's intentions when writing his stories, could make it clearer.

Lovecraft with his passion for astronomy and an inspiration from Poe created his own sphere of fear that works with the fact that no human mind is ready for the terror that is lurking in outer space, or at least no human mind was probably ready back then. This horror is also induced by the frightfulness of the unknown that, in Lovecraft's works, affects a person's mind. The characters that Lovecraft creates are usually anti-heroes, mild-mannered scholars and others. Despite being inspired by Poe, Lovecraft's stories lack evil characters as far as the narrators are concerned. It can be mentioned beforehand that none of his narrators seems to show any signs of Poe's concept of the spirit of perverse, therefore Lovecraft does not appear to work with the idea of inherent evil dispositions. He rather assumes the evil to be on the outside than on the inside. An element that Poe and Lovecraft have to a certain degree in common is that a narrator questions their own sanity and this leads a reader to doubt the narrator as well.⁸⁶ Lovecraft's writings also convey the insignificance of humankind in comparison with vast universe.⁸⁷

Lovecraft's stories are meant to violate the limitation of time and space and natural law that limit our lives. Weird Fiction is about crafting the idea of never-ending cosmic spaces that reach beyond human perception. His stories contain elements of hidden horror and its later effect, the presentation or portrayal of the horror using an object or phenomena, the reaction of those affected by the horror and the influence on the present

⁸⁶ See José Carlos Gil, "Poe and Lovecraft: Interior and Cosmic Terror," *In Anglo Saxonica Ser.III N.1* (2010): 37-43.

⁸⁷ See Howard Phillips Lovecraft, *Collected Essays: Volume 5 Philosophy; Autobiography and Miscellany*, ed. S. T. Joshi (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2006), 145-149.

situation in the story. Another essential constituent was to “never have a wonder taken for granted” and also atmosphere of a story should be put above any action.⁸⁸

In the following analyses, not only should the differences between their writing styles be observable but a reader should be able perceive the distinction of fears that authors used in their works.

3.2.1 The Tomb

“The Tomb” tells us of a day-dreaming boy who becomes obsessed with a mausoleum of his supposed ancestors. This obsession brings him madness and gets him committed into an asylum.

This short story belongs to one of the earliest of Lovecraft’s stories and as such, it should contain most of the stimulus provided by Poe. The protagonist, though is heavily based on Lovecraft himself, assuming from the following excerpt.

“Wealthy beyond the necessity of a commercial life, and temperamentally unfitted for the formal studies and social recreation of my acquaintances, I have dwelt ever in realms apart from the visible world; spending my youth and adolescence in ancient and little known books, and in roaming the fields and groves of the region near my ancestral home.”⁸⁹

By making connections with Lovecraft’s biography, it is visible that the protagonist and Lovecraft himself have things in common. For example, the riches, not being able to study at school, dreaming about other realms, reading ancient books and staying near his family’s house.

It is also possible to observe Lovecraft’s obsession with his family and ancestors because the protagonist is also obsessed with ancestral history. Jervas Dudley, the protagonist, thinks himself to be a descendant of the Hydes clan. The obsession with the clan is connected to a tomb that Jervas could not access as a child but later, when he grew up, he entered and spent most of his time there, which gets him into an asylum.

I assume that the protagonist of this story is similar to the protagonist in “Berenice”. Firstly, they both suffer from monomania and secondly, their illness began in childhood. The difference is that Egaeus knew about his sickness whether Jervas did not. He thought it to be just an interest in an object, not an obsession. This disorder affected their lives in different ways. It is of importance to stress that Egaeus’s madness caused a death whether

⁸⁸ See Howard Phillips Lovecraft, *Collected Essays: Volume 2*, ed. S T. Joshi (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2004), 175-178.

⁸⁹ H P. Lovecraft, *The Fiction: Complete and Unabridged*, ed. Barnes & Noble (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2008), 14.

Jervas's obsession leading to madness consumed him and got him admitted into the asylum.

This story makes use of gothic settings such as graveyard, tomb and an old family house. Lovecraft also made use of the macabre as the protagonist is interested in death among other things. These make Lovecraft's story seem to be heavily inspired by Poe and his writing style. In my opinion, Lovecraft tried to mimic Poe's "spirit of perverse" in this work hence the previous evidence and also the rich descriptions of the strong lure of its secret and also the interior of the tomb.

"I felt singularly at home in the musty, charnel-house air. Looking about me, I beheld many marble slabs bearing coffins, or the remains of coffins."⁹⁰

Together with the theme of madness it is possible to conclude that "The Tomb" contains many gothic elements but the protagonist, even though he suffers from monomania and becomes mad, does not show any trace of the spirit of perverse, i.e. evil dispositions; I therefore assume that Lovecraft only inspired himself by the theme of death and madness, rather than Poe's characters in this short story.

3.2.2 The Rats in the Walls

"The Rats in the Walls" (1923) is a story told by Delapore who purchases back and renovates an estate that his ancestors lost due to terrible events. After moving into the renovated house, he becomes haunted by sounds of rats coming from within the walls. These sounds lead him to a terrible secret hidden in a cellar and madness.

"The Rats in the Walls" was written six years after "The Tomb" (1917) and seven years before "The Whisperer in Darkness" (1930), therefore this short story should represent a half-way change, i.e. should be showing more of Lovecraft's outer fear and less of Poe's inner fear.

This short story deals with a terrible family secret, which is a theme similar to "The Fall of the House of Usher" and it can be observed in "The Tomb" as well. The setting is comparable as well, for Poe used for example, old mansions, which is an element typical of Gothic literature. The previous short story dealt with the setting of a tomb and this one is not far from it. "The Rats in the Walls" contains settings of old family mansion, which was to be reconstructed to its former glory. This mansion also contains a cellar,

⁹⁰ H P. Lovecraft, *The Fiction: Complete and Unabridged*, ed. Barnes & Noble (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2008), 18.

where the terrible secret is hidden and it consists of rituals and a murderous nature of his ancestors. The last element that could be connected to Poe is the narrator's madness at the end of the story, which is a Gothic element as well.

As far as elements of Lovecraft's own writing are concerned, there are a few inspired by his life and some are connected to his own sphere of fear. The story presents a reader with dates which actually correspond with Lovecraft's real life events. The narrator states that he moved to the Exham Priory, which was his family mansion on 16 July 1923 and this is the year when Lovecraft wrote this story. 1904 is the year of the death of the narrator's father and it corresponds with the death of Lovecraft's grandfather. As mentioned before, Lovecraft's grandfather represented a paternal role for Lovecraft and that is why I assume this event appeared in the short story as the death of the narrator's father. In 1917 the narrator's son was taken into army and Lovecraft attempted to enlist the army in this year. In 1921, the narrator states that he finds himself aimless and this is probably caused by the death of his son. This year corresponds with the death of Lovecraft's mother, who died from gall bladder surgery complications. This resulted in Lovecraft's attempts to commit suicide.⁹¹ Based on this, I assume that the narrator's black out towards the end of the story is inspired by either Lovecraft's own suicidal thoughts. All of the stated were stressful events for Lovecraft and they correlate with stressful events in the story.

Similarly to the previous story, Lovecraft's character is built on his real life interests such as Roman, Celtic and Egyptian history and in connection with this he creates the fear of the unknown. Most of these are based on existing history and legends but this short story also contains Lovecraft's own made-up Egyptian deity of chaos belonging to The Cthulhu Mythos.

The unknown in this story is represented by both rats lurking in the walls and the secret portal underneath the sub-cellar. Lovecraft makes his stories different from Poe's by using the elements of both the unknown and his own life but so far, the inspiration taken from Poe stories has been quite strong, hence the use of gothic elements such as madness, haunted mansions and graveyards.

In order to understand what makes Lovecraft's stories different, especially later when he began using components of The Cthulhu Mythos, it is necessary that this concept is

⁹¹ See Tyson, *The Dream World of H. P. Lovecraft: His Life, His Demons, His Universe*, 211, ebook.

explained. The God-like creatures referred to as The Old Ones form the Cthulhu mythos which finds its origin in mythologies Lovecraft was interested in. The Old Ones are also a product of Lovecraft's version of fear, i.e. the fear of the unknown.⁹² All in all, the Cthulhu mythos is connected to Greek and Egyptian mythology and followed by the creation of Lovecraft's own deities. The Old Ones is a cover term for aliens or entities of great power and knowledge that were here on Earth before humans.⁹³

3.2.3 The Whisperer in Darkness

"The Whisperer in Darkness" tells a story of Albert Wilmarth who starts to investigate a story about a body of an alien floating in a river printed in newspapers. This way he becomes a correspondent of Henry Akeley, who is terrorised by these creatures. After a series of events which are mostly described through letters, Wilmarth decides to meet Akeley. In the end he finds out that not only was Akeley killed by the aliens but it was supposed to be his fate too.

Unlike Lovecraft's previous stories that were analysed this one seems to work fully with the theme of alien forces. Being written six years before he died and assuming that with age, he distanced himself from Poe, this story could contain most of Lovecraft's fear of the unknown and outer space.

"The Whisperer in Darkness" is based on some information from Lovecraft's life, similarly to the previous works. The events begin in medias res but the narrative starts with the incident of November, 1927 in Vermont. Lovecraft himself visited Vermont around the same time of the same year; therefore he could vividly portray the settings of the story as he does throughout most of it. Furthermore, he uses the environment to induce the fear which conveys the message that the protagonist does not know what is lurking behind trees.

"Branching away now and then were narrow, half-concealed roads that bored their way through solid, luxuriant masses of forest among whose primal trees whole armies of elemental spirits might well lurk. As I saw these I thought of how Akeley had been molested by unseen agencies on his drives along this very route, and did not wonder that such things could be."⁹⁴

⁹² See Kerry Bolton, "The Influence of H. P. Lovecraft On Occultism," *The Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies* 2, no. 6 (2014), <http://irishgothichorrorjournal.homestead.com/LovecraftOccultism.html>.

⁹³ See Tyson, *The Dream World of H. P. Lovecraft: His Life, His Demons, His Universe*, 107-108, ebook.

⁹⁴ H P. Lovecraft, *The Fiction: Complete and Unabridged*, ed. Barnes & Noble (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2008), 702.

The protagonist Albert N. Wilmarth was an instructor of literature at Miskatonic University in Arkham, which is a fictional city created by Lovecraft himself. In my opinion, this professor is supposed to be Lovecraft's fictional alter-ego, because they shared an interest in mythologies. Wilmarth is a folklorist, which would explain why he knows about Cthulhu, and also adopted Lovecraft's opinion of superiority, which is recurrent in almost every of his works.

“It was my conclusion that such witnesses - in every case naive and simple backwoods folk - had glimpsed the battered and bloated bodies of human beings or farm animals in the whirling currents;”⁹⁵

There are several ways though which Lovecraft induces the fear and reality of the story such as a use of letters that Akeley and Wilmarth exchanged. Furthermore, they also exchanged short telegram messages as well as photos of alien footprints and a phonograph record of an alien voice. Furthermore, the first-person perspective appears again. These, in my opinion, are supposed to make the story more realistic and therefore more frightening for a reader. Alien technology appears in the story as well, for example cylinders for a storage of brains and devices which provided them with sight, hearing and speech.

If we consider the letters that Akeley and Wilmarth send to each other, it is possible to see that these messages are getting the shorter the more dangerous the situation gets and this gradual shortening evokes the feeling of helplessness and fear in a reader, also because Akeley usually states that Wilmarth cannot do anything about his situation and advises him to take no action in these messages. Some of these short messages also contain mistakes one of which appears in Akeley's name as can be seen in the telegram below:

“APPRECIATE YOUR POSITION BUT CAN DO NOTHING TAKE NO ACTION
YOURSELF FOR IT COULD ONLY HARM BOTH WAIT FOR EXPLANATION HENRY
AKELY”⁹⁶

This inclines that these messages were either manipulated or written by somebody else and therefore it induces the fear because of the unknown force that got involved in the communication.

In this story, Lovecraft induces madness by exposing Wilmarth to Akeley's remains, namely his face and hands that were probably worn by an alien. Furthermore he also

⁹⁵ H P. Lovecraft, *The Fiction: Complete and Unabridged*, ed. Barnes & Noble (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2008), 669.

⁹⁶ H P. Lovecraft, *The Fiction: Complete and Unabridged*, ed. Barnes & Noble (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2008), 688. A quotation of a telegram in the form in which it appeared in the book.

contributes to this atmosphere using several night scenes where the aliens and their adherents try to get into Akeley's house. In one of these scenes, Akeley thinks he is going crazy.

“I think I am going crazy. It may be that all I have ever written you is a dream or madness. It was bad enough before, but this time it is too much. They talked to me last night - talked in that cursed buzzing voice and told me things that I dare not repeat to you. I heard them plainly above the barking of the dogs, and once when they were drowned out a human voice helped them.”⁹⁷

“The Whisperer in Darkness” does not mention any disorders and even though there are parts where characters think they are mad, this madness is not caused by an internal impulse such as a mental disorder but by an external motivation. This external influence is provided by the unknown that Akeley and Wilmarth are exposed to. They cannot be certain whether the aliens speak the truth about not harming them and taking them on a journey to their planet. Even the use of alien technology makes this piece very different from Lovecraft's previous stories and also Poe. Based on given evidence, I assume that the proportion of Poe's influence on Lovecraft is getting the lower the later a story is written.

⁹⁷ H P. Lovecraft, *The Fiction: Complete and Unabridged*, ed. Barnes & Noble (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2008), 690.

CONCLUSION

In order to complete and conclude this thesis, it is necessary to reiterate the concepts of inner and outer fear, i.e. what forms the concepts. The thesis also revealed the necessity to point out differences between inner and outer fear, and furthermore, stress the development of Lovecraft's outer fear concept in regard to Poe's concept of inner fear.

Poe's inner fear works with the notion of perverse which was defined by Poe himself as "primitive impulses of the human heart".⁹⁸ These impulses are usually represented as disorders or sicknesses of mind which lead to destruction of not only the possessed person, but also the victim of this possessed person. As a consequence, the possessed figure seems to sink into madness and the victim perishes. This "spirit of perverse", furthermore, requires a trigger that is usually the victim but it does not necessarily have to be. "The Black Cat" could serve as an example of this exception as the cat is the trigger but the victim, who dies in the end, is the narrator's wife. Even though the cat dies in the story, it comes back to haunt the narrator, which makes its death unclear. The rule that a victim, who dies in the end, equals a trigger is therefore broken.

Lovecraft's outer fear deals with a different concept that includes something not of this world, i.e. something alien. Probably the best way to comprehend Lovecraft's outer fear is to compare it to inner fear. The main difference is that the stimuli of this fear do not come from inside of a person but are provided by something external, in other words, the "primitive impulse of the human heart" is missing. The first of Lovecraft's stories, "The Tomb", which was analysed, seems to resemble Poe's works the most but this is only due to the protagonist's fascination with death, the settings of tomb, and the implied madness at the end of the story which was probably caused by the narrator's monomania. No vile action was taken though and therefore the short story resembles Poe's concept of inner fear the most. A clear example of outer fear is represented by "The Whisperer in Darkness", which presents a reader with an unknown external threat that puts lives of the involved in danger. The events of "The Tomb" and "The Rats in the Walls" seem to result in madness at their end, unlike the events of "The Whisperer in Darkness" that do not appear to bear any signs of madness, although the incidents that happened towards the end could provide stimuli for the external influences to make the narrator mad.

⁹⁸ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Portable Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. J. Gerald Kennedy (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 194.

Despite Lovecraft's early inspiration taken from Poe, his understanding of fear and concept of outer fear was gradually developing with the help of his own interests, among which the love for astronomy is probably the most important one. An example of the development could be the comparison of Lovecraft's "The Tomb" and "The Whisperer in Darkness". The narrator of "The Tomb" resembles Lovecraft, regarding his interests and remoteness, among other things, but his fascination with death in connection to monomania which was also present in the story, made "The Tomb" similar to Poe stories as those usually contain a sickness of mind as well as the theme of death. If "The Whisperer in Darkness" is to be taken into account, it represents Lovecraft's concept of outer fear entirely, in my opinion, as it bears neither symbols of inner fear nor fascination with death. The fear in this story is provided by the aliens that represent the fear of the unknown, in other words, the outer fear.

Commenting on how madness is connected to the concepts of inner and outer fear, the source of the madness has to be taken into account. In the case of inner fear, it is formed by a vile act performed by a human being. Contrary to this, the unknown external elements provide a source of madness for outer fear but Lovecraft's protagonists do not necessarily become mad, which is the opposite of Poe's protagonists.

Influence of education is visible in both of the authors' works but Poe despite his interests such as star-gazing turned his attention to the analysis of a person's mind. This was probably influenced by often presence of death in his life. Lovecraft, on the contrary, used his interest in astronomy and mythology to its fullest and not only created the Cthulhu mythos but also gradually developed his own sphere of fear.

When it comes to religion, it definitely helped Lovecraft to create his own mythos as he explored many religions, resulting in his passion for Mahometanism. It could be suggested that religion does not seem to have anything to do with the concept of outer fear but the Cthulhu mythos consists of old deities that, among other things, pose the external threat and provide the fear of the unknown. Poe's connection to religion does not seem to contribute to his concept of inner fear, even though he usually refers to religiously oriented books in his stories but they seem to induce madness rather than to influence the "spirit of perverse" in any way.

As mentioned before, women are of high importance to Poe both in his works and life. The women most important for him were unfortunate as to die of tuberculosis and this probably inspired the portrayal of women in Poe's works. These are usually the unfortunate victims of the character who is possessed by the "spirit of perverse". Lovecraft

as well encountered women important for him, such as his mother, but they never seem to be of high importance in his works. In “The Tomb”, the narrator speaks of his mother and her concerns about his health, which could be inspired by Lovecraft’s overly-protective mother but women never seem to influence Lovecraft’s concept of outer fear, for example becoming victims of an external threat.

In regard to Poe’s definition of perverse as “primitive impulses of the human heart”⁹⁹ and his concept of inner fear of which the perverse is a root, it is possible to say that Lovecraft’s outer fear is a different concept consisting of impulses other than those coming from the human heart. Lovecraft’s outer fear lacks a basic element that Poe’s inner fear contains and this is the capability of a human being to do evil things. Inner fear works with perverseness which is the evilness and capability of doing evil things coming from the human heart, the evilness in outer fear, on the other hand, has an external source and, as stated before this external source are the aliens. As mentioned before, the perverse leads to a loss of reason and therefore to committing a vile crime. If outer fear is considered, there is no vile crime to be committed that would come from the inside of a person’s mind but the vile action is done by an external agent.

All in all, the analysis and aforementioned arguments lead to the conclusion that Lovecraft was inspired by Poe’s aesthetics of the beginning but did not adopt his concept of inner fear. In addition to this, Lovecraft’s outer fear had been gradually developing until he embraced it fully in his later works such as “The Whisperer in Darkness”.

⁹⁹ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Portable Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. J. Gerald Kennedy (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 194.

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