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DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

**Za hranice hororu, aneb zkoumání souvislostí mezi literárními díly E. A. Poea
a filmy A. Hitchcocka**

**Beyond Horror: or, Exploring The Connections Between E. A. Poe's Writings
and A. Hitchcock's Cinema**

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1. Introduction

Although hidden at the back of people's minds, and often subject to criticism and classification of being taboo, horror forms a fundamental part of many cultures, reflected not only in literature, but present in ancient history, as well as in theatre and film. Horror, although often avoided and feared, is a necessary component of the human psyche; it is something that is simultaneously desired and loathed, and it is because of its close links to psychology that it is present in our culture, as, to various extents, anything man-made is a reflection of the human mind. The topic of horror seems to be a potent theme in a wide variety of fields; especially in literature and film. It may be useful, in the exploration of those fields, to trace the development of horror, its place in these media and the role it plays therein, which may help to illuminate the reasons for its incorporation within these short stories and films.

Nevertheless, Edgar Allan Poe and Alfred Hitchcock are explored in this thesis as the most convenient choice, but the implications of the thesis are in close connection to horror in general, that which has been present in our culture for centuries and is likely to continue its presence for many years in the future. This inextricable connection of horror and human thought is to be explored in this thesis equally, by the use of Poe and Hitchcock for demonstration, as well as by offering a theoretical background to this fundamental topic and connecting the specific works to these theories, in order to show that horror is not by any means a modern trend or an unusual and extravagant mode to be denied and rejected by society, but accepted as a parallel of the development of human thought and forming a connection at a higher level, beyond the small-scale developments of literary trends. While the differences between Poe and Hitchcock will be brought forth and analyzed, as each author has his particular and specific style, it will also be pointed out that many aspects of their horror are similar or even unchanging, in congruence with the idea that certain elements of horror operate truly "beyond" literature, film or even literary theory; and the links between the ancient aspects and the more modern demonstrations of horror are obvious and show a timeless quality. It may be surmised that horror in its basic essence would possibly change in line with a large-scale shift in human thinking; however its developments may be explored only at a detailed level, as the basic elements show a stable quality over centuries. It must be stated, nevertheless, that despite this almost distanced view, as if looking at human

thought from a global and interconnected perspective, the understanding of horror may vary from culture to culture or, even, individually, just as much as human thought may vary as such – this is again due to its close links with the human mind, and what may seem horrific to one person, might not seem so to another. This thesis, however, deals more importantly with the large-scale connections of horror, and, more closely, with its specific depictions in Poe’s short stories such as “The Fall of the House of Usher,” “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “Ligeia,” and Hitchcock’s films, namely *Psycho*, *Rope*, *Vertigo* and *The Birds*, while simultaneously exploring, by this theoretical establishment of horror’s boundaries, the ways in which both Poe and Hitchcock surpass these, their works achieving a status difficult to categorize within this scheme, resulting in their shift beyond horror.

In the attempt to carry out the abovementioned exploration and analysis, a background in theory is necessary – to illuminate the topic, as well as to form a solid basis for the subsequent analysis. Apart from pointing out the specific similarities and differences between Poe’s and Hitchcock’s works in several themed chapters of this thesis, which already shows the structural and topical similarities of the two authors, the ultimate aim is to connect these singular demonstrations with the introductory theories. This serves the purpose of showing the extent to which both Poe and Hitchcock, while following their own trends and exploring their specific artistic styles, are subject to the longstanding paradigms of horror, or, if you will, of psychology. On the other side of the coin, however, this will also enable one to explore the limits of these paradigms, and ultimately set out the extent to which these authors supersede horror; while horror as such stays relatively unchanging due to its connections to the human psyche, there are ways in which an author may not stay within its boundaries.

As an introduction, it may be stated that the theories included in this thesis shall be those of Edmund Burke and his explanation of the Sublime and the criteria of its creation, which may depict the main areas in which Poe and Hitchcock do conform to these paradigms. This is a useful source, as Burke is quite detailed in his description of horror or, rather, the creation of the Sublime, and thus facilitates a strong basis upon which to establish the subsequent literary and film analysis. Similarly, the links between Burke’s theory and Aristotle’s understanding of tragedy will be mentioned. Indeed, while the tragedy and the Sublime are two differing phenomena, they arguably form a part of the higher connection of horror, albeit by different

means. The effect on the audience, however, may serve the same purpose as horror in both cases, and may therefore form the beginnings of horror in literature and art.

As a more contemporary source of the development of horror in theory, Julia Kristeva's theory of the abject will be included in the theoretical chapter, as this is undoubtedly a significant aspect of horror in its modern shape, and despite the timeless quality of certain elements of horror, Kristeva's view and findings are fresh and new, thus useful to the purposes of this thesis. The notions she explores perhaps may have been present in the depiction of horror for a long time, however the articulated theory is pioneering in the field. It is especially relevant here due to its close connections with psychology, an indivisible part of horror, of which Kristeva is obviously aware. The notion of the abject will be discussed in comparison to the Sublime, and possible links between these concepts shall be pointed out.

Finally, some part of the chapter will be devoted to Gilles Deleuze's film-oriented theories, as they are relevant to the exploration of Hitchcock's works, and help to explain some of the meaning behind Hitchcock's film-making strategies. While illuminating the films from a slightly different perspective, they will also be used to connect the films to the previous theories of horror and the specific depictions of horror in Hitchcock's films, to keep in line with the theme and argument of this thesis. Issues such as the mental image, the structure of the film narrative and the role of the camera will be mentioned, to further link film theory to literary theory as discussed by, for example, Vladimir Propp and his formalistic approach to narrative structure. Laura Mulvey's observations on structural duality in film will be mentioned and juxtaposed with Paul Ricoeur's interpretation of Sigmund Freud, to show a similar line of thought. These theories will mainly serve the purpose of conjoining the two media which are used in the analysis, the literary and film media.

The thesis will then continue in such a manner as to take a closer look at the short stories and films in sub-chapters, grouped together by main elements of horror which Poe's and Hitchcock's works share, although at certain times, these elements are shared across sub-chapters and may overlap. Nevertheless, the main topics in this chapter will be the split personality element of *Psycho*, coupled with Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "William Wilson" in one sub-chapter, both tightly linked to psychology and the structure of the mind; for example as described by Sigmund Freud. However, more aspects of these works will be explored in connection to the theories of horror, to explain the reasons for its evocation of fear in the audience or readers. The

second sub-chapter's theme will be the perversion of certain murders occurring in the short story or film, namely in *Rope*, *Blackmail*, "The Black Cat" and "The Tell-Tale Heart" – all connected by attacking the moral code of humanity, of depicting perversion and depraved murderers which naturally evoke fear and shock in the reader or audience. Already the presence of a corpse in the same room, and the readers' or the audience's awareness of it, creates such an effect of horror. Similarly, a shared aspect is the effects of such murders on a morally conscious individual, in other words, the maddening effects of guilt or the simple knowledge of one's committed crime. The third sub-chapter will be devoted to the theme of obsession, an element set apart in the thesis due to its extensive use in "Ligeia" and *Vertigo* – the two works that share a remarkable amount of elements and structure. In the larger context of this thesis, however, obsession forms some part of the psychological theme as well and is then closely connected to the first sub-chapter. The final sub-chapter involving "The Raven" and *The Birds* is singled out for a similar reason; the potent theme of placing an animal, specifically a bird, in the position of the horror-evoking element, creates a lot of space for analysis and, indeed, is greatly connected to Burke's theory and his criteria of the Sublime. The division of each sub-chapter is then logically made, and facilitates a thematic structuring of this primarily analytical chapter. Due to the comparison being not only between one author and the theories, but two authors and the theories, these divisions are made in the effort to group the various works of the two authors systematically, rather than such divisions made in respect of the theories, with all works included in all sub-chapters, which could result in confused structuring of these works.

The third chapter shall constitute a concluding analysis of Poe's and Hitchcock's artistic personas – their placement in a larger context of literary and film development, such as prevalent genres and trends of thought, and the effects of these on the deeper analysis made in the second chapter. In essence, this chapter will serve to establish points that should be realized as regards the different era and artistic media, to take these into account following the comparison of Hitchcock and Poe. Similarly, this chapter will point out the reservations one may keep in mind throughout, as some authors' intention is often misconstrued; this may be especially applicable in the case of Poe and Hitchcock. For ease of reference, this chapter shall also be divided into sub-chapters, the first dealing specifically with the different medium used (literature and film), the second shall focus on the noted difference in setting used by Poe and Hitchcock, and finally, the third sub-chapter will bring forward the shared focus on psychological phenomena, bringing the reader to

the final representation of horror despite the authors' differences. As a final chapter, it will bring together the previous two chapters, and, by use of a closer look at the actual limits of horror boundaries, it will point out the ways in which Poe and Hitchcock overcome these. Their categorization is then rendered more problematic, but this is in line with their tendency to play and to create works whose seriousness is debatable. Mystification is a rather significant part of the authors' horror-making, which alone seems to subvert their own works, and push them towards different categories of literature.

With the completion of the thesis, there should be an increased understanding of the various strategies used by Poe and Hitchcock to evoke horror, and may result in viewing these authors and their works not as individuals in their specific time and area, although this of course too has an impact on their styles, as will be shown, but rather as parts of a larger framework of horror as a theory, with their obviously relevant contribution to this field. The specific connections between Poe and Hitchcock should be clear, and will be underlined in the course of the thesis, in order to show their links to the higher level that conjoins various types and styles of horror as a single, unified trajectory. These links will then serve the purpose of strengthening the view that both Poe and Hitchcock rebel against these preset limitations. While obviously strongly implementing the established horror strategies and theories in their works, they are equally exploiting them, or perhaps even abusing them, in order to illicit horror, in some cases dishonestly. It will also be concluded that, since play and mystification is a large part of the authors' works, then the resulting amplification of fiction, as well as the theme of an impending apocalypse amounting to a sense of ensuing dystopia, both contribute to their reach beyond horror.

2. A Closer Look at Theory

As a foundation for this thesis, it should be analyzed what horror actually entails from a theoretical perspective, to explore its own boundaries. Whereas in the following chapters, the short stories and films shall be explored in detail and with direct consultation of primary texts or media, this chapter shall deal with the phenomenon of horror and its theoretical implications, such as the concept of the Sublime offering a specific set of rules, as it were, to trace in the primary texts and films. The idea is to also achieve a more historic context of horror as a genre and as a phenomenon, and perhaps envision its development more clearly. This may provide an initial perspective on the problem of horror in literary texts and films, and enable one to get a glimpse of the phenomenon from a greater distance, and with a wider but delineated scope, to finalize and set in context the issues discussed in the chapters to follow.

2.1 Theories of Horror: Edmund Burke and Julia Kristeva

At the centre of the study of horror in philosophy is the concept of the Sublime, explored by Immanuel Kant, as well as, and to a great detail, by Edmund Burke. Gilles Deleuze discusses the Sublime, providing a clear summary and definition of the concept itself:

Kant distinguished two kinds of Sublime, mathematical and dynamic, the immense and the powerful, the measureless and the formless. Both had the property of decomposing organic composition, the first by going beyond it, the second by breaking it. In the mathematical sublime, the extensive unit of measurement changes so much that the imagination is no longer able to comprehend it, runs up against its own limit and is annihilated; but it gives way to a thinking faculty which forces us to conceive the immense or the measureless as whole. In the dynamic sublime, it is intensity which is raised to such a power that it dazzles or annihilates our organic being, strikes terror into it, but arouses a thinking faculty by which we feel superior to that which annihilates us, to discover in us a supra-organic spirit which dominates the whole inorganic life of things: then we lose our fear, knowing that our spiritual “destination” is truly invincible.¹

Hence, the most important aspect brought forth by Kant is the idea that a human is forced to absorb (whether by senses or only by thought) something which is in scope or size much larger

¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: The Athlone Press, 1995) 53.

and thus inconceivable. Secondly, it is an important aspect that the experience results in annihilation; this might not be a physical and real annihilation, but a symbolic one. It may be useful to connect this early theory of horror to Julia Kristeva's concept of the "abject," which is indeed much different from Kant's and Burke's idea of the Sublime; however, there are similarities and this theory of the abject is one of the fundamental ideas of horror. Kristeva claims, "[a] 'something' that I do not recognize as a thing. A weight of meaninglessness, about which there is nothing insignificant, and which crushes me. On the edge of nonexistence and hallucination, of a reality that, if I acknowledge it, annihilates me."² In practice, Kristeva's notion of the abject is more reminiscent of Frankenstein's monster, for example; it deals with the gruesome, that which one's mind absolutely rejects – it is extreme, not a gloomy house, such as in Poe, which is almost a romantic, albeit dark, image. Neither is it Hitchcock's withheld violence, that which happens behind a shower curtain or away from the screen. Kristeva powerfully describes the concept – it is often connected to being a social taboo due to its disgusting nature. Perhaps it may be noted that modern horror, with its gore, comes closer to this depiction of the abject than for example Poe's or Hitchcock's works. However, this probably applies strictly to the nature of the abject body, which is "monstrous." When considering the concept from a less material perspective, Kristeva's following description may be applied to Poe's demoniac characters:

He who denies morality is not abject; there can be grandeur in amorality and even in crime that flaunts its disrespect for the law—rebellious, liberating, and suicidal crime. Abjection, on the other hand, is immoral, sinister, scheming, and shady: a terror that disassembles, a hatred that smiles, a passion that uses the body for barter instead of inflaming it, a debtor who sells you up, a friend who stabs you.³

Indeed, when applied to some of Poe's main villains, it is not the villain who is not aware of morality and has no conscience that can be called abject; nevertheless, there are characters that Poe creates which are "immoral, sinister, scheming, and shady," these may be abject in nature. Perhaps it may be somewhat complicated to determine absolutely whether a character is aware of morality and purposefully being evil, as often it happens that, the characters, aware of morality, are aware of the evil they are doing, unable to stop it but being devastated in effect. It is this lack of control that Poe often creates in the villains; and the nature of their actual immorality is more

² Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) 2.

³ Kristeva 4.

open. The villain of “The Black Cat,” for example, fits this description, despite his lack of understanding why he becomes so evil.

As Kristeva further notes, “[a]bject. It is something rejected from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself as from an object. Imaginary uncanniness and real threat, it beckons to us and ends up engulfing us.”⁴ This way, the abject is being so rejected as there are traces of it indivisibly contained within a human being; that part of the mind that one would not wish to think about, certainly not as something with which one wishes to be affiliated. This is the main reason why it often forms such social taboos; perhaps it is linked to the notion of shame, as it is the “I” rejecting the “Other” which is, in fact, within. According to Kristeva, “[i]t is experienced at the peak of its strength when that subject, weary of fruitless attempts to identify with something on the outside, finds the impossible within; when it finds that the impossible constitutes its very being, that it is none other than abject.”⁵ This is reminiscent of Poe’s “William Wilson,” whose realization that his arch enemy dwells within is perhaps more the reason for his suicide than the phantasmal knife that stabs him.

Kristeva’s contribution to the theory of horror, then, is very relevant, and may be linked to the more traditional theories, such as the Sublime. Edmund Burke develops this in his work, “On the Sublime and Beautiful,” as he does not only explain the source of the feeling of awe and ensuing horror, but also describes point by point the aspects enabling and enhancing the Sublime, or horror. In his primary explanation of the Sublime, he argues:

Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling.⁶

This way, Burke sets out that terror contributes to the inception of the Sublime, and thus relates to theories of horror. There is evidence for this in language, as “[several languages] frequently use the same word to signify indifferently the modes of astonishment or admiration and those of terror. [Greek: θάμβος] is in Greek either fear or wonder; [Greek: δεινός] is terrible or respectable; [Greek: αἰδέω], to reverence or to fear.”⁷ Indeed, following the traces to antiquity proves to be worthwhile, as horror is closely related to tragedy in that, in both, the audience is

⁴ Kristeva 4.

⁵ Kristeva 5.

⁶ Edmund Burke, “On the Sublime and Beautiful,” *The Works of Edmund Burke in Nine Volumes*, vol. 1 (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1839) 82.

⁷ Burke 99.

faced with an unpleasant scene, one is perhaps more sinister and contains more suspense, whereas the other is more straightforward, however similarly involves surprise, sorrow and devastation in the viewer. Its presence in society helps to show that this type of medium is perhaps necessary for the human being, and must be in some way contributing to one's mental health.

In connection, Burke thus enlightens the nature of humans who inherently need to view pain – it is an intriguing moment when, knowing there is something dangerous or tragic happening in one's proximity, the human is compelled to see, despite the actually unpleasant feeling which follows, and even when one has fully seen everything there is to see, it is difficult to keep one's eyes away; it is like an invisible force, turning our eyes towards the tragic scene. As Burke explains:

But the case is widely different with the greater part of mankind; there is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue, as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity; so that whether the misfortune is before our eyes, or whether they are turned back to it in history, it always touches with delight. This is not an unmixed delight, but blended with no small uneasiness. The delight we have in such things hinders us from shunning scenes of misery; and the pain we feel prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer; [...]⁸

This already points to the antique tragedy, as there is a distinct sense of relief when viewing such a scene – perhaps of the realization that the viewer is not a victim in the scene directly, but is allowed to share in the moment at present. Aristotle is concerned with such viewer's attraction toward the scene similarly in *Poetics*, where he claims that “[t]he Spectacle has, indeed, an emotional attraction of its own, [...]. For the power of Tragedy, we may be sure, is felt even apart from representation and actors. Besides, the production of spectacular effects depends more on the art of the stage machinist than on that of the poet.”⁹ In this way, horror may have similar guidelines, as to why it is such a popular genre and why it has been so popular in Hitchcock's time, as well as in Poe's. It is not only that humans wish to be afraid – perhaps so, but the importance being that this fear and experience of “pain” is in fact cathartic, and in the end may be beneficial. Aristotle mentions catharsis, or purgation, by stating, “tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious [...] in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions.”¹⁰ This is indeed explained to be a purifying experience,

⁸ Burke 89.

⁹ Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. S. H. Butcher (New York: Cosimo, Inc., 2008) 13, 14.

¹⁰ Aristotle 10.

and thus, while being actually unpleasant, is a positive and a necessary element to the human consumption of media.

It seems very relevant that horror films are still largely popular – it is possible that they, as well, are cathartic. However, Michel Foucault explains an issue regarding pain and torture, in *Discipline and Punish*, where he questions the validity of “torture as a public spectacle” in modern times, as opposed to the era when this was prevalent. He argues that:

Among so many changes, I shall consider one: the disappearance of torture as a public spectacle. Today we are rather inclined to ignore it; perhaps, in its time, it gave rise to too much inflated rhetoric; perhaps it has been attributed too readily and too emphatically to a process of “humanization”, [...] Punishment of a less immediately physical kind, a certain discretion in the art of inflicting pain, a combination of more subtle, more subdued sufferings, deprived of their visible display, should not all this be treated as a special case, an incidental effect of deeper changes? And yet the fact remains that a few decades saw the disappearance of the tortured, dismembered, amputated body, symbolically branded on face or shoulder, exposed alive or dead to public view. The body as the major target of penal repression disappeared.¹¹

Indeed, there may have occurred a process of humanization, but the extent of this humanization should perhaps be questioned. It should be noted that, while overt and institutionalized torture and public executions, for example, have disappeared, the human, no matter how modern, still has not changed in its essence; torture has not completely disappeared from the world (often not even from governmental bodies in positions of authority). As regards the publicized spectacle of torture and pain, this may arguably still take place even today – be it in the form of bloody and often surprisingly gruesome scenes of modern horror movies, projected onto an oversized screen so that all detail is visible by all spectators, or in the form of sensational news stories and headlines which often have less to do with pure facts, but serve the purpose of shocking the readers, thus placing them in awe, enabling them to indulge in an alternative spectacle of torture.

Returning then to the concept of the Sublime as elaborately described by Burke, it may be primarily stated that it is in the perception or interpretation of the mind that horror forms therein. As Burke states, “[i]n this case the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it.”¹² This implies a complete suffocation of mind by an idea or a concept, by its vastness or complexity, and thus it is unable to grasp it. Kristeva shares this view, as she includes this in her theory of the abject,

¹¹ Michel Foucault, “The Body of the Condemned,” *Conflict, Order & Action: Reading in Sociology*, eds. Ed Ksenych and David Liu (Ontario: Canadian Scholars’ Press, Inc., 2001) 377, 378.

¹² Burke 98.

suggesting that “[t]here looms, within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, but it cannot be assimilated.”¹³ Even here, then, can the two concepts come together – in its nature of being “unthinkable” – however, perhaps unthinkable for differing reasons.

Burke’s main reason for suggesting something is Sublime, is its largeness – this is especially potent in horror, where a monstrous building, scenery, or a deep, dark and bottomless pit, are often picked to represent the Sublime. Burke mentions that:

[All] *general* privations are great, because they are all terrible; *vacuity* , *darkness* , *solitude* , and *silence* . [...] Greatness of dimension is a powerful cause of the sublime. This is too evident, and the observation too common, to need any illustration; it is not so common to consider in what ways greatness of dimension, vastness of extent or quantity, has the most striking effect. [...] Extension is either in length, height, or depth. Of these the length strikes least; a hundred yards of even ground will never work such an effect as a tower a hundred yards high, or a rock or mountain of that altitude. I am apt to imagine, likewise, that height is less grand than depth; and that we are more struck at looking down from a precipice, than looking up at an object of equal height; [...].¹⁴

It is not surprising, however, that in the same statement in which he describes vast and oversized objects or concepts, Burke also mentions privation – emptiness, for example. Logically speaking, the reasoning may be debatable, as Burke states that these concepts are great because they are terrible – whereas in most other cases, the formula is that the objects are terrible because they are great. Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly true that a sense of loss, missing, emptiness, or darkness, evokes fear in humans, it is transferred to the feeling of emptiness of the soul, and this is an unpleasant experience. Perhaps there may be a division in certain cases of horror, as these feelings, it seems, are not or cannot be cathartic – the release of energy or culmination of violence is not there, it is a state of suspense, and perhaps should be distinguished apart from horror evoked by violence. As Burke states above, looking into a deep pit is more effective than a tall building or mountain of an awesome magnitude – however, perhaps this feeling is even more closely connected to the vacuity than monstrosity, as it is the depth that creates horror, the absence of material, the darkness and emptiness of such a pit, that evokes this fear and awe in the human.

¹³ Kristeva 1.

¹⁴ Burke 111, 112.

Conversely, large size is not necessary for the feeling of awe, as Burke notes that “[t]here are many animals, who, though far from being large, are yet capable of raising ideas of the sublime, because they are considered as objects of terror.”¹⁵ Thus, terror is still left somewhat undefined, and whatever causes terror may be considered sublime – as the ideas that are created by it are sublime. It then renders the mind its own creator of horror, in certain cases, and withholding information or images may in fact prove to be more horrific than showing them. As Burke suggests, “[t]o make anything very terrible, obscurity seems in general to be necessary. When we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accustom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes.”¹⁶ This seems to be valid and is often used in horror films, where the true appearance of certain monsters (of which the viewer knows looks horrid) is not directly shown. In fact, this method involves the viewer and renders the audience an active part of the film, and Hitchcock is known for implementing this method in his films, effectively achieving a horrific experience. William Rothman provides an example of this, as “[...] in *Blackmail*, [murder] takes place behind a curtain; in *Psycho*, the murder in the shower is presented in a montage that withholds all views of the knife penetrating flesh [...]”¹⁷ However, this is only one example. A rather disturbing scene also occurs in another part of *Psycho*, which is the slow movement of the camera towards the corpse sitting in a chair, but the only view the audience is provided is a back view; the appearance is at first open to the viewer’s interpretation, and it may be even more horrid than the eventual showing of the face (which, of course, is in reality also rather terrifying). What Hitchcock achieves in this scene is not only the horror of the mind, imagining the possible appearance of the face, but also suspense, and suddenness, of the showing, followed thus by a somewhat cathartic feeling of the audience, however shaken. This method may be used in literary form, however the lack of seeing or knowing is more difficult to convey. Poe’s remarks about a certain image being beyond the narrator’s imagination are perhaps similar examples used in his works.

Connected with the inability to grasp an idea is the concept of infinity which Burke brings forth. He goes on, however, to distinguish between a natural kind of infinity, as it were, and artificial, stating that “[i]nfinity has a tendency to fill the mind with that sort of delightful horror, which is the most genuine effect, and truest test of the sublime. [...] Succession and uniformity of parts are

¹⁵ Burke 98.

¹⁶ Burke 99.

¹⁷ William Rothman, *Hitchcock - The Murderous Gaze* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982) 249.

what constitute the artificial infinite.”¹⁸ Indeed, this may be applied to rallies where an army is exhibited and which has often been done in Nazi Germany. The precision, with which such a vast and *uniform* number of soldiers march, may be perceived as horrifying especially if the result seems to mimic infinity. Hitchcock’s birds show this in the images of the sky where they seem to fill every part of it, and their sameness in such a large quantity creates this effect. This theory is certainly connected to the artificial, man-made world, as when one thinks of a machine which creates exactly the same product, consistently, unvaryingly, and in seemingly infinite quantities – this non-variance seems to weigh down on the mind heavily, and almost becomes a dystopian element. Deleuze’s description of the Sublime may be conjoined with this idea, as the mathematical, rather than dynamic, sublime, whereas “[t]he variable present could become interval, qualitative leap, numerical unit, intensive degree; and the whole could become organic whole, dialectical totalisation, measureless totality of the mathematical sublime, intensive totality of the dynamic sublime.”¹⁹ Thus, the idea of the individual item in such a scheme, for example only one product, one soldier, one bird, do not create this effect, one must think of these within the context of the whole, as this is precisely what creates artificial infinity, the measureless totality.

As shall be discussed in the following chapter, sound is an important aspect in creating horror and may even be portrayed in text, despite the impossibility for the reader to realistically perceive this. Burke claims, for example, that “[e]xcessive loudness alone is sufficient to overpower the soul, to suspend its action, and to fill it with terror.”²⁰ This is already suggestive of something monstrous, as for every sound there should be a source – and extremely loud noises seem to evoke the idea that behind such a sound is a terrible being. Perhaps, connected to the above, *not knowing* the source of such a sound is even more menacing (in fact, not knowing the source of most sounds may be disconcerting). An important point with respect to sound has been further pointed out by Burke:

In everything sudden and unexpected, we are apt to start; that is, we have a perception of danger, and our nature rouses us to guard against it. It may be observed that a single sound of some strength, though but of short duration, if repeated after intervals, has a grand effect. Few things are more awful than the striking of a great clock, when the silence of the night prevents the attention from being too much dissipated. The same

¹⁸ Burke 113.

¹⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 1* 55.

²⁰ Burke 122.

may be said of a single stroke on a drum, repeated with pauses; and of the successive firing of cannon at a distance.²¹

This is indeed a great tool in denoting horror, as this creates an ominous presence, the repetition seeming to build up to a certain event of unknown nature. This is especially relevant in, for example, “The Raven,” where the mathematically precise repetition of “Nevermore” reminds one of the striking of a clock, with the gradation of a countdown. Alternatively, barely audible sound can be similarly frightening, as it is not considered the norm for speech and the difficulty in hearing and understanding the content also contributes to the horror-evoking effect. In Poe, this may be seen in characters whispering, for example, as seen in “William Wilson,” “[a]t this moment I felt a light hand placed upon my shoulder, and that ever-remembered, low, damnable *whisper* within my ear.”²² Similarly, in *Blackmail*, the repetition and emphasis on the word “knife” is also a method which relates to working with sound, as the word sounds louder and clearer within the heroine’s mind, functioning as a chant. This is then an effective source and depiction of psychological horror in the film.

2.2 Gilles Deleuze on Hitchcock and Other Theories of Structure

Deleuze similarly contributes to theoretical explanations of horror in Hitchcock. Rothman describes the horror resulting from combining qualities that contradict one another, especially with a connection to the theme of masculinity and femininity which become mixed, subverting stereotypical divisions and thus evoking unreason and disorder:

[...] the symbolic significance birds take on in *Psycho* and *The Birds*. Their significance is partly derived from the idea that birds, with their softness, warmth, and passivity and their knifelike claws and beaks, combine stereotypical masculine and feminine attributes in a dizzying way. Among Hitchcock’s British films there are a host of examples, such as the bird in *Blackmail* whose chirping takes on a nightmarish quality [...].²³

It is difficult to conclude that this is due to a kind of uncanny quality in the nature of birds; that the masculine attributes are not expected in such a soft and warm creature, and thus the familiar, a soft bird, would become unfamiliar and disconcerting, due to its masculine features. This cannot

²¹ Burke 122, 123.

²² Edgar Allan Poe, *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1938) 640.

²³ Rothman 350.

be said precisely because the birds, inherently, combine these qualities. They are not only soft, but they naturally have weapons (claws and a beak), but because both of these are inherently a part of them, it creates an uneasiness in the mind. These qualities are then exploited in such films as Deleuze mentions, as while looking at any bird in reality, one may always be aware of the natural weapons. A further point is the fact that Deleuze sees the birds in Hitchcock's film as a symbol, which may be said about the bird in "The Raven," also constituting a symbol in the poem. According to Deleuze and his theory:

In *The Birds*, the first gull which strikes the heroine is a demark, since it violently leaves the customary series which unites it to its species, to man and to Nature, But the thousands of birds, all species brought together, grasped in their preparations, in their attacks, in their moments of rest, are a symbol: these are not abstractions or metaphors, they are real birds, literally, but which present the inverted image of men's relationships with Nature, and the naturalised image of men's relationships between themselves.²⁴

A quality that Deleuze notices and speaks of in Hitchcock is the method of involving the viewer directly; similarly to the birds creating an inverted image by their symbolism, so is the role of the viewer and the character inverted. As he claims, "[...] the identification is actually inverted: the character has become a kind of viewer. He shifts, runs and becomes animated in vain [...]. He is prey to a vision, pursued by it or pursuing it, rather than engaged in an action."²⁵ Indeed, this is quite apparent in *Psycho*, where the heroine is in the position of a victim, not only of the actual murderer, but often of the camera (or the viewer) itself. As Deleuze states, however, there are alternatively cases of the character pursuing vision, demonstrated by Norman and his disturbing voyeuristic habits. The camera is elevated to perform a function of consciousness; it does not simply take a picture or a scene, it serves to perform thought processes that the viewer may experience, and mental connections are made. This way, the camera can speak, and as Deleuze describes it, "a camera-consciousness which would no longer be defined by the movements it is able to follow or make, but by the mental connections it is able to enter into. And it becomes questioning, responding, objecting, provoking, [...] in accordance with the open list of logical conjunctions [...]."²⁶ This is a kind of camera personification, extending its functions and roles within a film, but may also prove to be a meaningful tool in horror-making. In comparison to

²⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 1* 204.

²⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: The Athlone Press, 2000) 3.

²⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema 2* 23.

literary works, this is perhaps akin to the stream of consciousness method, as this type of writing also facilitates associations and connections which the reader may pick up on, and enables the reader to take an active part in the creation of the work.

Deleuze goes on to specify the exact nature of the abovementioned connection of relations, which help to create this dynamic way of film-making. It is what he calls the mental image, something best described by looking at the structure of *The Rope*, which:

is made up of a single shot in so far as the images are only the winding paths of a single reasoning process. [...] The essential point, in any event, is that action, and also perception and affection, are framed in a fabric of relations. It is this chain of relations which [*sic*] constitutes the mental image, in opposition to the thread of actions, perceptions and affections.²⁷

This type of film-making constituting the mental image has become Hitchcock's signature style, together with the use of the cameo; there are links and messages within the framework of the films, engraved in the background and creating significant relations. It is a kind of a structured frame, similarly to Poe's elaborate theories on writing explained in his essay "Eureka", with individual aspects inter-related. Rothman explains this style, pointing out the significance of pre-set structures in Hitchcock, which he calls "Hitchcockian signs," such as patterns of behavior or development of events:

In Hitchcock's work as a whole, this tunnel image takes on great resonance. The shot looking down the stairwell in *Vertigo*, for example, is a variant of it. [...] In *The Birds*, Jessica Tandy must pass twice through such a frame when she comes upon the horrifying spectacle of her neighbor's pecked-out eyes (in a conjunction of Hitchcockian signs, she drops her purse as she runs). [...] Hitchcock's tunnel image relates to his *////* motif and his flashes of black, white, and red. All participate in a system of references to, and invocations of, sexuality, and in a system of self-reference.²⁸

It seems then that this style resembles a kind of a whirlpool or a matrix of meaning, with specific permutations in certain scenes, following a specified inter-related pattern. It is once again a method enabling, to an extent, the involvement of the audience, but certainly enabling mental associations to take place based on similarity in structure and meaning; and as mentioned above, this also connects to a modernist literary genre of associative consciousness. Deleuze adds to Rothman's explanation Francois Regnault's interpretation which may be usefully implemented when dealing with *Vertigo*:

²⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 1* 200.

²⁸ Rothman 361.

Analysing certain Hitchcock films Francois Regnault identifies a global movement for each one, or a “principal geometric or dynamic form,” which can appear in the pure state in the credits: “the spirals of *Vertigo*, the broken lines and the contrasting black and white structure of *Psycho* [...]” [...] in *Vertigo* the great spiral can become the vertigo of the hero, but also the circuit he maps out in his car, or the curl in the heroine’s hair [...].²⁹

This may be seen in the opening of the film when a vortex is visible, again connecting to the greater structure of the meaning of “vertigo” and all that it may relate to. It seems that this is Hitchcock’s game, where he engages in play, or communication, with the audience. The somewhat complex method leads to Deleuze’s exploration of Hitchcock as a tragic director and specifically how this is achieved. In his opinion, it is in the method of balancing two aspects which are in opposition in such a way that the equilibrium achieved is horror-evoking, similarly to the birds whose masculine and feminine qualities create a discordant image. According to Deleuze:

The model of this instability will be that of the guilty and the innocent. But, also, the autonomous life of the relation will make it tend towards a kind of equilibrium, even though it may be devastated, desperate or even monstrous. [...] It is in this respect that Hitchcock is a tragic director: in his work the shot, as always in the cinema, has two faces, the one turned towards the characters, the objects and the actions in movement, the other turned towards a whole which changes progressively as the film goes on. But, in Hitchcock, the whole which changes is the evolution of relations, which move from the disequilibrium that they introduce between characters to the terrible equilibrium that they attain in themselves.³⁰

This resulting equilibrium is terrible – it is created by those relations emerging between individual instances and aspects of the film, constantly changing, and its movement originates from an imbalance, from a practical perspective, between individual parts of the film, or characters, to the balance of what they, theoretically, become. This kind of duality, for Deleuze, always creates a certain amount of horror, the equilibrium involving two balanced counterparts, which are at odds; there is a sense of anxiety.

A structural duality is an element that is common to both literature and film, and not only in the horror genre. This again is rather necessary to the underlying plot and themes, as it isolates the varying polar opposites and serves as their underlining and emphasis, entering the reader’s or audience’s consciousness more readily and with more intensity. It would seem that this

²⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 1* 21, 22.

³⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 1* 202, 203.

phenomenon is a fundamental part to any narrative. As Paul Ricoeur states, “Freud combines these vicissitudes into meaningful pairs: voyeurism and exhibitionism, sadism and masochism.”³¹ This is especially visible in Hitchcock’s work, as these dualities are abundantly expressed; not surprising considering the close connection of Hitchcock’s work with the Freudian era. Laura Mulvey similarly discusses such dualities within the structure of a film, suggesting that “[i]n a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly.”³² This is indeed linked to Ricoeur’s description of Freud’s pairs, as with such understanding, the male would be stylized in the narrative to be the active party, thus the voyeur doing the watching, or the sadist of the second pair. This is true in both authors, as Hitchcock’s *Psycho* involves a male voyeur, and this is similar in *Vertigo* where the females are even considered masochistic. In Poe, it may be observed that the males are often active performers of violence and sadism, such as in “The Black Cat,” and in “Ligeia,” the females similarly to *Vertigo* serve the purpose of their effects on the male narrator, with their appearance of the utmost importance. Mulvey therefore further notes:

The presence of woman is an indispensable element of spectacle in normal narrative film, yet her visual presence tends to work against the development of a story line [...]. As Budd Boetticher has put it: “[...] [she] makes [the hero] act the way he does. In herself the woman has not the slightest importance.”³³

Indeed, this is a frequent placement of the female role within such a narrative structure, and may be seen in both Hitchcock and Poe.

Furthermore, as a counterpoint to Deleuze’s structural understanding of the film and its meaning, Vladimir Propp’s theory of literary narrative is rather different; but in line with his formalist thought. Compared to Deleuze, it is a somewhat less fluid and dynamic, and more mathematical, understanding of the narrative structure, with a clear outline especially in the folktale, details of which are only permutations in an already working and established formula. In respect of those permutations that are often seen as significant differences amongst narratives, Propp notes that “[t]o the uninitiated listener all these variants seem completely different, and in a way he is right.

³¹ Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970) 475.

³² Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) 837.

³³ Mulvey 837.

But to the sophisticated scholar this diversity conceals a logically determinable unity.”³⁴ Such a unity seems logical and may often be observed in narratives, even those of Poe, where many of his short stories share the same basic structure of establishment of scene, gradation of horror by means of repetitive occurrences of disturbing events – often amplified with each occurrence – and the ultimate climax of the outcome of events. Propp explains, “[...] this compositional scheme has no real existence. However, it is realized in the narrative in many different forms: it is the basis of the plot and is, so to speak, its skeleton.”³⁵ The horror story may thus apply to this paradigm, as there often is a sense of mystery at the beginning, some form of violence or murder, and consequences of this occurrence. A notable feature of the horror is however its repetitive occurrences of some terrifying or disturbing event, its structure is thus somewhat more complicated. Nevertheless, this is a clear demonstration of the creation of horror, one that may be explained in such a mathematical fashion. Christian Metz furthermore explains the necessity of the symbolic level in a narrative structure, stating that “[t]here is always a moment after the obvious observation that it is man who makes the symbol when it is also clear that the symbol makes man: this is one of the great lessons of psychoanalysis, anthropology, and linguistics.”³⁶ So inextricably linked, it is even more necessary to the horror which is so closely connected to psychology. Structurally speaking, according to Metz, “[...] the symbolic is thus not precisely a superstructure. [...] Rather, in its deeper strata it represents a kind of *juxtastructure* [...],”³⁷ consisting of a situation or structure where certain characteristics of the concept or item in question lead to a given category, but its singleness or differentness simultaneously exclude it from this category. Hence, it leads to a state of being and non-being, belonging and not belonging. This fluid state of meaning then is in congruence with horror, whose instability and mystery deepen its effects, and the symbolic is therefore frequently used, and is often necessary, in the horror narrative.

To conclude this chapter, there are many theories which relate to the theme of horror and its creation and evocation, and many, if not most, are in some way linked to the psyche – since horror is essentially fear invoked in humans, it is an emotion artificially inflicted, and is largely linked to the viewer’s or reader’s own interpretation. Burke’s description of the Sublime in many

³⁴ Vladimir J. Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, ed. Anatoly Liberman (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984) 156.

³⁵ Propp 157.

³⁶ Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema* (London: Macmillan, 1982) 30.

³⁷ Metz 30.

ways answers questions regarding why certain elements evoke fear and horror in another human mind; but this field is simultaneously open to argument and exploration, since, at a detailed level, the discipline is constantly evolving, and yet, it continually enjoys popularity, both in literature and film. Indeed, it is something humans love and even need, but simultaneously hate. Nevertheless, its nature and effects seem to be linked to something very basic and essential in the make-up of the human mind, resulting in timeless, constant and reliable strategies and structures of evoking fear, awe and suspense, which have seen success for centuries.

3. Analysis of Works in Light of Introduced Theory

In this chapter, the individual selected works shall be analyzed in detail. Specifically, the purpose of the chapter is to outline the shared strategies of horror-making in Poe and Hitchcock, mostly thematic in nature, such as the use of the split personality and connected with it, the psychological implications dealing with Freudian psychoanalysis, the subdivision into the ego and superego, in other words the role of conscience, as well as the id, or the sub-conscious. This is the main reason for selecting *Psycho*, “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “William Wilson” for the first sub-chapter; all of these works significantly deal with the splitting of the mind, and the representation of “the Other” within, as in the presence of an alter ego, and connotes the idea of the abject. Voyeurism thus forms a major part of the discussion, due to its prominence in *Psycho* and its relation to power play and such involvement of the camera, and, indeed, the elimination and violation of the private sphere, a penetrating quality applicable to both Poe’s stories explored herein. This sub-chapter will follow into the second one, which deals with the manifestation of these workings of the mind and conscience, namely the maddening consequences of performed murders which often are beyond morality and justification, perhaps save for *Blackmail*, included here for the strong depiction of such a consequence – guilt. Works that share this problem are also “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Black Cat” and *Rope*, all essentially mind games, where the guilt or conscience itself brings the truth of the murder to the surface. In other cases, it plays tricks with the murderers’ minds, it harasses them and points out the role and importance of the understanding of morality in horror. Again, this theme connects the selected works beyond their individual plots, and creates a further link to Freud, in the issue of guilt, morality and the “dirty little secret,” hidden, but destined to be divulged. The third sub-chapter consists of “Ligeia” and *Vertigo*, chosen to be in a single sub-chapter due to its preoccupation with obsession, very profound in both works and forming a definite link between Poe and Hitchcock. The analysis, however, does not solely explore this aspect, which is indeed horrific, but also connects it with the shared narrative structure, especially as regards the position and role of the female within the story, as opposed to the male; the obsession creates a foundation for the female’s objectification, and the role of sexuality within the context of horror, as discussed by Mulvey’s theories in the first chapter. Finally, the last sub-chapter has been particularly chosen to

point out that “The Raven” and *The Birds* share an obvious link, which is the horror created by birds, when one’s expectations are subverted, as well as human knowledge, social order and system that is generally relied on. In “The Raven,” this is mainly shown by the destructive effect on the narrator by the use of a single bird’s unreasoning chant, in the film this effect is on the entire civilization of the attacked town. Ultimately, the resulting effect is that of an apocalypse, whether in terms of the whole world or only the narrator’s soul caused by the magnitude of his despair, and leads to the larger scheme of Poe’s and Hitchcock’s work – it leads beyond horror, as will be discussed in the final chapter of this thesis.

3.1 The Split Personality: *Psycho*, “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “William Wilson”

Together with *The Birds*, *Psycho* undoubtedly belongs to one of Hitchcock’s most horrifying films, though it may be more complex to establish one element that is most responsible for this effect. In this thesis, the film is compared in terms of its most prominent aspect of split personality, in which way it may be related to Poe’s short stories. Of course, there is murder and suspense, but it seems that what renders this film uncommon is its bizarre and disturbing atmosphere, propelled by the abovementioned psychological element. Perhaps the mind is best disturbed by itself – the ungraspable darkness of something going wrong in someone else’s psyche. In this thesis, *Psycho* shall be related to Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “William Wilson,” for it seems that these short stories refer to a very similar theme – the fragmentation of a psyche, the lines along which this is done being somewhat debatable.

The interpretations are numerous. Nevertheless, William Wilson and his alter ego are certainly parts of the same psyche, whether the alter ego rather represents Wilson’s conscience, or superego. As Ricoeur suggests, “[b]y self-observation Freud designates a certain splitting of the ego, experienced as the feeling of being observed, watched, criticized, condemned: the superego reveals itself as a watchful gaze,”³⁸ skillfully depicted in “William Wilson” as the alter ego who follows William everywhere. Roderick and Madeline Usher, on the other hand, may be explained in terms of the house as a structure, including or excluding the narrator, and thus form quite

³⁸ Ricoeur 184.

complex pictures of the human mind, be it the ego, superego, and id, as Roderick, the narrator, and Madeline respectively, or simply reason and emotion as Roderick and Madeline, with the narrator a confused observer and explorer of these dark recesses. This is precisely the point at which there is such congruence with *Psycho*; indeed, Norman Bates and his dead mother are parts of one psyche, and even though the conclusions critics reach often vary as regards the more powerful part of the two identities, the fact that there are two personalities present is undeniable. Indeed, the split personality is a theme rather popular in horror, and Poe and Hitchcock certainly are not the only authors who have employed it for the purposes of horror; it is connected to Freud's theory of the uncanny, where one identity becoming two always involves a simultaneous familiarity and discord, unfamiliarity or mystery. Furthermore, it may also be linked to Kristeva's theory of the abject, where that alter ego dwelling within may be described along those lines of her theory.

Secondly, as far as *Psycho* and "The Fall of the House of Usher" are concerned, there is a further disturbing element – that of bizarre family relations. This is somewhat incestuous, as in "The Fall of the House of Usher," or simply obsessive, as in *Psycho*, Norman Bates in the role of the excessively attached child, all but in love with his mother. This is, additionally, cast with overtones of necrophilia. The borderline between reality and fantasy is thus blurred, as there are several points at which the audience may be uncertain whether the given picture is considered supernatural – in other words, which parts of the film occur in reality and which only happen in the imagination of one of the characters. This is another link to Poe's short stories, as at no point in the narrative is the reader certain that what happens only does so in the protagonists' minds, or simply as an unreal and poetic portrayal of an allegory. This confusion similarly leads to an insecure feeling of the audience.

First of all, the simplest aspect that enables the horror mode, are the cues that the reader, or audience, receives. This is the most overt in "The Fall of the House of Usher" – Poe, unsurprisingly, establishes a Gothic, dark tone from the outset, "a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit."³⁹ This is not an objective view, however, despite the house's naturally oppressive look. The story's first person narrative opens up the possibility that the horror is simply the product of the narrator's perception. Similarly, this is the case with "William Wilson," "[d]eath approaches; and the shadow which foreruns him has thrown a softening influence over

³⁹ Edgar Allan Poe, *Complete Tales and Poems* (Ljubljana: Mladinska Knjiga, 1966) 231.

my spirit.”⁴⁰ This is not uncommon for Poe, as the mode in which he writes his horror short stories is always overtly Gothic, and has been criticized for this. Hitchcock’s use of the setting is usually free from cues at the beginning, and other than when the film opens up with murder, such as in *Rope*, there is usually a prevailing sense of safety and innocence, as the film starts with an introduction usually establishing setting of the urban, modern world. This is so for *Psycho* as well, and the first cues the audience receives of something being not entirely right, is perhaps Marion leaving town with the money, and the audience is fooled to believe that the main plot and crime is her own. Hitchcock often indulges in directing the audience as much as the actors, for the effect of the film is an important factor to him, and being able to manipulate the audience’s thoughts and expectations enables him to properly pass on the suspense and the horror with as much ease. As Hitchcock discloses, “[...] I also know that the construction of the story and the way in which it was told caused audiences all over the world to react and become emotional.”⁴¹

It would be unfair, however, to claim that Hitchcock does not offer cues throughout the film – as compared to Poe, they only occur later, so as to gradually ease the audience into suspicion and fear. This, perhaps, is a major difference that is connected to the third chapter, their contexts, since Poe is part of the Romantic movement and thus his stories involve an almost sentimentally Gothic atmosphere and setting – so much so, that it may often become absurd or comic, which is, in fact, a connection to Hitchcock, whose horror films may often be viewed as black comedies. As George Perry notes, “Hitchcock’s most ruthless manipulation of audience to achieve macabre effects was achieved in *Psycho*, the blackest of black comedies to emerge from Hollywood,”⁴² and “*Psycho* was in some respects a horror comic, an E. C. Gaines macabre adventure, and it was never meant to be taken as seriously as the contemporary British film critics insisted on regarding it.”⁴³ Both Poe and Hitchcock, then, may legitimately be taken with a grain of salt, considering their seriousness that is certainly effected in their audience or readers. Indeed, one may view both Poe and Hitchcock, in a way, as tricksters, whose Gothicism, darkness and horror are often ways to manipulate and play with their readers or audience. This certainly does not undermine their validity in the context of horror, as even in Greek tragedy, it is not completely known whether

⁴⁰ Poe, *Complete Tales and Poems* 626.

⁴¹ Alfred Hitchcock in Francois Truffaut, *Hitchcock: The Definitive Study of Alfred Hitchcock* (New York: Touchstone, 1983) 283.

⁴² George Perry, *The films of Alfred Hitchcock* (London: Studio Vista, 1965) 139.

⁴³ George Perry, *Hitchcock* (London: Macmillan, 1975) 100, 101.

there were absolutely no elements of trickery involved, and already the emergence of tragicomedy suggests a kind of fluidity in respect of these classifications and intentions.

Thematically, the interplay of the hidden and the seen is a prominent aspect of the film, as well as the corresponding short stories. Thus, darkness is a powerful theme, as well as that of voyeurism, heavily used in *Psycho*. In all cases, there is always some dark secret, and this secret contributes to the effect of mystery and suspense, as Burke's theory of the Sublime would suggest. Hitchcock argues, however, that true suspense is built up only when the audience is informed of this secret, with the protagonist unaware. In Francois Truffaut's study, he claims:

There is a distinct difference between "suspense" and "surprise," and yet many pictures continually confuse the two. [...] Let us suppose that there is a bomb underneath this table between us. Nothing happens, and then all of a sudden, "Boom!" There is an explosion. The public is *surprised*, but prior to this surprise, it has seen an absolutely ordinary scene, of no special consequence. Now, let us take a *suspense* situation. The bomb is underneath the table and the public *knows* it, probably because they have seen the anarchist place it there. The public is *aware* that the bomb is going to explode at one o'clock and there is a clock in the decor. The public can see that it is a quarter to one. In these conditions this same innocuous conversation becomes fascinating because the public is participating in the scene. [...] In the first case we have given the public fifteen seconds of *surprise* at the moment of the explosion. In the second we have provided them with fifteen minutes of *suspense*. The conclusion is that whenever possible the public must be informed. Except when the surprise is a twist, that is, when the unexpected ending is, in itself, the highlight of the story.⁴⁴

Despite this, the notion of the dark secret is still essentially necessary, even if only to the protagonist. A similar effect is achieved in cases where the audience is aware of the hidden secret only vaguely, even if they do not exactly know the details. Perry notes that, in *Psycho*, "[a] detective climbs the stairs in search of the grim house's secret; something is going to happen inevitably, but when? How? It comes with a ferocity and suddenness that manages to shock the senses even though it is expected."⁴⁵ This is perhaps comparable to Poe, as the abundant Gothic cues and dark omens necessarily render the reader expectant of horror. However, the horror that actually occurs possibly shocks the readers by its sheer complexity – be it psychological or structural, with Poe steering away from the simple occurrences of murder and its horror, leaning towards a more poetic approach in congruence with the Romantic style.

Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" is based on an allegory of the mind, which is one demonstration of the complexity of Poe's horror. Richard Wilbur argues that even the house's

⁴⁴ Hitchcock in Truffaut 73.

⁴⁵ Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 141, 142.

interior, for example, mimics the mind's dark recesses. He states that "[t]he House of Usher *is*, in allegorical fact, the physical body of Roderick Usher, and its dim interior *is*, in fact, Roderick Usher's visionary mind."⁴⁶ Thus, the hidden corridors represent the depths and darkness of the mind, and according to Wilbur, cellars and even more remote areas represent the irrational parts. It is debatable, however, if the allegory is Roderick's, or if, in fact, the narrator envisions himself accessing his own mind, with Roderick and Madeline as simple allegories of the various parts. As Steven Jay Schneider mentions,

[William Patrick] Day seeks to account for the obvious correspondences between Freudian psychoanalysis and Gothic literature at the level of theme (e.g., the drama of selfhood played out within the family; the struggle to contain and control sexual energy; the conflict between masculine and feminine modes of identity) as well as narrative (e.g., the subversion of linear plot structures; the substitution of mechanisms such as transformation, condensation, and projection for clearly defined patterns of cause and effect; the prioritization of subjective experience and the dynamics of "inner life").⁴⁷

Poe's approach then is in line with the nature of Gothic literature and the structurally creative narrative and thematic style corresponds to this, especially as connected to psychology. Moreover, Day's account establishes the basic association between Poe, a representative of Gothic literature, and Hitchcock, a film director who makes great use of the elements of Freudian psychology in order to amplify the horror in his films.

A further important fact, however, is that Poe heavily uses the idea of a hidden secret, and differentiates between this hidden element and that which is seen. In Hitchcock, the horror of the shower murder, for example, partially rests in the fact that there are no visible wounds – it is hidden and unseen. Robert Spadoni comments on this:

[Frank] McConnell writes that "the classic horror film ... has no 'depth.' One manifestation of this negative quality is in the arrangement of camera angles. With surprisingly few exceptions, these films maintain the point of view of a neutral third observer: one seldom sees the monster from the point of view of the victim or the victim from the point of view of the monster ... The effect of the third-person point of view is literally to flatten the horror, to convert the potential depth-perception of panic into a two-dimensional tableau which, again, underscores the factitiousness of the monster."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Richard Wilbur in Robert Regan, *Poe, a Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Robert Regan (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967) 107.

⁴⁷ Steven Jay Schneider, *Horror film and psychoanalysis: Freud's worst nightmare* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 6.

⁴⁸ Robert Spadoni, *Uncanny bodies: the coming of sound film and the origins of the horror genre* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007) 84, 85.

This idea, then, enables the audience to consider the greatest amount of horror in their own minds, their imagination is engaged, and possibly outdoes any scene of filmed wounds, making the visual aspect of horror very abstract. This is a manifestation of Burke's notion of the Sublime, where obscurity forms a necessary element. Rothman goes even further in his interpretation, suggesting the possibility of a supernatural or unreal experience:

[w]ithin the compass of this shot [Marion's stomach and the knife], Marion's body remains unmarked, immaculate. We see no blood and witness no penetration of knife into flesh. Yet it is this shot's juxtaposition of blade and flesh that announces the fatal wound. By never showing the blade penetrating Marion's flesh, Hitchcock deprives the viewer of a sensually gratifying climax, and also declares that there is no moment when Marion actually feels the knife. The scene of her murder passes before Marion as if she were only dreaming it.⁴⁹

The scene is unique in its absence of gore, which cannot be said about other scenes of the film (the corpse of the dead mother, for example) or other Hitchcock films, such as *The Birds*. While surpassing other scenes in its violence, it is strangely elegant and aesthetic. Perry notes, "[t]he shower sequence is horrifying on the screen, the victim repeatedly stabbed by a descending dagger, although no actual wounds are visible."⁵⁰ What seems to be emphasized in this scene, then, is not the gore, but the symbolism and thematic content, a feature linking Hitchcock and Poe. The camera angles, for example, strongly suggest this. There is a focus on the shower head before the murder, carefully shown from Marion's own point of view, but also from profile, rendering it almost voyeuristic, like Norman's eye – indeed, as Deleuze explains in the first chapter of this thesis, the shower head, like the camera, becomes personified, establishing and invoking consciousness. Rothman notes, however,

[w]hen Marion looks into the shower head, there is no sign that she suspects that she is being viewed. If she envisions the shower head as an eye, it is a sightless eye, subject to her control like the figures in her private film. [...] At least we can recognize it as our eye, secretly subjecting her to its gaze; as Norman's, continuing its haunting; as the source of the intimate views that follow.⁵¹

This eye symbol is then repeated in the close-up shots of the shower drain, dissolving into Marion's own eye, rendering it a powerful image of the film. Voyeurism, then, is a potent theme of the film, despite its development into an overpowering theme of the split psyche or schizophrenia, which of course also implies that which is seen and unseen, or imagined.

⁴⁹ William Rothman, *Hitchcock - The Murderous Gaze* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1982) 304.

⁵⁰ Perry, *Hitchcock* 101.

⁵¹ Rothman 293.

Rothman's comment that the shower head is a "sightless eye" is rather antithetic, due to the fact that in the film, it realistically is sightless because it is nothing more than a shower head; but simultaneously, it is symbolically an eye. When the element of human interpretation is added, the audience's own imagination, it ceases to be truly sightless – it is the audience's eye, perhaps even the anticipated eye of Marion's murderer, and the implication disturbs the audience, setting out Marion as a victim and ominously anticipates violence and murder. Anticipation thus is a major element that connects horror throughout time periods and media.

Voyeurism is present in the film prominently, not only in the overt scene of Norman watching Marion through the hole in the wall. Mulvey states in relation to this element, "[a]t the extreme, [the instinct to look] can become fixated into a perversion, producing obsessive voyeurs and Peeping Toms, whose only sexual satisfaction can come from watching, in an active controlling sense, an objectified other."⁵² Marion, for example, is a victim of not only the spectator's gaze and the camera gaze, but also of the voyeuristic intra-diegetic gaze of Norman.⁵³ According to Hitchcock, however, Norman is himself not only a voyeur, but a masochist in that he is simultaneously being consciously watched by the birds, especially owls, that he has stuffed, "[the birds] were like symbols. [...] But the owl, for instance, has another connotation. Owls belong to the night world; they are watchers, and this appeals to Perkins' masochism. He knows the birds and he knows that they're watching him all the time. He can see his own guilt reflected in their knowing eyes."⁵⁴ This may be one of the first clues in understanding Norman's tortured soul. The theme of voyeurism undoubtedly contributes to the effect of horror, as it is in essence a sort of entrapment (in a gaze), one that the victim is not aware of, and furthermore is a violation of privacy, which also disturbs the audience and readers, and forms another connection to Poe.

Entrapment in general may be viewed as a horrifying factor and is used by both Poe and Hitchcock. Linda Badley discusses the creation of horror, stating that:

Evoking "a self-contained world with its own laws and landscapes" (Sarris 1968: 39), Hitchcock fit neatly into Sarris's "pantheon" and subsequently into countless theorizing essays, monographs, and film school courses. Forged out of the "lowest" materials – the thriller, exploitation/horror, and even television – the Hitchcock film lacked social context or content other than a self-implicating exchange of looks between characters, audience, and camera. It helped that Hitchcock's aesthetic equated "the medium of pure cinema" with fear

⁵² Mulvey 835.

⁵³ Lucia Ricciardelli, *Visual Culture & the Crisis of History: American Documentary Practice in the Postmodern Era* (Santa Barbara: University of California, 2007) 120.

⁵⁴ Hitchcock in Truffaut 282.

cinema, with the “assembling of pieces of film to create fright” (quoted in *Dial H for Hitchcock* [1999]), just as Poe reduced beauty to vicarious melancholy and terror.⁵⁵

It is this “self-contained world” that makes horror possible, with the characters and the audience entrapped within its boundaries. Due to this specific world having its own laws, according to the author’s imagination and manipulation, it escapes the expectations of reality, of the normal, and the viewers or readers are left groundless. As Badley suggests, it is a reduction of sorts to this simplified existence of horror, an enclosed lab – fear cinema for Hitchcock and melancholy for Poe – and all devices and aesthetics point in that direction.

The shower scene of *Psycho* profusely engages with the element of voyeurism and entrapment in a gaze, especially due to the shots from above which include the curtain bar, a borderline of the private sphere. Mulvey notes that “[...] Freud isolated scopophilia as one of the component instincts of sexuality which exist as drives quite independently of the erotogenic zones. At this point he associated scopophilia with taking other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze.”⁵⁶ This not only shows the undeniable connection to Freud, but also points out the utter objectification of Marion in the scene. Henry Krips describes that “[t]he other mechanism Freud proposes is the drive (*Trieb*) [as opposed to cathexis, libidinal stabilization by fixation]. Each drive is associated with an imbricated pair of needs; the scopic drive, for example, with the need to see (voyeurism) and be seen (exhibitionism),”⁵⁷ a theory that Jacques Lacan also draws upon. The borderline of the private sphere is carefully depicted as being violated by the murderer, his arms and knife penetrating this area. Perhaps this is what creates the horror of the scene – Marion’s vulnerability in such an intimate setting. Rothman notes, “[v]iewed from overhead, the shower-curtain bar cuts across the screen, graphically defining the boundary between the space inside and the space outside the shower, and forming a perfect *////*. This shot declares the reality of the intruder’s crossing of the inviolable barrier.”⁵⁸ Rothman explains the signification of this visual effect, “I call this pattern of parallel vertical lines Hitchcock’s *////* sign. It recurs at significant junctures in every one of his films. [...] At another level, it signifies the confinement of the camera’s subject within the frame and within the world of the film.”⁵⁹ Indeed, then, the sense of entrapment is prominent here, and may be linked to Poe, whose characters

⁵⁵ Linda Badley in Schneider 225.

⁵⁶ Mulvey 835.

⁵⁷ Henry Krips, *Fetish: An Erotics of Culture* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1999) 25.

⁵⁸ Rothman 302.

⁵⁹ Rothman 33.

often find themselves entrapped. Quite naturally, the depiction of entrapment is evocative of horror, as there is no escape from a negative situation; as in Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, where the narrator dwells in the bottom part of the ship enclosed, with panic attacks naturally coming when he cannot find his way out – as in a maze. When the space is so small, as in this story, the ensuing claustrophobia is inevitable; indeed, as in “The Pit and the Pendulum” with the descending steel, in already a small space where there is no way to escape. This is then another link between Poe and Hitchcock, and between these works and horror theory.

In both “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “William Wilson,” there is a form of entrapment. The allegory of the mind locks the characters within the house, imprisoning them within the scheme itself, and the remote setting of the dilapidated house seems to suggest the same. William Wilson, on the other hand, is followed by his own conscience, thus he can never escape, aptly demonstrated by “[f]rom his inscrutable tyranny did I at length flee, panic-stricken, as from a pestilence; and to the very ends of the earth *I fled in vain*.”⁶⁰ In connection, Wilbur states that the Poe hero “is always either enclosed or on his way to an enclosure.”⁶¹ What is most horrifying about Wilson is that desire to escape from himself, and the gradual unveiling of this secret; the uncanny resemblance of the alter ego becomes supremely disturbing, as Lacan notes, “[i]f we imagine it, in the extreme case, experienced in the uncanny form characteristic of the apprehensions of one's *double*, the situation would trigger uncontrollable anxiety.”⁶² Wilson describes his horror as his “namesake” resembles him more and more, “[m]y dress it was an easy matter to copy; my gait and general manner were without difficult, appropriated; in spite of his constitutional defect, even my voice did not escape him. [...] but then the key, – it was identical; *and his singular whisper, it grew the very echo of my own*.” Similarly, “[p]erhaps the *gradation* of his copy rendered it not readily perceptible,”⁶³ reminiscent of the narrative structure of horror where this repetitive, escalating aspect is greatly effective. The element of the Freudian uncanny, that which is hidden, then, is an important feature of Poe's horror, as well as Hitchcock's horror cinema. Despite the dead mother of *Psycho* possibly being only in Norman's mind, she is still a “hidden” element; something that should not be divulged to the vision of the audience. Just like

⁶⁰ Poe, *Complete Tales and Poems* 639.

⁶¹ Wilbur in Regan 103.

⁶² Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2006) 89.

⁶³ Poe, *Complete Tales and Poems* 632.

with the unseen wounds of Marion's murder, the audience's mind imagines the utmost horror when faced with this hidden dark mystery.

Such is the mystery of the split psyche, or the theme of doubling. An element that truly unifies Hitchcock's film with Poe's respective short stories, it is also an element that is connected to Freud's uncanny, or, *Unheimlich*, which may be construed as both "familiar and agreeable, and [...], what is concealed and kept out of sight... everything is *unheimlich* that ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light."⁶⁴ Thus, seeing one's double may seem familiar and harmless, but it is this hidden element of the subconscious, which Wilson's alter ego is a part of, that creates horror. In Hitchcock, the ordinary becomes horrific. This strong reference to Freudian psychology and the element of the uncanny is discussed by Schneider:

[William Patrick Day] first rejects the orthodox and uncritical psychoanalytic view according to which these correspondences were *inevitable* because the Gothic simply anticipated truths soon to be discovered by Freud. He also rejects the pragmatic and hermeneutic view that these correspondences were *fortuitous* because, regardless of whether Freud was right or wrong, the Gothic simply lent itself to allegorization in psychoanalytic terms.⁶⁵

Despite Freudian psychoanalysis emerging well after Poe's day, his narrative devices undeniably connect to Freud.

His vehement use of the uncanny may be seen in a large number of his horror stories; indeed, this sets this type of horror apart from that of monsters, perhaps as may be seen in Marry Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Poe's horror, as does Hitchcock's, uses everyday objects and, by use of human dark imagination, twists them into something ominous and disturbing, as Burke's theory of the Sublime suggests. As mentioned above, William Wilson's double looks just like him (*it is him*) – it is familiar to the highest degree (and perhaps so familiar as to be disturbing). William Wilson's threat is horrific, as his enemy, himself, is within him, as Ricoeur notes, "[t]he ego finds itself threatened, and in order to defend itself must dominate the situation. From the outset Freud had noted that it is easier to defend oneself against an external danger than against an internal danger; [...]. Man is essentially a being threatened from within; [...],"⁶⁶ a theory fittingly demonstrated by Poe in this short story. The story of "William Wilson" may also be applied to theories articulated by Lacan, who states that "a freedom that is never so authentically affirmed as when it

⁶⁴ Sigmund Freud, quoted in Fred Botting, *Gothic* (London: Routledge, 1996) 113.

⁶⁵ Steven Jay Schneider 6.

⁶⁶ Ricoeur 182.

is within the walls of a prison; [...]; a voyeuristic-sadistic idealization of sexual relationships; a personality that achieves self-realization only in suicide; and a consciousness of the other that can only be satisfied by Hegelian murder.”⁶⁷ This brings forth questions regarding William Wilson’s experience with his alter ego – and the notions connected with his suicide, especially in relation to the “mirror stage,” where one simultaneously witnesses the discordance between the image in the mirror and the self, as well as the narcissistic realization of the ego, the synchronization of the self with this witnessed reflection. It may be argued that, William Wilson by committing suicide has done the only thing possible to achieve the aforementioned self-realization, however the shock and horror with which he performs this leads more toward the notion of unacceptable discord and alienation, a thought that truly captures William’s entrapment and inescapable situation – a situation inevitably ending with his suicide.

Furthermore, the raven in “The Raven” is a bird, but its symbolic nature shifts its meaning from being a simple, unthinking bird into something powerful and ominous, something that a thinking capacity often results in. Hitchcock uses a similar strategy in *The Birds*, except not focusing as heavily on the symbolic qualities, but rather on the numbers of the birds, as in a battle between men and birds. Nevertheless, it remains that familiar and harmless birds (which may be seen in reality on any day) become horrific. According to Perry, “[f]ear is a potent force in the Hitchcock armoury of effects, and the totally unexpected or unlikely eruption of danger and menace, another trademark. In a Hitchcock film the most ordinary setting must be treated with suspicion because there may well be something unpleasant lurking just out of sight.”⁶⁸

Finally, the opposite of the uncanny is yet another source of fear. Indeed, just as the familiar becoming distorted is conducive to horror, so is the unfamiliar, that which distances us from the object, that which makes us incapable of comprehending it, unable to relate to it or unable to predict – especially as regards human behavior. This is in congruence with Burke’s Sublime, that which is ungraspable and thus evokes awe, as well as horror. The visualization or depiction of another person’s insanity may be horrifying, and this may be connected to Kristeva’s idea of the “abject body,” discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis. Both Poe and Hitchcock achieve true horror by reflecting madness at its most terrible – in *Psycho*, as well as “The Fall of the House of Usher,” and even in “William Wilson” as the mirror theme leads to a case of split

⁶⁷ Lacan 80.

⁶⁸ Perry, *Hitchcock* 117, 118.

personality. Bates' madness is obvious, as Perry notes, "[i]n the last scene a psychiatrist offers an explanation, while the murderer regresses into total lunacy."⁶⁹ This theme is repetitive in Hitchcock and Poe, and occurs in many other stories and films, for example as obsession, and thus shows the basic and unchanging elements of horror.

3.2 Murder Most Foul: *Rope*, *Blackmail*, "The Black Cat" and "The Tell-Tale Heart"

The prevailing theme that connects *Rope*, *Blackmail*, "The Black Cat" and "The Tell-Tale Heart" is, obviously, murder, but these works are all also linked to psychology, or mental states, as for example the aspect of guilt experienced after committing a crime, and the connected altered perception which results from the guilt and thus is necessarily an effect of the subconscious. This is not present in all the works to the same extents, because in some cases, the murder is more demonstrative and is meant to be uncovered, and in other cases, the murderer is the manifestation of madness, and thus the element of true guilt, or conscience, is debatable. Nevertheless, the concealed but persisting presence of the corpse in *Rope*, "The Black Cat" or "The Tell-Tale Heart" is a disturbing device and certainly contributes to the creation of horror, however certainly linked to the previous sub-chapter, as psychology and madness is a pervasive theme.

Similarly to "The Raven," where one's own mind is the pit of despair, in this sub-chapter, it is the mind that is demonstrated to cause the utmost suffering. Indeed, *Blackmail* is about a murder whose legitimacy is debatable; however, what haunts the protagonist is the act of committing the murder itself. Human morality, then, may be seen as a downfall, as the cause of this distress (a sociopath may not have such consequences). The persisting sense of guilt over a committed sin, perhaps, is what destroys these psyches. In *Rope*, and the other Poe stories, there is an additional element of the pervading dead body, which is not always seen, but is sensed – it *is* there, no matter how well hidden (and, perhaps, may be equated to Lady Macbeth's bloody hand). The horror is primarily in the committing of the murder, but the conscience is where most of the remaining horror occurs. This torment is what eventually leads to the denouement, or the uncovering of the dead body – that element, oppressive on the mind. This often leads to sensory illusions, because the bad conscience invents these due to guilt. The beating of the heart of the

⁶⁹ Perry, *Hitchcock* 101.

corpse in “The Tell-Tale Heart,” for example, underlines this pervasive quality of the dead body. It also implies that it is still alive – then there is an element of the impossible-to-kill dead body, that which has already been killed but is seemingly still alive, as in “The Black Cat.” This is already reminiscent of a “monster” quality, and may be linked to Kristeva’s theory of the abject body.

Guilt is perhaps the most important theme of *Blackmail*. As Perry describes, “[the heroine’s] fiancé, a detective, enters. She looks up at him and suspects that he knows her guilt. The clang of the shop bell reverberates like the knell of judgement day.”⁷⁰ This adds a symbolic level to the film, and to guilt itself. The most important scene denoting the depth of the heroine’s guilt, is the knife scene, depicting the extent of her perception’s alteration, obsessively fixating on the word “knife.” Hitchcock comments on this:

One of the neighbors is discussing the murder. She says, “What a terrible way to kill a man, with a knife in his back. If I had killed him, I might have struck him over the head with a brick, but I wouldn’t use a knife.” And the talk goes on and on, becoming a confusion of vague noises to which the girl no longer listens. Except for the one word, “Knife, knife,” which is said over and over again and becomes fainter and fainter. Then suddenly she hears her father’s normal, loud voice: “Alice, please pass me the bread knife.” And Alice has to pick up a knife similar to the one she’s used for the killing, while the others go on chattering about the crime.⁷¹

Indeed, this is a different kind of horror compared to the previous sub-chapter. However, the aspect of altering the mind this way, leads to another element in the film, which in fact connects it to the previous ones – the borderline between the symbolic and the real, as well as reality and imagination. It may be problematic to undoubtedly indicate which sections are objectively true, and which only occur in the heroine’s consciousness, just as it happens in *Psycho* with Norman, as well as Marion. As Perry observes, “[...] an innocent breakfast conversation turns into a nightmare for the girl as the word ‘knife’ constantly recurs until it is the only coherent word that emerges from a jabbering babble.”⁷² This blurred distinction between reality and imagination is then a notable element of Hitchcock’s work. Rothman, for example, notices it even in *Rope*, “[o]pening a film with a hallucinatory fragment of a murder scene is one of Hitchcock’s characteristic strategies.”⁷³ It may then be an important issue to discuss as part of Hitchcock’s

⁷⁰ Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 29, 30.

⁷¹ Hitchcock in Truffaut 65.

⁷² Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 30.

⁷³ Rothman 349.

aesthetic, and while being another link to Poe, is also a device used to invoke horror or enable the horror mode, because if reality and the senses are so overtly subverted, then the audience's expectations are shaken up, and there are countless possibilities of the development of events; confusing the audience is a typical horror strategy, as it is linked to the unfamiliar, but also often results in surprise.

Rothman contributes to this issue further, involving the camera in the fruition of this device. He notes, “[t]he camera’s capacity to cross real and symbolic barriers receives its most systematic treatment in Hitchcock’s work in the films of the late forties, such as *Rope* [...]”⁷⁴ Indeed, this aspect of the camera being a very potent device (one that Poe cannot use), as regards the depiction of the real and the symbolic, is greatly used by Hitchcock, and may be seen in his other films, even *Blackmail*, as Rothman further notes:

[...] Alice is asked to pass a bread knife and we hear the word “knife” as it is colored by her imagination [...]. But the passage in which the barrier between the real and the imaginary is most emphatically crossed – or perhaps denied – is the film’s finale, the chase through the British Museum (a space dominated by //s). [...] He films this chase by cutting back and forth between Alice, in the throes of an interior struggle, and the blackmailer [...]. It is a dark irony, characteristic of the bleakness of *Blackmail*, that the imaginary scene that edifies her is also real, and that the moment she arrives at her understanding is the moment at which it is, irrevocably, too late.⁷⁵

The symbolic becomes important due to its openness of possibilities and the necessity of putting the audience’s (or the readers’) mind to work with implications, just as Deleuze has been shown to claim. The mental image plays a significant role, especially in horror, as has been discussed in the first chapter.

As demonstrated above in *Blackmail*, symbolism is also used in Poe, which creates another link between these two authors and modes. According to Richard M. Fletcher:

Again, in “symbolic” terms the tell-tale heart is the voice of his conscience; but in terms of Poe’s narrative dilemma it is no more than a technical ploy [...]. Hence, the mechanism of his “hearing” the beating heart is in itself an artifice which is hardly a satisfactory solution to the problem caused in this story of having no *raisonneur* who remains unaffected by the catastrophe of seemingly inexorable events.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Rothman 360.

⁷⁵ Rothman 58, 59.

⁷⁶ Richard M. Fletcher, *The Stylistic Development of Edgar Allan Poe* (Hague: Mouton, 1973) 164.

The heartbeat is a symbolic device of the remnants of humanity in the madman, namely conscience, and as Fletcher notes, it is also a device used instead of a reasoning narrator, due to the fact that the viewpoint is that of an insane murderer – a stable mechanism, like the unstoppable heartbeat (albeit only in the madman’s imagination), which would effect the denouement of the story. Nevertheless, it seems to be more than a mechanism to control the plot; there is also something horrific in the exactness of a heartbeat that again points to Burke’s theory of the Sublime, the unstoppable nature of it (being heard even after the man’s death, again despite its imaginary nature), reminiscent of the cat that still exists behind the brick wall despite its murder. Here is one instance where Poe’s stories come close to a horror story based on a monster; the idea of the murdered continuing to live, therefore being almost impossible to kill. The mechanical persistence of this life force is somewhat monstrous and, while these are considered the innocent victims of the stories, also carry with them an ominous air of monstrosity.

In Hitchcock’s films, the role of the camera is an important aspect which is not simply a way of showing the audience what is happening in the plot; it is a device, as seen in *Psycho*, that contributes to the evocation of various effects, symbolic interpretations, and in a way, Hitchcock uses the camera as a poet would use literary devices. As Deleuze notes, “[t]he essential point, in any event, is that action, and also perception and affection, are framed in a fabric of relations. It is this chain of relations which constitutes the mental image, in opposition to the thread of actions, perceptions and affections.”⁷⁷ As demonstrated in the previous sub-chapter as regards the camera’s use in *Psycho*, such as in the shower murder scene, so it is used in *Rope*, where it is portrayed as one of the spectators – not as much as the voyeuristic eye, but as an observer similarly to the audience, and serves the purpose of another person in the room. Perry explains by stating that “[t]he action was followed around by the camera which was like an extra spectator.”⁷⁸ This is useful in bringing forth the desired emotions in the audience as well, since it leads the audience in where they might need to look at a given moment, what miniscule details should be noticed, all creating a scenario of holding back the knowledge of the murder and tell-tale signs of the murderers’ guilt. The camera is not thoughtless in this instance; it is a guide of reasoning behind the murder and the observation of the interplay of the characters during the party; especially knowing about the murder, the audience anticipates, waits for and expects the truth to slip out. Deleuze similarly comments on the interconnection of the camera usage and the plot

⁷⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 1* 200.

⁷⁸ Perry, *Hitchcock* 70.

itself, “[...] *Rope* is made up of a single shot in so far as the images are only the winding paths of a single reasoning process.”⁷⁹ In a way, this has some ties to the detective story, which both Hitchcock and Poe have used in their oeuvre.

This camera use has been further analyzed, especially in this film where there are no cuts, certainly giving it a unique quality. The passage of time seems real and therefore the audience’s anticipation is increased. It may be noted that in the Greek tragedies, the unity of time has similarly been kept. According to Rothman, “[f]or the deliberateness of every move that the camera makes creates a state of perpetual tension. At every moment, our sense that the camera is poised to move enhances our sense that it represents a palpable presence within the world of the film.”⁸⁰ As seems to be the case, the source of horror then is the anticipation, the wait, rather than a gruesome murder, as observed in the previous chapter. This only shows the difference between various methodologies used in different films, however both aspects form a significant aspect of the creation of horror.

In “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Black Cat,” a number of similar issues arise with respect to the element and role of psychology. In both cases, the murderers/narrators are seriously flawed – one a cold maniac convinced of his sanity, the other a man who turns into a demon. Thus, one may trace already the first differences between Poe’s and Hitchcock’s conceptions of the theme of this sub-chapter. One may say that in *Rope*, the murderers are much closer to the regular person, and thus may easily be mistaken for an innocent person, even though the audience is unaware of the processes within their mind, of which they do not speak, unlike the narrators of Poe’s stories. In *Blackmail*, on the other hand, it may be argued that, while starting off as a sane woman, her own act of crime and the subsequent guilt causes her descent into madness. The murderers of the two Poe’s stories may be closer to Norman of *Psycho*. Nevertheless, the horror that Poe unleashes in these two stories, if to be taken seriously, is the utter depravity and perversion, almost demonism, of the murderous acts, especially in “The Black Cat,” where the narrator, at times, strangely admits to fearing himself, as he claims, “I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity.”⁸¹ The magnitude of the immorality of his act is what Poe underlines, “hung it *because* I knew that it had loved me, and *because* I felt it had given me no

⁷⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 1* 200.

⁸⁰ Rothman 247.

⁸¹ Poe, *Complete Tales and Poems* 224.

reason for offence.”⁸² The injustice of the murder, and the cruelty of it, is what creates the impression of depravity. While being so perverse, however, at this earlier stage, the narrator also seems to have no control over these violent acts, “hung it with the tears streaming down my eyes, and with the bitterest remorse at my heart.”⁸³ In some way, then, the narrator commits this crime without a sense of control, which is further underlined in “[t]he fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer. My original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body; and a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured, thrilled every fibre of my frame.”⁸⁴ This loss of moral identity and a possession by some unimaginable beast is Poe’s device at bringing out horror and again introduces Kristeva’s theory of abjection, for this character certainly evokes such feelings within the readers.

Similarly, in “The Tell-Tale Heart,” the narrator finds himself in a situation where it seems necessary to kill – to get rid of some element that inevitably leads to the narrator’s rage. Already here may be obvious that Poe’s horror seldom stems from an evident “monster,” as may be the case in *Frankenstein*, for example. Such an element would perhaps be identifiable with Žižek’s “real Real,” which he describes as “the horrifying Thing, the primordial object, [...] the Alien in Ridley Scott’s film of the same name.”⁸⁵ Poe’s horror, apart from the various devices of symbolism, supernaturalism, and allegory, is mostly made up of regular human minds in ordinary human bodies, which goes horribly wrong. Fletcher discusses the narrator’s problem in “The Tell-Tale Heart,” identifying the cause of his murder as the old man’s difference, “[t]he eye, therefore, is not a ‘symbol’ as we conventionally regard symbols. Rather, [...] it represents anomaly, individuality, ‘differentness.’”⁸⁶ This way, there is a portrayal of the “Other,” something which again cannot be related to, and shows in a detailed way the creation of discrimination, bullying, and violence from otherness. The horror of the story, however, is that the sane reader cannot relate to the murderer; the reader is aware of the narrator’s twisted mind. Thus, the reader is subjected to continuing to read from the perspective of horror itself, of the murderer, the madman, the enemy. As Fletcher explains:

The paradox to the situation as Poe genially presents it is that the narrator is himself “mad,” yet congratulates himself on his “sanity.” [...] In his way a “superman,” he feels justified in killing the old man whom he

⁸² Poe, *Complete Tales and Poems* 225.

⁸³ Poe, *Complete Tales and Poems* 225.

⁸⁴ Poe, *Complete Tales and Poems* 224.

⁸⁵ Slavoj Žižek, *Jacques Lacan: Critical Evaluations in Cultural Theory* (London: Routledge, 2003) 2.

⁸⁶ Fletcher 163.

considers possessed of the evil eye, i.e., the old man is “considered a madman” by one who is himself insane.⁸⁷

The awareness of being unwillingly placed in the murderer’s shoes by sharing his viewpoint is a chilling factor and certainly contributes to Poe’s horror creation. This is somewhat connected to the fact that in most of these works, there is a secret that is shared by nobody else but the audience and the murderer himself; a strange fact which certainly evokes some discomfort in the audience or reader, as well as creates suspense, as Hitchcock explains in the previous sub-chapter of this thesis. The knowledge of something being hidden, no matter how immoral, serves as a constant excitement when other protagonists are not aware of this secret. Rothman states:

At the center of *Rope* is a secret – there will be no cuts, only camera movements – that is no secret at all. [...] Hitchcock’s desire for his achievement to be acknowledged is as manifest as its central character’s desire for the conception, planning, and execution of his perfect murder to be acknowledged.⁸⁸

It seems that similarly, there is tension and anticipation in “The Tell-Tale Heart” felt in the readers as they are aware of the murdered man under the floorboards and the narrative increasingly leads to the uncovering of the body, almost exactly like in *Rope*. There is something extremely morbid about the mere presence of a corpse, hidden but known about by the murderer and the audience, with regular course of actions going on around; in “The Tell-Tale Heart,” the man sitting on top of the floorboards, with other people in the room, talking, or in *Rope*, the party, drinks on the corpse-containing chest. From the point of view of moral sensibilities, it is absurd and bizarre. As Perry notes, “[the murderers] hide the body in a large chest in the apartment, in the very room in which a short time later they are entertaining their victim’s parents, fiancée and tutor to cocktails.”⁸⁹ There is far more going on than simple anticipation, in this case.

The magnitude of *the* secret, then, is greatly increased – it is the main focus of the plot, of the audience’s and the readers’ thoughts. Just as the effect it has on the murderer himself, the knowledge of this secret is impossible to contain, to deal with. It is oppressively on one’s mind, constantly, by its sheer moral significance and meaning. Symbolism then becomes a very important factor, as mentioned above and as expressed by Metz in the first chapter, due to its associative power. Everything leads to that one thought, and this may also be seen in *Blackmail*.

⁸⁷ Fletcher 163, 164.

⁸⁸ Rothman 247.

⁸⁹ Perry, *Hitchcock* 71.

Just like in “The Tell-Tale Heart,” the mind’s connotations lead to this one focus, the one guilty crime, as Rothman observes, “[a]mong Hitchcock’s early films, *Blackmail* contains the most striking instances of Hitchcock’s use of coded sexual references and symbols. Crazy with fear and guilt, Alice wanders through the London night; [...],”⁹⁰ a framework of interrelated associations denotative of Deleuze’s theory. In these horrors, it is inevitable that the secret will be disclosed, and observing the mental state of the murderers, it is inevitable that it will be disclosed by the murderers themselves. Knowing that this will happen certainly aids the suspense in Hitchcock style, as the audience, or reader, does not know when it will happen – although, as Hitchcock himself notes, suspense is brought forth also when the audience knows the exact time, resulting in the preceding conversation, before the horrific event, becoming unique. Nevertheless, it follows that these works are undeniably linked and show a common feature of horror used in both eras.

3.3 Obsession: *Vertigo* and “Ligeia”

This sub-chapter shall deal primarily with the notion of obsession as a horror-evoking element, which touches upon both works, even though details may differ. Obsession is an emotion or mental state worthy of horror itself, as it is inherently disturbing – it again weakens rationale, which is evocative of horror (lack of the possibility of relation or intelligent communication). There is also something disturbingly uncanny about the need for the protagonist in *Vertigo* to dress the woman the same, re-create someone who can never be that someone, as if in a state of suspended animation, a woman as an object, who is denied her own subjectivity. Indeed, the theme itself is present, despite the fact that Judy really is Madeleine, unlike Ligeia and Rowena whose actual existence is unclear and might even be wholly a product of the narrator’s mind, especially at the end where the two ladies’ identities merge, even if only supernaturally. This theme of yearning may be glimpsed in Poe’s “The Raven” as well, in the despair and reminiscence of the narrator, and perhaps, had he had a chance to revivify his lost Lenore, he might make a good candidate for similar obsessive behavior. This is not certain, however, since if the presence of Ligeia may be considered the product of the narrator’s mind, then this already is a sign of obsession, and it may be noted that the narrator of “The Raven” does not concoct such an

⁹⁰ Rothman 351.

obsessive vision. It should also be pointed out that the narrator of “The Raven” feels a much deeper sorrow than the one in “Ligeia” as it is not only the lost love he suffers for, but also a darkness of the mind and soul, depicted by the loss of reason.

It may be observed that there are quite distinct consistencies between *Vertigo* and “Ligeia.” For example, as Truffaut suggests, “[...] substitution is the main theme of the picture: A man who is still in love with a woman he believes to be dead attempts to re-create the image of the dead woman when he meets up with a girl who is her look-alike.”⁹¹ This attempt at re-creation is essentially what the narrator in “Ligeia” manifests. Harry Levin, for example, notes that “the arithmetical formula is the coalescence of two into singleness; but Poe enlarges it by making the heroine’s double her polar opposite and by dramatizing, with his eeriest stage-effects, the substitution of the one for the other.”⁹² However, the interesting fact about Ligeia and Rowena, is that they seem to be polar opposites appearance-wise, rather than the remarkably similar Judy and Madeleine. The narrator thus only seems to fill a gap in his life and heart by Rowena – and the differences between them are more than obvious, as Ligeia is dark-haired and Rowena is blonde.

There is, indeed, such a parallel in *Vertigo*. Judy must dye her hair to suit Scottie’s obsessive desires, which shows Scottie’s initiative and efforts in trying to achieve Madeleine’s exact appearance in Judy. They are already so similar that with these subtle changes, he is trying to move Judy increasingly towards his “ideal,” Madeleine. As Perry explains:

Six months later on the street he spots a girl who has a marked physical resemblance to his former love, and convinced in spite of her denials that she is the same girl, he falls in love again. He persuades her to dye her hair blonde like the first girl, and when the exact image has been recreated he is able to unravel the extraordinary truth – that there was a deliberate hoax to cloak a murder.⁹³

Therefore, this is more grounded in reality in Hitchcock, as it turns out quite reasonably that, with such uncanny similarity, Judy and Madeleine indeed are the same person, but what is important to analyze is the element of oneness, the peculiar mingling of identities where the audience does not at first know the truth about Judy, but notices, just as much as Scottie, their disturbing resemblance. The uncertainty about someone’s identity evokes fear, as it shakes the ground of reality and the set order of the world, it opens the door to the unknown which is one of the most horrifying experiences for the human mind. Nevertheless, Scottie’s obsession is similarly

⁹¹ Truffaut 325.

⁹² Harry Levin, *The Power of Blackness: Hawthorne, Poe, Melville* (Athens: Ohio State University Press, 1989) 158.

⁹³ Perry, *Hitchcock* 96.

disturbing; an obsessed mind is not a reasonable mind. The gradation of Judy's changes is also connotative of the typical scheme, or framework, of the horror, as Propp's narrative theory would suggest.

It may be argued, however, that *Vertigo*, while involving these horrific themes, is set in a more realistic scheme. Not only is the setting an ordinary American city, as opposed to Poe's undefined and largely abstract place (implying similarly a more abstract interpretation), but the fact that Judy is later discovered to really be Madeleine somewhat diminishes its supernaturalism, as well as horror. Indeed, what remains horrific about *Vertigo* is its preoccupation with Scottie's psyche. In comparison, "Ligeia" contains overt horror, its climax in the metempsychosis of Ligeia, possibly a figment of the narrator's obsessed imagination. It also fits into a more Gothic context as a result, as it is the product of the Gothic movement, rather than Hitchcock's experimental cinema horror and effort to relate it to his modern audience. As mentioned in the second chapter, these differences must be taken into account when dealing with authors from different periods, and Hitchcock's style then has a distinct modern quality.

However, while Hitchcock often places his films into the urban milieu, and involves plots, characters and language from an everyday life (possibly to increase the effect of the horror which is bound to ensue), it should not be completely dissociated from a somewhat poetic style containing symbolism; Hitchcock's films are not as true to life as they may seem at first. The urban and seemingly realistic context often turns out to be only a veil concealing the symbolic connections and underlying meaning of which Hitchcock himself is aware, and thus this may be considered intentional. Truffaut provides Hitchcock's words relating to this in *Vertigo*:

At the beginning of the picture, when James Stewart follows Madeleine to the cemetery, we gave her a dreamlike, mysterious quality by shooting through a fog filter. That gave us a green effect, like fog over the bright sunshine. Then, later on, when Stewart first meets Judy, I decided to make her live at the Empire Hotel in Post Street because it has a green neon sign flashing continually outside the window. So when the girl emerges from the bathroom, that green light gives her the same subtle, ghostlike quality.⁹⁴

Hence Hitchcock consciously uses repetitive motifs that connect together, throughout the work, creating a symbolic meaning, as Deleuze's theory also suggests. From his words above, it follows that Hitchcock strives to achieve an air of mystery and surrealism around Madeleine, and then again connects, by the use of the green color, Judy to Madeleine. This denotes that the two

⁹⁴ Hitchcock in Truffaut 244, 245.

women are not merely one ordinary woman guilty of a hoax – this is only the realistic veil, so that the plot meets popular appeal relating to ordinary and modern life. As Rothman states, “[f]or Hitchcock, green is the color of dreams, fantasies, and memories.”⁹⁵ Thus, no matter what the milieu, it is shown that Madeleine (and Judy) are meant to be only half-real, or even surreal; in this way, they stand much closer to Ligeia, and this is another clue from Hitchcock that their purpose in the film is to place a mirror in front of Scottie – they are there as reflections of Scottie’s own psyche, his obsession and his fears (such as his vertigo). Indeed, as would be in line with Mulvey’s observations, the female often serves the purpose of effecting action in the male, she does not propel the plot forward herself and the male becomes the real focus.

In “Ligeia,” there is no evidence that Rowena would have any similarity of facial features to Ligeia. In fact, it is rather the opposite, as the narrator feels no suspicion or sees no strange resemblance between the two, as Scottie does in *Vertigo*. It may be noticed that the narrator grows to despise Rowena with almost as much hatred as the narrator of “The Black Cat,” which may be seen in “[Rowena] shunned me, and loved me but little – I could not help perceiving; but it gave me rather pleasure than otherwise. I loathed her with a hatred belonging more to demon than to man.”⁹⁶ Indeed, while the narrator of “The Black Cat” admits to what crime he has committed, “Ligeia”’s narrator may have just as well murdered Rowena for the desire of revivifying Ligeia, but is himself not aware of it. His hatred towards Rowena certainly contributes to such a view. It may be observed that Poe seems to enjoy depicting some of his tormented souls as victims of evil, possessed by a dark, hateful heart which render them depraved, they are subject to inexplicable compulsions to do harm, and lose their humanity, believing themselves to be demons, reminiscent of some evil dwelling within, the abject dark part of their minds.

It may be said that Scottie in *Vertigo* is “suffering from a reincarnation complex,”⁹⁷ according to Perry. This notion, indeed, seems to be at least partially linked to necrophilia, as Scottie remains sexually desiring of a dead woman. Hitchcock affirms this idea, stating that “[t]o put it plainly, the man wants to go to bed with a woman who’s dead; he is indulging in a form of necrophilia.”⁹⁸ Thus, there is a connection between *Vertigo* and “Ligeia” through this taboo element of

⁹⁵ Rothman 359.

⁹⁶ Poe, *Complete Tales and Poems* 661.

⁹⁷ Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 131.

⁹⁸ Hitchcock in Truffaut 244:

necrophilia, and is also reminiscent of *Psycho*, where Norman keeps his dead mother in his house as a corpse, if the possibilities of any imaginary levels are not considered. This theme, then, is pervasive; a corpse that is not disposed of, but kept, is for example present in “The Black Cat,” as well as “The Tell-Tale Heart,” and indeed appears also in Hitchcock’s *Rope*.

Sexuality, however, forms a rather large part of the context. The protagonist played by Kim Novak “is a sexual object moulded to conform with the detective’s wish.”⁹⁹ This hinting at sexuality in the film, is what may render their relationship disturbing – what is connected to sexuality is often considered taboo for the audience, it is dark, intimate and penetrating, especially when one partner is in a somewhat inferior position, which may be exploited. To the viewer, however, it may simultaneously be attractive, as Ricoeur states, “[t]aboo places us at a point where the forbidden is attractive because it is forbidden, where the law excites concupiscence [...],”¹⁰⁰ again pointing out this draw towards, and simultaneously away from, horror. The knowledge of such extreme intimacy also evokes discomfort in the audience and, if escalated, may lead to violence and horror, as may be seen in *Psycho* where the murder, as well as the voyeurism, have strong sexual connotations. Hitchcock himself is aware of this in *Vertigo*, as he explains that “[c]inematicallly, all of Stewart’s efforts to recreate the dead woman are shown in such a way that he seems to be trying to undress her, instead of the other way around.”¹⁰¹ Indeed, by attempting to create a copy of Madeleine, who is now dead, Scottie is showing his ultimate possession of Judy/Madeleine – this is not simply obsession, but an attempt to entirely possess the woman’s body. And, as Hitchcock suggests, this possession leads to Judy being placed in an inferior, sexualized and objectified position, in which she is increasingly becoming stripped with every new item she puts on to resemble Madeleine. In fact, there is a reverse side to this aspect, as Scottie’s eroticism lies in the picture of the perfect Madeleine; for him, Judy becoming Madeleine is a striptease, wherein every time she takes one more step toward resembling Madeleine is more erotic than if she were naked.

The notion of the extent of this destructive obsession, another psychological trait (showing Poe’s and Hitchcock’s great involvement with psychology), is the most horrifying element in these works. As Truffaut describes, “[t]hose scenes in which James Stewart takes Judy to the dress shop to buy a suit just like the one Madeleine wore, and the way in which he makes her try on

⁹⁹ Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 134.

¹⁰⁰ Ricoeur 202.

¹⁰¹ Hitchcock in Truffaut 244.

shoes, are among the best. He's like a maniac."¹⁰² There is an element of sought perfection that occurs in both *Vertigo* and "Ligeia." In *Vertigo*, Scottie's attempts to recreate Madeleine are his attempts to recreate perfection. In "Ligeia," it is uncertain whether Ligeia really exists, as there are certain clues that denote a possibility of fantasy. However, whether real or not, to the narrator, Ligeia is the epitome of perfection, and thus his attempts to revivify her are just as well his attempts to behold perfection again, as in his description of Ligeia, "the lofty and pale forehead – it was faultless," or "and nowhere but in the graceful medallions of the Hebrews had I beheld a similar perfection,"¹⁰³ denotative of his infatuated admiration. Perhaps what is so disturbing and thus evocative of horror about this infatuation, is its utter irrationality, and so again is ungraspable, impossible to comprehend, in other words Sublime, according to Burke's criteria of the concept. What Hitchcock creates in the film is an effective method of doubling, that one may also observe in Poe's "William Wilson"; as Rothman mentions, "Judy steps forward to assume her place in Scottie's vision and he sees that she is wearing Madeleine's necklace, hence recognizes that Judy and Madeleine are one."¹⁰⁴ This is in fact strongly connotative of the final moment of William Wilson noticing his enemy in the mirror; his alter ego, conjoining the two identities into one, structurally the exact opposite of a split personality, with the result quite similar.

It is notable that what seems to be the primary factor in the creation of horror, in this instance, is not a supernatural entity, such as ghosts or monsters, but what is realistic enough to occur in the world as we know it. More specifically, the perversions and abnormalities of the human mind in another person to which one may relate, as they are reminiscent of one's own mind and its possibilities, are vehemently used in this type of horror. In connection to *Vertigo*, Perry further mentions, "[...] it seemed that [Hitchcock] was less concerned with it being a straightforward suspense story, more interested in the effect of the obsessive and deliberate re-creation of the dead girl by the detective."¹⁰⁵ Thus it is not only very closely connected to Poe's "Ligeia," but may be viewed as a higher theme in a large number of Hitchcock's and Poe's works, and perhaps should be identified as one of the most prominent themes of horror in general. It may be elaborated by contextualizing this ideology within the framework of horror theory and exploring why it is that humans are most afraid of themselves – of their own minds but in a twisted form. It

¹⁰² Truffaut 244.

¹⁰³ Poe, *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* 655.

¹⁰⁴ Rothman 361.

¹⁰⁵ Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 131.

is the loss of control over one's own mind, the idea that such a thing may happen to one's own mind and it would be impossible to control. In line with Freudian thought, it may be surmised that what the audience or the reader is most afraid of is his own subconscious, the mirror image, the alter ego, the William Wilson we cannot control.

3.4 Animal Element: *The Birds* and "The Raven"

Both works, *The Birds* and "The Raven," have a large number of similarities and are very profound not only in their manifold use of horror, but also in their implications in relation to the human being, and are a great contribution to one's understanding of horror. It is very fitting for both artists to choose an animal as the main representative of horror – it allows for the human to be placed in the position of a naïve element, convinced of his superiority, not expecting the events to unfold in such a way that would place the animal above the human. It is a powerful demonstration of the uncanny, forming a large part of both works and being the main force behind the specific horror therein. This sub-chapter will then focus on categories such as the uncanny, the Sublime, the anticipation or suspense of action, or the impending apocalypse. It is not difficult to see that the birds are picked intentionally – in everyday life, they seem to be perfectly harmless, and thus it is not expected that they would be capable of thinking on any higher level. Hearing a bird song in the trees is only the typical depiction of bliss and peace; this expected harmlessness is then horrifyingly juxtaposed with the development of events in both works.

In Poe's poem, the raven becomes a cognizant entity, which in turn haunts the narrator and throws him into destructive agonies, by its unending repetitive and irrational chant. In *The Birds*, it does not matter whether represented by an individual or a flock of birds – they unleash a war on humans as though they were strategizing generals instead of the normally unreasoning animals. It is like hearing a bird song suddenly become repetitive in such a way that it would resemble a mathematical formula, a verbal spell, or a rhetorical argument – it would be at least a little strange and perhaps fearsome, that it seems as though these birds are capable of thought. It is this type of the uncanny that is used in both works. This may be manifested in the almost human and calculated attacks, as for example in the boat, giving their "mind" more intelligence. This may be compared to the raven, who actually "answers," albeit irrationally. One does not expect these

innocent creatures to be dangerous, and the fact that they become so is surprising and unpredictable. Hitchcock himself acknowledges, “[t]he basic appeal to me is that it had to do with ordinary, everyday birds.”¹⁰⁶ This lays a good foundation for the creation or build-up of horror, as it is largely involved with the audience’s expectations that turn out false. The ensuing element of surprise, resulting in negativity (positive surprise would then lead to comedy and illicit laughter in the audience), and thus horror. Perry similarly notes that “[i]t is not birds of prey, either, that are behaving in an aggressive manner, but the common species.”¹⁰⁷ This is an important point that helps to show that there is a large potential of creating horror; it is dependent on the method of displaying objects, or tone of voice – there must be a premonition of danger, which can be initiated by typically innocent triggers. Interpretation, of course, also plays a role, and thus, in line with Deleuze’s theories, the audience is as much important as the method of delivery. As Hitchcock explains, “[i]t all goes to show that with a little effort even the word ‘love’ can be made to sound ominous.”¹⁰⁸

Another aspect of horror, significantly manifested in these two works, is the Sublime. Indeed, the Sublime relates to the experience of something vast and incomprehensible, too large to encompass in the scope of one’s mind, as Burke states in the first chapter. In *The Birds*, there is strength in their numbers – often depicted so that their vastness is impossible to quantify – the audience cannot count them or see the flock in its entirety, denotative of artificial infinity. Such examples could be their accumulation on the wires, which increases their ominous character even before the actual attack. One bird may already be difficult to handle, and with such a high number of violent birds, defense seems impossible. Perry notes, “[t]he story [...] hinges on one simple, frightening situation: the bird population in its numberless millions turning against man.”¹⁰⁹ In “The Raven,” this is not so – there is only one bird, albeit oppressive on the mind of the narrator, but in a more intimate setting. The fact that the birds in Hitchcock’s film affect a civilization, denoted by the general outside world, the services and public buildings, equates it to a natural disaster or something much larger and more powerful than human society. This is another reason why their presence is Sublime.

¹⁰⁶ Hitchcock in Truffaut 285.

¹⁰⁷ Perry, *Hitchcock* 105.

¹⁰⁸ Hitchcock in Truffaut 288.

¹⁰⁹ Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 145.

In “The Raven,” the strength on the contrary rests in the very intimacy: the raven seems to know the narrator privately, “know” about his deep depression (indeed, it seems to know him better than the narrator himself, which is also rather disturbing). In this way, Poe demonstrates the pit of emotional despair. It may be seen that Poe’s horror is highly psychological, with psychological implications. Hitchcock’s horror, while often *about* psychological problems and themes, functioning as catalysts of horror, does not have such implications, as the film cannot be viewed as an allegory of the mind – it is a regular town with civilization, which is affected outwardly by visual phenomena. However, as said above, this civilization is disrupted and subverted by the phenomenon of the birds – they seem to come from elsewhere, otherworldly, thus incomprehensible, defying all knowledge and information. This inability to understand their minds, much like the raven, leads to their awesome and sublime nature. The lack of understanding is then a large element in horror-making, whether literary or in film. In connection, Perry further suggests:

Some critics have objected to the mechanical trickery [matte-work] employed because it enables the birds to dominate the human actors in the picture. This surely was one of the director’s intentions – to show that a man could be paralysed and helpless before a force beyond his immediate comprehension. It is the ultimate, cynical conclusion of his philosophy of making people victims of environments and circumstances.¹¹⁰

Indeed, the implications are that the resulting effect is that of human smallness; the human, be it the character in the film, the narrator or the audience, is made painfully aware of their weakness, and their ensuing feeling of inferiority.

While horror, then, results in evoking fear in the individual, it is placed in a larger context of humanity. This is less obvious in “The Raven,” where this is clearly seen only in the depth of the narrator’s suffering, however in *The Birds* this is quite overt. First of all, the power play between birds and humans is obvious from the start; the urban setting of a busy American city, denoted by businessmen carrying briefcases and wearing suits. The shop with caged birds is also significant, as this shows where humans have placed themselves in relation to birds, and shows the human confidence of their superiority over birds (and other animals). This has been firmly set from the beginning, so that the shock and surprise is amplified when birds take over. Also, there seems to be a revenge motif, as the birds attacking may not be perceived as villains simply being evil for no reason, but as a result of human behavior. As Hitchcock discloses:

¹¹⁰ Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 149.

And later on, when the gulls attack the village, Melanie Daniels takes refuge in a glass telephone booth and I show her as a bird in a cage. This time it isn't a gilded cage, but a cage of misery, and it's also the beginning of her ordeal by fire, so to speak. It's a reversal of the age-old conflict between men and birds. Here the human beings are in cages and the birds are on the outside.¹¹¹

Thus, it is not merely revenge of birds, but it may also serve the purpose of a threat, and a mirror to humanity, showing the wider context mentioned above. The audience then perhaps does not only experience the horror for the duration of the film, but is left with a lingering feeling of moral guilt.

The film may also be seen to deepen this element by its lack of silence in respect of the validity of human knowledge. Humans are not only confident in their general superiority over animals, but often also about their knowledge, especially the sciences, and its correctness. Hitchcock seems to laugh at this aspect of humanity in the film, introducing the ornithologist who is proven wrong. According to Perry:

There is a telling scene in the village restaurant when a middle-aged woman ornithologist [...] pooh-poohs the whole notion of the bird world becoming aggressive because it goes against their nature, and later is forced to eat her words when the same building is besieged by gulls, with a grandstand view of the destruction outside.¹¹²

One must be aware of the other side of this coin, however. The essence of the birds' horror, as discussed, is in the depicted "*unheimlich*" – that which we think we know, turns into horror when it is suddenly disproved by the unpredictable and lethal bird behavior. It is a state of affairs that cannot be analyzed, one cannot research it to understand it, no encyclopedias apply. The utter subversion of human knowledge is strongly evocative of horror. In "The Raven," one would similarly not expect the raven's behavior, but there is a difference in the specific methodologies of Hitchcock and Poe, as this type of bird can in reality mimic speech, is thought of as highly intelligent, and also carries with it a higher mythical and symbolic quality. Furthermore, it is also an accepted ill omen, thus it certainly fits more into the setting of the poem and, even though the behavior is certainly not commonplace and shocks the narrator as much as the readers, it is perhaps more expected in the context of such a poem, especially if it is not absolutely clear whether any of it actually happens outside of the narrator's mind. This is necessarily impossible in *The Birds*, as the whole city is affected – a city which is given a name, and is shown to involve

¹¹¹ Hitchcock in Truffaut 288.

¹¹² Perry, *Hitchcock* 106.

authorities and institutions, such as a school. The message of the film is clear, as put forward by Perry, “*The Birds* described an ecological nightmare, a massive shift in the balance of nature which occurs when for some unspecified reason the bird population of the world turns against man.”¹¹³ What is meant by “man” essentially refers to all of the man-made existence, and the implications are thus larger. It is not only the individuals themselves that the birds are after, but symbolically, it is the whole world. According to Perry, “[i]t is a parable, expressing Hitchcock’s frequently voiced contention that it is in the ordinary things around us that menace and danger lurk, and perhaps our ultimate destruction.”¹¹⁴ Again, this underlines the function of the uncanny in this film, and points to the inversion of safe and dangerous roles within the framework of Hitchcock’s film.

Another undeniable quality of both works, and connected to the issue above, is the general aspect of the ensuing apocalypse, perhaps more expressly depicted in the film. One of the few places which may seem apart from actual reality, and thus befitting a picture of a town not necessarily in existence, is the end of the film, which is shown as very barren and quite unreal, as Perry notes, “[t]hey drive off through a desolate landscape that has been taken over by the feathered species.”¹¹⁵ Indeed, this may only seem unreal not because the film occurs in a town that has never really existed, but more likely, because it shows the utter destruction that the birds have caused, empowering the sense of horror and its aftermath. It depicts a town that has become completely dominated by birds and they have made it theirs, which is the idea behind the sky depicted as being full of birds who refuse to leave and who are more powerful than humans, as all other humans have escaped. According to Perry, “[n]ever in his films has [Hitchcock] come so close to portraying the ultimate cataclysm, the annihilation of the world by uncontrollable forces.”¹¹⁶ Poe’s “The Raven” similarly hints at annihilation of the narrator’s entire soul, “[a]nd my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor / Shall be lifted - nevermore!”¹¹⁷ In this regard, it is not only the presence of a bird that links the two works. Rothman also states that “*The Birds* [...] [is] infused with a deep sense of loss, an urgency, and an emotional directness that set [it] apart from all other Hitchcock films. [It] declares something about the human need for

¹¹³ Perry, *Hitchcock* 105.

¹¹⁴ Perry, *Hitchcock* 105.

¹¹⁵ Perry, *Hitchcock* 105.

¹¹⁶ Perry, *Hitchcock* 105.

¹¹⁷ Poe, *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* 946.

love that was always implicit in his work.”¹¹⁸ Thus, this sense of loss is a part of both the film and the poem, connecting these at a thematic level and by means of the implications arising from the works. The apocalypse, it seems, is closely connected to the expressed sense of loss and the need for love, especially obvious in “The Raven.”

Hitchcock further uses space to invoke horror, together with the correct camera angles denoting, for example, the heroine’s lack of awareness of danger nearby. As Perry states:

There is a breathtaking scene in which huge ravens gather in a school playground immediately behind the unsuspecting heroine. The first time she looks there are two or three birds on the climbing bars. When she turns round again every inch of it is festooned with hundreds of menacing black shapes, sitting, waiting. There follows a tremendous wave of violence as the birds swoop down on the fishing village, tearing, pecking, clawing. The air is filled with whirling feathered bodies.¹¹⁹

As Hitchcock is a master of suspense, this method is by all means intentional; using the camera in a way that enables the viewer to notice the rather quickly flocking birds, in a large area behind Melanie, all to create a feeling of anticipation in the audience, who become anxious about what is going to happen when either she looks and notices, or when the birds turn into killers. Hitchcock explains his own methodology regarding the careful and effective use of space:

Another aspect of the same problem is that space should not be wasted, because it can be used for dramatic effect. For instance, in *The Birds*, when the birds attack the barricaded house and Melanie is cringing back on the sofa, I kept the camera back and used the space to show the nothingness from which she's shrinking. When I went back to her, I varied that by placing the camera high to convey the impression of the fear that's rising in her.¹²⁰

Hitchcock is thus able to create emotions and interpretive theories by employing the camera in a meaningful way – this is very much comparable to a writer’s choice of words or structure of a plot. However, it is the element of building up to an event that is essential in the scene, and Truffaut suggests that “[t]he scene in which Melanie Daniels is waiting for the children outside the school illustrates your secret formula for suspense. There’s a long, silent wait, during which you build up the mood with great authority, almost imperiously.”¹²¹ Indeed, it seems as though the characters, especially the victims of the ensuing attack, are only playing the shallow part of a victimized body, there is no purpose to its placement on the screen other than to entertain the

¹¹⁸ Rothman 249.

¹¹⁹ Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 147.

¹²⁰ Hitchcock in Truffaut 263.

¹²¹ Truffaut 292.

audience by expecting and watching it become outwitted and ravaged by, not only the birds, but also by the camera.

Furthermore, the use of signs or omens leads to suspense, and thus to an anticipated horrific experience, as Perry notes, “[t]he first moment of menace occurs when a seagull swoops and grazes [Melanie’s] head.”¹²² Already from this moment, the horror is imminent, and the audience is more tense with every further bird that appears, denotative of the typical gradation of horror in respect of the narrative structure. Truffaut also points this out, noting that “[the audience] merely suspect that the attacks by the birds are going to become increasingly serious. The first part is an entirely normal picture with psychological overtones, and it is only at the end of each scene that some clue hints at the potential menace of the birds.”¹²³ The human mind is easily adaptable to patterns and habits, and the increasing attacks engrave a pattern of violence in birds, similarly increasing the audience’s fear with every new attack. It is almost a kind of conditioning, wherein the audience may later experience horror only by seeing another bird, albeit peaceful. Omens, followed by a terrifying action, are then useful sources of this psychological conditioning, and are vehemently used by Poe as well; in “The Raven,” the bird itself is an ill-omen, and the knocking on the door intensifies this.

Finally, knocking is a useful attribute when discussing “The Raven,” as specifically the element of sound may be effectively used in invoking horror, as mentioned by Burke in the first chapter. Hitchcock uses the art of sound intentionally, as he states, “[f]or instance, when Melanie is locked up in the attic with the murderous birds, we inserted the natural sounds of wings, but we stylized them so as to create greater intensity. We wanted to get a menacing wave of vibration rather than a single level.”¹²⁴ This menacing quality of sound has similarly been exploited in “The Raven,” as the ominous repetition at the end of each stanza, with a strong rhythm, increasingly creates a sense of impending horror. This is especially significant when comparing it to the choice of music in *Psycho* during the murderous scene, where Perry comments, “[t]he sequence is accompanied by a terrifying musical chord, repeated over and over again like a demonic shriek.”¹²⁵ This is undeniably reminiscent of “The Raven” and its emphasis on sound, sonorousness and rhythm.

¹²² Perry, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* 146, 147.

¹²³ Truffaut 287.

¹²⁴ Hitchcock in Truffaut 297.

¹²⁵ Perry, *Hitchcock* 101.

3.5 Conclusion

In the preceding sub-chapters, it has been shown that Poe's and Hitchcock's selected works share many aspects, and those aspects are often linked to the theories of horror presented in the first chapter, thus pointing out the correlations between interpretations of horror across centuries. It is evident that in the analyzed works, there is frequent use of the Sublime as brought forth by Burke, manifested in several ways, such as irrationality visible in, for example, the murderer of "The Tell-Tale Heart," or the raven of the poem, and the presence of situations which the reader or audience are unable to comprehend. The vastness of space or numbers is seen in *The Birds*, for example, but this is closely linked to Burke's concept of artificial infinity, as the birds are often uncountable and resemble an army. The use of obscurity has also been discussed in connection to Burke, as this is used whenever a specific view is withheld, most obviously used in *Psycho*'s shower scene.

Similarly, psychoanalysis and Freudian thought, such as the use of the uncanny, is present across most analyzed works and shows a timeless quality as regards its use in horror. Indeed, using an innocent bird as the focus and initiator of horror is uncanny, and this may be applied both to "The Raven" and *The Birds*. Uncanny is a potent concept, as it is anything that is familiar, which has suddenly become distanced and dangerous, therefore horrific. Most of those encounters of split personalities and multipart minds, such as in "The Fall of the House of Usher," "William Wilson" and *Psycho*, are in a way connected to the uncanny; that part within them, which should be the most familiar, since it is within, is in essence the cause of horror in the stories. This may also be an abject part of their own psyches, but this may be debatable. Nonetheless, Kristeva's notion of the abject has been to some extent present in the analyzed works, and shows an existence of this phenomenon before its articulation in theory by Kristeva; the "Other" which is despised and rejected, but is inextricably a part of oneself, is most evident in "William Wilson" in the narrator's experience, and to the audience, the exposures to the morbid characters of Norman's mother, or the demonic murderer in "The Black Cat," may be in some ways considered abject.

In conclusion, the horror narrative structure has also been involved, with the most significant aspect being its repetitive nature, facilitating suspense and conditioning by its gradation which

forms a fundamental part of the horror genre. This is an element that is less manifested by the thematic content, but certainly by the structure of the plot, and thus is in line with the presented theories of narrative proposed by Propp. A horror story, be it in literature or in film, would not be half as horrific, had the scheme of the plot consisted only of one occurrence of horror, and nothing else. This may be considered a tragic event, or a sad accident; and while the event in itself may be considered horrific, it would not be part of the horror genre trajectory demarcated in this thesis. This method is vehemently used in *The Birds*, as the number of birds gradually add on, each encounter more horrific than the previous one. This same structure may be seen in Poe's stories, such as "William Wilson," where the alter ego gradually becomes more and more oppressive to the narrator. Therefore, whilst the comparison of specific thematic features and horror evoking strategies as far as content is concerned is highly important, the significance of the narrative structure of horror and any other literary text should not be forgotten, as it plays a key role in the establishment and fruition of the specific genre.

4. The Scope of Poe's and Hitchcock's Horror

To supplement the first theoretical chapter and the literary analysis provided, this chapter shall deal with the authors within the context of their era, to discuss not only the main theme of this thesis as has been done in the first chapter, but the authors specifically. Poe is mostly known for his poems and short stories, but in fact is a diverse writer of the nineteenth century, and not a century later, Hitchcock emerges as a pioneering British but somewhat transnational film director, one who witnesses the birth of cinematography and significantly contributes to its development throughout the twentieth century. In some ways, these artists are very similar, especially in some of their choice of motifs, but in others, they may be considered polar opposites. This chapter will then discuss the links between the analyzed works and the trends and movements present in the literary and cinematic sphere in their time. Most importantly, this chapter shall briefly discuss the problems that must be faced when dealing with two different media, a writer and a film director, and the ways in which they are nonetheless comparable, especially as regards aesthetic sensibility. Indeed, there are difficulties to be encountered when this is to be portrayed in modern film; surrealism, an aspect much connected to horror, may then be more problematic, and the ways in which Hitchcock incorporates it in his films will be examined. At this point, the element of mystification shall be analyzed, in connection to the authors as players, and its effects on the amplification of fiction, as may be seen in, for example, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*. In this light, there is a level of uncertainty, but also a higher level of fiction, and this particularly aids horror and its manifestation in the works. Setting is another more prominent aspect regarding the comparison of Hitchcock and Poe, and will form another sub-chapter; the aspect of realism in Hitchcock, as compared to the more blatantly unrealistic placement of Poe's stories, plays a role and should be taken into account in their juxtaposition. Finally, the sub-chapter of psyche will be added, to tie the differences together under a common theme, connecting not only both authors to horror, but also to each other. This sub-chapter will close with a final establishment of the most prominent link between Poe and Hitchcock, in that they both surpass their categorization within horror, perhaps specifically by the use of the instances and themes of horror, and aspects of horror theory, analyzed in the previous chapters, but also by their effective use of specific medium, setting and psyche, as explored in

this chapter. A larger contextual perspective on these artists and their works may be achieved through such an analysis, after the detailed thematic and stylistic exploration of their art and their use of horror has already been made, to offer a wider scope and arrive at a final point in connection to the main thought of this thesis; the placement of Poe and Hitchcock beyond horror and its boundaries.

4.1 Medium

First of all, the medium used by the authors is important, as it closely ties them to their own time; what Poe could share with the reader can only be expressed in writing, whilst Hitchcock's options are more open as he is free to explore the visual and auditory, relating to a more modern, and more varied, style. In this way, one may claim that Hitchcock's style is less romantic, as obviously the poetry present not only in Poe's poems, but also short stories, cannot be so readily achieved through a film that uses the contemporary (in Hitchcock's time) setting, not a versed style or otherwise old-fashioned theme. However, it should be noted that Hitchcock's style does not completely lack this poetry, either. When considering for example *Vertigo*, there are often highly contemplative or poetic instances of Scottie's experiences (quite privately depicted, as from his own private point of view), whether during his episodes of paranoia and vertigo, or his obsessive fascination with Madeleine.

Despite these instances of pure artistic sensibility, which results in highly poetic or aesthetic scenes somewhat disconnected from the typical down-to-earth approach and matter-of-fact storytelling, John Russell Taylor points out, "[a]rtistic pretensions were hardly thought of, much less encouraged, and the relation of the film to its audience – a large popular audience, since at this time in Britain films were still generally considered a diversion for the servants rather than masters – was paramount."¹²⁶ Hence it follows that what fuelled Hitchcock's work, and not surprisingly so, was the interests and ways of enchanting the audience, as that was the main goal of his films. This sets Hitchcock apart from Romantic writers who often dealt with misery and poverty, simply to express poetry or art through literature. While this may have been considered a large difference between Hitchcock and Poe, it may be also somewhat debatable with respect to Poe specifically, as Poe did often write simply for the reaction of the audience, and perhaps

¹²⁶ John Russell Taylor, *Hitch: The Life and Work of Alfred Hitchcock* (London: Faber & Faber, 1978) 41.

interest, most notably with “The Raven” – although even this was a difficult piece to publish. He considers this in his “Philosophy of Composition” – Poe is an author who often seems to write only for the sake of a hoax. Leslie A. Fiedler however explains, “[...] Poe [...] was content simply to be possessed by his subjects (when pressed he could always pretend they were parodies or hoaxes, or disown them as ‘silly’), and [his] works, therefore, seem in large part symptoms rather than achievements.”¹²⁷ Indeed, this would imply that his art is something happening *to* him rather than something he performs, perhaps a trait found in more Romantic writers. Fiedler then seems to be convinced that Poe only pretends that his works are a hoax – again, this is something one may choose to believe if one is not prepared to face the possibility of Poe’s oeuvre being nothing more than a joke, which may be difficult and even unlikely. Nevertheless, as it is not absolutely possible to prove or disprove, this possibility should be present at least at the back of one’s mind, and should play some role, even if minor, in an analysis. For example, certain aspects seem to affirm that Poe’s works are, indeed, hoaxes, often manifested by their absurdity. It is also known that Poe indulged in mystification, which results in the amplification of fiction and therefore of the described horror.

It is quite common for artists not to take their work absolutely seriously – writing may be part of play. When considering Hitchcock, Taylor claims that “Hitchcock is not so much in his films: he *is* his films.”¹²⁸ This occurs especially in his signature cameo, however it may be considered that what the cameo signifies is more than simply that Hitchcock is one with his films. This may be one of his recurring motifs for which he is known, but also, it may be a sign of play, not much different from Poe’s claims subverting his own work. There is often the tendency to categorize writers and authors, freeze them in their works, as though they were only painted, staying still and this way open to criticism and analysis. However, Taylor is aware of Hitchcock’s multifaceted nature, as he goes on to suggest:

There have to be, at the very least, three Alfred Hitchcocks. There is the public Hitchcock, the television performer, the well-publicized character. There is the professional Hitchcock, the dedicated film-maker who concentrates everything on his movies and allows nothing to get in the way of his concept and its scrupulous realization. And there is the private Hitchcock, the unpublicized family man who rarely departs from a home life of classic modesty and simplicity, the epitome of English middle-class virtues.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (London: Paladin, 1970) 392.

¹²⁸ Taylor 19.

¹²⁹ Taylor 20.

In fact, there may be more than three sides to Hitchcock, and this should apply to Poe as well. This is important to set out, as it should be considered when a literary critic comes to a point when certain elements or aspects of the artists' work seem to be in discord, or contradict – it is their prerogative, as in Walt Whitman's "Do I contradict myself? / Very well then I contradict myself, / (I am large, I contain multitudes),"¹³⁰ which applies to the nature of human beings. It is also significant in the analysis of horror, because what may be perceived as an attempt at achieving fear in people, may have been intended as nothing more than a prank, whereby the author takes his horror created much less seriously than the audience or reader affected by it.

Fiedler, for example, classifies Poe's horror by stating that, "[f]rom the time of Poe, two possibilities have been open to the gothic: the pursuit of genuine terror, [...] or the evocation of sham terror, the calling-up of ghosts in which no one believes."¹³¹ The author then considers whether the horror is meant to be genuine or not, but the main point which both Poe and Hitchcock seem to follow to an extent, is the consideration of popularity, taking into account the reactions of the audience or the readers. According to Fiedler, "[t]he popular audience has always demanded the pseudo-fiction of terror, which in all of its major forms Poe perfected for the American market-place: the ghost story, the detective story, and science fiction."¹³² This is the classification that often applies to Poe (and certainly to Hitchcock, who openly admits that his films are often about the audience's desires and reactions, the audience which yearns to be surprised, kept in suspense, or terrified).

Due to this issue, Poe often does not conform to the typically Romantic fiction where the element of the lack of genuineness undermines the meaning of the works and explores a more modern aspect of writing. As regards his classification to the Gothic genre, Fiedler argues that "Poe lacks as a writer a *sense of sin* [...],"¹³³ which he claims would have led to gothic fiction. It may be debatable, however, how this may be proven or manifested in the works; Poe, for example, often seems to be preoccupied with the consciences, as shown in "William Wilson," and even his more evil characters, such as in "The Tell-Tale Heart" or even in "The Black Cat," no matter how free of conscience these may seem at first (or, in "The Black Cat," at the end). The sense of sin is also vehemently apparent in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, where the passages regarding the

¹³⁰ Walt Whitman in Sherry Ceniza, "Gender," *A Companion to Walt Whitman*, ed. Donald D. Kummings (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2009) 180.

¹³¹ Fiedler 458.

¹³² Fiedler 458.

¹³³ Fiedler 397.

Tsalal island manifest the notion of a greater Sin of mankind, as symbolized by the dialectic of black and white, denoting racial implications, as well as the final journey to the extreme South, the South Pole, towards the strange white figure. All this is suggestive of a larger scheme, applicable to all of mankind, similar to the apocalyptic tendencies prominent in *The Birds*, as already suggested in the previous chapter by. It is then not as accurate as Fiedler states, that Poe “lacks” this in his works.

Fiedler further argues that “Poe liked to boast that he had transformed the gothic from a ‘horror of Germany’ to a ‘horror of the soul’; but by ‘soul’ he seems to have meant only what we should call ‘sensibility’.”¹³⁴ This statement implies that what concerns Poe in his writings seems to be primarily the aesthetic rather than moral, especially as regards torment. This may be true to the extent that Poe certainly shows a great aesthetic sensibility in his works, as may be seen for example by the particular aesthetic play visible in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* during the scene of the ship of the dead. Indeed, this is highly effective and points to the deceptive quality by which Poe achieves horror, induced by the specific mastery of aesthetics, “[...] she passed under our stern [...], we have a full view of her decks. Shall I ever forget the triple horror of that spectacle? [...] We plainly saw that not a soul lived in that fated vessel!”¹³⁵, as well as “[t]he body [...] had been easily swayed to and fro [...], and it was this motion which had first impressed us with the belief of its being alive. [...] The eyes were gone, and the whole flesh around the mouth, leaving the teeth utterly naked. This, then, was the smile which had cheered us on to hope!”¹³⁶ Indeed, this forms a great base to Poe’s horror creation; deception – as is Poe’s favorite mode, not only by use of his hoaxes, therefore towards the actual viewers, but also within the plot, exercised on the helpless narrators and characters, fully in Poe’s control. This kind of fiction then seems authentic, as is attempted by the factual data and personas of authority, such as in the introduction and other “editorial” elements, but the reader is always in some way misled, be it that the whole story is a hoax, or even its absurdity, or indeed horror, serve as surprises or shocks, effects that Poe, like Hitchcock, successfully achieves. This points not only to mystification, but, equally, to the power of fiction, and the resulting power of horror, thus amplified and seemingly more horrific than if it were reality. The *Narrative* deals with such

¹³⁴ Fiedler 397.

¹³⁵ Edgar Allan Poe, *Sixty-seven Tales and the Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket; The Raven and Other Poems* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1990) 641.

¹³⁶ Poe, *Sixty-seven Tales and the Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket; The Raven and Other Poems* 641, 642.

deception often, occurring not only in the scene of the ship of the dead, but also during Pym's long suffering on the *Grampus*, when he thinks he sees an approaching ship, but in fact it is moving in the opposite direction. This is another sign of inversion, a pattern that repeats itself and culminates by the inversion of colors, temperatures, and other values at Tsalal and beyond. It may be argued that morality does form a large part in the works, even in the short stories, as a profound understanding of morality is necessary to create the perverse, morally shocking scenarios of his plots. Fiedler also does not seem to consider the implications of "William Wilson" and its particular occupation with morality. Poe's association with Gothic fiction may then still be valid, despite Fiedler's argument.

An aspect that is prevalent in Poe's work, is the magnitude of the effects of his horror, often leading to apocalypse and destruction, an American Gothic aspect visible in, for example, Charles Brockden Brown. As Fiedler notes:

Chiefly, however, it is the dissolution of the earth in fire, which so haunted Poe, a vision of the apocalypse, which obsesses the writers of science fiction [...]. The ghost story deals with a terror that threatens to destroy the individual soul; the detective story with a hidden guilt that threatens to destroy the self-contained community, or, more contemporaneously, the social fabric of a city; science fiction evokes a cataclysmic horror that threatens the entire earth, the solar system, galaxy – or even the total universe.¹³⁷

This is very relevant, as this is an element that is significant in evoking horror, as it is so all-encompassing, includes all human life and the universe, increasing its magnitude and significance, which elevates it to the Sublime and beyond. Poe is not only enlarging the implications of the horror of his fiction, but he is also concerned with the workings of the universe, its expansion and contraction, and possible destruction, as he explores this in his essay "Eureka." He readily connects his theories with literature, and so for him as an author, these issues are deeply intertwined. Hitchcock does not seem to be as preoccupied with such theories, or indeed involve the notion of the apocalypse as often. There is a link, however, since there are moments in his films that humanity itself is the focus of his horror; for example, depicted in the ending of *The Birds*, where the landscape on the screen is strongly reminiscent of an apocalyptic scenario. This apocalyptic tendency may serve to show that, Hitchcock's horror does not deal simply with murders and gruesomeness, nor only with psychological states of those tortured souls, but with a wider scope of effect – it may be understood as a criticism of society, the attack

¹³⁷ Fiedler 463.

and consequences merely a side effect of such a punishment on mankind. Connected again to *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, one may see similarities in the ending, where, following the crew's meeting of the "Other," and the ensuing massacre, the ultimate ending tends toward an apocalypse – one that is never clearly effected, but sensed. The entire meeting is more complex than it seems; the inhabitants are indeed the ultimate "Other" of the crew – they are entirely black (including their teeth, which is a rather shocking attribute), their manners and language are absolutely foreign to them, as well as the readers, and their land and surroundings are completely out of this world. While interest may be peaked originally, the development of events seems to depict them as rather elements of abjection, in Pym's words, "they appeared to be the most wicked, hypocritical, vindictive, bloodthirsty, and altogether fiendish race of men upon the face of the globe."¹³⁸ Pym's wits are tested many times, but at the same time, it is a story very obviously written from his own perspective, including all his observations and articulated opinions – as he himself admits, "[i]t is possible, however, that my companions may have entertained the same opinion of their own condition as I did of mine, and that I have unwittingly been guilty of the same extravagances and imbecilities as themselves [...]."¹³⁹

Nevertheless, the symbolism of black and white is overtly used in the narrative, and thus may be considered intentional – however, its interpretation is not as clear as may seem. For example, it is unclear whether the absolute ending may be viewed negatively or positively in any way – there is no sign of deliverance, the figure appears almost supernaturally, it is not clear whether any "safety" shall be provided. The waters increasing the temperature and the sky turning very dark, with ashes around, certainly does not seem welcoming; on the contrary, the appearance is that of either hell, or a state of death. This considered, there is still the fact that white has been feared to the highest degree by the natives of Tsalal – they themselves perhaps considering it abject, or horrifying. Simultaneously, Pym's description of the white color is unreasonably positive, almost fetishistic, "the hue of the skin of the figure was of the perfect whiteness of the snow."¹⁴⁰ This is another example of mystification, and Pym its victim. This is mystification through inversion of colors, and it becomes evident that Poe operates along these lines, inverting not only black and white, but also racism presented in the novel, the concepts of hell and dystopia. The natives view Pym's crew with abjection, and they in turn become, to the reader, the abject body, as may be

¹³⁸ Poe, *Sixty-seven Tales and the Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket; The Raven and Other Poems* 699.

¹³⁹ Poe, *Sixty-seven Tales and the Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket; The Raven and Other Poems* 645.

¹⁴⁰ Poe, *Sixty-seven Tales and the Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket; The Raven and Other Poems* 702.

seen in Pym's harsh description of the race, resulting in an ironic but revelatory view consisting of two hateful forces opposing each other, two groups of people mutually viewing each other as abject, unable to coexist and hence leading to apocalypse.

Poe uses such irony to point to the racism of the South, in an inverted fashion where the natives represent the racist whites of the South in their behavior, in order that the readers identify with Pym's perspective which then, from the authorial superimposed narrative layer, turns into irony. Pym is caught in a racist social pattern against which it is impossible to fight – a likely reason for the canoe's inevitable passage to hell, represented by the chasm of the South Pole. Pym's view becomes ironic as a result of the concept of phantasmatic identification, as Jan Campbell and Janet Harbord explain, “[p]hantasmatic identification is not a denial of difference, warns [Judith] Butler, which is after all the legacy of an imperialist past. Rather, it is a recognition of the cost of rigidly occupying exclusionary identities.”¹⁴¹ This demonstrates the problem of the established social pattern whose foundation is based on exclusion, such as racism, and to which Pym is subjected, his inability to bear this burden, of which he is consciously unaware, culminating in the apocalyptic ending. Hence, the result of such a racist set-up of society where individuals must inherently exclude others, such as those of another race, is shown to lead to a suffering self.

Poe's ironic treatment finally points to the reality of racism, by placing the large white figure to inhibit the apocalypse, creating a kind of deferral, and a revelation ensues. This may act as a subversion of the “Manifest Destiny” ideology prominent in America during the time of its expansion. It is important to note that, as mentioned above, the story contains two narrative layers; that of Pym who is the fictional narrator of the novel, and Poe, the author, who is responsible for the ironic outcome of the situation, amplified by the apocalypse. Pym is thus a “victim” of Poe's narrative, and is exploited to carry Poe's message and meaning to the reader. The significance of the South Pole, the chasms and the analogy of hell and its inversion rests in the fact that what Poe relates to is the “Hollow Earth” theory in his establishment of a subterranean setting, which has in Poe's time also acted as a space for utopias; this is therefore an inversion of setting, as this originally utopian place has been transformed into a hellish place.

The symbolism posited by Poe may refer to slavery as the ultimate sin of mankind, resulting in this bizarre inversion of all knowledge similar to the situation of *The Birds*, the white figure

¹⁴¹ Jan Campbell and Janet Harbord, “Playing it Again: Citation, Reiteration or Circularity?” *Performativity & Belonging*, ed. Vikki Bell (Nottingham: SAGE, 1999) 235.

representative of the incomplete apocalypse reminiscent of hell. It is unclear, however, whether the figure appears to prevent the canoe from falling into the chasm, or whether it is there in line with the canoe inevitably perishing within the chasm. The former would mimic a kind of deliverance, or perhaps only the revelation mentioned above, but this is left in vagueness, with the only element absolutely clear being the sharp contrast of blackness and whiteness, the polar opposites of these points, the eternal battle of these poles, these extremes. This shows the complexity of Poe's work, already suggesting his outreach beyond the framework of horror.

4.2 Setting

The setting, then, is a further topic to be discussed at the outset, as it strongly relates to not only the creation of horror, but also the connections to the respective genres and trends. Fiedler compares Poe and Brockden Brown in respect of their choice of setting, in relation to the American Gothic:

In earlier American fiction, however, there are few instances of the gothic city [...]. Brockden Brown, to be sure, had evoked the city under plague, a Philadelphia converted to a nightmare by disease and death; but Poe, who was, in a sense, his chief successor, abandoned, along with Brown's resolve to create horror without falling back on the supernatural, Brown's concern with American places. Poe surrenders the actual urban scene for unreal courts, the vaults beneath imaginary European towns, and especially lonely estates located on no maps.¹⁴²

This already shows the varying aspect of setting in American Gothic fiction, and in this way, Poe's style is much closer to Romanticism, as he chooses the supernatural – and thus closer to the metaphoric, symbolic and allegorical – than Brockden Brown. Poe's work may then be much more readily connected to the psychological, as the setting which is not strictly pivoted on reality is a more potent ground for such analysis. This is however not by any means dismissing Brockden Brown's concern with the psyche, as this is similarly a large part of his works. As regards Poe, Fiedler's view seems to somewhat disregard the more significant and higher-level symbolism, more profound and meaningful than he seems to give him credit for. For instance, in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, Poe's concern is certainly more than the evocation of random unreal scenarios; here, the narrative occurs on the narrow borderline between reality and fantasy, placing the plot within real oceans and seas, but gradually moving to places which

¹⁴² Fiedler 446.

subvert reality, shifting the story to a more symbolic, but all the more meaningful, level. This may be seen, for example, in the unrealistic and fantastic observations of nature, Tsalal's strange water, as well as the increasingly hot sea when the canoe moves towards the South Pole, again implying a sort of inversion. Its symbolism subverts a schematic and simplistic view of Poe's narrative that Fiedler seems to present. Nevertheless, what strikes as relevant is that, in this way, Brown's urban scene places his method closer to Hitchcock rather than Poe, since Hitchcock's style similarly invokes the modern urban milieu, only to explore and discover the disturbing elements lurking beneath its seemingly ordinary surface. It is this method that most surprises the audience, whilst Poe's stories begin with ominous introductions from the outset. Indeed, Hitchcock's films may provide hints which may be interpreted as ill omens, but they are usually subtle and cannot be compared to Poe's strategically disturbing openings of his fiction.

Fiedler however notes that the Gothic progresses socially outwardly in respect of violence:

There are [...] transformations in the function and treatment of violence in fiction [...]. The first is the *urbanization of violence*; that is to say, violence is transferred from nature to society, from the given world that man must endure to the artificial world he has made [...].¹⁴³

This implies that violence, or horror, moves from the natural environment towards the city, in fact possibly involving rather the violence within a society, as well as that which is created by man. If such a development applies to literature as a whole, then the logical result of this formula would be dystopia, such as that expressed by Aldous Huxley. This is implied similarly in Deleuze's statement that, "[...] from the aspect of the dynamic sublime: *the non-organic life of things* culminates in a fire, which burns us and which burns all of Nature, acting as the spirit of evil or of darkness."¹⁴⁴ Even though Poe's setting is not typically urban, the violence which occurs as a result of man's evil mind may coincide with Fiedler's statement. Perhaps already the involvement of psychology enables this horror and violence to be rather social than natural; despite certain problems which arise when considering, for example, "A Descent into the Maelström," where the spectacle of the vortex seems to be rather a natural phenomenon. Here, however, the story attempts to achieve a more science-fiction style, and displays some similarity to "Eureka." Furthermore, the possibility of symbolism again may shift the meaning from a typically naturally-induced horror, for example by interpretation or visual aspects, such as horror created by our own minds when it twists something one sees into a horrific spectacle.

¹⁴³ Fiedler 446.

¹⁴⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 1* 54.

Nevertheless, when the theory Fiedler sets forth is assumed valid, then a correlation may be seen in Hitchcock, as the violence he often explores is essentially urbanized. In respect of Poe, however, Fiedler's view is again at odds, since, for example in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, violence occurs as the ship initially distances from "civilization," from cities, and is found in the middle of the ocean; the horror that ensues is caused by starvation and isolation, and other natural phenomena. One may argue that the massacre of Tsalal may be considered connected to society, as it occurs in connection to the natives rather than on an empty island without any civilization. However, this again seems simplistic, as the setting of Tsalal may hardly be considered "urban" and its symbolic nature subverts such a classification. In Hitchcock, this may be so when specifically considering *The Birds*, as the existence of the attacked town seems rather remote, the violence ensuing from birds rather than society – it is a threat to society as we know it, to civilization, by the natural world turning against man in an incomprehensible way. It does not only point out the potential power of nature in all its aspects, but also the ultimate weakness of man. The concept of setting thus proves to be more complicated, as it is not simply a case of violence occurring in an urban milieu, or caused by unnatural phenomena – what must also be taken into account, as above, is the meaning behind using a particular setting, as well as its symbolic implications.

4.3 Psyche

As a concluding part of this chapter, it may be noted that what largely connects both trends and, indeed, both types of media, is the focus on the psyche and its processes. In both the short stories of Poe and the films of Hitchcock, as important as the plots may be, the leading foci are themes such as madness, violence, or mental abnormalities, explored and dissected almost clinically, and frequently from the perspective of the diseased mind, to offer an even closer view of such a psyche. The writers' individual contexts may be responsible for this focus; be it the Romanticism of Poe's time, or the new-founded fascination by the human mind in Hitchcock's era, propelled by Sigmund Freud. This made psychology a popular discipline, and thus it was demanded and popularized by the audience – it is then unsurprising that Hitchcock would involve the topic in his films, considering his desire for giving the audience what it demands. This era of psychology contributed to the style of writing and, may be applied to film, as Fiedler observes, "[s]ince the

full impact of Freudianism, however, ghosts have tended to seem metaphors rather than facts of experience [...].”¹⁴⁵ This may be observed in Poe despite his pre-Freudian time, as it may be argued that in his works, there is a large amount of unrealistic and supernatural elements that are not meant to be taken as facts, but rather interpreted, and are often given metaphoric qualities, as seems to be the case in “The Fall of the House of Usher.” This kind of interpretation would then become even more popular with the rise of Freudian theories. With respect to the time of Hitchcock, which certainly is a Freudian time, Taylor claims that “[i]t was a time, in other words, when much of the potential of the film medium was about to be realized, the beginning of the great period of silent movies, the first suspicions of intellectual respectability and the advent of the self-conscious artist-figure in the ranks of film-makers.”¹⁴⁶ Such an artist-figure often becomes popular, as the audience may relate to him and see these relations manifested in the films themselves. This kind of relation may be tied to the emphasis on psychology, as Freudian times would be, and would also explain Poe’s popularity with respect to the life that he has been known to lead; while some may have criticized, many were rather fascinated, as this persona is in line with the Romantic individual, somewhat of a rebel and in some ways a social failure – in fact, the nature of Poe’s presence reaches an almost mythic status. Nevertheless, as Fiedler mentions, “[t]he image of Poe which for over a century has possessed the American mind is that image of failure and impotence so necessary to us in a world of success and power: an image of one who is the victim of society and of himself.”¹⁴⁷ This alone, may have perpetrated Poe’s popularity and established him as one of the leading figures of the American Romantic movement.

It follows then that the psyche dealt with is important not only in terms of being the main theme in the works, but also in respect of the artists themselves, as the artist becomes a part of his work, whether admittedly or not. As mentioned in the previous sub-chapters, mystification is similarly a large part of both Poe and Hitchcock – such an aspect manifested in both authors as aesthetic play, visible not only in the *Narrative*, but also in *Psycho*, especially in the final scenes of the uncovering of the mother’s body, despite its realism being uncertain. This in fact is a factor contributing to the mystification Hitchcock uses, on yet another level. This then is a final shared attribute of both authors, connecting them in the particular way of reaching beyond horror. As has

¹⁴⁵ Fiedler 458.

¹⁴⁶ Taylor 41.

¹⁴⁷ Fiedler 396.

been shown in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and its analysis in the previous sub-chapters, the leading trajectory from the framework of horror's limitations outward and beyond, consists in psychological horror as the point of origin, leading toward aesthetic play largely prominent especially in this work notably in the scene with the ship of the dead. Poe then seems to aim towards an anthropologically theological contemplation of human existence, as the voyage reaches Tsalal, where the symbolism of black and white, and connected with it the implications of race and sin, is increasingly prominent and reaches its apex in the final voyage to the South Pole, culminating in an inverted apocalypse. Thus, it can be surmised that from the individual psyche, an element present in many horrors and often its building block in line with the theoretical framework of the genre, both Poe and Hitchcock tend towards a tragic view of human, and in some cases Christian, existence, by use of aesthetic play that has been amplified by mystification that both authors have been shown to implement. Such a trajectory indicates that Poe and Hitchcock are not bound by the limitations of horror's boundaries, but surpass them, perhaps in the direction of philosophical dystopia, an element also visible in the works of Herman Melville whose oeuvre may be placed on the timeline only shortly after Poe's.

5. Conclusion

This thesis analyzed the topic of horror in literature and film in three chapters, focusing on horror theory and some narrative structures that form a significant part of the genre, for the purposes of establishing a coherent framework of horror to enable a further classification of Poe and Hitchcock within these boundaries, and thereafter dealing with the authors to be compared and analyzed in respect of horror as well as the different media, to conclude the main findings and explore the ways in which the horror boundaries are breached. This has been done by means of a close-up literary and film analysis, connecting those findings with those of the first theoretical chapter, pointing out the delineation of horror and its essential stability when considering the minute details of the strategies used to create horror, as well as by a chapter introducing the two authors in their specific contexts and larger methodological strategy. It has been shown that, despite centuries of development, both Poe's and Hitchcock's use of horror is strongly and evidently connected to Burke's notion of the Sublime and its paradigms, and it has been considered that there are connections between this theory and those of the twentieth century, such as the psychoanalytical theories of Freud, or the more modern theories of Kristeva. Narrative theories of Propp have been placed next to those of film, articulated by Deleuze, Mulvey and Metz, to establish a bridge between the literary and the film media, enabling its subsequent analysis. Despite these strong connections, it has also been considered that Poe and Hitchcock both show signs of going beyond horror demarcations, and tending toward dystopia, especially in certain works.

Burke's theory of the Sublime mentions specific aspects that are responsible for the feeling of awe and horror in the audience or reader; these reasons may often be linked to psychology and the subconscious. Burke refers to ideas such as monstrous objects and vast spaces, filling the mind of the reader or audience, resulting in the viewer to be completely overwhelmed, unable to grasp the idea itself or to grasp any additional thoughts or ideas for the object's size or for the concept's complexity or the idea of infinity; all this resulting in awe. Indeed, this strategy is shown to be used by Poe and Hitchcock, with Poe's frequent use of the vast and monstrous setting, such as the interior vaults of the house of Usher, or Hitchcock's seemingly infinite number of birds in the various camera shots of *The Birds*. However, Burke also mentions

obscurity, another element resulting in awe, or horror; Poe combines this with the vast areas of the house of Usher, as those areas are dark and hidden away, or confusing and maze-like, resembling the structure of the mind – such darkness and confusion is certainly linked to Burke’s notion of obscurity. It has been argued that the reason for this may be the human’s tendency to imagine, when not provided an actual picture or detail, the worst possible scenario, individualized according to the psyche of each reader or viewer, and thus it may be surmised that the person’s subconscious is the author of the most horrific scenes, an argument connected to Freud’s psychoanalysis. Hitchcock’s murder scene in the shower in *Psycho* suggests that this idea of obscurity has been fruitfully used to exploit this ability of the viewer to create their own horror. Kristeva’s theory of the abject has been compared to the Sublime, as an obscure, destructive concept subverting the self, when the individual must face its existence and realize its connections that are inextricably within, but that the individual abhors and fundamentally rejects. Its extreme nature may thus distance it from the vague and often rather romanticized kind of Gothicism and horror, thus in terms of style closer to the “monster” horror, however it has been pointed out that even the abject may be denotative of the Sublime and may be shown in Poe and Hitchcock.

The relevance of the concept of pain and catharsis has also been mentioned in the theoretical chapter, as using these connections, even more distinct lines can be drawn in the history of horror; from a psychological standpoint, horror may be related to the tragedies of antiquity in its cathartic quality. This serves to show the deeper links between modern horror and the needs of the audience of antiquity for catharsis, a link unifying the concept of horror throughout eras. The viewers share a tendency to avoid exposure to horror or tragic scenes; nevertheless, they are simultaneously attracted to it, similarly to their approach towards taboo issues. Shaping a higher framework of horror and, even more so, of psychology, this easily streamlines into the topic of voyeurism so vehemently used by Hitchcock, appearing in the context of horror elsewhere in the modern horror film. Whatever is hidden or secret is attractive, and this does not only entail sexualized scenes but also violent and shocking, bloody scenes that one simultaneously wants to see, but also are often unpleasant to experience and thus illicit fear. It may be then argued that the reason why the trajectory of horror is unified across time is due to its strong connections to basic human psychology, and the analysis of horror works alongside Freud’s theories or psychoanalysis is relevant.

Finally, the narrative structures of horror in film and literature have been joined, in order to enable the subsequent chapters of comparison and analysis to follow. Deleuze's description of film, especially as relates to Hitchcock, is that of the mental image; a structure of relations denoting an associative working process of consciousness. One of the foci in these theories is the position of the viewer, or the reader in literary narratives, and Deleuze's theory involves the viewer as an active participant. The camera facilitates this by it itself becoming personified, and thus aiding the associations to take effect in the viewer's mind. The question of dualities, a common structural feature, is discussed in relation to Deleuze, as he discusses the terrible equilibrium resulting from an original imbalance – that of several features in a single shot that work against each other or even are in contradiction, and create anxiety in the viewer as it cannot be processed, or that of the film itself, of the individual shots which have two faces, two perspectives, developing in discord. This is an aspect following into Mulvey, who points out the duality of male, active, and female, passive, aspects in the film narrative explaining the concept of voyeurism in these preset terms. The discussion on dualities opens up the topic of narrative structures as put forward by Propp and Metz. The main point is that Propp's literary narrative theory is of a unified structure, consisting of a skeleton-like base, details of which are mere permutations. This may be applied to the horror genre, often following similar methodology and plot strategies. On the other hand, Metz's structural theory involves the symbolic level, so often used in horror, referring to it as a juxtastructure, a term meant to describe its strange dual existence and meaning.

In conclusion, then, the analysis of the individual texts and films has shown the works' connections to the abovementioned theories. This has been achieved by four sub-chapters of the second chapter. The first sub-chapter, dealing with the split personality, but also questions of the ego and the subconscious, therefore connections to Freud, as well as to the theories of Burke in terms of spatial horror, established for example by the setting. The topic of voyeurism, which is also discussed in the first chapter, has been included due to its strong connections to *Psycho*. The second sub-chapter primarily dealt with the moral aspects of depicted murders, not only the depravity and perverseness of the murderer, in some cases, but also of the consequences resulting from guilt that serve to show the kind of horror emanating from one's own mind. The symbolic level has been discussed in some detail, and links to Deleuze have been established. The purpose of the third sub-chapter has been to point out the horror in obsessive behavior, as well as the

structural paradigms that link to Mulvey's understanding of voyeurism, the masochism connected with the role of the objectified female, and the structural similarities of Poe's and Hitchcock's works. The final sub-chapter has formed a conclusive debate on the addition of an animal element within the context of horror, its resulting links to Freud's uncanny, as well as the apocalyptic features of both works.

The third chapter, in order to establish the specific differences between the authors due to their different contexts, eras and media, has used the topics of medium, setting and a final topic of psyche, to summarize the findings of the previous theoretical and comparative chapters and place them within a truly comparable scope. It has been pointed out that aesthetic play forms a large part of the authors' style due to mystifying qualities of the narratives, mostly visible in the use of their media as well as setting. Furthermore, the depictions of an all-encompassing apocalypse, as mentioned above, are similarly denotative of the authors' outreach beyond horror, as the element of dystopia becomes notable, but while these features of mystification and apocalypse are connected, it is likely that both separately and individually breach the framework of horror, which is thus undermined by the possible lack of seriousness, but simultaneously amplified by the resulting empowerment of fiction and its effects.

The thesis has therefore shown that Hitchcock and Poe operate upon similar strategies of horror-making, with the obvious differences resulting from their individual use of media, style and time eras. Nevertheless, in the basics of horror, their methods are reminiscent of one another, already suggesting that certain aspects of horror are unchanging, especially as regards the lower level and more basic, fundamental elements of horror evocation. This is amplified when connected to the theories of horror and of the Sublime, and the thesis has shown that such links are traceable, if not obvious, in certain discussed aspects of the works. Such links do not only serve to show the similarities between Poe and Hitchcock, and thus literary and film horror, but also the horror of the eighteenth century, links to antiquity in the old concept of catharsis, as well as to modern horror. It might even be said that the oral tradition of storytelling, even before printed books, included some kind of "horror", perhaps later developed into fairytales, but containing aspects which, for some part of the storytelling, evoked a sense of suspense and perhaps fear in the audience. The inherent sense of awe may be seen in legends and epics, such as those from ancient Greece, by use of monsters and gods; denoting the strength of presence of awe, horror and the Sublime. To absolutely compare the horror of Poe and Hitchcock, however, with these works,

would not be as relevant, as there are also greater differences of narrative structure, plot and other aspects that place these types of work in differing categories, and would require further research to be able to establish such a rigid line of classification upon these traditions.

It is possible to argue, ultimately, that horror, with its intrinsic ties to human psychology, used in literature and, later, film, is a unified concept with preset methods, which is developed only as far as specific style is concerned, but which rather resembles one specific genre, with similar features, the only difference being that it is a somewhat timeless genre, not ultimately tied to one time era and trend, but present beyond the regular literary and film developments in various ways. It also points to the possibility of delimiting horror within boundaries, showing such consistency, which in turn enables one to perceive the extensions beyond these demarcations that Poe and Hitchcock perform. In this light, the thesis serves to posit that the authors do indeed go beyond horror, in their sprawling scope of aesthetics, intentional fallacy, symbolism and the implied view of human civilization on the brink of a dystopian catastrophe.

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Abstract in English

The aim of this thesis is the exploration of horror from a wider perspective in terms of theory, as well as in specific works of Edgar Allan Poe and Alfred Hitchcock. Ultimately, this thesis attempts to show a solid trajectory of horror across a wide temporal range, in order to demonstrate the connections of horror and inherent human psychology, as well as to demarcate the boundaries of horror for the purpose of showing Poe's and Hitchcock's surpassing of these limits, constituting the title of this thesis. The structure of the thesis similarly attempts to achieve the above by establishing the main theoretical background in the first chapter, the main body of the literary and film analysis largely present in the second chapter, and the third chapter capturing the contextual differences between Hitchcock and Poe, essentially arriving at the most significant findings and simultaneously providing a concluding exploration of the authors' achievement to go beyond the boundaries of horror.

The first chapter, then, mainly draws from the concept of the Sublime, as elaborately described by Edmund Burke, as well as the concept of abjection discussed by Julia Kristeva. These form the main basis of horror creation, and it is shown in the second analytical chapter that both Poe and Hitchcock implement these theories, visible for example in the perverse nature of Poe's murderers, the awe-inspiring recesses and vaults of the house of Usher, or the countless number of birds in Hitchcock's film evoking the illusion of artificial infinity. Some film theory from Gilles Deleuze is used to delineate some structural phenomena that may be compared with literary narrative structure, such as Vladimir Propp's scheme, and Laura Mulvey's views on voyeurism are incorporated which relate especially to Hitchcock's *Psycho*. The links of horror and psychology are also demonstrated by the frequent occurrences of the uncanny in both Poe and Hitchcock, the vehement use of split personalities, as well as other psychoanalytical issues such as conscience, obsession, and other identity problems which help to evoke horror or discomfort in the reader or audience. This is of course elaborated upon in the following analytical chapter, advocating the visible connection of the works with the theoretical background, while being conscious of the main themes evidently showing that Poe's and Hitchcock's work follows a highly similar pattern as regards thematic content, but also structure and various plot elements. Indeed, this points to the idea that horror creation shares a unified and uniform process.

The thesis is then concluded by the third chapter which serves to underline the differences resulting from Poe's and Hitchcock's literary and film media, as well as time periods; Poe's work, for example, is much closer to Romanticism due to this prevailing trend in his era, whilst Hitchcock's work is more experimental. The film medium also allows for exploration of horror in terms of voyeurism, and the camera helps to invoke horror – an element that is difficult to portray in text. The discussion then continues toward the theme of setting, a source of difference between Hitchcock and Poe in some cases, and ends with a topic of psyche, the main focus of both authors. This last chapter is interlaced with a greater focus on the apocalyptic tendencies demonstrated by the different media, setting and psychological implications, especially in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and in *The Birds*; a tendency that, originating at a level of individual psyche and achieved by mystification and aesthetic play, is shown to lead toward the authors' ultimate overflow from the sphere of horror into a more dystopian view, especially in relation to society, man, knowledge and human relationships.

Abstract in Czech

Cílem této práce je zkoumání hororu z širší perspektivy užitím teorie, stejně jako z užšího hlediska v konkrétních dílech Edgara Allana Poea a Alfreda Hitchcocka. Tato práce se pak zejména snaží ukázat, že existuje jednoduší trajektorie vývoje hororu v širokém časovém rozmezí, a dále se snaží prokázat spojení hororu a přirozené lidské psychologie, stejně jako vymezit hranice hororu za účelem pozdějšího prokázání, že Poe a Hitchcock tyto hranice překonávají, což také tvoří název této práce. Struktura práce se obdobně snaží dosáhnout výše uvedeného vytvořením hlavního teoretického zázemí v první kapitole, zatímco hlavní část literární a filmové analýzy se nachází převážně ve druhé kapitole. Třetí kapitola pak zachycuje kontextové rozdíly mezi Hitchcockem a Poem za účelem dobrání se k nejvýznamnějším konjekturám této práce a současně poskytuje závěrečný průzkum způsobů, jakými autoři jdou za hranice hororu.

První kapitola tedy především vychází z pojmu vznešena, jak podrobně popsal Edmund Burke, stejně jako z pojmu opovržení, o kterém pojednává Julia Kristeva. Tyto pojmy tvoří hlavní základ hororové tvorby; druhá analytická kapitola poukazuje právě na to, že v tvorbě Poea a Hitchcocka se tyto teorie objevují, což je zřejmé například z perverzní povahy Poeových vrahů, strašidelných zákoutí a vysokých kleneb domu Usherů nebo hrozivého množství ptáků ve filmu Hitchcocka vyvolávající iluzi umělého nekonečna. Filmová teorie od Gillesse Deleuze je použita za účelem vymezení určitých strukturálních jevů, které mohou být srovnány s literárním vyprávěním, jako je formalistická teorie Vladimira Proppa, a pohledy Laury Mulvey na problematiku voyeurství, týkající se především *Psycha* od Hitchcocka, jsou také zakomponovány. Vazby mezi hororem a psychologií jsou prokázány častými výskity freudovského tajemna jak v Poeovi, tak v Hitchcockovi, hojně používání rozštěpené osobnosti, stejně jako přítomnost jiných psychoanalytických témat, jako například svědomí, posedlost a jiné problémy identity, které pomáhají ve čtenářích či publiku vyvolat hrůzu nebo nepříjemný pocit. Toto je samozřejmě rozvinuto v následující analytické kapitole, která obhazuje existenci viditelných spojitostí mezi díly a teoretickou přípravou, ale zároveň pojednává o hlavních tématech která zřetelně ukazují, že se Poeova a Hitchcockova díla drží velmi podobného vzorce, pokud jde o obsahovou stránku, ale také co se týče struktury a různých dějových prvků. To poukazuje na to, že tvorba hororu spočívá v jednotném a jednoduším postupu.

Práce je pak zakončena třetí kapitolou, která slouží ke zdůraznění rozdílů vyplývajících z odlišných literárních a filmových médií užívaných Poeem a Hitchcockem, jakož i různých období; Poeova tvorba má například mnohem blíže k romantismu v důsledku toho, že tento směr v jeho době převažoval, zatímco Hitchcockova tvorba je kvůli filmu více experimentální. Filmové médium také umožňuje zkoumání hororu co se týče voyeurství, horor stejně tak pomáhá vyvolávat kamera – prvek, který není možné v textu využít. Diskuse dále pokračuje směrem k tématu umístění děje, což je v některých případech také zdrojem rozdílů mezi Hitchcockem a Poeem, a končí pak tématem psychiky jakožto hlavní zaměření obou autorů. Tato poslední kapitola je zároveň prokládána důrazem na apokalyptické tendence viditelné v různém užívání médií, umístěním děje a psychologických jevech, zejména v *Příběhu Arthura Gordona Pyma* a v *Ptácích*; je to tendence, která počíná na úrovni individuální psychiky a je následovně dosažena užitím mystifikace a estetické hry, a která konečně vede k přesahu autorů z oblasti hororu až k filosofické dystopii, zejména co se týče pohledu na společnost, člověka a lidské znalosti a vztahy.