

SPATIALITY IN GOTHIC LITERATURE: AN ANALYSIS OF *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER* BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

A ESPACIALIDADE NA LITERATURA GÓTICA: UMA ANÁLISE DE *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER* DE EDGAR ALLAN POE

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Abstract: This paper aims at investigating the use of the literary space in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1839) through its relations regarding the characters and the plot; also, its role in the creation of a unique ambience based in the combination of gothic elements. It approaches the object by Bakhtin's (1981) theory of the chronotope in order to explain the literary effects achieved by its use as a fictional tool. Furthermore, this study closes with a comparison between the house and the protagonist Roderick Usher, proposing that the former might be also perceived as a character itself.

Keywords: Spatiality. Gothic Literature. Edgar Allan Poe. Chronotope. *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

Resumo: Este artigo se dispôs a investigar o uso do espaço literário em *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1839) de Edgar Allan Poe através de sua relação com os personagens e a trama, assim como o seu papel na criação de uma ambientação distinta, baseada na combinação de elementos do gótico. Seu objeto foi abordado através da teoria do cronotopo de Bakhtin (1981) com o objetivo de explicar os efeitos literários alcançados a partir de seu uso como ferramenta ficcional. Ademais, ao final deste estudo é apresentada uma comparação entre a casa e o protagonista, Roderick Usher, propondo que aquela poderia ser, também, percebida como um personagem em si.

Palavras-chave: Espacialidade. Literatura Gótica. Edgar Allan Poe. Cronotopo. *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

A brief introduction

Space is considered a component of great relevance for the plot working as a one of the basic tools for the construction of most literary works. Particularly in Gothic literature, which is where the interest of this investigation lies, it plays a role

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of utmost importance. Then, in order to discuss it, the author herein chosen was Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), one of the main names within the genre. Known as a horror master himself, he is famous for his dark writing, characterized by elements of gloom, fear, horror, and death, all of which can be reinforced by the appropriate use of spatiality from his part.

That being said, as for the object of this paper, the short story analyzed was Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1839), in which the house is one of the elements responsible for representing the horror and discomfort that the author sought to show the reader throughout the plot. That led us to attempt at identifying how space, either physical (the house) and psychological (the ambiance), can influence both the characters' behaviors and events in the story.

In such work, Gothic elements like the melancholic tone, a haunted house, and the characters' obscure personalities are responsible for making it a horror story. The house, as it will be further discussed, is presented as a sort of metaphor for Usher's mind, who increasingly loses his remaining sanity while keeping a terrible secret about the condition of his cataleptic twin sister, Madeline.

Thus, space, which already plays the role of a primordial element in the creation of a plot, is elevated to the next level in Poe's short story. However, in order to demonstrate how we got to such conclusions, we firstly had to understand the history of Gothic not only as a genre, but the very origins of the word; its own literary characteristics, specially the spatial element, namely, the setting. Secondly, we tried to understand space through the Bakhtinian concept of chronotope (1981) to, then, apply it to the analysis of Poe's tale, as follows in the next sections.

The very beginnings of a genre

Gothic is more than just a literary genre, since the word itself has a long, and mostly unknown, history. The Goths were Germanic tribes, composed by the Visigoths and the Ostrogoths, who had a prominent role in the fall of the Western Roman Empire. After their invasions, Rome was divided and the Ostrogoths continued the traditions of the Western Empire, which marks the end of the so-called classical period. Unfortunately, scarce records of those tribes' history remained, as

D. Punter and G. Byron pointed out by stating that “[...] because the Goths left no literature or art of their own, they came to be remembered only as the invaders and destroyers of the great Roman civilization” (2004, p. 3.) Based on this assumption, it is possible to understand that in that time, what was unknown, was often seen as something unwelcome, even barbaric, and because this, remained scarce records of their history.

Way before being incorporated by literature, the beginning of the Middle Ages came with a new architecture style inspired by the late Gothic civilizations; within that there is the new model of European cathedral of which the first one was the Basilica of Saint Denis, in France, in the 12th century. The new style was more focused on letting the light come inside the building, and less focused on the sturdy walls and columns of the classical ones.

Later, the Italian Renaissance renewed the admiration for the classic arts of the ancient Rome and Greece. Thus, compared to those, the first time the name Goth was related to this new design it sounded as something crude and inferior.

Its first mention is acknowledged to be in Giorgio Vasari’s book *Lives of the Artists* (1550). In Vasari’s preface “such misconception was based on what they thought about the Goths, seen as then arose new architects who after the manner of their barbarous nations erected buildings in that style which we call Gothic (*dei Gotthi*)” (1946), the barbarians that destroyed the Roman civilization. As a result, Gothic was associated to things such as darkness, superstitions, simplicity, and oddity, which reflected upon the homonym artistic concept which was the yet to come.

Elements of Gothic

Only in the 18th century Gothic started consolidating as a literary genre. At that time, the romantic novel was the most popular genre and provided the world some writers as Goethe (1749-1832) and Byron (1788-1824), whose writing styles were darker than their counterparts. On the other hand, the alleged first Gothic novel, *The castle of Otranto* (1764), was not written by none of them, but by the also romantic author Horace Walpole (1717-1797).

Walpole (2008) wanted to mix what he called the ancient romance with the modern one. According to him, “it was an attempt to blend the two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern. In the former, all was imagination and improbability: in the latter, nature is always intended to be, and sometimes has been, copied with success” (2008, p. 9). And such mix of elements and motifs have all their own importance in composing the core of a Gothic narrative. As a matter of exemplification, one may list a set of specific elements chosen by literary purpose such as setting/space, ambience, dark secrets, madness, supernatural or inexplicable events, intense emotions, women threatened by men, supernatural creatures, an ancient prophecy, and a metonymy of gloom and horror as some of the most acknowledgeable ones. When such horror elements seem to be inserted in the reader’s reality, as proposed by Walpole, the story becomes even more terrifying.

One may correctly think of demise, as well, which is one of the most remarkable characteristics of Gothic. According to Snorri Sigurðsson it represents “a most poignant reminder for the audience of the intimacy and precarious nature of life and death” (2009, p. 10). Often present in Gothic stories, fantastic beings like ghosts, vampires, zombies, and witches are some of the supernatural creatures that embody its eerie aspect. Most of them are usually associated to something as an ancient prophecy or curse mostly connected to a place where the living beings are haunted. In addition, there are also all sorts of superstitions, that often include animals as being the symbols of supernatural, such as black cats, ravens, owls, etc., to show the audience that the natural world may also play a part in supernatural events, creating tension by the fact that there’s no safety anywhere, even regarding the supposedly known ordinary things.

However, Gothic was not the first genre that used supernatural elements on its plot. Shakespeare’s tragedies *Hamlet* (1603) and *Macbeth* (1623) present these elements, i.e. ghosts and witches, which, to this point, might qualify them as proto-gothic ones, although such assumption is completely up for debate and would need a deeper investigation. But even though Walpole was not the first one who had this idea, he was the pioneer of using dark elements with the practical intention of scaring the reader. That’s why it’s fair to state that it was only after Walpole’s works that Gothic started gaining more space and became a genre itself, a kind of dark

romance; it was further developed, from the 18th to the 19th centuries, by writers as Clara Reeve (1729-1807), Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823), William Thomas Beckford (1760-1844), Matthew Lewis (1775-1818), Mary Shelley (1797-1851), Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), Charles Dickens (1812-1870), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), and Lord Byron (1788-1824).

Just as another matter of exemplification, one may propose a timeline of the character of the vampire, one of the most remarkable of Gothic. It started with *The Vampyre* (1819) by John Polidori, *Varney, the vampire* (1847) by James Malcolm Rymer, followed by Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872), both acknowledged inspirations for Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). The latter being the greater influence in the creation of the image of the vampire nowadays, for whom one of the main elements of characterization is the place it inhabits, often a castle, and the places where it roams, like dark alleys, cemeteries, and etc.

It is known that a gloomy story often takes set in old and/or abandoned places, such as castles, mansions, states or ruins, abandoned places, or forests. The space where the story takes place is, in most times, a dark place, a big building full of secret passages, trap doors, obscure libraries, etc. Due to the use of such elements, the Gothic writing is considered one of the most curious genres, because it uses elements that go beyond the human imagination of the 18th and 19th centuries. According to Michel Foucault

Gothic novels develop a whole fantasy-world of stone walls, darkness, hideouts and dungeons which harbour [...] mountains and forests, caves, ruined castles and terrifyingly dark and silent convents. Now these imaginary spaces are like the negative of the transparency and visibility which it aimed to establish. (1980, p.154)

The use of a setting normally perceived as ordinary, plus the addition of a supernatural being, or a horror story that happens in that location, is a suitable combination for such genre; e.g., a forest and a werewolf. As for a house, it is one of the most famous settings for Gothic novels. It is a place normally perceived as a sort of refuge, almost like a personal sanctuary, and usually symbolizes protection and shelter. David Ronneburg says that "the house can be seen as the manifestation of man's triumph over nature. Protected from the unpredictable and merciless workings of the latter, man can withstand and attempt to tame it" (2002,

p.7). When it comes to horror, oddity related to the objects within the house, its environment, its location, and other elements, can help to build an aura of discomfort to be felt by the characters and readers.

The ambience is another important element. It is responsible for passing the fear of the unknown to the audience. Different from the environment, the ambience is related to the psychological atmosphere, namely the mood, which is influenced by the space as well. A Gothic ambience often includes characteristics such as storms, winter waves, blizzards or other extreme natural events that are usually followed by the climax. Most of them tend to happen by night.

Followed by other great names of literary writing, it is very unlikely to think about Gothic without mentioning one of its masters, Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), an inspiration for many writers of the genre. Poe published many poems, short stories, and novels, all responsible for making his unique and remarkable writing part of the history of Gothic. Poe had a great influence on how we see the modern horror stories, written or filmed; works that, either directly or not, drank from Poe's ideas and narratives. By having a recognizable style and characteristics; his writing presents a set of (now) classical Gothic elements that can be found in most of his works.

A characteristic of Poe's writing is the sublime effect present in most of his works. It happens due to the mixing of various feelings that the writer aims to make the reader to experience, as fear, terror, desire, etc., which resounds the principle of the Aristotelian catharsis. The author uses those elements to impact the audience, even after the reading.

Poe's works usually deal with death and its inevitability, madness, and other health conditions. Such aspects may be recognized in some of his stories, e.g. *The Black Cat* (1843), *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1839), and his most famous poem, *The Raven* (1845), among others. Those writing show similar elements, such as a character who struggles with a mental condition; a death that is elementary for the development of the plot; an ambience that is composed by elements that complete the feeling of horror; events that happen by night; secrets being revealed, a setting that is usually a big and quiet building. The latter is the element that will be explored by this paper in the last sections through the analysis of *The Fall of the house of Usher*.

The theory of the chronotope

Stories are often created through human experiences and tend to have a definite time and space. In literature, space does not refer only to the local where the plot takes place, it reaches a communicative level and is no longer simply synonymous with a place to fill. In most of the research on literature it seems to be of general agreement that space is considered an element of extreme importance in the narrative, since it is where the sequence of events that comprise the story takes place. Thus, considering due exceptions, spatiality is a necessary element to the plot, as in Gothic literature.

Studies have investigated the range of factors related to the influence of space in Gothic literature and its other elements. From them it is possible to acknowledge that space and time work together for the creation not only of the atmosphere of terror, but also of terror itself. Theoretically, the joint observation of both was called chronotope.

In Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel (1981), Mikhail Bakhtin defines the chronotope as follows:

We will give the name chronotope (literally, "time space") to the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature. [...] we are borrowing it for literary criticism almost as a metaphor (almost, but not entirely). What counts for us is the fact that it expresses the inseparability of space and time (time as the fourth dimension of space). We understand the chronotope as a formally constitutive category of literature. (1981, p. 84–85.)

Time and space are elements responsible for defining culture, behaviors, rules, and society in general. A story that takes place in the 19th century has its plot going on a different way from a story that occurs in the 20th century. However, even if the century and year are the same, if one is set in Orient and the other in Occident, there will likely be different tales and writings. Things like humanity and human laws have their own concepts and interpretations to different societies. Also, the very spaces portrayed in Gothic fiction already have a temporal characteristic, as they are generally antiquated spaces that transport readers and characters to other times, mainly the past. In fact, space and time are inextricably linked in the context

of gothic terror, since it is often through space that the past comes into play to haunt the characters.

Chronotope, according to Bakhtin (1981), defines the genre of the narrative; thus, space and time are elementary to literature because they can define the storyline based on the setting and epoch, even the historical context. As mentioned before, there is a juxtaposition of space and time in Gothic literature, which may be easily perceived in Poe's own analysis on his poem *The Raven* (1845).

Written in 1846 and titled *The Philosophy of Composition* (2009), Poe's theoretical text explains how he came to write *The Raven*, what factors were relevant to the composition of the poem, and, mostly relevant for this research: why he got to choose a chamber to portrait the story of a man who has lost his beloved and is then plagued by a talking feathered animal, namely a raven. Stating that he purposely chose all the elements in the poem, Poe claims that

The next point to be considered was the mode of bringing together the lover and the Raven—and the first branch of this consideration was the locale. For this the most natural suggestion might seem to be a forest, or the fields—but it has always appeared to me that a close circumscription of space is absolutely necessary to the effect of insulated incident—it has the force of a frame to a picture. It has an indisputable moral power in keeping concentrated the attention, and, of course, must not be confounded with mere unity of place. I determined, then, to place the lover in his chamber—in a chamber rendered sacred to him by memories of her who had frequented it. (2006, p. 551)

Poe's explanation on his choice of the elements presented in the poem makes it possible to see how all the details contained in the story were previously selected and chosen so that they could properly act in it. The ambience is formed by the use of the rain that forced the animal to seek shelter, the knocking that alluded to someone at the character's door, the fact that the narrator was alone with the bird in that dimly lit chamber that resembles his heart that still suffers from the loss of his beloved. The narrator, as Poe suggests, is in agony for his loss, which is reinforced by the elements that characterize the place chosen by the author, since they function as details that aim at presenting to the reader a cold, lifeless, melancholic, dark place. A place that was frequented by the one that is no longer among the living, but still haunts the protagonist's mind.

Still talking about the composition of his poem, Poe sets out what elements were needed to complete and transform the ambience by writing

The locale being thus determined, I had now to introduce the bird—and the thought of introducing him through the window was inevitable. The idea of making the lover suppose, in the first instance, that the flapping of the wings of the bird against the shutter, is a “tapping” at the door, originated in a wish to increase, by prolonging, the reader’s curiosity, and in a desire to admit the incidental effect arising from the lover’s throwing open the door, finding all dark, and thence adopting the half-fancy that it was the spirit of his mistress that knocked. (POE, 2006, p. 551.)

The construction of the work is usually made based on the space, being the elements that complement the narrative needed to adorn the setting. And through the proper use of it, it is intended to make the reader curious about what was behind the door from Poe’s poem.

Spatiality in Poe’s *The Fall of the House of Usher*: an analysis

One of Poe’s short stories that best portrayals most of the issues surrounding Gothic spatiality and horror is *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1839), which was first published in the September issue of the *Burton’s Gentleman’s Magazine*. The story is told in the first person by an unnamed narrator, a childhood friend of Roderick Usher, the protagonist and owner of an old house that has been in his family for generations. Being very ill, Usher writes his friend asking him to stay at his home for a while, which unchains the whole narrative. The moment he arrives in Usher’s property, the narrator comes across a huge and gloomy house; then, he proceeds describing not only the physical space, but also the horror caused by the image presented, like only the view itself was capable of making one to assume that it was an unwelcoming place. He is confused by the mix of feelings he is having with the house before him, as he explains in the following excerpt:

[...] the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was – but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment, with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible I looked upon the scene before me – upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain – upon the bleak walls – upon the vacant

eye-like windows – upon a few rank sedges – and upon a few with trunks of decayed trees. (POE, 2006, p. 126)

He uses terms of human characteristics to describe the house, such as comparing its windows to vacant eyes. Poe gives evidence that spatiality will be an extremely important element during the plot, inasmuch as the house is present since the title to the last scene of the story.

By means of the importance of space in the narrative, it is possible to see how it acts in the creation of terror in Poe's works. From the initial description of the setting, the reader can conclude that it is a tale of horror. The genre is often defined by the elements present in the narrative; based on this assumption it is possible to see this through Bakhtin's statement that "the chronotope in literature has an intrinsic generic significance. It can even be said that it is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions [...]" (1981, p. 84–85.). In this case, a Gothic story.

When authors use in their works elements that are unreal, they create a universe that has its own singularity, that is because, sometimes, real life is immerse in fiction and fiction is immerse in real life. Considering that, Sigurðsson supports that:

[...] by setting the events of the narrative in a world which is so similar to, yet so different from, the real world, that is, a world in which fantastic events can occur, the author gains a greater freedom in the narrative. (2009, p.15)

When the authors create their own universes, even though being similar to the real world, the writers create their own human and nature rules to control and support the development of the events.

When the author creates their own universe, even though being similar to the real world, the writer creates their own human and nature rules to control and support the development of the events.

There are two most common spaces to place a horror story, the first kind is an unusual setting historically known, such as: a castle, a graveyard, a cave, a convent, a monastery, a church, a cathedral or a dungeon. The other common space, used with the same purpose, is a familiar place; usually a place of comfort,

which is closer to the reader's everyday reality. When horror elements are added to it, this place becomes odd and gloom. The second choice of spatiality is a way of keeping the reader scared even after the reading, since these places are close to their everyday life. An example of a familiar place that is ideal to set a Gothic story, as it has been oft mentioned throughout this paper, is a house. Veronika Majlingová discusses the importance of the house by explaining that:

There are two main appearances of the house: first is the safe haven, connected also to the ideal of domesticity and the house as the female sphere. (...) The other use is the haunted house, one of the trademark settings of Gothic tales. In the first case, the evil, the numinous is an exterior force and the hero/ine strives to keep it that way, while in the case of the haunted house the evil is contained inside the building, usually in the form of a past secret and it will not stop tormenting the inhabitants until the situation is resolved, often ending with the destruction of the building itself or the death of the inhabitants. (2011, p. 20)

Since the house symbolizes protection and shelter, it “can be seen as the manifestation of man's triumph over nature. Protected from the unpredictable and merciless workings of the latter, man can withstand and attempt to tame it” (RONNEBURG, 2002, p. 8). When it comes to terror, the objects in it, the environment, darkness, location and other elements can help increasing the discomfort felt by the characters themselves, even from the objects in the house, as can be observed in this passage from the tale:

I endeavored to believe that much, if not all of what I felt, was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room—of the dark and tattered draperies, which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and from upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. (POE, 2006, p. 138-139)

The house is described as bearing a peculiar atmosphere that seemed to come from the place itself, as the narrator presents by saying that “from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden hued.” (POE, 2006, p. 128). That is an important example of how the present elements, if combined, can bring the necessary obscurity to the scene. The narrator exposes with no much secret how odd the house looks. Thus, he describes the indoors environment with adjectives and nouns that show how ghostly and decayed it is:

The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all. (POE, 2006, p. 129)

It's possible to have a glimpse at Poe's writing style through the short story. The characters he creates do not usually socialize; on the contrary, they bury themselves in bookstores, shady places with shady furniture and curtains that do not allow sunlight or life gets inside. Also, the whole mood of the story only worsens the characters' state of melancholy and depression. Usher seems to be disturbed, as the narrator describes him by saying that "he now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous lustre of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture [...]" (POE, 2006, p. 139), which means that his looks matches the look of the house itself.

Furthermore, the relation between the family and the house is intrinsically linked. The story starts with the description of the House of Usher and ends with Roderick and his twin sister Madeline, who die in one another's arms, followed by the destruction of the place. Like Roderick and Madeline, the house is sick, they behave as obscurely as their family state. Usher says that the main reason for his torment is his sister's illness, but he also blames the house for what he is been through:

He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth—in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion, had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit—an effect which the physique of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the morale of his existence. (POE, 2006, p. 131)

Usher is losing his remaining sanity, what can be compared with the house that appear to be keeping secrets from generations, as well as Usher who keeps a terrible secret related to his sister. A secret to which the house seems to have influence upon. Jerrold E. Hogle supports the notion that:

be it a castle, a foreign palace, an abbey, a vast prison, a subterranean crypt, a graveyard, a primeval frontier or island, a large old house or theatre, an aging city or urban underworld, decaying storehouse, factory, laboratory, public building [...]. Within this space, or a combination of such spaces, are hidden some secrets from the past (sometimes the recent past) that haunt the characters, psychologically, physically, or otherwise at the main time of the story. (2002, p. 2)

In addition, there is a crack in the building that is described right in the beginning of the story “a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.” (POE, 2006, p. 129). In parallel, it is possible to think that the house may be the representation of Usher's mind, so the fissure that is cracking the building may be a metaphor for the collapse in Usher's mind, as it is in the following excerpt that ends the tale with the death of the last Usher and the odd fall of the building, mentioning the crack in its front over again:

The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely-discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the “House of Usher.” (POE, 2006, p. 144)

According to Bakhtin “the chronotope is the place where the knots of narrative are tied and untied. It can be said without qualification that to them belongs the meaning that shapes narrative.” (1981, p. 95), what means that time and, as previously seen, space are the elements that shape the narrative. In the case of Poe's short story, the house is where everything started and ended, it presents the Usher's untold story and ends the family line, full of secrets to remain unknown to all but both.

Final Remarks

This study was taken to investigate the influence of the gothic genre on literary writing. The choice of Edgar Allan Poe's for this study comes from the importance he had and still has for Gothic literature, being the writer of works that marked literature. The choice of the tale *The Fall of the House of Usher* happened, specially, for the importance of space in the tale, where the house is extremely relevant to the development of the story.

The main theory chosen was Bakhtin's chronotope, which encompasses a huge scholarship on space and time in literary works. For this paper, it was chosen to use rather spatiality itself than focusing on its relation time, even though the latter clearly has influence in the narrative. Therefore, that theory was necessary to study and explain the importance of spatiality in the gothic short story.

Overall, Bakhtin's theory did not need to be so thoroughly explored, since Poe himself had already wrote, indirectly, about spatiality and its importance. In addition, the short story herein analyzed had strong marks of space influencing the course of the narrative. The analysis of spatiality in Literature supports that the process of writing a horror story is not always something unplanned. Had the tale been placed in another setting, one might not have the whole experience of witnessing all features of Usher's old house, with its sinister old furniture, crypt, dungeons, noisy stairs, its gloom pond, among other characteristics, all relatable to the outer and inner self of the protagonist. And if the house was, somehow, Usher, or at least part of him, wouldn't it be possible to state that it was a character itself? At least partially, in our opinion.

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