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TEMPOROSPATIAL OBSCURITY AND SUBLIMITY OF EMOTION IN RAISING TERROR IN ANN RADCLIFFE'S THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO

Abstract

This paper aims to elaborate on and exemplify Ann Radcliffe's masterful use of the suspension in time and indefinite time frame, as well as the indistinctness and haziness of space surrounding the main protagonists in The Mysteries of Udolpho, her most renowned novel. This obscurity of setting creates the intellectual incertitude in characters, and potentially readers, which further excites their emotions to the highest degree; a state the 18th century philosopher Edmund Burke calls sublime emotion. The obscure and the sublime are the two essential dimensions in fostering terror in Gothic literature of the 18th century, as well as today.

Key words: *terror, obscurity, suspension, sublime, vagueness, supernatural, anxiety, fear, suggestion*

The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear,
and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown.

(Lovecraft, 1973)

At the beginning of what is considered the most important period for Gothic literature, Ann Radcliffe published one of her most contributing, but frequently one-dimensionally analysed novels, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Despite the reiterated criticism of Radcliffe's incorrect history and geography, her lack of skill, according to Scott, or, perhaps even, lack of interest to develop characterisation, and the much debated tendency to disappoint her readers, as Barbauld sees it, by explaining away the supernatural events in a rather simplistic and naive way, Radcliffe's ingenuity in creating uncanny atmosphere with scant, but suggestive elements of the supernatural, granted her an important role in the development of Gothic fiction, as a pioneer of a new genre of the 'school of terror' (Reuber, 2004, p. 40). Much has been said about *Udolpho* as a respectable heir of Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, and considerable respect has been paid to Radcliffe's "pictorial art" (Miles, 2005) and the elevation of landscape description, as

well as the further codification of the typical supernatural elements that make Gothic literature what it is. However, with the titular castle episode in the novel attracting all the attention, little space is given to Radcliffe's subtle spectralization of time and place, and her mastery of raising human experience to a state of terror and sublimity by tackling the unconscious. Unfolding scenes with hazy twilight forests filled with sporadic sounds of footsteps, mysterious music hinting at spectral presences, lurking shadows in decrepit castles with labyrinthine halls, fleeting apparitions of the deceased, and the constant fear of imminent yet vague danger, holding both the protagonist and the reader in a permanent state of paralyzing terror, *Udolpho* makes a perfect example of Radcliffe's mastery of the psychological novel (Varma, 1923).

The genre of novel in question delves deeper into the psychological complexities of the protagonist's dealing with human emotion, where the protagonist, found in an unknown territory of human experience, constantly dwells in a state of anticipatory anxiety that gives rise to positive terror. The former is principally achieved, Radcliffe holds, not with explicitness in detail in depicting the horrifying, but rather with suggestive vagueness. In her essay "On the Supernatural in Poetry", Radcliffe discriminates between terror and horror, stating that unlike horror which "contracts, freezes and nearly annihilates" (Radcliffe, 1926, p. 150) the faculties, terror arouses them to a high degree as it rests on the factors of uncertainty and obscurity. This echoes the conception of sublimity and terror Edmund Burke postulated in his 1757 treatise on aesthetics in which he argues that confusion and obscurity play a vital role in exciting terror and sublimity – "the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling" (Burke, 1990, I, vii). This is precisely what Radcliffe allows readers to experience as they follow Emilie St. Albert on a journey from her cocooned existence in her parental home in the romantic plains of Gascony, through the suspense of perilous travelling through the mysterious mountains of France, to her imprisonment in the ancient, blood-spattered halls of the castle of *Udolpho*, all the way to the cryptic, spectre-infested *Chateau-le-Blanc* in the mystic forest of Languedoc, back to her home in *la Vallée*, where she is still haunted by the memories of the beloved deceased. Every step of the way, Radcliffe imbues with faint traces of malevolent supernatural and an uncanny air of gloom disquieting the heroine's mind and making her prolonged fear for the uncertain future turn into sublime. The subtlety in suggestion translates to the readers. "A few sinister details like a track of blood on castle stairs, a groan from a distant vault, or a weird song in a nocturnal forest", Lovecraft remarks, "can conjure up the most powerful images of imminent horror; surpassing by far the extravagant and toilsome elaborations of others." (Lovecraft, 1927). What Radcliffe succeeds in doing is what Freud finds necessary in inducing a feeling of dread; she creates a reality based on our own at the beginning of the novel, and lulls

us into believing that we are reading a 19th century realism novel until she jolts us with a fear-inspiring sensation, leaving a lingering atmosphere of unease, challenging the protagonist's perception and our beliefs. The much debated "intellectual uncertainty", first introduced by Jentsch (1906), and later discussed by Freud, is the deciding factor in raising terror in Radcliffe's obscure realm.

Temporal obscurity

Considering there are detailed accounts of other aspects of the novel, such as perhaps the itinerary of her heroine's travelling, it is interesting that Radcliffe does not give us any specific time frame in *Udolpho*, in which the events occur, or any references to days or months. We are briefly informed at the beginning of the novel that the year is 1584 (although this seems to be somewhat in discordance with the characters' lifestyle and affairs – see Albright, 2005), and there are scarce references for the seasons which only help us understand, upon reaching the end of the novel, that the events stretch for at least a year. We are not given the details about the historical circumstances surrounding the events, nor can we tell how long some of the main episodes take. This vague time setting, together with the anachronistic details give away the motive of providing the alleged year more for the purpose of establishing an atmosphere, rather than providing a timeline. Albright argues that the obscurity and non-linearity of time "reinforce the dreamlike quality of the novel" (Albright, 2011, p. 52). Reading *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, we feel that time flows in a circular manner, or even that it sometimes stands still, for each moment is prolonged, so that we experience Emily's emotions, and have time to contemplate her thoughts. We have difficulty experiencing the passage of time, as the characters often fall "into a reverie" (Radcliffe, 2001, I. iv. 51) or drop "suddenly from the most animating vivacity into fits of deep musing." (Radcliffe, 2001, I. v. 57) At times the moments linger while the characters are meandering through the enchanting landscapes, that Radcliffe (2001) paints with such evocativeness, "wrapt in the complacency which such scenes inspire" (I. iv. 53), or when they remember and lament their lost loved ones and sink "into thoughtfulness" (I. iv. 57). The characters cannot seem to manage to let go of the past: St. Aubert is reluctant to leave home which his late wife consecrated with her presence; Emily's grief for her father makes his late countenance materialize before her eyes; Valancourt roams the south parlour of the chateau at la Vallée tracing Emily's footsteps; Dorothee thinks she sees her late mistress in Emily's image when she puts late Marchioness de Villeroi's shawl on her; even sister Agnes realizes on her deathbed that the past comes to haunt her, making her relive the most dreadful moments of her

life. Throughout the novel, the characters become trapped in time, as the “memory awaken[s] pang of affection” (Radcliffe, 2001, I. x. 135).

Another way in which Radcliffe achieves this suspension in time is by having her characters, notably her main protagonist Emily, in constant fear and hesitation, so that in thinking about what horror the next day, or even, next step may bring, they wish to protract their fate. She often lingers at the casement deep into the night, reluctant to go to sleep and face the uncertainty of the next day, as in volume I, chapter IV, when St. Aubert is on his deathbed and Emily’s future is unsound:

Emily remained at the casement, watching the setting moon, and the valley sinking into deep shade, and willing to prolong her state of mind. At length she retired to her mattress, and sunk into tranquil slumber. (Radcliffe, 2001, I. iv. 55)

In times of great suffering, too, Emily freezes time and fills the void with the memory of Valancourt, desperately clinging to the memory of his affection:

Looking to him as to her only hope, she recollected, with jealous exactness, every assurance and every proof she had witnessed of his affection; read again and again the letters she had received from him; weighed, with intense anxiety, the force of every word, that spoke of his attachment; and dried her tears, as she trusted in his truth. (Radcliffe, 2001, II. ix. 297)

Having her protagonist constantly live in apprehension, Radcliffe creates “a sustained atmosphere of romantic terror” (Varma, 1923, p. 94) in which time decelerates each moment the protagonist faces a dreadful situation or is in fear of what yet may come. Even with her descriptions, Radcliffe is able to slow down the pace of narration, so that the readers feel the anxiety of the protagonist and the sublimity of the scene. Such is the case when Emily is traveling with Mm. Cheron and her soon to be proved captor Mons. Montoni, and as they are ascending the Apennines on their way to the notorious Castle of Udolpho, we feel the progression of the narration halt, as Emily’s mind is “already occupied by peculiar distress” (Radcliffe, 2001, I. xiii. 165), as she contemplates the possible motive of their journey. The suspension in time intensifies the moment Emily actually beholds the castle for the first time and Radcliffe begins her famous description of the gloomy edifice. As Emily casts her dreadful eye on detail after detail of the dreary estate, time significantly slows down:

As the carriage-wheels rolled heavily under the portcullis, Emily’s heart sunk, and she seemed, as if she was going into her prison; the gloomy court, into which she

passed, served to confirm the idea, and her imagination, ever awake to circumstance, suggested even more terrors, than her reason could justify. (Radcliffe, 2001, II. v. 240)

As we follow Emily's progression into the castle, Radcliffe (2001) interlaces her descriptions with gloom and sublimity, filling Emily's mind with thoughts of "long-suffering and murder" (II. v. 240), freezing her experience in time. The description of desolation continues into the castle, and Emily's perception of the castle turns her thoughts to memory again:

From the contemplation of this scene, Emily's mind proceeded to the apprehension of what she might suffer in it, till the remembrance of Valancourt, far, far distant! came to her heart, and softened it into sorrow. (Radcliffe, 2001, II. v. 241)

Emily is constantly trapped between "memory and expectation" (Albright, 2011, p. 60). In his "No Time Like the Present: The Mysteries of Udolpho.", Albright dedicates the whole article to the temporality in Udolpho, arguing that all three dimensions; past, present, and future, are fused so they create an uncanny, repetitive pattern of a sublime dream. Due to its lack of fixity, we are lost in the obscurity of the time stream, and we dwell in the realm of constant terror of uncertainty and hesitation.

Spatial obscurity

In keeping with Burke's theory of sublimity and the necessity of obscurity in inducing terror, Radcliffe's landscape descriptions are shrouded in a veil of mysticism and indefiniteness. Perhaps, there is some merit in her geographical incorrectness, as it leaves a possibility of understanding her setting as a part of a metaphysical universe, rather than a point on a physical map. She gives us the likes of the tranquil Languedoc, the rugged Apennines and the grandeur of Pyrenees, but she chooses not to paint the clear outlines of the surroundings. It is easy to comprehend where she drew her inspiration from, when one looks at Radcliffe's favourite landscape painters' works of art. She sought to convey the romanticism and unpredictability of wild scenes of Salvator Rosa, and she positively had a sensitiveness to the indistinctness, and melancholy air of dawn and dusk, that Claude Lorrain was famous for. However, Radcliffe goes one step further in writing, as she paints her nebulous landscapes with a hint of gloomy suggestiveness. The descriptions of landscapes her characters often ramble or journey through are loquacious, but not enough for the readers to find comfort in definiteness and familiarity, so that a great deal is still left for the readers to infer and imagine. Giving such an "obscure and imperfect idea" of the surroundings, Burke argues, contributes in "raising the stronger emotion" (Burke, 1990). We see the scenes through a gleam of the rays of the 'saffron' (Radcliffe, 2001,

I. viii. 121) setting sun in twilight, or through the dimness of ‘melancholy gloom of evening’ (Radcliffe, 2001, I. i. 44). The lines are smeared, and as if in a dream, we see the scenery through a vignette:

The sun now threw a last yellow gleam on the waves of the Mediterranean, and the gloom of twilight spread fast over the scene, till only a melancholy ray appeared on the western horizon, marking the point where the sun had set amid the vapours of an autumnal evening. (Radcliffe, 2001, I. vi. 92)

Just like the main plot, her descriptions are shrouded in mystification; she draws a “haze over her landscapes” (Varma, 1966, p. 113), tints them with deep colour, adds a flitting bat, a gliding shadow, or a half-heard footstep and arrives at that much sought after dreamlike quality of the setting. Radcliffe positively had a capacity for pensive moods, the spirituality of nature, and a taste for sad tones of darkness, as she herself was known to tread the forest paths and take pleasure in solitude at melancholy hours. It seems she sought to transfer that faculty to her heroines, as is definitely the case with Emily St. Aubert. Very early in the novel we learn that our main protagonist delights in solitary “wild wood-walks” and “rambl[ing] among the scenes of nature” (Radcliffe, 2001, I. i. 40), contemplating her past, her future, or the presence of the divinity in the rugged harmony of nature. However, frequently her susceptibility to the somber scenes gives way, and as soon as the uncertainties of her circumstances come forth, her fortitude leaves her, as she casts fearful glimpses around her, and the obscurity of the twilight hour affects her emotions, impressing her thoughts with premonitions of danger. In moments of solitary sauntering, the suggestiveness of the dismal scenes and atmosphere plays tricks on her mind and often causes Emily to succumb to a genuine feeling of dread. The tenebrousness and the desolation of the surrounding space at times chill her and raise her emotions from the terrific to the sublime even when she is not alone, as when Emily sets her eyes on the terrifying Apennines for the first time:

The gloom of these shades, their solitary silence, except when the breeze swept over their summits, the tremendous precipices of the mountains, that came partially to the eye, each assisted to raise the solemnity of Emily’s feelings into awe; she saw only images of gloomy grandeur, or of dreadful sublimity, around her; other images, equally gloomy and equally terrible, gleamed on her imagination.” (Radcliffe, 2001, II. v. 237)

Again, we are not granted with the full extent of the details of these horrific mountains, but Radcliffe’s equivocal description is compelling enough to affect the mind of both the main protagonist, as well as the reader. The same could be said of, perhaps, one of the most gripping

descriptions in the novel – that of the castle of Udolpho, in which Emily experiences terror almost continuously from the first sight of the menacing towers of the fortification:

...though it was now lighted up by the setting sun, the gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark grey stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object. As she gazed, the light died away on its walls, leaving a melancholy purple tint, which spread deeper and deeper, as the thin vapour crept up the mountain... Silent, lonely and sublime, it seemed to stand the sovereign of the scene, and to frown defiance on all, who dared to invade its solitary reign. As the twilight deepened, its features became more awful in obscurity... (Radcliffe, 2001, II. v. 239)

The description of the castle reiterates Burkean ideas of the sources of the sublime, together with the dark colour, enormity of the edifice, its magnificence, and the underlying gloom and inscrutability. The surrounding vapor with its mystifying agency and the murkiness of the edifice in the dying light, makes it seem impenetrable, much like the history and secrets Emily had heard of the castle. The murkiness and the inscrutability awaken Emily's imagination in the interior of the castle as well, as she passes along the dark and silent corridors, or as she observes the servants in the distance through the dusk (Radcliffe, 2001, III. vi. 395), or while spending lonely hours in her chamber, "the dismal obscurity" (Radcliffe, 2001, II. x. 315) of it assisting her fears, and she feels she sees shadows flitting by every now and then. As a person of heightened sensibility, Emily is susceptible to these particularities of space, and its affectivity contributes to the creation of "an unnatural tension" (Burke, 1990) throughout the novel. Ultimately, the different obscure settings, from the pastoral plains of Gascony, over the wild mountains of the Pyrenees and the Apennines, and through the solitary labyrinthine halls of the castle of Udolpho, all the way to the mysterious forest near the Chateau-le-Blanc, represent Emily's different states of mind (Reuber, 2004, p. 48) as she journeys inwardly towards the obscure parts of her soul. The obscure setting becomes "more than inert materiality by assuming an emblematic role in our understanding of the self" (Trigg, 2013, p. 6) and the terrifying situations serve as lessons in the process of individuation.

Sublimity of emotion

Perhaps, the most powerful element in the hands of Radcliffe, is her ingenuity in creating a feeling of sustained fear throughout the novel. Using her horror elements with great economy, she arrives at a novel pregnant with tension, nevertheless, and holds the reader in constant apprehension. We follow Emily St. Aubert as she treads softly in the dark forest or runs frantically through the lonely halls and experience as her initial fright turns into violent distress of a mind. The subtle, unnerving hints, like the rustle of leaves in the dead silence of

twilight, a faint sound of a footstep, a half-heard groan, a speck of blood, or just a sight of a perturbing scene, like that of a gibbet in the gloom of a dark forest, make us hold our breath in anticipation, as we await, together with the protagonist, the impending doom. Early on, we learn that Emily's inquisitive mind and susceptibility to atmosphere incite heightened emotion and wild speculations. From the episode with the sonnet and the lute in her father's fishing house when "the melancholy gloom of evening, and the profound stillness of the place, interrupted only by the light trembling of leaves, heightened her fanciful apprehensions" (Radcliffe, 2001, I. i. 44), Emily is frequently seized by sudden fits of unease which at times make her grow faint or even still with fear. From then on, the prolonged anxiety and the continuous alertness take a toll on a feeble heart and Emily dwells in a constant suspense expecting banditti to plunge at her from behind a tree (Radcliffe, 2001, I. v. 85) in the forest, and she is „constantly listen[ing] for some sound (Radcliffe, 2001, II. x. 316) while imprisoned in Udolpho. The vagueness, anticipation, and the faint suggestions, Radcliffe is so skilled at, serve as the most potent triggers and the most "fertile sources of sublime emotion" (Varma, 1966, p. 102). However, the profound sensitiveness, the psychological capacity Radcliffe herself had an inclination for, proves a great contributor in the awakening of the sublime emotion. In agreeing with Jentsch, Freud, too, appreciates the importance of "extreme delicacy of perception" (Freud, 2003, p. 2) as a faculty necessary to the raise this strong emotion. It is the combination of this sensitiveness and the weakened nerves that make Emily susceptible to the atmosphere and suggestiveness of the dark. Even in the familiar environment, Emily's imagination gets the best of her, as when she is sitting at her father's desk in the library at her childhood home in Gascony, and remembering the last night before they had departed from the chateau:

As she mused she saw the door slowly open, and a rustling sound in a remote part of the room startled her. Through the dusk she thought she perceived something move. The subject she had been considering, and the present tone of her spirits, which made her imagination respond to every impression of her senses, gave her a sudden terror of something supernatural. (Radcliffe, 2001, I. vii. 121)

Interestingly enough, we know that Emily is not superstitious, nor is she prone to frivolous fantasies, thus, we may conclude that her fears are unsound. However, her heightened spirits play tricks upon her mind, and she succumbs to her fearful thoughts and gives way to wild conjecturing. In some instances, she is quite unable to define the object of her fears, or the tragic fate she will experience if she does not escape or find a safe heaven. She treads the dismal galleries „apprehensive of – she scarcely [knows] what" (Radcliffe, 2001, II. ix. 309) as her mind is clouded by the numerous vague ideas of what yet may come. Another contributing

factor is her preference of solitude; she chooses to spend hours in solitary musing, yet the very isolation adds to her heightened emotions. The effects of this, coupled with the silence and darkness constitute the essential factors in the genesis of the “infantile anxiety” that is inherent in all human beings, according to Freud (2003). Following the theory he postulates in his 1919 essay “The Uncanny”, it is quite possible that the anxiety and the states of terror Emily frequently succumbs to are a result of repression of her excessive grief for her late father, the recurrence of which makes her father materialize before her eyes in the above mentioned part. Whenever there is a prospect of Emily confronting the vague, but menacing fate of her conjectures, her state turns from apprehension and terror to sublimity so overwhelming that she frequently has “no power to move from the spot” (Radcliffe, 2001, II. x. 309) or she has to “lean[] against the wall for support” (Radcliffe, 2001, II. x. 316). This disconcerting emotion, Burke explains, holds the individual in a state of awe, halting all other senses and incapacitating the sufferer to engage any other thought (Burke, 1990). Likewise, Emily has no opportunity to weigh the implications of the circumstances she is found in, but rather complies with her wild suppositions and gives in to her emotions:

It occurred to her – for, at this moment, she could not reason on the probability of circumstances – that some one of the strangers, lately arrived at the castle, had discovered her apartment, and was come with such intent, as their looks rendered too possible – to rob, perhaps to murder, her. The moment she admitted this possibility, terror supplied the place of conviction, and a kind of instinctive remembrance of her remote situation from the family heightened it to a degree, that almost overcame her senses”. (Radcliffe, 2001, II. iv. 301)

Tapping into the bloodcurdling notions and ideas that awake sublime emotion, Radcliffe endeavors to depict the fine mental processes behind her characters’ reasoning and conduct, and implies how very subtle the hints and overtones need to be to push the protagonist into this extreme. Nowhere is this more apparent and more explicitly portrayed in *Udolpho* than in the second volume in the scene when Emily finally beholds the infamous picture behind the veil:

But, a terror of this nature, as it occupies and expands the mind, and elevates it to high expectation, is purely sublime, and leads us, by a kind of fascination, to seek even the object, from which we appear to shrink... with a timid hand, [she] lifted the veil; but instantly let it fall –perceiving that what it had concealed was no picture, and, before she could leave the chamber, she dropped senseless on the floor. When she recovered her recollection, the remembrance of what she had seen had nearly deprived her of it a second time. (Radcliffe, 2001, II. vi. 258)

With this brief assertion of the inherent inclination of people to pursue what they abject, Radcliffe hints at the quality of feeling discussed by psychoanalysts decades later, and what Freud reiterated in elaborating the province and the fundamental factors of the specific kind of terror called uncanny. The typical Radcliffian elements; the obscurity, the sensitiveness to the atmosphere, the 'intellectual uncertainty', the haunting past and the repressed emotions all play an important role in arousing sublimity of emotion. Since the anticipated spectres are implicit, and emotional, perhaps it is reasonable to concur with Terry Castle's proposition (Castle, 1995) that Radcliffe's supernatural cannot be easily explained away, as it seems that her phantasms arise not from the haunted forests and castles, but rather from the protagonists' haunted minds.

Conclusion

Perhaps Radcliffe's presumed literary flaw of shattering the supernatural, the very essential element in her novels, is rather a grant to readers' imagination, as we colour and shape the impending doom according to our own worst nightmares. In the course of the novel, our nerves are strung so many times that, just like Emily St. Aubert, we are in a constant grip of fearful expectations. This anticipatory anxiety strains the already feeble nerves and as the suggestive stimuli touch upon a sensitive matter: a traumatic event, a memory of a beloved, or that ancient dread, or the "king of terrors" (Burke, 1990) as Burke calls the fear of death, comes to our mind, and all our emotions are suspended as we yield to the sublime. That is exactly what makes this novel not just a terror novel, but a psychological one, as well. As Radcliffe explores the unconscious with her tantalizing and evocative descriptions of the setting, letting the atmosphere, mood, and the vague, yet picturesque scenery play with our mind, she skillfully tackles the complexities of human emotions. The tenebrous landscapes and the non-linearity of the temporal dimension of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* create a surreal and phantasmagorical ambience further adding to the confusion and uncertainty, the qualities Radcliffe understands to be necessary in raising terror, as she reiterated in her essay, echoing Edmund Burke.

Such is the subtle spectralization of Ann Radcliffe that this paper sought to elaborate on. Elusive and implicit, her supernatural does not seek to shock the reader, but rather to suggest the terrifying implications that stretch and tackle the responsive capacity of the reader. Even when the origin of the spectralization is revealed as fraudulent, the readers stay for the pure feeling of suspension, as the emphasis is on mood and mental processes. The faint suggestions that awake readers' curiosity, the dreamlike atmosphere of hazy forests and crepuscular vaults, the prolongation of a moment in time and the anxiety readers share with the protagonists, display Radcliffe's ingenuity in writing terrifying stories and her intuition and acumen for the

psychology of the human mind. With an unusual alloy of fear and pleasure, we soldier on with the protagonists in pursuit of transformative experiences we may undergo if we brave out the atrocities and face the terror.

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**VREMENSKO-PROSTORNA OPSKURNOST I SUBLIMNA EMOCIJA
U STVARANJU TERORA U DJELU MISTERIJE UDOLFA
SPISATELJICE EN REDKLIF**

Sažetak

Cilj ovog rada jeste da razradi i predoči primjere vještine Ann Radcliffe u primjeni suspenzije vremena i neodređenosti vremenskog okvira, kao i nejasnost i zamagljenost prostora u kojem se nalaze protagonisti Misterija Udolfa, njenog najpoznatijeg romana. Ovakva opskurnost konteksta stvara intelektualnu nesigurnost protagonista, a sasvim moguće i čitatelja, koja dalje uzbuđuje emocije i dovodi ih do najvišeg stadija; stanja koje je Edmund Burk, filozof 18. stoljeća nazvao sublimno. Opskurnost i sublimnost su dvije osnovne dimenzije neophodne za poticanje terora u gotičkoj književnosti 18. stoljeća, kao i danas.

Ključne riječi: *teror, opskurnost, suspenzija, sublimnost, nejasnost, nadnaravno, tjeskoba, strah, sugestija*