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The Motif of Lurking Fear in the Works of H.P. Lovecraft
Bachelor thesis

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Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracoval samostatně a uvedl jsem úplný seznam použité literatury.

V Olomouci, dne

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1. Introduction

Weird literature and horror literature subsequently are thought of as emerging from the English gothic novel in 18th century. The most prominent work of the English gothic novel is thought to be Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) which was later in the 18th century followed by other gothic fictions from writers such as Ann Radcliffe and Clara Reeve. The English gothic novel combined gothic architecture with supernatural elements to create a unique atmosphere and setting. The Gothic novel then developed through Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) and mainly Edgar Allan Poe, who was arguably the most influential and labeled the first master of American Gothic by Birch.¹ Even at the end of the 19th century and in the 20th century the gothic fiction was not completely forgotten, although it was not the same gothic as two centuries back when Walpole wrote *The Castle of Otranto*. Gothic themes or the influence of Gothic fiction can be seen in the fiction of Arthur Conan Doyle, William Faulkner, or Oscar Wilde to name a few. With new authors employing the gothic motives and combining them with their own unique narratives and themes the genre was evolving even more. The most prominent writer employing the gothic themes of the 20th century is arguably Howard Phillips Lovecraft, who is considered as being a central figure in introducing the weird genre. However, in the first half of the 20th century, when he was active, the gothic/horror fiction was not as popular as in the 18th and 19th century, so there was nearly a half-century wait for the weird to be officially recognized and for its gateway to the mainstream to emerge.

The genre of horror² as we know it today entered mainstream in 1970s when horror literature and weird literature became much more accessible and few very successful horror movies appeared, from which the most prominent is conceivably *The Exorcist* (1973), an adaptation of a novel of the same name published in 1971.³ The rising popularity of horror/weird literature in the seventies gave rise to popularity of authors who were until

¹ Dinah Birch, *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 7th ed. (Oxford University Press, 2009), 3262.

² Ann VanderMeer and Jeff VanderMeer, *The New Weird*, 1st ed. (San Francisco, California: Tachyon Publications, 2008), 10. Weird eventually transformed into horror.

³ Carroll Noël, *The Philosophy of Horror or, Paradoxes of the Heart* (New York, New York: Routledge, 1990), 2.

then not regarded as important or influential. H. P. Lovecraft was one such writer not recognized in his time. Along with the rise of the horror genre Lovecraft's work also gained in popularity. In 2003 the term "New Weird" was coined by M. John Harrison as a name of a literary movement combining horror and speculative fiction.⁴ Essentially it was a continuation of the weird tale but with not so much focus on the "scare".⁵

However, the "scare" itself, is not the sole focus of the Weird either. Joshi in his book on the weird *The Modern Weird Tale: A Critique of Horror Fiction* (2001) writes about the weird literature in a similar way as VanderMeer, stating that the main goal of the weird is not to terrify.⁶ Joshi essentially draws on Lovecraft, he explains that the focus of Lovecraftian horror is the sole existence of the horrors and not what they do.⁷ In his essay on *Supernatural horror in Literature* (1927), Lovecraft himself describes in detail how he identifies a weird tale.

The true weird tale has something more than secret murder, bloody bones, or a sheeted form clanking chains according to rule. A certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread of outer, unknown forces must be present; and there must be a hint, expressed with a seriousness and portentousness becoming its subject, of that most terrible conception of the human brain—a malign and particular suspension or defeat of those fixed laws of Nature which are our only safeguard against the assaults of chaos and the daemons of unplumbed space.⁸

Although Lovecraft mentions the "dread of outer, unknown forces" it does not mean that the sole focus of weird fiction is the "scare" part. The focus is on the terror that the character is feeling and that is used for building a suspenseful atmosphere. The focus is not on the resolution of the plot that in horror fiction usually takes the form of the feeling of horror. "Although he is often classified as a writer of horror, Lovecraft's work seldom evokes a feeling of horror. When Lovecraft sets out his motives for writing in his short

⁴ Birch, *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 5308. The New Weird started forming in 1990s but was officially coined in 2003 by M. John Harrison.

⁵ Ann VanderMeer and Jeff VanderMeer, *The New Weird*, 11.

⁶ S. T. Joshi, *The Modern Weird Tale: A Critique of Horror Fiction* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2001), www.mcfarlandpub.com, 14.

⁷ Joshi, *The Modern Weird Tale: A Critique of Horror Fiction*, 258.

⁸ H. P. Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror in Literature* (Jersey City, New Jersey: Freeditorial, 2014), <https://www.freeditorial.com/>, 3.

essay “Notes on Writing Weird Fiction”, he does not immediately mention horror.”⁹ Lovecraft states that he puts focus on different aspects of fiction, namely “vague, elusive, fragmentary impressions of wonder, beauty, and adventurous expectancy”¹⁰ This correlates with the description of the sublime by Edmund Burke in his work concerning the philosophy of art *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757). “The passion caused by the great and sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully, is astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror.”¹¹ I would link this “adventurous expectancy” of Lovecraft to the astonishment of Burke, because the expectancy is what the motif of Lurking Fear¹² supports and the astonishment is the outcome of it. It contains “some degree of horror” as Burke states, and sometimes the outcome consists entirely of the feeling of horror, but not always, as it is not the main aim.

Reading how some of the most prominent figures in the domain of weird fiction describe what the weird should look like, it seems like a consensus that the main purpose of the weird should not be to scare the audience. The characteristics of the Gothic tale, as a predecessor of the weird literature go hand in hand with these descriptions. Main characteristic of gothic fiction is its “claustrophobic air of oppression or evil” and its “stranglehold of the past upon the present.”¹³ Usually the gothic tale is also set in an old gothic castle which is haunted and, or its past is peculiar in some unusual way.

This is what brings us to the main point of this work, which is the motif of Lurking Fear. This motif was also present in gothic literature but in my opinion, it is particularly prominent in the fiction of H.P. Lovecraft. That is the reason I aim to write mainly about his work. I am going to try to explain what this motif is, its relation to the concepts of horror and terror, how it manifests in Lovecraft’s literature and its influence of the narrative, characters, and atmosphere of the overall work. For this purpose, I chose as my

⁹ Mark Fisher, *The Weird and the Eerie* (Repeater Books, 2016), 51-52.

¹⁰ H.P. Lovecraft, “Notes on Writing Weird Fiction,” *The H.P. Lovecraft Archive*. Accessed February 21, 2023. <https://www.hplovecraft.com/>.

¹¹ Edmund Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London, UK: Thomas M’Lean, 1823), <https://ia600208.us.archive.org/16/items/philosophicalinq00burk/philosophicalinq00burk.pdf>, 73.

¹² See section 2.

¹³ Birch, *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 3260.

main primary source a collection of the works of H.P. Lovecraft named *Necronomicon: The Best Weird Tales of H.P. Lovecraft* (2008) which contains thirty-four stories by Lovecraft and the complete Cthulhu Mythos. It is edited by Stephen Jones who is a prominent figure in publishing horror anthologies and H.P. Lovecraft's work in England.

In my definition of Lurking Fear, I rely on Noël Carroll's concept of art-horror. Carroll's *The Philosophy of Horror, or Paradoxes of the Heart* (1990), in my opinion, accurately describes what feelings horror literature aims to elicit in the reader, how it does it and what is the effect or the outcome of such feeling. Although, Carroll's concept differs in certain aspects from mine, they can be well put into correlation with each other and by analyzing them side by side we can clearly see how Lurking Fear links the object of the target emotion and the emotion itself.

In the chapter discussing the relation of Lurking fear to the concepts of horror and terror, I rely mainly on Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1823), which makes clear distinctions between the two concepts. Burke's work is of considerable help, because it describes the concepts in detail, and it allows me to understand it and see the parallels between the concepts of horror, terror, and Lurking Fear. For the description of the concepts and their distinction I also use the work of Ann Radcliffe *On the Supernatural in Poetry* (1826), because Radcliffe's ideas correlate well with the descriptions of Burke.

H.P. Lovecraft's essays *Supernatural Horror in Literature* (1927) and *Notes On Writing Weird Fiction* (1933) provide me with the author's view on the horror genre and help me to understand why he employed certain elements into his works and how. This work in combination with works analyzing weird literature such as S.T. Joshi's *The Modern Weird Tale: A Critique of Horror Fiction* (2001), Mark Fisher's *The Weird and the Eerie* (2016) and Jeff and Ann VanderMeer's *The New Weird* (2008) make an adequate overview of the genre and help me to get an in-depth understanding of the genre from its origins through the development into modern time horror fiction.

2. The Motif of Lurking Fear

In the first place, I would like to introduce Lurking Fear in detail, because I see it as a complex phenomenon that permeates virtually all the works of H.P. Lovecraft. What I aim to include in the concept of the Lurking Fear is, mainly, Lovecraft's concept of the fear of the unknown combined with the manifestation of Lurking Fear in the narrative, because they correlate well with each other. The representation of Lurking Fear in the narrative is also the most important because it has a direct connection to the other two contexts in which this motif appears. Right after the narrative is the second important context, in which this motif manifests, and that is the mind of the protagonist. This is important, because it concerns emotional responses of the character to the threats that he faces, as well as, his own imagination and paranoia that take place when the subtle suggestions of something queer happening appear. The last context is the spatial realization of Lurking Fear. I list this one as last, not because it is the least important, but because it is not present as frequently as the other two. Do not get me wrong, there are unimaginable and terrifying places all over Lovecraft's work, but they do not always play a significant role. All the elements of Lurking Fear correlate with the development of the narrative.

I want to begin with the definition of art-horror by Noël Carroll because it arguably correlates well with Lurking Fear, as it essentially aims at eliciting emotions: "I am presupposing that art-horror is an emotion. It is the emotion that horror narratives and images are designed to elicit from the audience."¹⁴ This emotion is the origin of this type of fear that I call Lurking Fear. Although it corresponds to the name of the short story by H.P. Lovecraft, those two terms should not be confused with each other. I have chosen this name, since this type of fear is always in the background, be it the narrative, the mind of the protagonist, or the space and locations in which the short stories take place. It concerns the monster appearing in the fictions but not directly. The actual appearance of the monster is not part of the Lurking Fear but only its crystallization. It might seem as if the motif that I am describing is the same as the art-horror that Noël Carroll had in mind. However, Lurking Fear concerns various aspects of a particular work of literature, as I have described above, but it is also the source of the emotions of terror, and it results in the feeling of

¹⁴ Noël, *The Philosophy of Horror*, 24.

horror. Lurking Fear essentially creates a linkage between the object of the emotion and the actual emotion to create suspense or to intensify it. Whereas art-horror is the actual emotion.¹⁵

Now allow me to elaborate. What I mean by the Lurking fear manifesting in the narrative is essentially that notion of dread and of suspense that the story elicits in the reader, but it is not specifically identified. It corresponds to either the atmosphere of certain ancient, and or haunted mansions, catacombs, old houses etc., or to the atmosphere being intensified by the course of the story and how a certain story unfolds. Most of the time in Lovecraft's works the suspense and dread the audience experiences along with the protagonists crystallizes in the form of a monster which gives the fear a concrete form and that elicits the feeling of horror. However, this concrete form is presented only later in the story or at the very end. Carroll further explains that to invoke the emotion of art-horror the monster needs to be both threatening, to elicit fear, and impure in a way that renders the audience disgusted.¹⁶ These suggestions of threatening and disgusting beings are further amplified by the fact that many times in Lovecraft's stories, the monsters are hinted at by various myths and legends that are told by the locals of the area, in which the story takes place. For example, in the short story "The Lurking Fear" (1923), the main protagonist recalls the tales that are being told about the Martense Mansion.

For over a hundred years the antique, grove-circled stone house had been the subject of stories incredibly wild and monstrously hideous; stories of silent colossal creeping death which stalked abroad in summer. With whimpering insistence, the squatters told tales of a demon which seized lone wayfarers after dark, either carrying them off or leaving them in a frightful state of gnawed dismemberment; while sometimes they whispered of blood trails toward the distant mansion.¹⁷

This is an exact example of the intensification of the atmosphere that I had in mind when I was describing the narrative. Through these tales the reader receives fragments of information that do not reveal the reason certain events happen through the course of the

¹⁵ See description by Noël above.

¹⁶ Noël, *The Philosophy of Horror*, 28.

¹⁷ Howard Phillips Lovecraft, *The Necronomicon: The Best Weird Tales of H. P. Lovecraft*, ed. Stephen Jones (Gollancz, 2008), 66.

narrative up to this point or even the events that happened before the narrative starts. These fragments of information intensify the atmosphere by, usually, raising more questions than they give answers. Also, when the reader receives the information for the first time, the protagonist does as well. The effect of this is that the reader is more eager to sympathize with the protagonist and identify, at least to some extent, with his emotions. Carroll suggests, “We learn what is to be art-horrified in large measure from the fiction itself”¹⁸ which correlates with the responses of the characters to the events that happen through the course of the narrative. According to Carroll, the reader then for example sympathizes with, is concerned for, and can to some extent identify with the emotions that the protagonist is expressing. This does not mean, however, that the reader thinks of himself as one with the protagonist altogether.¹⁹ The effect on the reader then manifests itself in the form of suspense and later in the stories even dread that the reader is supposed to feel, because these are the effects on the protagonist as well.

In a way the manifestation of the Lurking Fear in the narrative and in the mind of the protagonist are intertwined because both are closely related to how vividly the reader can imagine the events and things being described, and how he interprets it.

Now I would like to elaborate on the Lurking Fear manifesting in the mind of the protagonist. Considering that horror is supposed to elicit some emotions in the reader and that it is its main component, the mind of the protagonist, I would argue, represents a central part in the effect of horror stories and their reception by the readers. The writer must pinpoint what effect literature has on the reader and by which techniques he is to achieve the appropriate response in the readers. “The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is the fear of the unknown.”²⁰ Lovecraft started with this his essay on the supernatural horror in literature, because I believe that he thought it as a central thing to the whole horror genre and in my opinion, it really is the most important property that is a prerequisite of any work of horror. In every Lovecraft story, this form of fear is present. The main protagonist encounters the fear of the unknown, at least to some extent every time. In some stories it is presented to the main

¹⁸ Noël, *The Philosophy of Horror*, 31.

¹⁹ Noël, *The Philosophy of Horror*, 89.

²⁰ Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror in Literature*, 1.

protagonist multiple times but never with an explanation, if there is an explanation it is only partial, and usually it raises more questions than it gives answers to, which intensifies the fear of the main protagonist.²¹ The protagonist encounters usually a monster, which he does not know the identity of nor does he know where it came from. It does not even have to be a monster. Sometimes it is just a notion that something is not quite right and if the narrative is presented with a grain of realism in it, the story's capability to terrify the reader is immediately taken to a different level. Lovecraft praises Wilhelm Meinhold for his "air of casual and realistic verisimilitude"²² which describes this manifestation of the Lurking Fear quite right. The protagonist often encounters monsters or certain 'weird things' gradually and in careful doses, so it does not reveal too much but at the same time not too little to keep the reader engaged in the story. This is also supported by the various tales and legends that often surround the mysterious place or person, that I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

However, usually the stories rely on evoking the fear in the reader by presenting repulsive images to him. This corresponds to the Lurking Fear manifesting in the narrative, as I have stated above, as well as, in the mind of the protagonist. Beings such as rats, spiders, zombies, ghouls, werewolves, and the like, are repulsive to people, because they stand out. They do not fit in and are associated with gruesome things, such as eating humans and living when they should, in fact, be dead. These things elicit fear in people and are automatically associated with it. That is why every other horror story has some of these present to some extent. Carroll describes the property that all of these have as "impurity"²³ and I completely agree with him. Many of the times in Lovecraft stories the being that has been the sole source of the fear of the protagonist or any other character turns out to be rats or zombies. Some might find this lame and just not enough. Because, of course, rats are repulsive, zombies and werewolves as well, but why would I be terrified solely by rats? Well, the thing is, these repulsive creatures are combined with the terror that the fear of the unknown evokes throughout the course of the story. It might be quite simple things like rats, but when there is only so much suggested to make you feel unease and suspense, the

²¹ This is the same effect that Lurking Fear has when it manifests in the actual narrative, as I presented above.

²² Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror in Literature*, 22.

²³ Noël, *The Philosophy of Horror*, 28.

weird tale strikes a nail on its head and by keeping the suggestions scarce to not reveal too much, it works.

Why it works is a matter of the actual piece of fiction teaching us how to respond to the fiction itself.²⁴ Especially in Lovecraft's fiction many of the times the character himself tells us how he felt when seeing the monster or when experiencing something.

Furthermore, the monsters in Lovecraft's stories are often described as unexplainable and indescribable. This corresponds with the plot that gives us only as much explanation to keep the suspenseful atmosphere effective until the end. When presented to the reader believably with, at least to a degree, realistic settings, and creatures and, or events, the reader immediately takes on similar emotions as the character. I say similar by considering the view of Carroll. He claims that the character feels slightly different emotions than the reader because it is being haunted by the monster, or the monster is at least present in his world, whereas we as an audience are not being haunted or hunted, nor is the monster even present.²⁵ This goes hand in hand with the suspension of disbelief, which presumes that even though the audience does know that the events taking place are not real it actively tries to suppress this 'knowing of the truth' to enjoy the story. I think this technique must be employed by the audience because otherwise horror fiction would have no reason to exist. I would also argue that by narrating in the first person, thus limiting the point of view of the audience, and by presenting the story believably, it is easier for the audience to suspend their disbeliefs. This also enables the story to have a more significant impact on the audience.

The creatures and events are, in my opinion, presented to the reader quite believably. The stories are usually presented by the account of a protagonist who either saw or experienced a certain thing or he tells a story that he heard from someone else. A typical example of this is the short story "The Call of Cthulhu" (1928). This short story is presented as a manuscript of a man who narrates things that he found out about the Cthulhu cult in the papers of his deceased uncle. Joshi claims that the quasi-stream of consciousness, that Ramsey Campbell employs in his collection "Demons by Daylight" (1973), would sound

²⁴ Noël, *The Philosophy of Horror*, 31.

²⁵ Noël, *The Philosophy of Horror*, 90.

ludicrous when told with the objective realism of Lovecraft.²⁶ I would argue that a certain type of the stream of consciousness is sometimes employed by Lovecraft, but the stories are not focused on it in a similar way as those of Campbell are. Stream of consciousness is a literary device that is used to present a continuous stream of thoughts that a character is thinking at the time.²⁷ It is different from a mere reported thought in the way it is incorporated into the text. It is not stated specifically that a given passage is the actual thoughts of a character, therefore the reader needs to identify it by himself using the context in which the passage appears. Lovecraft's use of the stream of consciousness differs from Campbell's use of it in the scope and importance of this technique for the narrative. Campbell's stories are built on it, and it is an essential plot device, because nearly all the protagonist's thoughts are presented that way, whereas Lovecraft uses it only sporadically to keep the audience in suspense or to make a sort of cliffhanger ending. As an example, I present the ending to the short story "Dagon" (1919). "The end is near. I hear a noise at the door, as of some immense slippery body lumbering against it. It shall not find me. God, that hand! The window! The window!"²⁸ The last sentence is a stream of consciousness of the main protagonist who, I suppose, at the end jumps out of a window. It does not have commas, so we are not specifically told that these are the protagonist's thoughts, and it also features unusual syntax and punctuation, which is common for the use of the technique.²⁹

What is also important to me is that Lovecraft arguably does not write in objective realism as Joshi states. The fact that most of the stories are narrated by one person, who either experienced the events, heard it from someone, or it is presented in the form of a found manuscript for example. The narrator is usually a first-person narrator, and the reader experiences the story from his point of view, or it is a third person limited narrator so the point of view, in which the reader experiences the story, is always limited. Objective realism would presume that the story is narrated objectively and not from only one perspective. This point of view that is employed in Lovecraft's stories also serves another function. The narrator, considering he is the one who experienced the story, many of the

²⁶ Joshi, *The Modern Weird Tale: A Critique of Horror Fiction*, 352.

²⁷ Birch, *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 7009.

²⁸ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 9.

²⁹ Birch, *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 7009.

times doubts himself, thinks himself as being mad or he doubts the events, about which he is telling us, ever happened. He thinks that maybe it all happened only in his head, that it was just a dream. Model example for this is the short story “The Shadow Out of Time” (1936), where the narrator is in a deep coma, so after waking up, he basically does not have means to prove if the events, which he experienced during his coma, did happen or if it was just a dream, or rather, he does not believe it until he finds an actual proof. I am not going to analyze the short stories in greater detail here, because we will focus on it further in the essay. Even if he uses the third person narrator, Lovecraft always makes sure that the reader knows only as much as the main protagonist, maybe a little bit more which is usually due to the research done by the narrator into the events that take place.

The last context which I would like to explain, where *The Lurking Fear* is present, is spatiality in horror literature. I would like to call it spatial realization of the motif of *Lurking Fear* in horror. This realization of *The Lurking Fear* is a minor one to the two discussed above. Nevertheless, it is also important for understanding how *The Lurking Fear* manifests and influences the overall story. Main presumption of this hypothesis is that the monsters inhabit environments which are unknown to the readers and the characters in the fictions. Usually, monsters are encountered in unnatural environments. For example, in the short story “*The Lurking Fear*” (1923) the protagonist encounters monsters in the underground. In the short story “*The Call of Cthulhu*” (1928) the monster, Cthulhu, is assumed to live in a city called R’yleh, that is presumed to be submerged in the south region of the Pacific Ocean. Another, completely different environment is presented to us in the short story “*The Shadow Out of Time*” (1936), where the monsters of the Great Race of Yith inhabit completely different time and space than the main protagonist. This corresponds well with the fear of the unknown. The creatures appear in an environment which is unknown and unnatural for the characters, as well as is the creature itself.

Therefore, it adds to the suspense. Considering the character is always a regular person and he tells the story as a first-person narrator, it makes the reader identify himself with the character to a degree. Also, it makes the reader sympathize with the character more.

The same hypothesis works for events as well. The environment in which the whole story takes place is usually quite unnatural. Be it the laboratory of Herbert West in “*Herbert West – Reanimator*” (1922), or the weird motel in “*The Music of Erich Zann*” (1922).

Throughout the course of the story, there are several things revealed that are unnatural about the environment supplementing the original description of the setting at the onset of the story.³⁰ This adds to the suspense as well. Therefore, at the end we, as readers, are subjected to the monster, of which we know nothing and the setting which also feels odd and begs the character and the reader to be suspicious about it. Although not every time, in some of the stories the unexplainable things and events which happen, or even the monsters, are tied with the place itself. In some of the stories even the title suggests that the place will play a significant role in the development of the narrative. Typical examples include “The Cats of Ulthar” (1920), “The Dreams in the Witch House” (1933) and “The Strange High House in the Mist” (1931). Although all those stories realize the spatiality in a unique way, they make the importance of space in horror/weird literature clearly visible.

3. Relation of Lurking Fear to the Concepts of Horror and Terror

In this section I would like to explain the relation of Lurking Fear to the concepts of horror and terror. It is important to explain this relation because terror, as well as horror are closely related to the emotion of fear. Whereas terror is one of the main components of this motif, as opposed to horror, which is not a part of the motif but is related to it. I would like to base this relation on the explanations of the differences between horror and terror by Edmund Burke and Ann Radcliffe, because their explanations are arguably the most concise and they clearly illustrate what the concepts of horror and terror mean.

3.1. Terror

Burke states that “Indeed terror is in all cases whatsoever, either more openly or latently, the ruling principle of the sublime.”³¹ This correlates with my concept of Lurking Fear, because the main component of Lurking Fear is terror, the uneasiness, and expectations of something dreadful and dangerous lurking in the shadows. The main reason that the Lurking Fear works well in eliciting fear, or amplifying it, is the fact that the actual referent is obscure for the most part of the story. The referent is eventually either revealed to the main protagonist, but not to the reader, or to both the reader and the protagonist. However, in many of the stories, the main protagonist is shaken with fear, sometimes even becomes

³⁰ Or with the first encounter with the setting, whichever comes first.

³¹ Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 75.

mad, by learning the terrifying truth about some place or creature etc., but he does not tell the reader the details of what happened. He just hints at what he sees. “I do not try, gentlemen, to account for that thing—that voice—nor can I venture to describe it in detail, since the first words took away my consciousness and created a mental blank which reaches to the time of my awakening in the hospital.”³² This is an example of this obscurity put on the referent from “The Statement of Randolph Carter” (1920). This obscurity is in accordance with Burke’s description of the importance of employing a certain obscurity that must be present to invoke terror. “To 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.”³³

3.2. Horror

The concept of horror is undoubtedly present in Lovecraft’s fiction, however, I do not consider it as a part of Lurking Fear, because horror, or the feeling of horror is only the crystallization of the suspense and the terror that the referent in question evokes. “Terror and horror are so far opposite, that the first expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life; the other contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them.”³⁴ This explanation by Ann Radcliffe clearly shows how terror and horror stand opposed to each other. The description that horror “contracts and freezes” the faculties of the mind support the explanation by Burke that “In 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. Hence arises the great power of the sublime”³⁵ Burke then continues, “No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.”³⁶ The protagonist, as well as, the reader are subjected to the greatest fear when they anticipate something, where the obscurity does not allow us, or the protagonist to know exactly what is lurking behind the walls, or under the sea. It is the time of the greatest suspense and the time at which terror is in effect. When horror comes, the referent is revealed, and the suspense diminishes because terror is no longer the main feeling but is replaced with the

³² Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 14.

³³ Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 76.

³⁴ Ann Radcliffe, “On the Supernatural in Poetry,” *New Monthly Magazine*, 1826, pp. 145-152, 149.

³⁵ Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 73.

³⁶ Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 74.

feeling of horror evoked by the appearance of the monster. It is at this time that Lurking Fear subsides and gives way to other motifs that support the theme of the story. My assumption that the strongest feeling of horror comes before the referent is revealed is supported by Burke: "... a great clearness helps but a little towards affecting the passions, as it is in some sort an enemy to all enthusiasms whatsoever."³⁷ Lovecraft also talks about unnecessary clearness and how it hurts horror. "Of Mrs. Radcliffe's countless imitators, the American novelist Charles Brockden Brown stands the closest in spirit and method. Like her, he injured his creations by natural explanations; but also like her, he had in uncanny atmospheric power which gives his horrors a frightful vitality as long as they remain unexplained."³⁸ This I think is why Lovecraft in many of his stories keeps the suspense even after the end of the story, because many of the times certain mysteries remain unexplained, which keeps the Lurking Fear in effect until the end. A typical example is "The Statement of Randolph Carter" that I have mentioned above.

4. Analysis

In this section I would like to analyze specific short stories, in which Lurking Fear is clearly visible. I will begin by describing the manifestation of it in the narrative, then its manifestation in the mind of the protagonist, and finally the motifs spatial realization.

4.1. "The Dreams in the Witch House"

This short story contains a typical example of Lurking Fear in Lovecraft's works. "The Dreams in the Witch House" (1933) is arguably unique, because here this motif manifests in all its forms evenly. That is, there is no context in which the motif being discussed is more prominent than in the others.

The short story revolves around a college student Walter Gilman, who rents a room in the old Witch House in the city of Arkham. He studies mathematics at the university and soon starts to make connections between mathematics and strange geometrical shapes that he discovers in his room, and which he sees in his dreams. He then begins to see a scary old

³⁷ Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 79.

³⁸ Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror in Literature*, 11.

woman and a creature, which appears to be a hybrid of a human and a rat. Later he also begins to see a tall man dressed in black along with the witch and the human-rat hybrid. He dreams about signing *The Book of Azathoth* and involuntarily assists the witch, “The Black Man” and the human-rat hybrid in kidnapping of an infant which is later sacrificed. Gilman, to save the infant, strangles the witch and the night after, Gilman is killed by the human-rat hybrid. Years later when workers are demolishing the building they find children’s bones in the walls of Gilman’s former room, the witch’s skeleton, and her book on black magic.

The first thing that comes to mind when close reading this short story, are the details which Lovecraft is serving to the reader one by one to support the legend of the witch house. These details support all the elements of *Lurking Fear* and thus intensify the atmosphere and the terror the character experiences. “Nor was any spot in that city more steeped in macabre memory than the room which had likewise harboured old Keziah Mason, whose flight from Salem Gaol at the last no one was ever able to explain.”³⁹ This description hints at various stories that are connected to the room in which Gilman resides. It also suggests that the things that happened are somehow eerie and unexplainable, which also serves to support the suspense of the narrative. There is also the name Keziah Mason, who is a character central to the story, but the reader does not know anything about her. However, Gilman supposedly knows about her and is interested in her past. It is also said that Gilman chose this room on purpose, because he knew that it was in the old Witch House where Keziah resided.⁴⁰ In this short story the reader knows a little less than the protagonist, but the context is gradually explained and eventually the reader’s knowledge is comparable to that of the protagonist. It is also explained that Gilman started to hear strange noises when he moved to the room in the old Witch House. “The darkness always teemed with unexplainable sound – and yet he sometimes shook with fear lest the noises he heard should subside and allow him to hear certain other fainter noises, which he suspected, were lurking behind them.”⁴¹ The noises correlate with *Lurking Fear* manifesting in the mind of the protagonist, because he does not know what it is but is constantly thinking about it and makes assumptions. It is also linked with the spatial realization of *Lurking Fear*, because

³⁹ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 358.

⁴⁰ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 359.

⁴¹ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 358.

Gilman's eerie experiences happen only inside the house or near the house.⁴² These events, subtle as they may be, have an undeniable effect on him since "he sometimes shook with fear."

The realization of the motif of Lurking Fear in the mind of the protagonist is strongly related to its realization in the narrative and the spatial realization. The sounds that Gilman heard prompted his mind to wonder about what might be hiding behind them and certain references to sounds are prevalent throughout the narrative. "The city below stretched away to the limits of vision, and he hoped that no sound would well up from it."⁴³ This also shows the spatial realization of Lurking Fear in the described endlessness of the city that Gilman sees, and it is joined with the fear of some creepy sounds that he might hear. This example is from later in the story but up to this point there are several references to sounds that Gilman hears and that creep him out. He hears sounds in the walls and the ceiling of his room and it is said that Gilman was expecting some kind of horror to engulf him entirely.⁴⁴ These sounds at first seem to be entirely real, but with the gradual revelation of the history of the Witch-House and Gilman's later experiences, it is also possible that he is simply becoming insane and the sounds are, at least, partly created inside of his mind and he cannot distinguish imagination from reality. This is also connected to his perception of space in the short story. "Something in the air of the hoary town worked obscurely on his imagination."⁴⁵ That fact that "Something" is responsible for it works perfectly for the suspense and the preservation of the terror throughout the narrative. He gradually begins to see weird shapes on the walls of his room and connects it with the legends about Keziah Mason, who presumably was able to access other dimensions. His room is also described as being built in weird angles and that "the curious angles of Gilman's room had been having a strange, almost hypnotic effect on him."⁴⁶ All of the perceptions of Gilman are further amplified by his dream-trips to the "world beyond" where he sees irregular shapes and hears eerie sounds and it is said that those dreams were "beyond the pale of sanity."⁴⁷ The

⁴² Later certain events happen far away from the house, but these are always linked with the house itself.

⁴³ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 369.

⁴⁴ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 376.

⁴⁵ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 359.

⁴⁶ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 360.

⁴⁷ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 361.

relation of the spatial realization of *Lurking Fear* and its realization in the mind of the protagonist is further backed by Stephen King.

H.P.L was struck by the horror of wrong geometry; he wrote frequently of non-Euclidean angles that tortured the eye and hurt the mind, and suggested other dimensions where the sum of a triangle's three corners might equal more or less than 180°. Contemplating such things, he suggested, might be enough in itself to drive a man crazy. Nor was he far wrong; we know from various psychological experiments that when you tamper with a man or woman's perspective on their physical world, you tamper with what may actually be the fulcrum of the human mind.⁴⁸

4.2. "The Lurking Fear"

The *Lurking Fear* is another Lovecraft's story that employs the motif being discussed almost evenly in the three contexts I have listed. This short story relies more on the realization of *Lurking Fear* in the narrative, than in any of the two other contexts, although the mind of the protagonist and the spatial realization also play their part here. The mind of the protagonist is nevertheless more prominent than the spatial realization, mainly, because of the ending, which I will elaborate on later.

"The Lurking Fear" revolves around a protagonist, a monster hunter, who is set on exploring an old Martense mansion in the region of New England. He is gradually uncovering the history behind the place and the strange disappearances of the Martense family members. The protagonist is set on exploring the mansion with two companions to protect him. He explains that he is interested in the Martense mansion mainly because of the terrific stories that the locals tell about the place. Later during the night his two companions disappear when he falls asleep and are never heard from again. The hunter also sees in the flash of lightning a shadow of some creature of which he is certain was not human. He later tells his story to a journalist Arthur Munroe and together they go again to explore the area surrounding the mansion to find the creature. They take shelter in a cabin because a thunderstorm is coming and during the thunderstorm Arthur Munroe is killed while looking out from a window. The protagonist then takes time to learn more about the Martense family and decides to dig up the grave of Jan Martense, who was supposedly

⁴⁸ Stephen King, *Danse Macabre* (New York, New York: Pocket Books, 2011), 419-420.

murdered. He digs so deep, however, that he falls through to one of the catacombs that run beneath the area around the mansion and there he encounters one of the creatures. Later when the protagonist explores the area again, he realizes that there is a huge system of catacombs all leading under the mansion. He runs to the mansion and finally, when storm comes, he sits quietly beside a chimney at the bottom of which is an opening. He experiences hordes of creatures coming from under the chimney and eventually shoots one. Later he organizes a group of men to blow up the mansion and the top of the hill, on which it is located. At the end he says that the one creature that he killed had one eye blue and one green, which was typical for the Martense family and that the truth of about the disappearance of the family haunts him to this day.

In this short story *Lurking Fear* is realized mainly through the narrative. The main source of the motif are the stories that surround the mansion. The protagonist first learns about them from newspapers, but later he also speaks with the locals who confirm the terrific stories and tell the protagonist even more. “The lurking fear dwelt in the shunned and deserted Martense mansion, which crowned the high but gradual eminence whose liability to frequent thunderstorms gave it the name of Tempest Mountain. For over a hundred years the antique, grove-circled stone house had been the subject of stories incredibly wild and monstrously hideous; stories of a silent colossal creeping death which stalked abroad in summer.”⁴⁹ These legends about the Martense mansion are mentioned multiple times throughout the story. It arguably serves the purpose of intensifying the terror that surrounds the mansion and the area around it, as well as the suspense that is created by repeating the fact that there are terrific stories with actual eyewitnesses amongst the locals. *Lurking Fear* is further supported in the narrative by the comments of the main protagonist that something is hidden in the surroundings, watching him. “Never before had the presence of evil so poignantly oppressed me.”⁵⁰ And further in the story “And yet, as I have said, vague new fears hovered menacingly over us; as if giant bat-winged gryphons squatted invisibly on the mountain-tops and leered with Abaddon-eyes that had looked on trans-cosmic gulfs.”⁵¹ These are just examples of numerous other mentions of a fear lurking in the

⁴⁹ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 66.

⁵⁰ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 69.

⁵¹ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 73.

darkness. What is more, darkness itself plays its role here. “In this morbid night solitude and feeble shifting illumination, the vast box-like pile displayed obscure hints of terror which day could not uncover.”⁵² There are numerous references to how the area seems haunted by terrors in the night and every time the narrator goes to the mansion, or the area around it, to explore, it is during a night. The terror of the night is also intensified by the recurrent thunderstorms that occur in the area at least three times during the course of the story.

A second context in which *Lurking Fear* appears in this short story is the mind of the protagonist. There is virtually only one reason this context is important in this short story and that is the ending. At the end, the narrator explains that the events that happened at the Martense mansion haunt him to this day. That is mainly to the fact that he was the only one to survive the explorations of the mansion and its surroundings, because everyone that went with him died. “The thing will haunt me, for who can say the extermination is complete, and that analogous phenomena do not exist all over the world? Who can, with my knowledge, think of the earth’s unknown caverns without a nightmare dread of future possibilities?”⁵³ The narrator says this after the mansion is burned down along with the top of the hill on which it stood. He further says that the experience will haunt him forever, because every time he sees a well or subway entrance he starts shivering. These thoughts of the narrator clarify the title, not only is it “*The Lurking Fear*,” because of the name given to the creatures haunting the Martense mansion, but the ending shows that the fear haunts the people who experience it, forever.

Spatial realization of *Lurking Fear* is also present in this short story, but it is not as significant as the two other contexts. The main spatial referent in this short story is the Martense mansion. However, it is not the main source of this realization of the motif in question. The central source of *Lurking Fear* concerning spatiality seems to be the area around the mansion. “It was not a wholesome landscape after dark, and I believe I would have noticed its morbidity even had I been ignorant of the terror that stalked there.”⁵⁴ The narrator claims that the area would seem eerie even to someone who does not know about

⁵² Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 69.

⁵³ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 81.

⁵⁴ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 65.

the occurrences there, however he does know them so we cannot take his word for it. The atmosphere of the area is nevertheless intensified by the darkness again, as I have pointed out before. I would also include the thunderstorms to the context of spatiality for the place itself apparently got its name *Tempest Mountain* because of the frequent thunderstorms.⁵⁵

4.3. “The Rats in the Walls”

The last short story I would like to discuss is “The Rats in the Walls.” In this short story the realization of Lurking Fear in the narrative is less prominent than in the two short stories I have discussed before. The realization of the motif in the mind of the protagonist and in space are more prominent, as well as more important. I would argue that the realization in the mind of the protagonist is more important because the short story relies on deterioration of the psyche of the main protagonist. However, his mental state deteriorates because of the horrors that haunt him throughout the story which are enhanced by the surroundings.

This short story revolves around a protagonist named Delapore, who is a descendant of an old family of de la Poer. His first name is not mentioned in the short story to put the family name into focus because of its importance for the development of the story. The narrator buys his ancestral mansion and has it restored so he can move in. After he moves in strange things begin to happen. At first his cat starts scratching on the walls as if there was something behind it, but the narrator does not experience anything suspicious. Later however, when the narrator is sleeping the cat jumps up and stares at a point on the wall and the narrator says that “But what I can swear to is that behind it I heard a low, distinct scurrying as of rats or mice.”⁵⁶ Gradually the narrator starts to investigate the cellar of his manor and then finds out that there is a passage further down to the space under the cellar. He hires a group of people to go with him to explore the mysterious passage. In the underground they find a vast grotto “It was a twilight grotto of enormous height, stretching away farther than any eye could see”⁵⁷ They also find bones of degraded humans which suggest that the ancestors of the narrator kept the humans in the grotto as cattle to eat them. Walter de la Pore, the last to live in the mansion, killed his whole family and escaped to

⁵⁵ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 66.

⁵⁶ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 96.

⁵⁷ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 102.

stop this from happening. At the end, the narrator reveals that he is confined in a mental institution because he went mad during the exploration of the grotto where he killed and ate one of the members of the exploration party.

Lurking Fear manifests itself in the narrative mostly by the narrator learning about rumors that the locals tell about the mansion. This context for the motif is remarkably like the myths about Martense mansion in “The Lurking Fear.” One of the things that the locals say and one of the reasons they hate the mansion, is that the mansion is built on a temple of a certain Roman cult worshipping a goddess named Cybele, which according to the narrator performed some unspeakable rituals. The narrator also later finds a vault in his cellar containing stone blocks apparently being used for offerings. “On one of these blocks were some brown stains which made me wonder.”⁵⁸ This clarifies the stories about a former Roman temple and makes room for wondering what comes next. The narrator says that the village legends have nothing good to say about the manor and that they portrayed his ancestors as some kind of demons.⁵⁹ This, arguably, adds to the suspense and the narrator as well as the reader know from the onset of the story that there is some mystery behind the manor that needs to be uncovered. The narrator also mentions that the villagers talk about missing people and that it has something to do with the de la Poer family. This is clarified at the end of the short story when we learn about the underground grotto where the family kept people for generations only to be eaten.

Arguably the most prominent context for Lurking Fear in this short story is the mind of the protagonist because the things he is imagining are the reason for his exploration of the mansion and they are also the reason he goes mad and kills and then starts eating a member of his exploration party. At first there are only the cats behaving strangely as they howl into the night or start to scratch the wallpaper on the walls. The narrator, however, begins to hear rats inside the walls even though the building was restored and cleaned of all vermin. “on every side of the chamber the walls were alive with nauseous sound—the verminous slithering of ravenous, gigantic rats.”⁶⁰ This is also supported by dreams that the narrator has, about the grotto he later finds in the underground, where he sees a swarm of rats

⁵⁸ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 98.

⁵⁹ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 93.

⁶⁰ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 97.

raining down on the grotto. The narrator also determines that the rats move downwards and that is why he decides to explore the cellar and subsequently the area under the cellar as well. In the cellar his companion Captain Norrys is unaware of any sounds of rats.

An acute terror now rose within me, for here were anomalies which nothing normal could well explain. These rats, if not the creatures of a madness which I shared with the cats alone, must be burrowing and sliding in Roman walls I had thought to be of solid limestone blocks . . . unless perhaps the action of water through more than seventeen centuries had eaten winding tunnels which rodent bodies had worn clear and ample. . . . But even so, the spectral horror was no less; for if these were living vermin why did not Norrys hear their disgusting commotion?⁶¹

The realization that the man that is in the same room as the narrator does not hear anything is unsettling and the mystery, about what the sounds are, deepens. With the mentions of “acute terror” and “spectral horror” that the narrator experiences the suspense is intensified and we can clearly see that he is terrified. The narrator also states that “my fear of the unknown was at this point very great”⁶² which shows that his fear is gaining in intensity as the narrative progresses and more strange things take place. This correlates with the Lurking Fear gradually intensifying as I have described in chapter 2. When the group descends through the passage under an altar in the cellar the recurrent dreams that the narrator has about the grotto start to make sense. “Having grasped to some slight degree the frightful revelations of this twilit area—an area so hideously foreshadowed by my recurrent dream—we turned to that apparently boundless depth of midnight cavern where no ray of light from the cliff could penetrate.”⁶³ The narrator realizes that the dreams were only foreshadowing what he would find out in the future and at the very end he also expresses his disgust at the actions of his ancestors and that he does not want to end up like them but nevertheless he does.

Although it is not specifically stated, I would argue that the reason for the narrator going mad is the influence of Nyarlathotep, a god from the Cthulhu Mythos. Up until the end where the narrator goes mad and mentions Nyarlathotep there is no mention of any

⁶¹ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 99.

⁶² Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 100.

⁶³ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 103.

supernatural being. Nyarlathotep frequently manipulates people⁶⁴ and so this manipulation of the narrator, into thinking there were rats in the walls that run downwards to the underground, would make sense. Also at the end when the group finds the narrator eating one of their members the narrator says that his cat was “tearing at my throat”⁶⁵ which could suggest that the “rats in the walls”, at which the cat was attacking earlier and what she was so disturbed about, are inside of the protagonist, so to speak. It suggests that the rats were not actual rats but rather the presence of the Outer God Nyarlathotep.

Lurking Fear in this short story also manifests in the setting. The focus of this context is mainly the mansion in which the short story takes place most of the time. Although it is restored by the narrator, it is still an ancient castle that emits a haunting atmosphere. There is a mention of mixed architectonic styles, mainly of Gothic, Saxon, and Romanesque but the foundations were said to be of even more ancient origin and a mix of many other styles.⁶⁶ This adds to the peculiarity of the place along with the narrator’s own description of the mansion. “Exham Priory itself I saw without emotion, a jumble of tottering mediaeval ruins covered with lichens and honeycombed with rooks’ nests, perched perilously upon a precipice, and denuded of floors or other interior features save the stone walls of the separate towers.”⁶⁷ This is the exact description I would choose for a haunted castle appearing in gothic literature. It is chilling by itself and combined with the legends that the villagers tell about the place the terrifying atmosphere is slowly emphasized.

5. Conclusion

The motif of Lurking Fear appears in all H.P. Lovecraft’s works. Using gothic literature and its specific characteristics, I identified the onset of the motif, its own characteristics and evolution into its modern form manifesting in Lovecraft’s literature. In defining Lurking Fear, I used Carroll’s *The Philosophy of Horror* where numerous parallels can be established giving credibility to the motif. One of them, and arguably the most significant, is the relation between Carroll’s definition of art-horror, which is the resulting emotion that a particular work elicits in the audience, and Lurking Fear’s role to create and/or enhance

⁶⁴ As shown in “The Dreams in the Witch House” where he appears disguised as a “Black Man”.

⁶⁵ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 104.

⁶⁶ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 90.

⁶⁷ Lovecraft, *Necronomicon*, 92.

the atmosphere of suspense which is a precursor to the actual feeling of art-horror. Carroll's description of to what extent can the reader identify with the protagonist was also helpful because it shows how the feelings of the protagonist and the reader correlate, and what effect does the protagonist's mental state has on the reader and his response to the fiction. I also described the relation of Lurking Fear to the concepts of horror and terror because these two concepts are central to horror literature. Concerning this distinction, I used mainly the work of Edmund Burke *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, which provides in-depth descriptions of different emotions that the sublime aims to elicit in the reader. I provided a link between the emotions, feelings of horror and terror, and the object of the emotion using Lurking Fear and its different forms of manifestation in Lovecraft's literature. I established the three forms of manifestation of Lurking Fear which are narrative, mind of the protagonist and the setting. These forms of Lurking Fear have the effect of enhancing the suspense and providing the story with a terrifying atmosphere which is essential for eliciting emotions in the reader. They permeate various aspects of a work of literature and that is why every short story by Lovecraft feels different yet also the same, because in every short story, a different form of Lurking Fear is foregrounded. Some short stories include Lurking Fear manifesting mainly in narrative, others in the mind of the reader and so on, but every time there is at least a shred of all the motifs forms, as I have demonstrated in the analysis of three of his works.

6. Resumé

Cílem mé práce bylo definovat motiv plíživého strachu, určit jeho charakteristické rysy a ukázat, jak se tento motiv projevuje v konkrétních povídkách, jelikož je všudypřítomný v díle amerického spisovatele hororu H.P. Lovecrafta. První kapitola je zaměřena na uvedení čtenáře do problematiky hororové literatury a její vývoj od dob gotické literatury, přes žánr weird fiction až po moderní horror.

V druhé kapitole, při definování samotného motivu, jsem využil především dílo amerického filozofa Noëla Carrola *The Philosophy of Horror* a jeho definici art-hororu jakožto emoce, kterou hororová literatura vyvolává ve čtenáři. Poukázal jsem na korelaci art-hororu a motivu plíživého strachu, který této emoci předchází a pomáhá navodit děsivou atmosféru, jejíž výsledek se projevuje v podobě emoce art-hororu vyvolané ve čtenáři. V neposlední

řadě jsem využil míru ztotožnění se čtenáře s protagonistou, jenž Carroll ve své práci popisuje a která je součástí plíživého strachu a má vliv na výslednou emoci art-hororu. Ve druhé kapitole jsem také vymezil tři kontexty, ve kterých se plíživý strach projevuje, a to, narativ, mysl protagonisty a prostorové zasazení příběhu.

Třetí kapitola je zaměřena na souvislost mezi motivem plíživého strachu a koncepty hororu a teroru, které jsou pro hororovou literaturu zásadní. Tuto souvislost jsem podpořil popisy emocí, a především pocity hororu a teroru a jejich rozdíly z práce britského filozofa Edmunda Burkeho *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. Specifikoval jsem také souvislost mezi těmito emocemi, pocity hororu a teroru a objektem těchto emocí s využitím plíživého strachu a forem, ve kterých se objevuje v díle H.P. Lovecrafta.

Definované formy plíživého strachu mají za následek utužení napětí ve čtenáři a vytvoření hrozivé atmosféry, které jsou zásadní pro vyvolání emocí ve čtenáři. Plíživý strach takto prostupuje více aspekty určitého díla, a proto se každá Lovecraftova povídka zdá odlišná a zároveň stejná, protože v každé povídce je upřednostněna jiná forma plíživého strachu. Některé povídky kladou větší důraz na plíživý strach projevující se v narativu, jiné zase v myslí protagonisty. Nicméně, vždy je v povídce alespoň náznak plíživého strachu ve všech jeho podobách, což jsem demonstroval v podobě analýzy tří Lovecraftových povídek ve čtvrté kapitole.

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Annotation

The thesis focuses on the motif of Lurking Fear in selected works of H.P. Lovecraft. The aim of the thesis is to establish the motif and define its characteristics. I also aim to determine the influence of Lurking Fear on the atmosphere, characters, and the plot, and to relate this motif to the concepts of horror and terror. I analyze three short stories by H.P. Lovecraft to demonstrate how the motif works and in what forms it appears in his works.

Key words: H.P. Lovecraft, fear, horror literature, terror, Weird fiction, New Weird, motif, emotions, Edmund Burke, Noël Carroll, art-horror.

Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na motiv plíživého strachu ve vybraných dílech H.P. Lovecrafta. Cílem práce je určit charakteristické rysy tohoto motivu a jeho vliv na atmosféru, postavy či děj a propojit tento motiv s koncepty hororu a teroru. V práci analyzuji tři krátké povídky H.P. Lovecrafta, abych představil, jak motiv funguje a v jakých formách se v díle Lovecrafta vyskytuje.

Klíčová slova: H.P. Lovecraft, strach, hororová literatura, teror, Weird fiction, New Weird, motiv, emoce, Edmund Burke, Noël Carroll, art-horor.