THE ENGLISH GOTHIC TRADITION IN FICTION AND FILM: CULTURAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of the article is to give a general analysis of cultural and philosophical foundations of the English Gothic tradition to see how and why the present stage of the latter acquired its various forms and meanings in fiction and film. The tasks concern, accordingly, the cultural and philosophical aspects separately and in combination. The cultural aspect is based on historical nuances of different epochs that gave rise to literary and, later, cinematic specificities of Gothic texts and motion pictures. The philosophical aspect relates to ideological and cosmogonic world models from antiquity to the present day, which found their extrapolations in fictional worlds.

The object of the article is the Gothic tradition seen as a complicated cultural phenomenon having weighty historical basics. The subject relates to literary texts and feature films reflecting the tradition in English.

The structure of the paper has three main parts with minor sub-divisions that introduce the problem, provide its theoretical fundamentals and an approach to discussion with previous research, suggest materials and methodology, and express detectable conclusive results.

The methods suggested in the article combine those based on the theories of Aristotelian "prime mover" and Hegelian triads. In addition, R. Guénon's theory relying on the "prime mover" is employed to describe the foundation of the Gothic as a cultural tradition in fiction and film. The dialectical Hegelian method shows how the main Gothic event and its entities refer to each other as subordinate and interconnected within dialectical unities. The event needs the entity to expose through it, and the entity encloses two elements opposed to each other.

The general scientific method of classification based on hierarchical and faceted types serves to differentiate the event and the entity (the hierarchical mode) and to discern variations of the entity by specific characteristics (the faceted mode). The latter characteristics are examined

in the Kantian terms of phenomena and noumena. Seven hundred Gothic texts and films of various genres and types allowed distinguishing four categories of Gothic entities.

1. Basic features of the English Gothic

The English Gothic tradition is a cultural convention based on the macabre aesthetics of the unwelcome[1] and reflected in fiction, film, drama, opera, and other arts by means of the English language. In the modern culture, the Gothic tradition (or the Gothic) has traversed the boundaries of literature to share its *frisson* even with happening and performance.

The italicised term has no universal definition but is synonymous to *suspense* – "a logical anxiety" of playing with some imaginary menace[2], hence "vivifying the activity of the horrific"[3] and demonstrating something fearsome as quite innocuous and safely distant. From this stance, the Gothic is an "alarming but oddly consoling"[4] brew of horror channelled into pleasure and fun[5].

In fiction, it bonds such dissimilar texts as, for example, the legacy of the 18th century and postmodern works. With different degrees of authenticity, they reproduce typical plot elements of medieval ballads, folklore, and Renaissance literature[6].

Etymologically, the English polysemantic adjective *Gothic* refers to the Goths – a tribe of early eastern Germans. The tribe's name is traced to a number of multilingual forms: *gothique* (from French), *gothicus* (Latin), γότϑοι (Greek), and the Gothic word *gutani[s]*, inscribed on the ring of Pietroassa, or Buzău torc[7]. The element *Goth* (*Gut*) in the

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[1] Hart Nibbrig Ch.L. Ästhetik der letzten Dinge. Berlin, 1989. P. 20 ; Morgan J. Biology of horror: Gothic literature and film. Edwardsville, 2002. P. 67.

[2] Barthes R., Duisit L. An introduction to the structural analysis of narrative. *New Literary History*. 1975. № 6.2. P. 267–268.

[3] Brinks E. Gothic masculinity. Effeminacy and the supernatural in English and German Romanticism. Lewisburg, 2003. P. 21.

[4] Ackroyd P. The English ghost. Spectres through time. London, 2011. P. 4.

[5] Burke E. A philosophical enquiry into the origin of our ideas of the sublime and beautiful. 1998. P. 31, 36–37 ; Carroll N. Philosophy of horror. Paradoxes of the heart. Oxford, 1990. P. 137–138 ; Cavallaro D. The Gothic vision: Three centuries of horror, terror and fear. London, 2002. P. xvii, 1–2.

[6] Botting F. Gothic. New York, 1996. P. 4–10.

[7] Antonsen E.H. Runes and Germanic Linguistics. Berlin, 2002. P. 280 ; Looijenga J.H. Runes around the North Sea and on the continent AD 150–700; Texts & Contexts. Groningen, 1997. P. 199 ; Orel V. A handbook of Germanic etymology. Leiden, 2003. P. 147.

ethnonym *Gut-þiuda* (*þiuda* here stands for *people*) correlates with some forms in Germanic languages: *Goti* (Old North), *Gutar, Gotar* (Old Swedish), *Gotan* (Old English)[8]. Conceivably, it stems from the name of the river *Gautelfr* where *gaut* is "source, spring" (from the OHG verb *giessen* – pour)[9].

Besides, the dictionary definition of *Gothic* includes the meaning of scorn for the Goths as barbarians (the destructive force that annihilated Rome). Although indirectly, this semantic nuance concerns architecture and the famous pointed style known by the same name. The latter does not indicate the tribe of the Goths, but specifies G. Vasari's disdain for them. He found the style barbarous[10]. In contrast to Renaissance structures, they seemed ugly to him because of lavish decorations but no inner order. Vasari warned against spatial chaos of Gothic cathedrals and the German manner[11]. Seeing the Gothic as something hideous, barbarous, chaotic, and formless is, accordingly, the result of Renaissance thinking based on quite a different aesthetic outlook allied with that of antiquity. Thus, the Gothic in its opposition to Renaissance acquired firmly negative connotations and was seen as alluding to the sombre Middle Ages with their stone metaphor of the Gothic cathedral.

However, in the alternative – occult – opinion, the Dark Ages concentrate around the Gothic cathedral as a sanctuary of esoteric science and art, the latter having their expression in a specific mysterious, cryptic argot understood by versed individuals. Regarding this approach, the Gothic is a cultural tradition with the Goths marginalised. The definitions given below are not the dictionary ones and may be treated as mere puns, but these verbal games serve to reveal the Gothic tradition from inside (from the point of view of its creators) and may be useful in interpreting its symbolism. The author of these definitions and explanations thinks of such a game as of a way of penetrating the spiritual mystery in the labyrinths of mind[12]. To interpret the word combinations *art gothique* (the Gothic art) and *art goth* (the

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[8] Klein E. A comprehensive etymological dictionary of the English language. Amsterdam, 1966. P. 67–671.

[9] Christensen A.S. Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the history of the Goths: Studies in a migration myth. Copenhagen, 2002. P. 287.

[10] Pearsall D. Gothic Europe 1200–1450. Arts, culture and society in the western world. London, 2014. P. 2.

[11] Vasari G. The lives of the most excellent painters, sculptors, and architects. New York, 2006. P. 15, 112.

[12] Fulcanelli. The mystery of the cathedrals. Las Vegas, 1984. P. 43.

Goths' art), he suggests the following cryptographic modes of reading: instead of *gothique* (Gothic) – *goétique* (goetic, magical), instead of *art gothique* – *argotique* (argotic, enigmatic), instead of *art goth* (the Goths' art) – *argot* (argot).

The air of mystery (argotic, enigmatic) attached to a special *language* (argot) of the Gothic art agrees with *the Gothic myth* – a complicated artistic and cultural phenomenon that underlies the Gothic tradition as aesthetic and ideological totality. It inaugurated the emergence of the Gothic fiction, with the English Gothic novel of the 18th century being its primary literary source[13] and a mixture of Romanticism and Protestant providentialism.

However, a keen interest to the supernatural relies on the antique, classical patterns as well. Thus, in "The Iliad", the phantom of Patroclus, or Patróklos, emanates to haunt Achilles, or Akhilleus[14]. In "Aeneid", the ghost of Creusa, Odysseus' first wife, slips out of his embrace three times[15]. In "Satyricon", Niceros, one of the minor characters, tells about having seen a man transform into a wolf, and Trimalchio, another character, speaks of the witches' attack[16]. According to Herodotus, it was enough for Gyges to get the Pythia's approval to rule Lydia for several decades[17]. Plutarch describes a prophetic eagle that helped Cimon to find the bones of Theseus[18].

Romanticism and the Protestant outlook share the ideology of fate, doom, and intuition[19]. Similarly, an irrational approach to described events, inspiring the readers with anxiety and fear, is natural for the Gothic fiction. The topics that were important for the 18th century have acquired new popularity nowadays. Among them, there are some typical Gothic oppositions[20]:

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[13] Wein T. British identities, heroic nationalisms, and the Gothic novel, 1764–1824. New York, 2002. P. 18, 40, 46, 52, 68, 88, 132, 155, 209, 227.

[14] Homer. The Iliad. New York, 1974. P. 537.

[15] Virgil. Aeneid. Oxford, 2007. P. 53.

[16] Petronius Arbiter. Satyricon. Indianapolis, 2000. P. 46–48.

[17] Herodotus. The history. Chicago, 1988. P. 38.

[18] Plutarch. Lives. Cambridge, 1967. P. 85.

[19] Birkhead E. The tale of terror. Charleston, 2008. P. 29–39 ; Botting F. Gothic. New York, 1996. P. 6 ; Kilgour M. The rise of the Gothic novel. London, 1995. P. 6, 14–15, 19.

[20] Cavallaro D. The Gothic vision: Three centuries of horror, terror and fear. London, 2002. P. 9 ; Edwards J.D. Gothic passages. Racial ambiguity and the American Gothic. Iowa City, 2003. P. 110 ; Horner A., Zlosnik S. Daphne du Maurier: Writing, identity, and the Gothic imagination. London, 1998. P. 5, 32, 45 ; Karschay S. Degeneration, normativity and the Gothic at the fin de siècle. New York, 2015. P. 31, 37, 51–53, 58, 63 ;

1) the present vs the past (i.e. the past weighs on the present, *le mort saisit le vif*);

2) stability vs unbalanced psychic setup;

3) norm vs anomaly (mutilation, degeneration, hybridity, deformity, ugliness);

4) cultural, civilised vs wild; discipline vs chaos; morality vs licentiousness;

5) natural vs supernatural; rational vs irrational, chimerical;

6) sacred vs profane.

The Gothic outlook also stems from eastern religions that supplanted Germanic and Celtic outlooks in the Middle Ages. For a generic medieval person, the world of spiritual virtue, represented by the Virgin, coexisted in paradoxical antinomy with its antithesis – the world of "the God's monkey" (the devil) full of witches, warlocks, werewolves, kobolds, and other soldiers of darkness in human disguise. In the world where everyone seemed capable of perfidious tricks, the life was a constant struggle with *Princeps umbrarum*. Therefore, no one could be sure of one's own neighbour. Being just a few steps from a precipice in one's mind, it was easy to believe under the burden of terror that witches' black masses were real, and magic was as natural as any other medieval craft. Who could be convinced that a kind-hearted neighbour had not had that notorious Faustian pact with the devil yet, and a fair-looking girl had not become his mistress, for the devil was said to gain strength through a woman? The images of hell (horned, clawed, and hoofed) became canonical in the 11th century and filled the creative fantasy of the Gothic art to the brim[21].

The Gothic plots associate systematically with transgressing the borders of the so-called "real world"[22], i.e. a habitual realm of existence, and rely on the ideas of *the beyond* and *the supernatural* (*unknown, paranormal*). Different ghosts, doubles, or demons of various kinds as well as Lucifer himself play the part of the unknown. On the border between the worlds, a disturbed space of darkness emerges to

Kilgour M. The rise of the Gothic novel. London, 1995. P. 17, 36 ; Spooner C. Contemporary Gothic. London, 2007. P. 8.

[21] Spengler O. The decline of the West: Perspectives on world history. New York, 1961. Vol. 2. P. 289.

[22] Botting F. Gothic. New York, 1996. P. 2, 4–5 ; Costantini M. Crossing boundaries: The revision of Gothic paradigms in "Heat and dust". *Empire and the Gothic. The politics of genre.* New York, 2003. P. 155–156; Smith A. Gothic literature. Edinburgh, 2007. P. 94–101.

amalgamate myths and facts, a mysterious labyrinth between dreams and reality where everything is partially known and partially incredible[23]. Sometimes the in-between space is described in terms of the Gothic séance – a pseudo-physical experience of communicating with the unknown, such as the spirits of the dead. Séance is a visionary interstitial space of quasi-reality between the known and the beyond[24].

At the end of the 19th century when mesmerism was in fashion, séances became especially popular among the aristocratic circles in England, and at that very time, the fictional ghost stories' boom was at its peak[25].

The ideas of *the beyond* are fundamentally traditional, for (on the surface) they do not need any special explanations and are intuitively clear in terms of telling apart the reality and its opposite. The English Gothic abounds in such plot and stylistic formulas as *dark*, *night*, *fear*, *curse*, *visions and phantasms*, *persecution*, *paranoia*, *hungry ghouls*, *werewolves*, *vampires*, *gargoyles*, *monsters*, *occult knowledge*, *incest*, *various obsessions*, *forbidden grimoires*, *secret brotherhoods*, *scholars of Faustian or Frankensteinian types*, *sinful beauties* and *demonic antagonists*. Guileful villains attempt to encroach upon Gothic heroines – virtuous aristocratic virgins, automatically cursed if a rapist is successful[26]. The scene of action often unfolds in or in the vicinity of castle halls (sometimes oriental), forlorn houses, ruins, cemeteries, monasteries, cursed evil places, basements, railways, laboratories, etc. These Gothic locales are widely known as the *castle chronotope[27]*.

The abovementioned elements are abundant in the works of such authors as W. Beckford, E. Bulwer-Lytton, W. Godwin, M.G. Lewis, A. Machen, C.R. Maturin, E.A. Poe, J. Polidori, B. Stoker, A. Radcliffe, M.W. Shelley, J.S. Le Fanu, etc.

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[23] Crawford J. Gothic fiction and the evolution of media technology. *Technologies of the Gothic in literature and culture technogothics.* New York, 2015. P. 39.

[24] Taylor N. Impersonating spirits: The paranormal entertainer and the dramaturgy of the Gothic séance. *New directions in 21st century Gothic.* London, 2015. P. 163, 166.

[25] Ackroyd P. The English ghost. Spectres through time. London, 2011. P. 3–4

[26] Brien D.L. Unsettled and destabilising life writing. The Gothic memoir. *New directions in 21'st century Gothic.* London, 2015. P. 149 ; Milbank A. Daughters of the house. Modes of the Gothic in Victorian fiction. London, 1992. P. 26 ; Punter D. Hungry ghosts and foreign bodies. *Gothic modernisms.* New York, 2001. P. 11, 13, 15 ; Punter D., Byron G. The Gothic. Hoboken, 2004. P. 259–298 ; Peaty G. Rock hard: Gargoyles in contemporary Gothic romance. *New directions in 21'st century Gothic.* London, 2015. P. 54–56 ; Mulvey-Roberts M. Gothic immortals. The Fiction of the brotherhood of the Rosy Cross. London, 1990. P. 9–18, 37, 127–131.

[27] Bakhtin M. The dialogic imagination. Austin, 1981. P. 84, 245–246.

2. Specific features of the English Gothic

The English Gothic is internally diverse and flexible due to the influence of general changes brought in by the demands of time and the emergence of cinema. A seemingly realistic prose work (like a story of historical events) may also include discrete "compartmentalized" elements. Among these, there are westerns, Gothic horrors, fantasy and magic tales, time travelogues, spy thrillers, as wells as different works about human society and its future, which is either much better than the life we have now or much worse. Still, "the membranes separating these subdivisions are permeable, and osmotic flow from one to another is normal"[28].

The criteria underlying the English Gothic include:

1)   cultural and historic prerequisites that influenced a certain work, e.g. Victorian, colonial (imperial), postcolonial, decadent Gothic, the Gothic of Romanticism, Modernism, Postmodernism (Postmodern), postmodernist Neogothic[29];

2)   national and ethnical characteristics of an author or his place of residence, e.g. English, American, Irish, etc. Gothic[30];

3)   the author's gender – male and female Gothic[31];

4)   ideological/philosophical features, i.e. feminist Gothic[32];

5)   the form, either small (the ghost story), or large (the Gothic novel);

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[28] Atwood M. Writing with intent. Essays, reviews, personal prose 1983–2005. New York, 2005. P. 243.

[29] Armitt L. Postmodern Gothic. *Teaching the Gothic.* New York, 2006. P. 78–93 ; Brantlinger P. Imperial Gothic. *Teaching the Gothic.* New York, 2006. P. 153–168 ; Fitzgerald L. Romantic Gothic. *Teaching the Gothic.* New York, 2006. P. 48–62 ; Lloyd-Smith A. American Gothic. *Teaching the Gothic.* New York, 2006. P. 136–153 ; Punter D., Byron G. The Gothic. Hoboken, 2004. P. 26–32, 39–59 ; Wisker G. Postcolonial Gothic. *Teaching the Gothic.* New York, 2006. P. 168–182 ; Wolfreys J. Victorian Gothic. *Teaching the Gothic.* New York, 2006. P. 62–78.

[30] Hansen J. Terror and Irish modernism. The Gothic tradition from Burke to Beckett. New York, 2009. P. 59, 87 ; Savoy E. The face of the tenant: A theory of American Gothic. *American Gothic. New interventions in a national narrative.* Iowa City, 1998. P. 3–20.

[31] Kilgour M. The rise of the Gothic novel. London, 1995. P. 37–38 ; Williams A. Art of darkness: A poetics of gothic. Chicago, 1995. P. 108–115, 135–141 ; Wisker G. Contemporary women's Gothic fiction: Carnival, hauntings, and vampire kisses. London, 2016. P. 63–91.

[32] Perry D.R., Sederholm C.H. Poe, "The house of Usher", and the American Gothic. New York, 2009. P. 19–39.

6) peculiarities of composition and plot, i.e. the classical Gothic novel of mystery and terror, the story of haunting, the Oriental story of unease, slipstream, dark fantasy, presque vu stories, the ultramodern eco-Gothic[33], etc.;

7) genre standards, i.e. the Gothic melodrama, also known as the Gothic romance, or family tragedy[34], the Gothic drama of substance and abstraction[35], the ironical, mock-Gothic[36], the Gothic detective[37], the Gothic thriller[38].

The treatment of melodrama, drama, and comedy relies on the dictionary meanings of these basic literary genres. Melodrama is a sentimental moralistic work within the inflexible framework of static positive and negative characters[39]. Drama is a tragic socio-psychological work within the flexible framework of dynamic characters having a strong potential[40]. Comedy is a humorous socio-psychological work within the flexible framework of static characters[41]. Thriller and

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[33] Houston G. From Dickens to Dracula. Cambridge, 2005. P. 97–98 ; Bayer-Berenbaum L. The Gothic imagination: Expansion in Gothic literature and art. Vancouver, 1982. P. 44–45 ; Sarikaya-Şen M. The construction of vulnerability and monstrosity in slipstream: Tom McCarthy's "Remainder". *Victimhood and vulnerability in 21'st century fiction.* New York, 2017. P. 53–71 ; Murphy B.M. Key concepts in contemporary popular fiction. Dordrecht, 2017. P. 22, 48.

[34] Billingham P., Farnell G. Melodrama. *The encyclopedia of the Gothic.* Chichester, 2016. P. 443–444 ; Williamson M. The lure of the vampire: Gender, fiction and fandom from Bram Stoker to Buffy. London, 2005. P. 64.

[35] Long Hoeveler D. Drama. *The encyclopedia of the Gothic.* Chichester, 2016. P. 196 ; Stoddard H. Isak Dinesen and the fiction of Gothic gravity. *Modern Gothic: A reader.* Manchester, 1996. P. 83.

[36] Becker S. Gothic forms of feminine fictions. Manchester, 1999. P. 153, 187 ; Heilman R.B. Charlotte Brontë's new Gothic. *The nineteenth-century novel: A critical reader.* New York, 2001. P. 212 ; Stetz M.D. British women's comic fiction, 1890–1990: Not drowning, but laughing. Burlington, 2001. P. 70, 73, 82.

[37] Bloom H. American women fiction writers, 1900–1960. New York, 1998. P. 82 ; Higgins S. Is a Christian mystery story possible? Charles Williams' "War in Heaven" as a generic case stuck. *Christianity and the detective story.* Newcastle upon Tyne, 2013. P. 7.

[38] Pribek T. Utility and invention in American Gothic literature. Wisconsin, 1986. P. 321, 364, 367 ; Magistrale T. Abject terrors: Surveying the modern and postmodern horror film. New York, 2005. P. 81.

[39] Neale S. Genre and Hollywood. London, 2000. P. 185.

[40] Goldman M. On drama: Boundaries of genre, borders of self. 2000. P. 10 ; Letwin D., Stockdale J., & Stockdale R. The architecture of drama: Plot, character, theme, genre and style. Ann Arbor, 2008. P. 105.

[41] Tomarken E. Genre and ethics: The education of an eighteenth-century critic. London, 2002. P. 59, 62, 64.

detective (mystery story) represent the genre based on adventure and suspense[42].

In film, the Gothic finds itself in the Gothic movie (usually based on classical Gothic novels such as "Frankenstein"), the occult movie ("Rosemary's Baby", "The Exorcist"), psychological horror ("Carrie", "Hannibal"), the monster movie ("Aliens", "Godzilla"), slasher ("Halloween", "Scream"), splatter-gore body horror ("Resident Evil", "Cannibal Holocaust"), exploitation cinema, grindhouse ("Hostel", "Saw")[43], dreadpunk[44].

The first Gothic romance, "The Castle of Otranto" by H. Walpole, was published in 1764 to become known due to its pseudo-medieval plot based on such recognisable components as knights' adventures, feudal curses, gentle damsels in distress[45]. Romances may have either rational or irrational explanations of all supernatural things dwelt upon[46].

For later works in the literary Gothic, the composition suggested by H. Walpole settles a universal architextual pattern – a structural and thematic integrity making that pattern identifiable[47]. It implies a game emulated in a text to arrange characters in their search of an ancient manuscript hiding family secrets. The game involves embedded stories that help to solve the main conundrum thus making a closed circle[48].

The Gothic romance transformed into horror and Neogothic novels. The former specify and particularise scenes of violence, the latter stipulate the necessity of some metaphysical inexplicable evil with *the horrible* (especially in its modernistic variant) focusing on human psyche and its eccentricities[49]. However, in such novels, characters seek (though in vain) for rational explanations of esoteric experience generalised as "the fear of Caliban who has seen his face in the mirror". The reason for

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[42] Milhorn H.T. Writing genre fiction. Boca Raton, 2006. P. 26, 36.

[43] Cherry B. Horror. London, 2009. P. 5–6.

[44] Gelder K. New directions in popular fiction: Genre, distribution, reproduction. London, 2016. P. 8, 40.

[45] Birkhead E. The tale of terror. Charleston, 2008. P. 29–39 ; Malenas Ledoux E. Social reform in Gothic writing. Fantastic forms of change, 1764–1834. New York, 2013. P. 24 ; Watt J. Contesting the Gothic. Fiction, genre, and cultural conflict. Cambridge, 1999. P. 12–14.

[46] Todorov T. The fantastic: A structural approach to a literary genre. Ithaca, 1975. P. 41–42.

[47] Genette G. The architext. An introduction. Los Angeles, 1992. P. 82–84.

[48] Clayton C.T. Gothic stories within stories. Frame narratives and realism in the genre, 1790–1900. Jefferson, 2017. P. 5–9 ; McEvoy E. Gothic tourism. *The Gothic world.* London, 2013. P. 481.

[49] Botting F. Gothic. New York, 1996. P. 103–105.

their quest always lies in the ontological doubt about the reality of the real[50].

While Modernism finds interest in split personalities and the ultimate choice between the good and the bad in endless pursuits of one's real ego, Postmodernism is sceptical about the truth, reality, and morality in general[51]. Metamodernism combines the fragmentary psyche of Modernism and moral relativity of Postmodernism in an integral "structure of feeling" creating a glocalised perspective (global + local) in the contemporary "culture of fear"[52]. The modern reader (viewer) should combine scepticism and irony of Postmodernism with seriousness that comes to supplant them[53]. In other words, he has to believe in his fear but be sure it is not real.

In the Gothic, the feeling of fear traditionally splits into *terror* that "expands the soul" and *horror* that "contracts and freezes" it[54].

Terror relates to classical paraphernalia of the castle chronotope and "the outer evil" of alien monsters, which are as dangerous as wild animals. Thus, the scenes of violence here have the attribute *monstrous*. Terror becomes a hostile metaphysical presence lurking in the dark[55] and pertains to the melodramatic Gothic. Horror is characteristic of Gothic thrillers and reveals the "inner evil", some dismal deviltry based on the conflict of Apollonian versus Dionysian forces, where the latter side hides behind a decent façade of the former one[56]. The protagonists of the books by P. Ackroyd, C. Barker, W. Strieber, W. Hjortsberg, etc. fight their inner evil.

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[50] Beville M. Gothic Postmodernism. Voicing the terrors of postmodernity. Amsterdam, 2009. P. 43–48, 62.

[51] McHale B. Postmodernist fiction. London, 1987. P. 141.

[52] Akker van den R., Vermeulen T. Notes on Metamodernism. *Supplanting the Postmodern: An anthology of writings on the arts and culture of the early 21st century.* London, 2015. P. 310 ; Stavris N. The anxieties of the present. *Supplanting the Postmodern: An anthology of writings on the arts and culture of the early 21st century.* London, 2015. P. 350.

[53] Eshelman R. Performatism. *Supplanting the Postmodern: An anthology of writings on the arts and culture of the early 21st century.* London, 2015. P. 111.

[54] Summers M. The Gothic quest: A history of the Gothic novel. New York, 1964. P. 49 ; Radcliffe A. On the supernatural in poetry. *Fantastic literature: A critical reader.* Santa Barbara, 2004. P. 47.

[55] Inverso M.-B. The Gothic impulse in contemporary drama. Ann Arbor, 1990. P. 120 ; Kristeva J. Powers of horror. An essay of abjection. New York, 1982. P. 13.

[56] King S. DanSe macabre. New York, 1983. P. 63, 76, 396.

3. Generalised basics and specificities of the Gothic

The Gothic is an artistic model of outlook based on the doubt that the world, as well as one's own personality, may be cognised; therefore, a person finds himself totally unprotected in front of unknown demonic forces. Confronting these forces becomes the culminating event when the reality (known) and its representatives get involved in the open opposition with the unknown – esoteric and mythological – side. The culminating event is the Aristotelian prime mover[57] that draws all characters, phenomena, and objects under its influence thus making the fictional world of the Gothic a case of manifestation, i.e. based on the cyclic integral world order with the basic cause (the prime mover) and everything else moved by it. Manifestation suggests causality in terms of *creatio ex deo* (create out of god), i.e. not as a result, but as another element functioning within the event where all the elements unite to be revealed in totality[58]. Besides, in the Gothic, the devil and his henchmen represent the unknown as conventional elements and do not strictly refer to Christian beliefs. The hellish pseudo-Christian beings act on a par with Chinese, Native American, and other supernatural creatures.

According to the Hegelian triad of *the rational, dialectic, and speculative*, also universalised as *thesis – antithesis – synthesis*[59], the Gothic may be described as a cultural tradition relying on the following key statements:

1. The known strictly opposes the unknown.
2. The elements within the opposition have their inner oppositions (as in cases of doubting one's own personality).
3. The elements make up a confluence within the culminating event.

The first statement determines a general antinomy characteristic of rational thinking, the second one represents the opposed elements in their internal dialectic; the third one shows their synthesis. The known gets its explanation through the unknown and contrariwise. Thus, the known is something enchanted, frightened, and intrigued by the unknown, and the unknown embodies the ontological doubt (see above) deeply ingrained in reality.

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[57] Aristotle. Metaphysics. London, 1998. P. 372.
[58] Guénon R. The crisis of the modern world. Hillsdale, 2004. P. 8–9.
[59] Hegel G.W.F. The science of logic. Cambridge, 2010. P. 35, 71–74, 80, 588–589, 606–608.

To summarise, the known and the unknown are principal Gothic entities, i.e. the animate (agents) or inanimate (objects or abstract notions) causes of relations and influences that get their realisation, exposure, and mutual understanding in the event of confrontation – the culmination of the Gothic. The entities are the reason for the event to happen, but the event is impossible without entities and is a result of their confrontation. This seemingly vicious circle is another example of the Hegelian triad:

1. The entities are separate elements opposed to each other.

2. Together but dialectically, they interact with the event as with a source of confrontation and something different from their independent ways of existence.

3. Besides, they influence the event depending on their inner qualities.

The event and entities in their mutual influence are conceptual for the Gothic and unite all works created within this tradition. The event is a generic force related to separate entities the way the rational relates to the dialectical (see above). Synthesised with the event, the entities transfer from the dialectical to the speculative level and make up, in their turn, a generic unity referred to the entity and the event as specific ones. For example, in Shakespearean "Hamlet", the prince is an entity on the known side engaged in a confrontation with the ghost of his father, an entity on the unknown side. The event influences the prince to the extent that it becomes the major reason for all further actions, and united with the ghost, Hamlet makes up a conflated entity responsible for "everything rotten in the state of Denmark".

Seven hundred works of fiction and motion pictures belonging to the Gothic tradition made it possible to distinguish four categories of Gothic entities: phenomena, noumena, pheno-noumena, and anthropomorphic typecasts. Phenomena and noumena are treated according to I. Kant[60]: a phenomenon results from generalised experience of living in the world, a noumenon is something encapsulated in / within itself that may be an object of imagination but is not knowable by senses. A typecast is a specific type of personality (i.e. the Byronic character or femme fatale), which represents the Gothic tradition.

The Gothic phenomena are the entities on the side of the known that have no supernatural qualities in a given work of fiction or feature film. They fall into the subcategories of objects, substances, and abstract

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[60] Kant I. The critique of pure reason. Cambridge, 1998. P. 338–354.

notions. *The objects* include *specific forms of architecture*: castles, ruins, monasteries, churches-cathedrals, old family mansions. Ruins are mentioned in the following (boldfaced):

*Within ourselves we had walks in plenty, the glen being always beautiful in all its phases, whether the woods were green in the spring or ruddy in the autumn. In the park which surrounded the house were **the ruins** of the former mansion of Brentwood, a much smaller and less important house than the solid Georgian edifice which we inhabited. **The ruins** were **picturesque**, however, and gave importance to the place*[61].

The main *substances* are blood, salt, specific metals (brass, silver, copper). The properties of brass are described below as those of a powerful amulet (boldfaced):

*This bed of yours <...> What is it made of? – **Brass. Solid brass**. – Bright yellow **brass**, dull gold **brass**? – Bright yellow, why? – OK, that's called high **brass**. That's because of the low **copper** content. <...> **It protects you from all spirits**, good and evil. It's possible that you've inherited **the largest protective amulet in history** <...> You're sleeping on the very thing that keeps evil away*[62].

Abstract notions integrate specific weather conditions (rain, snowstorm, fog); specific time of the day (night, full moon), seasons (usually autumn or winter). Gothic colouring is, as a rule, gloomy and oppressive. For example, in the novel "Melmoth the wanderer" there are some typical Gothic features: certain weather and season (boldfaced below), general desolation (in sparse font), utter neglect and devastation, comparisons with a cemetery (underlined):

*The **weather was cold and gloomy**; heavy clouds <...> **of autumnal rains** <...> <u>came sweeping on like the dark banners of an approaching host, whose march is for desolation</u> <...> grass-grown walks **whose grass was not even green, dwarfish, doddered, leafless trees,** and a luxuriant crop of nettles and weeds <...> It was <u>the verdure of the church-yard, the garden of death</u>*[63].

The Gothic noumena represent the unknown: non-anthropomorphic supernatural beings, magic substances, objects, and paranormal abstract notions.

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[61] Oliphant M. The open door. *A beleaguered city and other tales of the seen and the unseen.* Edinburgh, 2000. P. 173.

[62] Fazio J. (Director), Cohen J., Show D.B. (Writers). Brass. *The Hunger*. London ; Toronto, 1999. Min.: 00:20:36–00:21:33.

[63] Maturin C.R. Melmoth the wanderer. Mineola, 2017. P. 19.

Non-anthropomorphic supernatural beings are recognised as non-anthropomorphic ghosts, spirits or demons, monsters, supernatural (oracular) birds, etc. For example, some unidentified, variously named presences (boldfaced below) may be detected by characters:

*No doubt there really is **something** about this place that I don't understand; but when I don't understand a thing, I call it **a phenomenon**, and I don't take it for granted that it's going to kill me <…> once, the inkstand flew straight up from the table against the ceiling of my cabin. The same **thing** happened to Captain Lecky <…> if that **sort of thing** took place ashore, in this room for instance, a nervous person would talk about **spirits and levitation**[64].*

Magic substances and *objects* comprise magic food and drinks (such as love potions), alchemical artefacts (the elixir of youth, magic tobacco), ghostly vehicles (ghost cars or ships), grimoires written by supernatural beings. The philosopher's stone, among other things, transforms metals into gold (underlined below) and is known as "the Red Sulphur" and "a powder of red Sulphur" (boldfaced):

*<…> **the Philosopher's stone** that was <…> otherwise called **the Red Sulphur**. It was kept in the centre of the altar. Professor saw a crystal bottle or a phial on the alter inside which the Philosopher's stone was preserved. It was not a stone as its name suggests, it was but **a red powder, a powder of red Sulphur**. Professor took the Philosopher's stone, a little amount, touched it with his finger, he opened the cross from his neck which was made of iron <…> smeared a little amount of the Philosopher's stone on the cross and the chain <…> <u>and the cross turned into gold</u>. Professor told himself, the powder was real, and a pure Red Sulphur <u>was able to cure</u>[65].*

Paranormal things and *abstract notions* may appear as materialisation, metempsychosis, poltergeist, transformation, curse, phantom voices and visions, immortality. Something called "eternal bloodstains" is mentioned in the following (bold):

But with his hand on the china knob of the closet door he trembled. He was about to penetrate an awful mystery. <…> Speculation'd been rife, of course, and everyone had agreed that the closet was an eerie

[64] Crawford F.M. The screaming scull. *The witch of Prague and other stories*. Ware, 2008. P. 6–7.

[65] Ghosh S. Fantasy adventure of Professor Helst: Chronicles of the philosopher's stone. New Delhi, 2017. P. 179–180.

*place festooned with cobwebs and containing strange instruments of torture. There were rumours of **emerging bloodstains on the floor**[66].*

A pheno-noumenon is a Gothic entity that has phenomenal and noumenal qualities at the same time. Pheno-noumenal Gothic entities are objects, pseudo-aberrations, rituals.

The objects may be legendary books or manuscripts used for magic culinary, goetia, the pact with the devil, collectors' objects (dolls, pictures, waxworks), spellbound treasures, furniture and household things (tapestries, curtains, wallpaper), musical instruments, clothes and jewellery, occult objects like crystal balls, tarot, amulets, cursed objects, things of sympathetic magic. The fragment below mentions the book "The nine gates to the Kingdom of Shadows" issued by some prominent warlock who printed there genuine engravings from another book, "Delomelanicon" (boldfaced), written by the devil himself (a noumenal being). "The nine gates" reveals itself as a magic object only to a few chosen by the devil. Their task is to guess a diabolical riddle (underlined) by interpreting the engravings in order to evoke the devil (in sparse font).

"The nine gates of the Kingdom of Shadows" <…> Venice, 1666. The author and printer, Aristide Torchia, was burned by the holy inquisition together with all his works. Only three copies survived <…> ***The engravings you're now admiring were adapted by Torchia from the "Delomelanicon".*** *They form a kind of satanic riddle. Correctly interpreted with the aid of the original text <…> they're reputed to conjure up the prince of darkness in person <…>* ***"Delomelanicon" is <…> no myth. A book reputed to have been written by Satan himself.*** *That book existed. Torchia actually acquired it*[67].

In M.R. James's story "A warning to the curious", the crown is a pheno-noumenal Gothic entity. According to the circulating legend, once it crowned the Anglo-Saxon kings and is thought one of three tiaras allegedly laid in different places at the coast of England to keep the invaders away from its shores (boldfaced below). The crown itself is a simple, crudely crafted silver thing (underlined), and no one knowns if it really possessed / possesses supernatural powers to save the country from enemies.

The three crowns <…> buried in the ground near by the coast were ***to keep the Danes or the French or the Germans from landing.*** *<…>*

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[66] Patton F.G. Good morning, Miss Dove. New York, 1954. P. 46.

[67] Polanski R. (Producer / Screenwriter/Director), Brownjohn J., Urbizu E. (Screenwriters). The ninth gate. Santa Monica, 1999. 00:14:3700:15:56.

And they say that one of the three was dug up a long time ago, and another has disappeared by the encroaching of the sea, and one's still left doing its work, keeping off invaders <...> The crown was <u>of silver</u> <...> set with some gems, mostly antique intaglios and cameos, and was of <u>rather plain, almost rough workmanship</u>[68].

Supernatural qualities of the Angles' crown are implied by the presence of a certain William Ager, its zealous guardian who caught a cold during the night watch on the shore, fell ill with tuberculosis and died (boldfaced), later to become a ghost and go on standing his sentry (underlined):

*William Ager <...> had something to do with the crowns <...> <u>These Agers <...> were the guardians of the last crown</u>. William <...> who has only **died fairly recently** <...> **was a consumptive, by exposure and night watching** [...] There was always <u>somebody, a man,</u> standing by one of the firs <...> He was never in front of me. I always saw him with the tail of my eye on the left or the right <...> <u>he's light and weak,</u> but all the same I daren't face him*[69].

Gothic pseudo-aberrations are typical of the Gothic, but usually abnormal in human society: cannibalism, sadism, incest, manias, felonies, mutilations, etc. In the example below, congenital defects are dwelt on (boldfaced):

*Sharon could see and hear and, to a degree, think. But she couldn't speak – **she'd been born without vocal cords**. <...> Her missing vocal cords were just one sequent symptom of her **hypo-osteopesis, a rare genetic affliction also less-than-clinically referred to as curled-bone syndrome***[70].

Rituals fall into divination, obsession and exorcism (having a medical explanation in reality), occult rituals like demonic worship, spiritualism. The entities in "Deliver us from evil" are engaged in exorcism:

*Every culture, every religion since humans dropped out of the trees has practiced **exorcism**. Most of them are bullshit. It's true. But maybe 10, 15% just aren't. Besides superhuman strength, each possessed person used an altered voice and had clairvoyant powers*[71].

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[68] James M.R. A warning to the curious. *Complete ghost stories* / D.S. Davis. London, 2007. P. 492, 498.

[69] Ibid.. P. 494–495, 500.

[70] Lee E., White W.J. The teratologist. New York, 2007. P. 1–2.

[71] Bruckheimer J. (Producer), Derrickson S. (Screenwriter / Director). Deliver us from evil. Santa Monica, 2014. 01:03:01–01:03:24.

The Gothic anthropomorphic typecast is a person or a humanlike being representing the known, the unknown, or having mixed qualities.

The entity of the known is *the phenomenal anthropomorphic typecast*, the one of the unknown is, accordingly, *noumenal*, and a mixed character (a person of the known side but having paranormal abilities) is *the pheno-noumenal typecast*.

Among *the phenomenal typecasts*, there are rich heirs, poor students, guests in haunted houses, Gothic heroines (damsels in distress), wicked monks, wise buffoons, occult detectives, and ordinary malefactors (villains on the known side). A military man, as in "The mystery of Cloomber", may also represent the real side (boldfaced below):

*General Heatherstone is a very distinguished **soldier** <...> **formerly colonel** in the Indian Infantry, 41'st Bengal Foot, but now retired with the rank of **major-general**[72].*

The most significant *noumenal typecasts* are anthropomorphic ghosts and demons, the devil, characters of urban legends, mystical doubles like doppelgängers, revenants like zombies, created beings like golems, mummies, or homunculi (boldfaced):

*For the space of one year <...> remaining beneath the glass, and at the end of that time it will be **a pretty little infant thing**. It will be a true **homunculus**, therefore, and can be taught like any other child; it will grow and prosper with all its intellect and faculties, until its thirtieth year when it will fall asleep and return to its first unformed state[73].*

Pheno-noumenal typecasts involve old antiquaries and squires, Byronic characters (tragic, often unwillingly immortal outsiders), witches, vampire hunters, werewolves (half human, half animal), clairvoyants, vampires' mortal servants, mediums, mad scholars, fatal beauties, Gothic children fighting or supporting evil forces. M.R. James, for example, was fond of populating his ghost stories with old enigmatic antiquaries (in bold):

*Baxter's Roman villa <...> He was **the old chap** I got those glasses from. I believe he made them. He was an old watchmaker down in the village, a great **antiquary**[74].*

Sometimes Gothic entities are subject to reconfiguration sustained by the principle "creatio ex deo" (mentioned above). Each incarnation of

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[72] Conan Doyle A. The mystery of Cloomber. Mineola, 2009. P. 12.

[73] Ackroyd P. The house of Doctor Dee. London, 1993. P. 123

[74] James M.R. A view from a hill. *Complete ghost stories* / D.S. Davis. London, 2007. P. 468.

any Gothic entity is a mask, a playground on the border between the known and the unknown (beyond), something that is not what it seems. The Gothic anthropomorphic typecast demonstrates a tendency to change masks and reincarnate so as to assert, among other things, his own epistemological and aesthetic positions of an outsider and indifferent observer who considers himself unique (boldfaced) and therefore detaches himself from others (underlined):

*To be special is a desire at a hidden cost, for <u>if you wish to rise above the masses, you must separate yourself from them</u>; you must **abandon those qualities that are universal and replace them with the qualities unique**; you must do what it takes to become **something else entirely***[75].

One of the most famous fictional villains at the turn of the 20'th and 21'st centuries, Hannibal Lecter, watches people out of curiosity and meanwhile changes "suits". Lecter is a collective Gothic typecast of a mad scholar, a devil in the image of a man, a Byronic hero. He does not recognise and does not share human values. For him, people are objects of psychological experiments, food, or both at the same time. His therapist, Bedelia Du Maurier, suddenly notices through the seams of his "suit" (boldfaced) that he is dangerous (underlined), he does not care of ethics, but only of aesthetics, and his world is a world without moral principles (given in sparse font):

*I am simply ending our patient-psychiatrist relationship <...> I've had to draw a conclusion based on what I glimpsed **through the stitching of the person suit that you wear**. And the conclusion that I've drawn <...> is that <u>you are... dangerous</u>*[76].

You no longer have ethical concerns, Hannibal. You have aesthetical ones. <...> Your peace is without morality.[77]

Hannibal replies that ethics become aesthetics, and morality as a social canon does not exist, there is only the spirit of morality, moralising, moral consciousness (morale):

Ethics become aesthetics. Morality doesn't exist. Only morale[78].

A brand-new interpretation of Hannibal lies in treating him as a supernatural being. For example, he can diagnose a disease (lung cancer,

[75] Canuel E. (Director), Fazio J., Nelson M.W. (Writers). The night bloomer. *The Hunger*. Montreal ; Toronto, 1999. 00:24:52–00:25:22.

[76] Hunter T. (Director), Fuller B. (Writer). 2014. Sakizuke. *Hannibal*. Universal City ; Culver City, 2014. 00:07:55–00:09:14.

[77] Natali V., Fuller B. Antipasto. *Hannibal*. Universal City ; Culver City, 2015. 00:12:38, 00:13:41.

[78] Ibid.

encephalitis) by a patient's body odour or create large-scale installations out of dismembered corpses almost every week, which is humanly impossible due to the lack of time and because of super-difficult physical work that requires more than one loader and, perhaps, several months to prepare and organise the stuff. The "Hannibal" series creates an image of the devil who watches the reactions of people: he is curious what may come out of various atypical or provocative situations. Hannibal is "Satan at work, tempting someone with the apple of their psyche"[79]. His motives are not childhood violence (though he knew it too) or drug addicted parents. He believes that life can open up and show its beautiful side only on the verge of death. It is his innate conviction and aesthetic attitude[80]. In the following quote, other characters acknowledge Hannibal as a devil who enjoys his nature (boldfaced):

*You **really** are **the Devil. Certainly** seem to **enjoy it**. You have a click in your hoof*[81].

Lecter himself admits that in his youth he despised Faust (underlined):

As a young man <...> I was <u>contemptuous of Faust</u>[82].

His actions are perceived as a theatrical performance (boldfaced below), and others are capable of seeing elegance and grace in them (underlined) as well:

*He **wants to perform**. Every <u>brutal choice has <...> elegance, grace</u>*[83].

All typecasts and other non-anthropomorphic Gothic entities represent different possibilities for the culminating event to take its ultimate realisation in a certain Gothic text or feature film. Discerning Gothic entities presupposes three criteria: origin, structure, and motivation. The *origin* is a source, the initial appearance of a character (typecast) in a certain chronotope. A witch, for example, is not a noumenal typecast, for initially it is a person (human being) with all human needs, qualities, functions, duties, and only afterwards a witch (this is her other, noumenal, side).

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[79] Jeffery M. Bryan Fuller's "Hannibal" Q & A: "Lecter is like Satan at work". URL: http://www.digitalspy.com/tv/hannibal/interviews/a478343/bryan-fuller-hannibal-qa-lecter-is-like-satan-at-work.

[80] Garret G. Entertaining judgment: The afterlife in popular imagination. Oxford, 2015. P. 89–90.

[81] Natali V., Fuller B. Antipasto. *Hannibal*. Universal City ; Culver City, 2015. 00:07:19–00:07:25.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Foley J., Fuller B. Sorbet. *Hannibal*. Universal City; Culver City, 2013. 00:23:47–00:24:03.

Witches have ordinary lives, pay taxes, wash dishes, drive cars, die of diseases. The witch's supernatural skills are the so called *the other big B* (by the analogy with the Lacanian *objet petit a,* or *object small a*) *structured into* her personality directly perceived and identified as a Gothic typecast (*the big A*). However, *the big B*, in contrast to *the object small a* as, roughly, an alien element, an unattainable desire[84] is interpreted in terms of the ability, not just a desire, if necessary, to become something else though the main form remains human.

Motivation to face the unknown is always initiated by *the known*, therefore rituals and mysteries are performed, and certain words are pronounced in certain locations. Noumenal typecasts, like *the demon*, are not motivated to face the known unless some ritual deliberately invokes them (usually with tragic consequences for the known). Thought demons can shape themselves as humans, their main form is nonhuman, unlike that of a witch. *The big A* of the noumenal type is thus beyond human knowledge, only his *other B* is somehow cognised.

CONCLUSIONS

The English Gothic in fiction and film is defined in the paper as an original cultural convention with the culminating event of a special kind at its core. The event requires specific circumstances that enable the encounter of two opposing forces – *the known* and *the unknown (the beyond)*, the latter relying on the concepts of the bizarre, uncommon, paranormal, etc. The English Gothic generalises the idea about one's problematic self-identification in a supposedly real world in front of unknown and horrible forces that might also inhabit it. The *known world* confronts *the powers of the unknown*, and the culmination of their opposition within the Gothic lies in the event of confrontation that exposes them in a number Gothic entities: phenomena, noumena, pheno-noumena, and anthropomorphic typecasts. The suggested approach of classifying entities that underlie the English Gothic is based on three criteria: origin, typecast structure, and motivation, all of them seen in a joint, analogically reconsidered Lacanian perspective. The Gothic phenomena and noumena are treated within the Kantian tenets, have no supernatural qualities and fall into the subcategories of objects, substances, and abstract notions. The Gothic noumena embody the unknown: non-anthropomorphic supernatural beings, magic substances, objects, and paranormal abstract notions. The Gothic pheno-noumenona combine phenomenal and noumenal qualities

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[84] Lacan J. Ecrits. The first complete edition in English. New York, 2006. P. 61, 571, 697.

and comprise objects, pseudo-aberrations, rituals. The Gothic anthro-pomorphic typecast is, accordingly, a humanlike being on either the side of the known or the unknown; besides, there may be a borderline character having mixed qualities. Accordingly, variants of typecasts are recognised as phenomenal, noumenal, and pheno-noumenal.

The main results of the paper state that the Gothic entities with all their inner qualities catalyse the event and are, therefore, its cause though the event is also realised in the entities themselves, thus becoming the result of catalysis. The entities and the event are mutually important for understanding the English Gothic. The fateful event lies in unfolding the joint gothic entity (the known and the unknown) in time, and the joint entity is subject to procedures with the Hegelian triad of *thesis – antithesis – synthesis*.

SUMMARY

The article explores cultural and philosophical prerequisites of the English Gothic tradition (the Gothic) in fiction and film. Its etymological and historical sources are considered so that to work out a definition helpful in determining basic and specific features of the tradition with reference to initial and modern stages of its development, including the Gothic of Romanticism, Modernism, Postmodernism, and Metamodernism. Accordingly, the English Gothic is a cultural convention based on the macabre pseudo-medieval aesthetics and reflected in fiction and film by means of the English language. Several classifications of fiction works and feature films are given to discern their various types. In general, the Gothic plots are seen as relying on a pattern of arranging characters in their quest of solving supernatural mysteries. In these quests, the characters get involved in the open opposition with the unknown (esoteric and mythological forces). The opposition generalises the major culminating event of the Gothic and is interpreted in the article in Aristotelian, Hegelian, Kantian, and Lacanian terms. The philosophical ideas of R. Guénon are also taken into account to state the underlying principle of the Gothic fictional world. The entities of this generalised world, which get their ultimate exposure in the culminating event, are categorised into four groups with several subclasses.

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