

GOTHIC MARKERS OF THE DETECTIVE GENRE

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Abstract. The purpose of the article is to study the specifics of genre diffusion in literary studies, in particular, the analysis and study of the functional load of the triune category of Gothic poetics (mystery - intense expectation - horror) in the context of the detective genre. In order to study the dialectical unity of the mentioned genre constructions, it seems appropriate to trace their geneological structure, as well as to identify, characterize and analyze basic archetypes as the primary contours of genre transformation. The relevance of the research is determined by the need to systematize relevant features of one or another genre, as well as to identify "diffuse" features of literary Gothic and detective fiction.

As a result, the correlative relationship between literary Gothic and detective through the prism of mystery - tense expectation - horror was established, however, it was investigated that in the paradigm of the poetic continuum of the Gothic genre, the specified triune category is interdependent and complementary in relation to the mystical phenomenon, while in the detective it is rationalistic.

In addition, the semantic horizons of the image of Death and its semantic and functional load in both genre structures were considered, as well as a comparative characterization of the main characters of the specified genre categories was carried out.

Keywords: detective, literary gothic, mystery, suspense, horror, rationalism, mysticism, folklore-mythological images, research.

1. INTRODUCTION

The problem of the formation and development of the detective genre is still among the understudied issue in Ukrainian literary criticism. The generally established stereotypical tradition, especially the one dominant during the Soviet period, usually views this genre in the context of "mass culture, yet not an integral part of the general literary process" (Harlan, 2010, p. 84). This kind of skepticism at the time might have resulted from ideological prejudice, as the issue of the development of the national literary process was out of the question, and the censorship would allow only the texts complimentary to the regime. However, the national variant of the detective genre went through the process of its poetic constants development as well as the evolutionary dynamics in the genre-stylistic discourse of both national and world literary processes; and it is important to mention it happened not only in the framework of synchronic but also diachronic approach. One can find proof of the previous statement in different national literatures as there exist numerous detective texts from the times of Edgar Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle and up to the present.

In her article "The Development of the Retro Detective Genre in Modern European Literature" researcher Olha Kharlan emphasises that "the history of the detective genre, its evolution and development features provide interesting material that adds to understanding of the problem of correlation of the genre with a certain artistic system" (Kharlan, 2010, p. 85). The literary critic also draws attention to the fact that the history of the detective in its modern sense "[stems] from the time of the 'logical stories' by E.A. Poe 'The Murders on the Rue Morgue' (1841), 'The Mystery of Marie Roget' (1843), and 'The Purloined Letter' (1844), with the common character the first famous detective Auguste Dupin" (Kharlan, 2010, p. 86)., she argues that the detective genre genesis goes centuries back, in particular, "its elements are found in the Bible (the story of Cain and Abel shows a crime, a murderer, a victim, the cause of the crime, evidence, an attempt to hide the crime, even the murder weapon; King Solomon sets up a psychological trap to catch a pseudo-mother, etc.) (Harlan, 2010, p. 85).

2. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The paradigm of the scientific study of the artistic organization of a detective work revolves around the system of figurative, thematic-motivational and other levels, it includes a complex of poetic constants along with ideological and content, and genre-style dominants. Consequently, in the given article we make an attempt to distinguish certain peculiarities of the detective genre in the framework of the gothic coordinate system, since, according to the literary critic Ivan Denysiuk, the threefold category of gothic poetics – mystery, horror and suspense is the genre-building constant of literary gothic. Khrystyna Pastukh shares the above opinion, emphasising that this model "is perhaps the most important attribute of a gothic work and serves as a driver for both reader's attention and imagination" (Pastukh, 2013, p. 7).

In our opinion, the above-mentioned category embraces formal and content peculiarities of the gothic genre, as well as its problems and images, themes and motives, genre, style, and plot features, etc. However, it is worth emphasising the fact that three fundamental features of literary gothic genre, namely mystery, horror, and suspense, are inherent for detective genre as well. Moreover, some researchers consider detective genre to be a logical continuation of the gothic one, and one can see evident traces of both detective and gothic genres in some literary works (for example, in the novel "The Woman in White" by Wilkie Collins). In our article, we try to identify gothic markers of the detective genre as well as explore their semantic and functional meanings.

Thus, one of the constitutive features of any plot of a gothic work is a mystery – for example, someone's disappearance, unknown origin, unsolved crime, etc. "The exposition of a conflict normally goes back to the past, while the disclosure of a secret is postponed until the very end. Moreover, the main secret or mystery correlates with minor ones, marginal, and they also find their exposure in the end. At the same time, it is important to emphasise that mystery is one of the determining features of the detective genre since its other genre-building dominants revolve around it, and that it how they create appropriate operational space for the development of a detective line of a particular work. In a gothic narrative a mystery or secret always contains a mysterious element, which becomes the central component of the philosophical and aesthetic understanding of the world, whereas works of the detective genre the focus of the mystery disclosure (be it a bizarre event, someone's disappearance, murder, or a different crime) goes to "ratio" (i.e. sense, mind, intellect) which reveals itself through the prism of a main character's observation and/or deduction skills, as s/he is usually doing the detecting or investigation.

Therefore, in the gothic work the mystery of plot collisions is accompanied by interdependent plot peculiarities of the gothic paradigm – horror and suspense" (Bilous, 2004, p. 192). The same peculiarities are inherent in the detective genre to some extent: while gothic works are dominated by horror, if one compares influence of the three above-mentioned constants (mystery, horror, and suspense), in a detective story horror is often a collateral consequence of the plot development and it makes itself known by means of elements of danger. This kind of overlap of the fundamental principles of literary gothic and detective genres quite naturally raises the question concerning differentiation of the above-mentioned literary genres, and, in our opinion, the difference lies in the way of thinking and, therefore, authors' structure of their texts (taking into account the aspect of perception): while in the gothic genre both world perception and reproduction rely on an irrational basis with an emphasis on the categories of mystical and corresponding eschatological motives, the detective genre relies on a rational, analytical perception and portrayal of real circumstances as well as plot development of events.

One should mention that in the literary gothic horror is combined with the motive of death: i.e. when a character's subconscious fears come to the surface within confined topos it results in the appearance of another characteristic feature typical for a gothic character – the fear of death. On the one hand, this trait can be seen as a genetically predetermined instinct, on the other hand, it might be a fruit of a religious and cultural worldview. A. Schopenhauer perceives the fear of death as the reverse side of the will to live, though he emphasises that it is based on the associative perception of death as evil. Hence the fear of it. In his works "Thoughts for the Time of War and Death" (1915) and "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" (1920), Freud somewhat modifies this feature, arguing that each individual has an inherent attraction to death. The Austrian psychoanalyst concludes that the inanimate preceded the living. Living substance stems from inanimate, and directly or indirectly goes back to its original state, since "the purpose of all life is death" (Freud, 2018, p. 109). The self-preservation drive is a particular case of a general drive aimed at providing the body with its own path to death. According to Freud, desires to live and to die do not appear in their pure forms, but they are closely intertwined, and connection might be traced in particular in sadism and masochism as in a dialectically integral psychological complex. That is why the gothic hero creates their own model of Death perception, focused on obtaining forbidden knowledge. Thus, gothic genre can be considered a literary version of the Freudian "death drive". In general G. Bataille considers Death a development: if one wants to live, they should not try to escape from the shadows of death, but, on the contrary, allow them to grow on the edge of feelings loss, where Death itself ends (Kunnas, 2015, p. 38). N. Bukina argues that in this way gothic genre substantiates the idea of renewal through death, the idea towards which our souls have been long inclined (Bukina, 2016, p. 41). Thus, at the motives level the image-symbol of Death plays a significant role in the gothic paradigm, since other constants of the genre (image of a grave, motives of fate and doom, an ancestral curse, etc.) revolve around it.

When it comes to the image of Death in the detective genre, in our opinion, it reflects context of the existential coordinate system: a detective sees death as an existential phenomenon. "No one can save another one from dying. Dying proves that ontologically death always correlates with being personal and existential" (Topol, 2009, p. 84). Taking into account that main existential phenomena correlate with people, E. Fink writes: "Death" is not just an "event", but also an existential comprehension of human mortality" (Topol, 2009, p. 85). To understand the phenomenon of "death", one must experience it or get used to it (Topol, 2009, p. 85). This correlates with how Jaspers puts it: to understand a soul, "we place

ourselves in other's shoes ", so that we understand their pains and experiences (Topol, 2009, p. 86). The detective genre sees Death in the context of a plot development in the framework of existential paradigm: Death appears to be a given thing, the most obvious and easily perceived one, a kind of point of non-return, and at the same time, an early termination of life with a certain practical purpose – be it inheritance, breaking free from someone's influence, or avoidance of persecution. Thus, detective genre modifies the image of Death according to its own literary structure, which clearly correlates with the category of mysticism in the framework of rationality, since detective mystery is devoid of mysticism (hence there is no dominant emotional component), it has a realistic-naturalistic focus, which, in turn, appeals to the rational component. This is the thing the Goncourt brothers would emphasise in their diary: "Having read Edgar Poe... [there is] a new literary world, a prophet of the 20th century... No poetry - the imagination is verified by analysis... There is a sense of monomania in this. Things play a greater role than people; love gives way to deduction and similar sources of thoughts, phrases, plots and curiosity; the basis of a novel has moved from heart to head, from feeling to thought, from dramatic clashes to mathematical calculations" (Kyienko, 2023, p. 7). Therefore, Gothic Death is usually the result of the biblical motive of atonement for sins, whereas in the detective genre it appears as a driver of false interpretations until circumstances are clarified and a crime is solved.

Plot peculiarities of a gothic work include dynamic and intense development of events, there is an exceptional place for fatal accidents, coincidences, as well as presence of the almighty *Fatum*. "Such leitmotifs as persecution and persecution, crime and punishment, prophetic dreams, divinations, visions, ancestral curses, unnatural love, hatred, and death are purely gothic in nature" (Bilous, 2004, p. 192). One should mention that both the issues of crime and punishment, as well as hatred and death, are among the key issues in the detective genre, yet, while gothic tradition calls to subconscious fears that become known in the framework of the genre, detective stories appeal to the logical, rational foundations. Moreover, both genres systems use conventional frames to enhance literary effect of developing plots; however, there is a significant difference between them: while gothic texts represent a system of figurative, thematic-motive, and other levels, a complex of poetic constants, as well as ideological, content, and genre-style dominants in the framework of folklore and mythology, they appeal to the collective unconscious of a nation, detective texts aim at justice- and truth-seeking, and it becomes a foundation, an existential basis of this genre functioning, regardless of the circumstances, historical era, artistic truth, or individual unconscious of the characters of a detective story. Thus, whereas a literary gothic story is an allusion to the collective unconscious, a detective story focuses on an individual, since it is the intellectual level, attentiveness, meticulousness, and responsibility of the main character, who is a detective, that drive the story and lead to a fair punishment of the criminal.

It is important to mention that both of these literary genres share some common features in the framework of archetypal analysis; however, this subtle "kinship" expresses diversity of poetic constants which determine coherent differentiation and express ambivalence of semantic subtexts, images, as well as ideological, content, and genre-style dominants in these genres. For example, gothic genre offers its own version of the traditional archetype of home model, filling it with relevant semantics. Thus, literary gothic genre creates the notion of "anti-home", or so-called "black home", which, in turn, correlates with the traditional representation of Home, neglecting the sacredness of the latter. The detective genre does not label this archetype with any latent semantics in accordance with its own coordinate system, but, on the contrary: it presents the traditional modeling of home as a close sacred inhabited space, which

coordinates individual modifications of this archetype and stereotypical ideas at the content-structural level of the text.

In terms of the Shadow archetype, gothic literature permanently pushes it to the surface in its generalized form, personifying the concept of fear according to the demonology of a certain nationality. The Shadow is "the dark unconscious side of a personality, ignored (rejected) by conscious processes of their Ego" (Mazur, 2020, p.46). At the same time, detective stories use the Shadow archetype to create an image of a criminal, thus confirming his sinful essence, manifested in hatred and malicious intentions. "The Shadow archetype hides desires of the libido and they get rechannelled into various types of constructive activity and thus it reduces feelings of internal anxiety and tension, contributing to the development of the creative potential of an individual" (Mazur, 2020, p. 46). However, in the detective genre, the latter transforms into a committed crime – someone's murder, robbery, persecution, or rape, etc. Moreover, the image of a criminal in the detective genre combines characteristics of both the Shadow and the Persona as dominant archetypes. Such syncretic identification is a negative influence on a villain's image, since it can lead result in the destruction of the character's individuality: an individual "begins to identify himself only with the social role, the "mask" (actor's face), chosen in order to seamlessly integrate in the social environment" (Mazur, 2020, p. 48). Therefore, the unity of the above-mentioned archetypes in the detective genre becomes a factor helping to tell apart literary gothic and detective genres.

In her scientific study "Historical and philosophical interpretation of personality archetypes as symbolic images of the collective unconscious in the receptive field of psychoanalytic views of Carl Gustav Jung" researcher Maryna Mazur argues that under the influence of the Shadow archetype a personality stays in a state of mental duality, "multiple" personality. "Each alter-ego of the personality depends on their own stereotypical patterns of behavior and perception of reality => (dissociative personality disorder (DID)). Peculiarities of the dissociative identity disorder [DID] (DSM-IV) are revealed in the documentary novels of Daniel Keyes (1927 – 2014) "The Minds of Billy Milligan" –1981 and "The Milligan Wars" –1994, which tell the real story of American William Stanley Milligan, who was a dangerous criminal and committed various crimes (robbery, rape, etc.), and who was diagnosed with a "multiple personality". The key point of him committing crimes were 24 full-fledged personalities => 10 of them were main and 14 were "undesirable", including his own main personality" (Mazur, 2020, p. 46). Therefore, the central issue of a literary detective is the scientific explanation of the behavior of a criminal, based on a rational interaction between reality and the inner world of a villain, while for gothic literature it is the irrational perception of reality in the context of mysticism that is the fundamental determinant.

Another integral characteristic feature of the poetics of the gothic genre is the archetype of the road, which finds its implementation in the motives of seeking and wandering of the main characters. In the framework of the gothic literature, roads are seen as a modification of the labyrinth mythologem, while in detective stories they are often perceived as implicit symbols of the search for truth, and this symbol gets verified by the presence of a detective character (Edgar Poe created melancholic intellectual Auguste Dupin, who never makes mistakes and in his work relies not so much on material evidence but rather on the strength of his mind and imagination. Conan Doyle introduced an eccentric analyst, Sherlock Holmes, who looks a lot like an English amateur athlete in addition to all his brilliant deductive abilities and talents. G. K. Chesterton thought of humble Reverend Brown, whose methods of

investigation are based on his understanding of psychology which stems from the pastor listening to confessions of his parishioners) (Collins, 2023, p. 9). The very presence of characters who are in charge of investigation processes allows to always rationally explain mysteries of a crime in the detective genre (if there is a fact of committing a crime mentioned in the text – then there must be a person who has committed the crime with a certain purpose – therefore, a detective tries to learn motives of each character of the narrative – and, consequently, there must be a result of an investigation, which at the same time brings readers the sense of justice done, as it shows the process of punishing the offender); meanwhile, the literary gothic genre relies on a fundamentally irrational basis, namely, merging of an image of a villain and supernatural forces. Thus, existing images of supernatural characters, who harm people or even kill them, incorporate functions of villains, while real, common characters gothic works fall victims of the former. This is the feature that brings in a significant difference when it comes to comparing the two genres.

Another key difference between literary gothic and detective genres is the aspect of perception, which is closely related to the figurative-motive level of a work: for gothic literature presence of folklore-demonological characters is close to imperative as readers perceive gothic texts through the prism of their own biblical or pagan beliefs and eschatological representations, each detail of the literary work plays to the gothic entourage, which, in turn, creates suspense (intense expectation), meanwhile, a detective story revolves around the very fact of a crime committed and the process of its investigation by a real detective character, thus every literary detail gets readers closer to the disclosure of the mystery of a crime; therefore, in a detective story the suspense effect is somewhat reduced, it reflects a certain mundane repetitiveness, something that adds to a logical model of criminal behaviour.

3. CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, mystery, horror, and suspense are absolutely crucial dominants for both gothic and detective genres. However, for the latter, it is the factor of a realistic, rationally explained interpretation of events, a logical mechanism of emphasising the motive behind a crime that is of paramount importance. For the gothic genre the above-mentioned three-component category reveals itself through the prism of paralogical thinking and relies on intuition, while in the detective genre it serves as a means of rational-logical detailing, and being combined with empirical knowledge and scientific interpretation it expands the boundaries of the cognitive effect of the phenomenon of truth.

The fact that the above-mentioned components are present in both genres and their literary constructs makes it possible to emphasize their semiotic and structural similarity, which, in turn, allows us to argue they share some similarities in terms of genres genealogy, and therefore, one can trace partial integration of gothic elements into a detective genre. French linguist and literary critic Tsvetan Todorov sees this transience as a regular pattern in genres modification: "...a new genre is always a transformation of one or more older genres: by means of inversion, transference, or combination" (Soletsky, 2018, p. 63). Moreover, it is a known fact that there are no "pure" genres existing in any kind of art; therefore, this kind of dialectical correlation of literary gothic and detective genres in the framework of the three-component category (mystery/horror/ suspense) correlates with a generalized semiotic model and a visual and mental form of world perception, yet it has two different focuses: the gothic tradition is permanently stuck on the emphasis of transcendent, while the detective tradition values rational.

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Ірина Стецька. Готичні маркери детективного жанру. *Журнал Прикарпатського університету імені Василя Стефаника. Філологія*, 10 (2023), 83–90.

Метою статті є дослідження специфіки жанрової дифузності в літературознавстві, зокрема аналіз та вивчення функціонального навантаження триєдиної категорії готичної поетики (таємничості – напруженого очікування - жаху) в контексті детективного жанру. З метою дослідження діалектичної єдності зазначених жанрових конструктів видається доцільним простежити їх генеалогічну структуру, а також виявити, охарактеризувати та проаналізувати базові архетипи як первинні контури жанрової трансформації. Актуальність дослідження визначається необхідністю систематизації релевантних ознак того чи іншого жанру, а також виявлення «дифузних» особливостей літературної готики та детективу.

Як результат було встановлено корелятивне співвідношення літературної готики та детективу крізь призму таємничості – напруженого очікування – жаху, однак досліджено, що в парадигмі поетологічного континууму готичного жанру зазначена триєдина категорія є взаємозалежною та

взаємодоповнювальною стосовно феномену містичного, тоді коли в детективному – раціоналістичного.

Крім того, розглянуто смислові горизонти образу Смерті та її семантико-функціонального навантаження в обох жанрових конструктах, а також здійснено порівняльну характеристику головних персонажів зазначених жанрових категорій.

Ключові слова: детектив, літературна готика, таємничість, напружене очікування, жах, раціоналізм, містицизм, фольклорно-міфологічні образи, нишпорка.