

**DOKUZ EYLÜL UNIVERSITY**  
**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES**  
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**MASTER’S THESIS**

**POESQUE SPACE AS A FEAR FACTOR IN KAZUO  
ISHIGURO’S *WHEN WE WERE ORPHANS AND NEVER  
LET ME GO***

**Hasan Serkan DEMİR**

**Supervisor**

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nilsen GÖKÇEN**

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## **APPROVAL PAGE**



## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this doctoral thesis titled as “Poesque Space As A Fear Factor In Kazuo Ishiguro’s *When We Were Orphans* And *Never Let Me Go*” has been written by myself in accordance with the academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that all materials benefited in this thesis consist of the mentioned resources in the reference list. I verify all these with my honor.

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Master's Thesis**

**Poesque Space as a Fear Factor in Kazuo Ishiguro's *When We Were Orphans* and  
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**Hasan Serkan DEMİR**

**Dokuz Eylül University**

**Graduate Institute of Social Sciences**

**Department Of Western Languages and Literatures**

**American Culture and Literature Program**

Literary pace plays an important role in the evocation of feelings because space is not only a container of things but a subjective reality. The meaning of space depends on the person who attaches meaning to it. In Poe's stories, it is the narrator who forges the meaning of space based on his most important tool, stories. Gothic fiction is probably the most typical example in which space is used to create different moods and emotions. Gothic narratives use this element to create a horrid atmosphere filled with darkness and unknown. Edgar Allan Poe, as a gothic fiction writer, owes his gothic effect largely to the narrator's perception and understanding of space. Radiating from the narrator's mind, Poe's space uncannily echoes everywhere. While Poe masterfully manipulates the imagination of his narrator, he successfully draws his reader to this horrid space.

The contemporary writer Kazuo Ishiguro echoes Poe in terms of the concept of space in his novels. For both Poe and Ishiguro, the uncanny and doubles are extremely important elements. Both writers use these elements in order to blur the boundaries of reality. Threatening the boundaries of reality leads to doubts as to taken-for-granted definitions. Besides, stories play an important role in creating space for both Ishiguro and Poe.

**This thesis aims to follow the projections of Poesque methods Kazuo Ishiguro employs in his novels *Never Let Me Go* and *When We Were Orphans*, such as narration or storytelling, doubles, unknown and uncanny.**

**Keywords: Poesque space, uncanny, Kazuo Ishiguro, Gothic, doubles, clones, Edgar Allan Poe.**



## ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Kazuo Ishiguro'nun *When We Were Orphans* ve *Never Let Me Go* adlı  
romanlarında Korku Faktörü Olarak Poesk Mekan  
Hasan Serkan Demir

Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı Programı

Edebiyatta mekân duygu uyandırmada çok önemli bir rol oynar çünkü mekân sadece içerisinde bulunanların taşıyıcısı değil öznel bir gerçekliktir. Mekânın anlamı ona anlam veren kişiden kişiye göre değişebilir. Poe'da bu anlamı anlatıcı oluşturur; onun en önemli aracı ise öyküsüdür. Gotik roman muhtemelen mekânın ruh halini ve duyguyu yaratmak için kullanıldığı en tipik örnektir. Gotik karanlık ve bilinmeyen gibi öğeleri kullanarak korkunç bir atmosfer yaratmaya çalışır. Bir gotik yazarı olarak Edgar Allan Poe'nun gotik atmosferi etkisini büyük oranda anlatıcının mekânı algılaması ve anlamlandırmasına borçludur. Poe'nun mekânları anlatıcının aklından yansırken tekinsiz bir biçimde her yerde yankılanır. Poe anlatıcısının hayal gücünü ustaca manipüle ederken okurunu da bu korkunç mekâna çekmeyi başarır.

Günümüz yazarlarından Kazuo Ishiguro romanlarındaki mekân anlayışı açısından Poe ile benzerlik göstermektedir. Tekinsizlik ve ikilikler hem Ishiguro hem de Poe için çok önemli bir öğedir. İki yazar da bu öğeleri gerçeğin sınırlarını belirsizleştirmek için kullanırlar. Gerçeğin sınırlarının tehdit edilmesi, alışılmış tanımlardan şüphe etmeyi de arkasından getirir. Bunun yanında, hikâyeler hem Poe'nun hem Ishiguro'nun mekânlarını oluşturmalarında önemli rol oynar.

**Bu tez Kazuo Ishiguro’nun *Never Let Me Go* ve *When We Were Orphans* adlı romanlarında, Edgar Allan Poe’nun gotik mekânı yaratmak için kullandığı hikâyeleme, ikilik, bilinmeyen ve tekinsizlik gibi ögelerin izdüşümlerini takip etmek amacındadır.**

**Anahtar Kelimeler: Poe mekânları, Gotik, mekân, tekinsizlik, kopyalama/klonlama, Kazuo Ishiguro, Edgar Allan Poe.**



**POESQUE SPACE AS A FEAR FACTOR IN KAZUO ISHIGURO’S *WHEN WE WERE ORPHANS* AND *NEVER LET ME GO***

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## INTRODUCTION

Fear is one of the oldest and strongest emotions of mankind, says an important gothic writer H.P Lovecraft, and Gothic literature writers try to evoke this ancient and strong emotion in their characters and readers. Undisputedly, Edgar Allan Poe is the master of this genre with his exquisite storytelling skills. Poe knows how to haunt his reader with his authentic imagination and unique use of language. Through his exceptional narration in his stories, Poe creates a reflection of nightmare for his characters in order to make them experience true fear. He uses a host of Gothic elements in order to create this fearful atmosphere. The contemporary British writer Kazuo Ishiguro, more than two hundred years after Poe, uses Gothic elements similar to Poe's in his novels. This thesis, on the one hand, analyzes how Poe uses and manipulates Gothic elements in his stories "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Pit and the Pendulum" and "The Cask of Amontillado" by focusing on the concept of space in particular. On the other hand, it focuses on how Kazuo Ishiguro's space in his novels *When We Were Orphans* and *Never Let Me Go* show similarity to the deployment of space in Edgar Allan Poe's stories.

The first part of the thesis, focusing on the discussion on the concept of space, provides a philosophical panorama. It explains how the theories about space have changed throughout their emergence to Gothic fiction. It starts with the mythological definition of space as a container and continues with the theories of Aristotle and Plato. Then it continues with the changes philosophers like David Hume and Immanuel Kant bring to the definition of space from an external reality to an internal one. As an internal reality, space becomes a subjective reality which changes according to its perceiver; thus, imagination, emotion, and perception play an important role in the meanings attached to space. At the end of the chapter, the emphasis is placed on the connection between this external reality and literature, explicated with an example of the subjective structure of space.

After the philosophical panorama, the thesis focuses on the Gothic Space. Gothic was introduced to the European way of life as an architectural style. However, Gothic is

not only an architectural movement but also a literary movement. Therefore, the part on Gothic space describes its employment in literature via the first examples of the genre. After the first examples, it focuses on the ways Gothic literature uses space to create fear, which elements it includes, and how it operates them. To support the argument, the main source is provided by Bachelard's discussion and examples in *The Poetics of Space*. As its major effect is to arouse fear, Gothic space uses darkness and the unknown. The stories and storytelling follow as ways of dealing with the unknown. People tend to rationalize and explain the irrational, dark and unknown in their imagination. They try to find definitions for the unknown in order to control it. But there are grand forces that they cannot control such as nature. Nature as an uncontrollable force occupies a significant portion of Gothic space especially in its infinitude and agoraphobic examples.

After these delineations of Gothic Space, several stories of Poe are discussed in order to enlighten Poesque space in the first chapter. Poe uses space as an element of uncanny by doubles, which he achieves by merging characteristics attached to different persons and even those attached to inanimate objects with those of animate objects. For example, in "The Fall of the House of Usher," the connections and similarities between Roderick Usher and the family house contribute greatly to the feeling of uncanny. Another crucial element of Poesque space, premature burial, is also analyzed in this story as it epitomizes fears known as of claustrophobia. In addition to agoraphobia and claustrophobia, Poe uses sense-related images such as sounds and darkness in order to limit the perception of his characters in space. In "The Fall of the House of Usher," for example, Poe designs a climax scene with unbearably extreme uncanny sounds and visions that sends the narrator into the depths of awe and fear.

The second story exemplifying the Poesque space is "The Pit and the Pendulum." The first part of the story focuses on how knowledge and an unknown space force the narrator to create his own horrid space. The second part focuses on the pit, the ghastly reality in space. The pit as the unknown threatens to exceed the boundaries of known reality. Once the space becomes visible and light, physical constraint disables the narrator's movements. Thus it is either lack of knowledge, darkness or actual physical

limitations that make the narrator the victim of an approaching danger. The chapter focuses on how Poe manages to turn the space into an inescapable torture chamber.

The last section of the first chapter examines and discusses how Poe uses outside and inside space as a device of uncanny in his “The Cask of Amontillado.” Poe uses a carnival setting as outside space to evoke the feeling of uncanny. In a carnival, nobody knows the true identity of people around, for people hide behind their masks. Furthermore, Poe uses this setting to match the space with the hideous intentions of his main character and narrator. However, this seemingly joyous and celebratory space turns into a dark and gloomy one when the characters descend into the catacombs in the narrator’s cellar. As a space of darkness and death, catacombs play a crucial role to evoke the feelings of fear and anxiety. Poe creates a correlation between the characters and space and his devices such as the carnival setting, masks, and catacombs strengthen the feeling of fear in space.

The second chapter of the thesis concentrates on the novels of Kazuo Ishiguro and shows how he creates a similar atmosphere to Poe’s. It begins with *Never Let Me Go*, in which, Ishiguro uses claustrophobic space elements peculiar to Poesque space. However, Ishiguro creates claustrophobic space by using invisible walls like those in “The Pit and The Pendulum.” These invisible walls are constructed around Hailsham, the main building in the novel, by the stories, unwritten restrictions and psychological pressure. Even though these stories seem like shields that protect the children inside Hailsham, actually the invisible verbal barrier that holds the students—who are revealed to be clones created for organ donations—inside like cattle in a barn. Informed only by their totally isolated educations at Hailsham, these students wait for their organs to be transplanted to the “real” humans. As “others,” clone students are entrapped in a claustrophobic space where they cannot make decisions concerning even their own bodies. The guardians check clone students’ health routinely in order to keep their “body” healthy. Therefore, Hailsham students actually live in a space of deceit and horror. According to the people outside the school, they are the source of horror and uncanny. Though they are physically identical to normal humans, they are considered to be different, in fact, the uncanny doubles of humans created in a laboratory. Normal

human beings are afraid of the clones because clones are “the others” and they threaten the singular, rational and supreme human that is at the center of the world.

The last part of Chapter II examines Ishiguro’s novel *When We Were Orphans*. It brings together two Poesque techniques of detective and mystery fiction. The two major settings of the novel are London and Shanghai. While London seems to be the place of order and reason, Shanghai, with its intricate and narrow streets and the painful memories of war and loss in the narrator’s mind becomes a location where reason falters and disintegrates. The story looks like a detective fiction, but Ishiguro subverts the conventions of this genre by using an unreliable narrator as the protagonist. This subversion affects space because the story is told from the perspective of the unreliable protagonist. The protagonist Banks becomes a detective in order to find his so-called kidnapped family, and he forces himself to believe he could find and save them after all those years. The protagonist changes reality, thus, space according to his will. While reordering space to the distorted memories of his own, he projects them to realities and creates rather crooked doubles of real persons and events. Ishiguro’s doubles, like Poe’s, create an uncanny effect. Furthermore, the unreliability of the narrator contributes to this uncanny effect because it is hard to tell if the narrator is telling the truth or not.

## CHAPTER ONE

### SPACE THEORIES

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

H.P. Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror in Literature*

#### 1.1. PHILOSOPHICAL PANORAMA

Space, like time and air, is a subject that is so familiar yet so difficult to think about because of its familiarity; it surrounds everything in such a way that one cannot identify or isolate it as something independent of the objects, events, and people that it permeates. Different branches of study including philosophy, geometry, mathematics and social sciences discuss the meanings and significance of space. All of these discussions focus initially on the question “What is space?” The first theories about space focus on the container theory which conceptualizes space as a supreme being and a container of the beings. One of the earliest examples of this theory can be found in the book of Hesiod, a Greek poet (700 B.C.). In his book *Theogony*, in the chapter entitled “Creation Stories from around the World,” he explains the roots of creation. According to *Theogony*: “Chaos was born first and after her came Gaia the broad-breasted, the firm seat of all the immortals who hold the peaks of snowy Olympos, and the misty Tartaros” (Hesiod, 1983: 18 - St.140). The first and the supreme existence is “chaos” and chaos exists even before the earth, underworld (hell), titans and the gods. It is the shapeless void that contains all that exists and beings within. Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle adopted Hesiod’s “container space” concept and used it to explain space in their studies. According to Plato, “[...] Space can no more exist independently of the things in it than

time can exist without events to measure” (1888: 183). It means that space has no quality on its own and it acts as a haven for the objects exist and processes take place. Plato’s pupil Aristotle’s concept of space bears similarities to his mentor’s:

“First of all things came chaos to being, then broad-breasted earth,” implying that things need to have space first, because he (Hesiod) thought, with most people, that everything is somewhere and in place. If this is its nature, the potency of place must be a marvelous thing, and take precedence of all other things. For that without which nothing else can exist, while it can exist without the others, must needs be first; for place does not pass out of existence when the things in it are annihilated. (Aristotle, 2012, IV: I)

Aristotle’s theory of space is based on Hesiod’s concept of chaos as container. Again, according to Aristotle, every being needs space to exist, but space can exist without the help of the bodies it contains. This theory envisions that space is an exterior reality as the container of the things that exist.

Next to these above-mentioned philosophers who formulate space as a container, philosophers like Hume and Kant think that space is a “secondary quality” that needs human perception to exist:

As every idea is deriv’d from some impression, which is exactly similar to it, the impressions similar to this idea of extension, must either be some sensations deriv’d from the sight, or some internal impressions arising from these sensations. Our internal impressions are our passions, emotions, desires and aversions; none of which, I believe, will ever be asserted to be the model, from which the idea of space is deriv’d. There remains therefore nothing but the senses, which can convey to us this original impression. (Hume, 1739: 24)

Fundamentally, according to Hume, space relies on the perceptual mental process of the spectator, and the meaning of space depends on the physiology of our perceptual mental

processes. Hence, space is not like a ‘primary quality’ that indicates an external reality, which is independent from the senses, but it is a reality that depends on the perceptual mental process (James Fieser no pg.). As an empiricist, Hume thinks that things can be proven to exist only with the perceptions of the senses. He bases his theory of space on this empiric information: “the idea of space is convey’d to the mind by two senses, the sight and touch” (1896: 27). As such, directly connected to the human senses, space is depends on our perceptual mental process. Kant differs from Hume because he puts forward a transcendental concept of space: “Space is merely the form of outer intuition, but not a real object that can be externally intuited, and it is not a correlate of appearances, but rather the form of appearances themselves. Thus space taken absolutely (simply by itself) alone cannot occur as something determining the existence of things, because it is not an object at all, but only the form of possible objects” (Kant, 1998: 473). In other words, it is only from the human aspect that we can speak about space, and we cognize things not as they are in themselves *but only as they appear under the conditions of our sensibility* (Kant, 1998: 8). So, Kant’s theory denies the existence of space except our intuition because the knowledge of space must be *a priori*<sup>1</sup>.

Despite the differences in their nuances, philosophers like Hume and Kant changed the concept of space from objective to subjective. Space had earlier been considered to exist independently from the perceiver so that it could exist without an observer. Nevertheless, Kant’s theory of space is centered on the perceiver for the existence of space. Hume relates the existence of space to our perceptions and Kant takes it one step further and turns it into a category that exists in our mind. According to their theories, space is a subjective reality that changes according to the experience of the perceiver. In other words, the concept of space is personal and subjective. If space is a personal and subjective reality then emotion, imagination and perception ... etc.—play an important role on the meaning of space. Also, if space is reduced to personal terms, then space includes personal experiences and imaginative faculty.

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<sup>1</sup> **A priori knowledge**, in Western philosophy since the time of Immanuel Kant, knowledge that is independent of all particular experiences, as opposed to a posteriori knowledge, which derives from experience (Tikkanen, 2011: no pg.)

The role of imagination in envisioning different meanings of space is most truly observed in literary space constructions and depictions. In literature, space is used as a tool to set the feelings and mood of the story. Gothic fiction is probably the most typical example in which space is used to create moods and emotion. Nicole Eismann points out this fact as follows:

Literary spaces [...] do not only function as places for actions and happenings but are functionalized in different ways. One purpose of the space, that is especially important for Gothic fiction, is to set the mood of the story, which also implies to capture the fears and issues of the respective time and use them to create a certain atmosphere around the plot. (2015: 1)

Space is more than a container with its subjective structure. For example, in Gothic fiction, the room of a high school principal can be very scary for the students but whereas for the other teachers, the same room represents a place of higher status, for the principal him/herself the same space is nothing more than a place of work. These are all possible because different meanings can be attached to the same space. People attach these meanings based on their personal experiences related to these spaces; these attached meanings in turn permeate the mood of the room. Scared students feel nervous when they are in the principal's room. Just as the imaginative faculty is at work in associating a specific space with certain meanings those meanings in turn generate related emotions in people. One of the strongest emotion spaces generate in us is fear, the feeling that Gothic fiction evokes.

## **1.2. GOTHIC SPACE**

The term Gothic originates from the Germanic Tribe "Goths" who invaded Europe in the time of The Roman Empire (113 BC and 596 AD). The term was first used to refer to the architectural style related to Goths. Elaborate architectural structure of the Germanic tribes expanded to include most European architecture. Gothic architecture is generally known with the examples of cathedrals and churches because it



is an architectural style that points out the power of the divinity with its great, towering designs, which extends upwards with reverence. The improvements in engineering in the 12th and 13th centuries enabled the construction of gigantic buildings which are an important feat of Gothic style. These gigantic cathedrals are divine symbols which remind people of how small they are in front of God. The enormity of these architectural buildings evokes the feeling of awe because it gives a feeling of extreme smallness inside. Moreover, the images used in these structures (in cathedrals or churches) are often exaggerated to the level of grotesquery. The figure of the gargoyle is a unique example of this grotesquery. Radically different from the common pure biblical images like angel, saints, nuns, the figure of the gargoyle is monstrous and scary.

Gothic is not only an architectural style but also a literary style that influenced literature between the years 1764-1840. Nevertheless, it is wrong to limit Gothic literature with a period because its effects still continue today. In literature, Gothic style is generally used in the novel genre, and one of the first examples of the Gothic fiction is Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). The plot of the novel takes place in a castle which is seemingly haunted by ghosts. The haunted castle is a mysterious and supernatural atmosphere with its dark and gloomy rooms. The rooms of the castle often lack light and the sound of the doors closing by themselves strike terror in the characters. Fred Botting explains the importance of place in early Gothic fiction:

The major locus of Gothic plots, the castle, was gloomily predominant in early Gothic fiction. Decaying, bleak and full of hidden passageways, the castle was linked to other medieval edifices—abbeys, churches and graveyards especially—that, in their generally ruinous states, harked back to a feudal past associated with barbarity, superstition and fear. [...] In later fiction, the castle gradually gave way to the old house: as both building and family line, it became the site where fears and anxieties returned in the present. (1996: 2)

All of these spaces are equally important for Gothic literature. However, they need to be filled with extreme elements in order to evoke strong emotional responses like awe and fear:

Tortuous, fragmented narratives relating mysterious incidents, horrible images and life-threatening pursuits predominate in the eighteenth century. Spectres, monsters, demons, corpses, skeletons, evil aristocrats, monks and nuns, fainting heroines and bandits populate Gothic landscapes as suggestive figures of imagined and realistic threats. This list grew, in the nineteenth century, with the addition of scientists, fathers, husbands, madmen, criminals and the monstrous double signifying duplicity and evil nature. (Botting, 1996: 1)

Anything with extreme qualities plays a vital role in gothic style for it challenges both social norms and the biological and imaginative capacities of human perception. Just as a gigantic structure's power lies in the human inability to see it as a whole, sexually forbidden acts such as incest challenge social norms: "The literary Gothic [...] is typically concerned with extreme states, such as violence and pain, fear and anxiety, sexual aggression and perversion" (Hillard, 2009: 690). Likewise, darkness, claustrophobic and sunless environments create the effect of uncertainty and unknown because they limit our vision. Also, extreme voices, width, length, height etc. create fear because they threaten to supersede the limits of human perception. Excessive voices like thunder, a scream or a door shut are alarming for the senses. These excessive forms always underlie human phobias. Susan Yi Sencindiver identifies these elements as follows:

The Gothic constitutes a *sui generis* mode of fiction in its adept manipulation of innumerable spatial phobias: lygophobia (fear of dark or gloomy places), claustrophobia (fear of enclosed spaces) and its corollary monophobia (fear of solitude); agoraphobia (the fear of open spaces), atremia or stasophobia (fear of elevated or vertical stations), cenophobia

(fear of empty spaces), and as we will suggest ensuing, oiko- or domatophobia (fear of houses, home surroundings). (2010: 1)

Large spaces occupy liminal positions in human perception, their threat lying in the fact that one cannot see the totality of such spaces. For example, castles and mansions evoke the feeling of the perceiver's smallness in a huge space. Similarly, repetitive images evoke the feeling of entrapment and endlessness in space. In Gothic literature the space where characters move and act is actually full of "exaggerated" outside forces which are "uncontrollable" by characters. Thus, Gothic space can be defined as the space of the excessive, filled with exaggerations and abnormalities. According to Manuel Aguirre, "Gothic can be said to postulate [...] the world of the sublime, terrifying, chaotic Numinous which transcends human reason (but which need not be the supernatural)" (2008: 2-3). These excessive forms are the root cause of the awe and fear characters in Gothic fiction deal with as Sencindiver states: "Excess, disorder, and violation are innate to fictional fearful world of the Gothic" (2010: 4). To create this scary effect, Gothic space influences our senses with high density of outside forces. Voice and sound are a crucial part of this effect. A scream, for instance, is an alarming voice which signifies danger and insecurity. It also signifies threat; screaming heard in a castle gives a mysterious and dangerous feeling to both the readers and the character(s) in the work because the source of the sound is generally impossible to determine in this exceptionally large space. Furthermore, storm and lightning play a similar role as the scream. Even though they are not sounds of a person, the exceptional pitch of these sounds scare people because it is both high pitched and unexpected. Generally, the sound of thunder is heard in a dark and gloomy room. The timing of the thunder increases the gothic feeling of fear because the sound of thunder pierces through the silence of the dark night.

Castles and mansions are the most commonly used spaces in Gothic literature. These constructions are considered both complicated and exceptionally large with their excessive number of rooms. As Veronica Majlingová states: "[C]astle was adapted to the genre because its confusing structure and size" (2011: 33). This largeness and

labyrinthine qualities of space create the feeling of smallness in the character. A character in a castle is just a miniscule being against the enormous space of castle. Therefore, the largeness of the space gives the feeling of powerlessness to the perceiver. Small spaces can be perceived in their wholeness so they are comparatively easy to understand and control, but the massive ones cannot be kept within the bounds of the vision. Therefore, the enormous can be a threat due to their unperceived thus unknown parts. It is very hard to understand such extreme largeness because vision cannot comprehend how large the castle is. Thus, the large number of rooms inside a castle adds to the mystery of the castle. Since one can occupy only one of the many rooms of a castle, it is always an enigma what takes place in the other rooms which fall beyond the perception of the character because they are hidden beyond walls. As Majlingová suggests, “An anti-home place such as the castle with its asymmetrical structure is a representation of [...] irrationality. It is a mysterious place where ordinary natural laws and social norms do not apply” (2011: 33). Thus, the castle with its trap doors, secret rooms, and secret passages includes both the fear of enormous spaces and claustrophobic environments. Because what lies beyond the wall is unknown, the doorway that leads to the unknown receives particular attention in Gothic fiction. The fear attached to the castle is enforced also by the image of the cellar which occupies the unknown depths of this huge construction.

While castles often inspire fear due to their enormous size, closed spaces are also among the gothic elements that inspire fear, this time due to smallness and claustrophobia. For example, the cellar, which is usually used as a part of an enormous castle, arouses such fears. The cellar belongs both to the house and castle where excessive darkness lurks. It is a claustrophobic space with its narrow passages. One of the significant theories about the cellar has been formulated by Gaston Bachelard who uses Jung theory related to the fear of the attic and the cellar in order to explain the fear of the cellar. In *The Poetics of Space* Bachelard compares the cellar to the attic. According to that theory, fears in the attic are possible to rationalize because the image of the roof is related to the idea of protection in our minds. “A roof tells its *raison d'être* right away: it gives mankind shelter from the rain and sun he fears” (Bachelard, 1969:

18). The image of the roof is connected to the explainable also because the attic and the roof of the house are connected with the image of sunlight which represents the understandable. Things in the sunlight can be seen and recognized easily; this is why it is closer to the reasonable. Therefore, Bachelard suggests that “Up near the roof all our thoughts are clear. In the attic, it is a pleasure to see the bare rafters of the strong framework. Here we participate in the carpenter's solid geometry” (1969: 18). According to Bachelard, dreamers<sup>2</sup> think “the roof would protect me from the rain and snow.” The cellar, on the other hand, is the negative part of the house. The image of the cellar is contrary to the image of the attic. “As for the cellar, [...] it will be rationalized and its conveniences enumerated. But it is first and foremost the “dark entity” of the house, the one that partakes of subterranean forces. When we dream there, we are in harmony with the irrationality of the depths” (Bachelard, 1969: 18). The images of the cellar are “dark” and hard to explain. Also, the phrase “subterranean forces” is very noteworthy for they are related to things one cannot explain and images connected to the abnormal. As mythology bears witness, subterranean is closely connected to death itself. In Greek mythology Hades, the ruler of the Underworld, also known as “The Unseen One,” gathers the dead in his realm, and it is nearly impossible to turn back from his domain. In many religions, hell, the place where people are punished is considered to exist underground. Furthermore, death is closely connected to the process of burial itself, and this creates a claustrophobic fear. These facts make the subterranean forces more frightening.

The cellar is connected to the images of darkness and subterranean forces because it unleashes the forces of the irrational. It is unable to “see” in the closed space of the cellar. Thus, while in the attic fears are easily “rationalized,” it is hard to rationalize the space of the cellar:

In the cellar, even for a more courageous man than the one Jung mentions, ‘rationalization’ is less rapid and less clear, also it is never definitive. In the attic, the day's experiences can always efface the fears

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<sup>2</sup> Bachelard maintains that one needs a shelter in order to dream and “the house shelters daydreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace” (Bachelard, 1969: 6)

of the night. In the cellar, darkness prevails both day and night, and even when we are carrying a candle, we see shadows dancing on the dark walls. (Bachelard, 1969: 19)

This darkness of the cellar is reminiscent of the ultimate darkness of the “subterranean forces” and death. The cellar is evocative of ultimate fears of humans: Death and burial. “Walls of the cellar are buried walls [...] walls that have the entire earth behind them. And so the [...] fear becomes exaggerated” (Bachelard, 1969: 20). As Bachelard suggests, not only is the dark image of the cellar itself the source of the fear but the images, such as walls with entire earth behind, make the space itself scarier in our mind. “The cellar itself then becomes buried madness,” (1969: 20) says Bachelard. The cellar arouses the claustrophobic fears reminiscent of being buried alive or in a cell which makes escape impossible.

Darkness is a part of the Gothic space because it limits the vision, therefore, the knowledge of characters. Darkness limits sight which is our primary way of acquiring knowledge. Sight and knowledge are interrelated terms because humans are vision-centered creatures; thus they depend on their eyes more than other sense organs to understand their environment. According to Douglas D. C. Pocock: “Sight is without doubt our dominant sense yielding nine-tenths of our knowledge of the external world” (1981: 388). For humans it is the primary way of acquiring multiple levels of knowledge and Fredd Dretske explains this connection between knowledge and sight:

We observe study, perceive, watch, inspect, recognize, detect, identify, and discern the elements in our environment. We distinguish and discriminate between them; we glimpse, spot, notice, spy, and catch sight of them. Moreover, we see, or at least say we see not only teapots and tigers, but what these things are, how they look, who they belong to, where they are located, what they are doing, that they have moved, whether they are nearby, when they arrived, and why they were late. (1969: 1)

Light is generally associated with knowledge because light is a necessary element for sight. Light illuminates the physical world so we can see and define things around us. In the light, things become visible and seen this also enables us to understand them. In the Renaissance era people called knowledge “illumination” because knowledge is considered as a light which “illuminates” darkness. Darkness, on the other hand, is related to ignorance because darkness is like a journey to nowhere, to the unknown. Ignorance is attached to darkness because of this inability to see, which is closely related to knowing. Therefore, in darkness nothing can be known, there is only nothingness and meaninglessness.

It is human beings who attach meaning to things. Things do not mean anything without people to define them. The space where meaning ends is where nothingness begins, and nothingness is the doorstep to death. In other words, nothingness is closely connected to death because death is the space of no meaning. It is the beginning of the unexplainable and the meaningless. Death is a space where no sense is good for; it is the end of the knowledge, and a transition to the totally unknown. In the known space, senses can be used and meanings can be analyzed, but in the unknown space, it is not possible. Everything is deprived of its meaning in the unknown space. Thus, the loss of meaning is also where human existence is threatened. If death is the loss of meaning it is not only a physical threat but a semantic one that threatens to unhinge the bonds of rationality.

As stated by Elias Canetti: “There is nothing that man fears more than the touch of the unknown. He wants to see what is reaching towards him, and to be able to recognize or at least classify it. Man always tends to avoid physical contact with anything strange” (qtd. in Brill 2006: 214). People need to define and understand something so that they can control it. The power of control is greatly reduced in the dark and unknown space. This space also deprives people of the ability to rationalize. As cognitive creatures, people need to see the physical representation of something to rationalize it. Kurt Reizler focuses on the fact as follows:

A human being is alone in a wood at night. Dead leaves rustling cause, as Luther says, deadly fright. I cannot compel anybody to go beyond saying simply that this man is afraid for his life or his wallet, of a gangster behind a tree. In most cases we might discover another note, however faint: a feeling as if something extraordinary, hardly possible could happen—ghosts, voices of the dead. Darkness deprives us of the definite shape of the things that in daylight testify to the order on this well-rounded earth. Moreover, we are alone; there are no others on whom we can rely (1944: 492)

As knowledge helps us control our environment, the ability to see is part and parcel of knowledge which enables to do so. The unknown space is scary because we do not have control over it. Every living being needs to know their own space because they feel secure in a space they know. Animals mark their space with their fluids or scents to identify their space. They call the marked space their own because they “know” that space. They move in their space with a feeling of security because, they think, the space they reside is under their control. Humans, like animals, need to know and control their space to feel secure.

As storytelling animals, humans use stories to understand and draw their borders. The stories they create help them to rationalize, define and understand the space around them. This is how the myths—the first stories of the mankind to understand the space they occupy—emerged. *Creation Myths of the World* defines the myth as “explanations of phenomena that humans of earlier civilizations could not otherwise explain” (Leeming, 1994: 18). They created stories that would provide a rational explanation for their surroundings and natural phenomena like storms, sunrise and night and day in early ages. With stories, people bring the meaning of the things they could not understand down to their level of understanding. Lacking necessary knowledge leads imagination to fill the hole of the unknown. The imagination fills those holes or gaps with the “stories” we create. In short, people give meaning to things that exceed their rationality.



A specifically human way of controlling and ordering the chaotic universe is telling stories which are an act of organizing, ordering and controlling. Stories originally came into existence from the human need to answer the questions that nature poses. Since, with their limited tools, humans cannot find “rational” answers to some natural phenomena, they explain these by referring to supernatural powers. The supernatural elements such as ghosts, zombies, devils and gods occupy the dark corners of nature unreachable by humans, namely the forests, the mountain tops, the dark and deep caves, the depths of waters, ... etc. Such spaces evoking the sense of supernatural are also created by the human hand in imitation of nature in gothic architectural forms such as cathedrals, castles and gigantic churches. According to Aguirre: “Our inability to grasp the Other [the unknown] makes it disorientating, hence terrifying; and not least among its terrors is the fact that we cannot quite tell it from our own world” (2013: 127). Thus, the gothic fear that arises from such places is enforced, because the source of fear belongs not to this world where we reside but to a totally unknown world beyond this one.

The forest is a commonly employed gothic space because it is both used as an agoraphobic and claustrophobic space with the repetitive images, and a divine space that inspires an onlooker with the grandiosity of the creator. Thus, in gothic images, it is possible to find people’s supernatural beliefs and fears. Gothic style is closely connected to the essence of Christian faith but at the same time it has symbols from Pagan (nature-worship) symbolism like gargoyles and ward spirits. Gothic forms as introduced by pagan Goths included elements of untamed nature which they worshipped and feared. Christian gothic architecture inherited these elements in their own places of worship. Thus, it was the untamed elements of the forest of the Goths that invoked the feeling of awe in the Christian cathedrals and churches. James Snyder explains it as follows:

Forests were the first temples of God, and in forests men grasped their first idea of architecture. [...] The forests of the Gauls passed in their turn into the temples of our fathers, and our oak forests have thus preserved their sacred origin. These vaults incised with leaves, these socles that

support the walls and end brusquely like broken tree trunks, the coolness of the vaults, the shadows of the Sanctuary, the dark aisles, the secret passages, the low doors, all of this evokes in a Gothic church the labyrinths of the forests; it all makes us conscious of religious awe, the mysteries, and the divinity." In his *Genie du Christianisme*, Francois-Rene Chateaubriand (1768-1848) (1989: 34)

The forest and God are connected because they exist where human understanding falters. The sacred is closely connected to awe, mystery and divine, for they transcend the limits of human senses and knowledge. That is why when darkness and the forest are used together, the effect of fear is multiplied. While the forest creates the drastic, divine and religious effect, darkness limits sight and increases emotional response.

The forest is both a large space and a claustrophobic space because it includes similar images such as trees as far as eyes can see. The space with repetitive images in an open space makes one feel "entrapped" in openness. The forest is an important example for the agoraphobic fear. The forest is a living being, a space which animals and different kinds of creatures reside. It is an unexpected and uncontrollable space because it is a part of nature which does not need humans to continue its existence. This uncontrollable space gives humans an "anxious impression of going deeper and deeper into a limitless world" (qtd in Bachelard, 1969: 185). It is both literally and metaphorically true because in the forest it is nearly impossible to see beyond a distance. The repetitive line of trees confuses imagination, and it creates the effect that the line will never end because all the trees look like one another. The images around arouse the feeling of limitlessness, and the voyage in the forest feels like it would never end. "Forests, especially, with the mystery of their space prolonged indefinitely beyond the veil of tree-trunks and leaves, space that is veiled for our eyes, but transparent to action, are veritable psychological transcendents" (qtd. in Bachelard, 1969: 185). Physically the forest is considered as a veiled closed space. It blocks vision and blurs definiteness, but it is also "open on every side" (qtd. in Bachelard, 1969: 185). One is paradoxically trapped by the trees within, but one also has the chance to move freely in the space of

the forest. This paradoxical situation increases the mysterious indefiniteness of the forest. It is impossible to define what will happen in a forest because it is a deepness that is more than one can comprehend. The voyage of the traveler turns into an infinite one because of the repetitive images of the forest. Therefore, the traveler feels entrapped in an open space. This entrapment gives one a feeling of insecurity because it is unable to “see” dangers coming. As said before, it is both “open and closed” at the same time and this openness does not provide the feeling of security to the traveler in the forest.

In conclusion, the concept of space changes through time according to different theories of philosophers. First, in ancient philosophy, it was conceptualized as the container of things, but philosophers like Kant changed it into a subjective and personal reality. This change marks a radical move for it involves the human perceptive, emotive and interpretative capacities in the concept of space. The theory of space based on subjective perception opens the path to the imaginative faculties in defining and attaching meaning to space. Therefore, the meanings attached to spaces are not only fixed and dependent on the space but also observer dependent. Gothic fiction masterfully shapes this elusive meaning of space in literature. Gothic fiction uses the power of imagination to create a gloomy and fearful mood. To create this mood the Gothic fiction uses the elements that exceed human senses as the source of fear. For example, the process of acquiring knowledge is interrupted by excessive darkness. Darkness creates a claustrophobic space as it provides no knowledge for the perceiver. This inability leads one to use imagination to rationalize the unseen. Thus, the imagination and the irrational merge and create the supernatural. The supernatural increases the fear effect of the Gothic space with images like ghosts, demons or other creatures of darkness. Not only supernatural images but also repetitive images are elements of fear for the Gothic Space. Repetitive images of trees create both claustrophobic and agoraphobic space for the perceiver. As a result, Gothic space capitalizes on the subjective quality of space and by tempting on the limits of human perception it manages to create fear and awe simultaneously.

### 1.3. POESQUE SPACE

Edgar Allan Poe, as a gothic fiction writer, uses space masterfully in his stories to evoke fear in both his characters and readers. Poe's ability to create an atmosphere of terror and suspense is equaled only by few of his many imitators (Hammond, 1981: 27). In order to create an atmosphere of terror, Poe uses "first person (limited) narration" so he reduces the source of knowledge and perception of his character. Poe not only limits the perception of his characters but also exceeds their limits of perception using "extremes." Extreme light, dark, sounds are the fundamentals of the extremes in Poesque space. Poe uses these elements to exceed the limits of perception of his characters (as in "The Fall of the House of Usher") or to create a claustrophobic space for them (as in "The Pit and the Pendulum"). However, the main source of claustrophobic and agoraphobic space is the dimensional aspects of the space. Poe both employs extreme dimensions in space in order to limit the perception of his character. By limiting the perception of his characters Poe paves the way to create sublime, uncanny. Poe not only hinders his characters from acquiring enough knowledge to grasp the reality of space, but also by using doubles, pushes them through the edges of the unknown to lose their sense of reality and sanity. Hence, Poe uses different elements in space to heighten certain feelings like fear in his characters, but in order to do that, he creates a connection between characters and space.

In Poe's stories, the space and characters are intimately related. Characters observe their environment and interpret their surroundings while the space contributes to the shaping of characters. Therefore, they establish the meaning of space with their own experiences and feelings just as space defines them and establishes their perspectives. Gerhard Hoffman underlines it as such:

Poe, who proceeds from the delineation of space in the Gothic novel or story to develop narrative spaces in which physical elements combine with psychic ones in the sense of a genuine mutual relationship between space and dweller, or space and observer. Inner conflicts are transferred to spaces and objects, become embodied within them; at the same time, these conflicts in turn are determined by these spaces. (1979: 2)

The feelings and inner conflicts of characters influence the actual state of space because the characters project their personal experiences onto the space they are in. This changed space, in turn, acts as a conveyor of horror and fear. For example, In “The Fall of the House of Usher,” the narrator feels a great disturbance when he sees the house and he calls it an “oppressive” being (Poe, 1978: 399). As Hoffman suggests: “It is [...] significant that the emotional reactions evoked by the sight of the house are of a complex, difficult nature, deviant from the norm, and *are felt to be such by the narrator*” (4; emphasis added). The sight of the house overwhelms the narrator because the house acts as a threat to the rational distinctions between human and house with its “eye-like” windows. It forces the boundaries of rationality because it exceeds the definitions of a house. It becomes an enigma for the narrator to solve, thus the house as an odd and unexplainable space evokes fear and terror in the narrator. However, it is important to notice that the narrator is the only source of knowledge, so by using first person narration Poe reduces the reliability of the narrator and reality of his narratives.

First person storytelling is important for establishing the perception of space in Poe’s stories because it limits the knowledge of the character and reader: J.O Bailey indicates that: “He [Poe] wrote to Thomas W. White [...] that tales of terror are made into excellent stories by ‘the singular heightened into the strange and mystical’ ” (1964: 445). To create the strange and mystical effect, stories are always told from the subjective (singular) point of view of a narrator, so there is no other source of knowledge. Bailey also suggests that, Poe uses the first person narrator as a way to conceal the basis of terror: “I suggest that Poe's chief device for concealment was to tell the story [“The Fall of the House of Usher”] in the first person of a narrator” (1964: 445). The narrator is the only source of knowledge for the reader in Poe’s stories, so the reliability of the narrator can be questioned. The unreliability of the narrator creates more than one possibility, thus, multiplies realities or truths and “makes singular into the strange and mystical” (qtd. in Bailey, 1964: 445). If there are multiple possible realities, the story starts to recede from reason and gets closer to the supernatural and the unknown. These “realities” can be the product of an irrational mind. The space as

perceived and depicted by such an incoherent mind can be, no more than, a figment of the narrator's imagination.

Poe uses natural phenomena like lighting, darkness, brightness, sound, ... etc. masterfully in order to create fear and terror for his characters by exceeding their limits of perception. Hoffman states in "Space and Symbol in the Tales of Edgar Allan Poe," "Tones and sounds, light and shadow, brightness and darkness are additional phenomena which create atmosphere" (1979: 3). Poe places these elements in his stories skillfully to maximize the fear effect. He exposes his characters to extreme natural conditions; thus these elements threaten to exceed the limits of human perception as in the case of extremely loud voices, extreme light or dark, ... etc. For example, in *The House of the Usher*, Poe uses extreme natural elements to increase the effect of the climax scene. In the climax scene, the narrator runs out of the house aghast. His escape is accompanied with "a wild light", "a gleam so unusual" and "a blood-red moon" (Poe, 1978: 25). These unusual elements are threatening because they threaten to exceed the limits of comprehension.

Dimensional aspects like extremely large (outside) and small spaces (inside) that exceed the perception and comprehension of characters are also essential to create fear in Poesque space. As Hoffman stresses "Directions [...] are significant in so far as they possess mood qualities. For example, Poe likes to employ the contrasts "outside" and "inside," "above" and "below," at climactic points of his stories" (1979: 3). Both inside and below can be considered as essential elements of the claustrophobic space. Poe merges "inside" and "below" to create "premature burial" an enhanced claustrophobic space. Premature burial is both historical reality and psychological horror for characters. It is a historical reality because as Roger Platizky states "live burial was once practiced as a form of punishment, 'a "rite of social purification," in Europe. Especially in the sixteenth-century people were buried alive as severe punishment for sexual offenses and great larceny" (1999: 207). Premature burial is a psychological horror because it is a dark and claustrophobic space which limits any movement or action. One can be buried alive in a coffin as in "The House of the Usher" or one can be buried alive within the walls as in "The Cask of Amontillado." Both of these examples take place in physical

spaces that cause claustrophobia. In addition, a natural element like darkness can cause claustrophobic spaces. In “The Pit and the Pendulum,” Poe uses darkness as an element of dimension to make his narrator think he is in a narrow space. The limited sight makes him think that he is in a very small space while he may in fact not.

Another dimensional aspect of Poesque space is extremely large (agoraphobic) space. Buildings like mansions, castles, and palaces act as agoraphobic spaces with their vision limiting structures. In a large building like a castle it is impossible to see all the rooms within; thus the largeness of the castle acts as a threat for the character just like in “The House of the Usher.” Poe creates a large space (mansion) for his characters, but he puts them into a comparatively small room in the large mansion; thus, he limits the vision and knowledge of his characters within the space of room (miniscule space) in the mansion. They do not know anything about what is happening outside of their room because their vision of the whole is obstructed. In the last part of “The Fall of the House of Usher” the narrator reads a book to his friend in a room. He hears a sound from the lower parts of the mansion, and it changes the mood of the story. The source of the sounds coming from the lower parts is unidentified and unknown to the narrator thus they evoke feelings of fear. The root cause of this fear is lack of necessary control over the whole space. What is happening out of the room is out of his control and knowledge, and the source of the sound is a total mystery to him. Thus, he is trapped in a fearful largeness (agoraphobic space) that is beyond his authority.

In order to create fear in Poesque space, Poe associates natural elements and dimensional aspects to the idea of the sublime. Botting suggests that, “For Burke, beautiful objects were characterized by their smallness, smoothness, delicacy and gradual variation. They evoked love and tenderness in contrast to the sublime which produced awe and terror. Objects which evoked sublime emotions were vast, magnificent and obscure” (Botting, 1996: 26). Sublime evokes the feelings of awe and terror and the source of these terrors are magnificent and obscure. For example, in “The House of the Usher” the house is an object of the sublime with its ambiguity: “While beauty could be contained within the individual’s gaze or comprehension, sublimity presented an excess that could not be processed by a rational mind” (Botting, 1996: 26).

The narrator cannot explain the oddity of the house with his rational mind thus it evokes the feelings of terror and awe inside him: “The terror was akin to the sense of wonderment and awe accompanying religious experience” (Botting, 1996: 26). The grandeur and excess of the sublime are connected to the divine power which is unexplainable and totally unknown to the human beings. This grandeur of the sublime is directly connected to nature and natural elements and they can also evoke the feelings of terror and awe: Loudness and sudden contrasts, like the play of extreme light and dark in buildings, contributed to the sense of extension and infinity associated with the sublime (Botting, 1996: 26). Excessive voices and sudden light contrasts are also connected to the sublime because they threaten to exceed the limits of human perception.

Poesque space not only uses elements that threaten to exceed the limits of perception but also uses uncanny (*unheimlich*) in order to blur the boundaries between the familiar and unfamiliar. According to Sigmund Freud: “the ‘uncanny’ is that class of the terrifying which leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar” (1919: 1). Uncanny blends the self and other, familiar and unfamiliar, known and unknown to make things uncertain and blur the boundaries between them (Perry and Sederholm, 2009: 16). Another meaning of the *unheimlich* is: “the name for everything that ought to have remained hidden and secret and has become visible” (Freud, 1919: 4). Poe uses *unheimlich* in “The House of the Usher” and creates a house that is “un-homely” different. The house in the story looks like a human being with its “eye-like” windows. Furthermore, with its reflection (double) in the pond, the house prevents a different image from the actual image of a “house.” The reflection of the house is terrifying for the narrator and it is again un-homely. The reflection symbolically reveals the horrid secrets of the house with grotesque unfamiliarity. The house reveals what “ought to have remained as a secret” with the reflection on the pond thus turns familiar into unfamiliar: “A house contains the familiar and congenial, but at the same time it screens what is familiar and congenial from view, making a mystery of it ... What takes place within the four walls of a house remains a mystery to those shut out from it” (qtd in Majlingová, 2011: 28). The house not only protects Roderick from outside dangers but also represents the family and “keeps” the secrets of the family inside.



Poe also uses “doubles” to blur the boundaries between reality and supernatural. It can be defined as “the physical images of the self, such as shadows and reflections, and in psychic projections of the self, such as gods and devils, guardian angels and familiar” (qtd in Santiago, 2013: 71). However, in Gothic literature doubles are used in a disturbing way that would alienate the self or blur the boundaries between fantasy and reality. Botting explains it as follows:

Doubles, *alter egos*, mirrors and animated representations of the disturbing parts of human identity [are] the stock devices. Signifying the alienation of the human subject from the culture and language in which s/he was located, these devices increasingly destabilised the boundaries between psyche and reality, opening up an indeterminate zone in which the differences between fantasy and actuality were no longer secure. (1996: 7)

Poe uses characters and spaces as doubles to create ambivalence and blur the lines between the real and the copy. In the beginning of “The House of the Usher” Poe uses doubles to blur the boundaries of reality and create a horrid space for the narrator. Poe creates the double effect by reflecting the image of the house through the pool on the ground. The house itself is haunting for the narrator but the double of the house worse than the house itself. The narrator sees the reflection of the house on the pool which evokes feelings of unreal and terror in the narrator: “I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodelled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows” (Poe, 1978: 398). The double of the house is scarier than the actual image of the house because the reflection of the house is receding from the reality. The narrator looks down into “a black and lurid tarn,” to see the reflection of the house as “remodelled and inverted images” (Poe, 1978: 398). This remodel is a challenge for his perception and recognition, thus, it leaves him in terror. There is a possibility that the

incestuous relationship between the sister and brother is reflected through the image on the pool to the narrator by Poe as a double.

The unknown is another element of Poesque space that causes fear in space. In the story “Tell-Tale Heart” Poe uses “the evil-eye of the old man” as the unknown element. The narrator is afraid of what the evil-eye can see. He can never know what it sees but even the possibility of an “all-seeing-eye” is nightmarish for the narrator because there is no privacy after everything is seen. As an omniscient seer in space, the evil-eye is a threat to the narrator. The narrator describes the eye as: “One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture — a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold” (Poe, 1978: 792). The narrator cannot comprehend the disparity of the old man’s eye and names it as evil-eye. The narrator is being watched by the old man and his *vulture eye* and it disturbs the narrator because it is impossible to know what the eyes of the old man see. B.D Tucker states that, “The idea of an all-seeing eye, peering at one, even during one's most secret moments, is indeed disturbing. [...] [The] narrator of this tale ... wished to be the seer, not the seen” (1981: 95). The narrator wants to observe the old man but instead, the old man observes him with his “evil eye” and he thinks that his eye can penetrate into the secrets of the narrator: “The power of this orb [evil-eye] is suggested in the extraordinary statement that “No human eye?—not even his?—could have detected any wrong.” Granted this is a negative statement, it still implies that the old man's eye had exceptional penetration to discover secret sin [...]” (Tucker, 1981: 95). It is totally unknown what the “evil-eye” sees when it gazes to the narrator but the space that the “evil-eye” is in brings the possibility of “all-seen” for the narrator.

At the end, Poe uses many different elements in harmony within space to create fear. He uses dimensional elements in order to create agoraphobic and claustrophobic space and he merges these spaces with natural phenomena in order to maximize the fear effect. He fills this newly created space with uncanny elements which blur the boundaries between original and copy, thus, multiplies and shatters “the real” for the character. This multiplied reality may also serve as the double in order to push the character towards the edge of the unknown.

### 1.3.1. Terror of the Uncanny Space: “The Fall of the House of Usher”

“The Fall of the House of Usher” is one of Poe’s most famous horror stories. In this story, Poe subverts meanings attached to the most familiar objects and uses extremes in order to create fear through space. At the center of the story stands the house referred to in the title. The house in its accustomed sense is associated with safety and warmth and support of family life, but the House of Usher is nowhere near these. It is so un-house-like that Poe seems to play on the original German for uncanny, the term *unheimlich* which literally means un-homelike. Thus, the House of Usher is an uncanny place because it is so un-house-like. Therefore, one can safely affirm that the major source of the feelings of terror and horror arise from Poe’s deployment of space and his ingenious subversions of meanings attached to spaces. The uncanny feelings aroused by reversals of meanings of spaces are enhanced by their double images. Thus multiplied spaces, spaces reflected on humans or vice versa, and twins that annihilate the sense of neat borders also among the elements of space that arouse fear and terror. While doubling and multiplying points at overabundance of things, at its extreme, stands another strategy Poe uses in relation to space: too narrow places that threaten to suffocate the characters, spaces that fall upon them and bury them prematurely. Thus, this chapter will analyze the spatial references in Poe’s story in relation to the feelings of uncanny, doubling, and claustrophobia.

The uncanny feeling that the house radiates is first noticed as the borders between the house and the human are subverted. The story begins with a letter to the nameless narrator. The narrator receives a letter from an old friend named Roderick Usher. The narrator heeds the call and makes his way to the house of his friend, but the sight of the house disturbs the narrator with “the vacant eye-like windows” (Poe, 1978: 397). The house itself goes beyond the definition of a “house” because it looks like a human being and watches the narrator with its “eye-like” windows. The appearance of the house is extremely grotesque for the narrator so the sight gives him “a sickening of the heart” (Poe, 1978: 397). He tries to understand the cause of this disturbance but his

struggle is in vain: “What was it—I paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered” (Poe, 1978: 398). The feeling of being watched by “a house” is beyond the limits of recognition, so the narrator cannot comprehend this mystery. It is an “unnerving” experience because it is impossible to know what those concrete “eyes” of the *animated* house see through the narrator. The house is generally considered as a protective space which provides security. It is a shelter for protection from the outside forces and unknown dangers. The House of the Usher, on the contrary, feels like a dangerous and odd space for the narrator. Poe subverts this convention (house as shelter) and changes the house into a frightening, unfamiliar space.

[...] When I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy—a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung [...] an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven [...]. (Poe, 1978: 399)

Extreme and unknown merge into one in this example. It is extreme because the house bizarrely looks like a human being and it is unknown because the house is very unfamiliar and insoluble for the narrator. Manuel Aguirre defines this space as the space of the “other” in his article A Grammar of Gothic: “as The Other thus exists *sublimine*—up against the limits of reality, i.e. as a superlative that inevitably (and paradoxically) spills over and beyond the knowable—in other words, in the threshold region Edmund Burke defined as the Sublime. Its inherent ambiguity is perhaps the distinctive mark of the Numinous, and closely corresponds to ‘the uncanny’ (*das Unheimliche*) and *le fantastique*” (2013: 128). This inability to understand leads the narrator to visualize the house as a supernatural being “[...] The emotional reactions evoked by the sight of the house are of a complex, difficult nature, deviant from the norm, and are felt to be such by the narrator“ (Hoffman, 1979: 4). The narrator looks at the house and the house itself

is “hung in an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven” (Poe, 1978: 399). If the house is actually hell it is then the abode of the supernatural, however, the house also a house something very real and naturally explicable. The narrator is caught between those “two” houses: the house *as we know it* and the house as a *supernatural force*: “There is an uncanny phenomenon which we can explain in two fashions, by types of natural causes and supernatural causes. The possibility of a hesitation between the two creates the fantastic effect” (qtd. in Perry and Sederholm, 2009: 15). The supernatural affinity of the house and its uncanny similarity to a human being exceeds the definition of the house so forces the narrator to hesitate between real and supernatural. This hesitation prepares the way for the sublime because the “terror and awe” caused by the sublime cannot be processed by a rational mind (Botting, 1996: 26). The narrator cannot comprehend the unfamiliarity of the house so it turns into a “force that oppresses him” that evokes terror and fear in him. Furthermore, the house evokes the feeling of awe and terror in the narrator because it acts as a memorial to the aristocratic past of the Usher family:

“I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested, of late, in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact, that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth, at no period, any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain” (Poe, 1978: 398)

“Ancient” Usher family was not a passive aristocratic family but an infusive and gracious one. All of these features are merging into the house itself with their name, as they call it, “the house of Usher.” The house represents the Usher lineage, their past and their future. However, this means that, the house also carries their distortedness like their

“direct line of descent.” If the house is a direct representation of the Usher lineage then their incestuous relationship is also represented by the house. This means that, the feeling of awe that the house evokes in the narrator is connected to the greatness and graciousness of the Usher family but the terror can be associated with the incestuous relationship of the family. Either way, the house acts as the representation of the family and especially Roderick Usher.

Poe uses the house as the double of Roderick to emphasize the psychological state of Roderick. This also reveals the connection between the space and the character. According to Hoffman, there is an odd similarity between the owner and the house. This is an enigma because a house cannot look like a human being. Hoffman comments on this connection as follows:

[P]arallelism of man and space; that is to say the correlation between man and space are bound atmospherically and in this process both appear equally enigmatic: “the house exhibits “a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts, and the crumbling condition of the individual stones” (III, 276), and this “wild inconsistency” in the building’s structure corresponds to the “inconsistency” in Roderick’s behavior. A similar correspondence exists between the beginning deterioration of his personality and the fine fissure in the masonry, which runs from the roof to the tarn, while the resemblance of Roderick’s hair to the “minute fungi” uniformly covering the masonry finally involves even the realm of plants, thus connecting in space the organic vegetative realm with the inorganic and, by association, both with man. (1979: 5)

The correlation between Roderick and the house is supernaturally odd but precise. There is an inconsistency in Roderick’s behavior and the cause of this psychological breakdown can be his incestuous relationship with his sister. As Perry, R. Dennis and Carl H. Sederholm state: “These pairs of doubles are further linked by hints of sexuality. In fact, the many readings of ‘Usher’ as an incest narrative prefigure the sexual suggestiveness” (2009: 49). The house is not only connected to the inhabitants physically or psychologically, but also to their nature and fate according to Miriam

Fernández Santiago: “the house stands for its inhabitants, whose fate and nature are so closely linked to the building that when it breaks in two and sinks within the dark tarn that reflects its inverted image, the Usher siblings sink with it” (2013: 76-77). The house also inherits the inhabitant’s incestuous guilt and hereditary curse, (Thompson, 1972: 17) thus at the end of the story the house ceases to exist with its inhabitants. However, it would be misleading to conceive of the meaning of the tale as developing solely upon incestuous guilt or hereditary curse because the tale is a concatenation of many elements and one of them is the supernatural character of the House. The house is the double of its inhabitants and it is directly connected to them but a house standing for its inhabitants also raises the question of supernatural in space: “Is the physical House actually “alive” and by some preternatural force of will controlling the destinies of the Ushers? Or is the story not a tale of the supernatural at all, but rather a work of psychological realism?” (Thompson, 1972: 16). In this aspect, as a double house blurs the boundaries of reality and supernatural.

Premature burial (claustrophobic space) is a crucial element of Poesque space to create the fear effect. Andrew Mangham describes premature burial as “uncanny, unsettling, and terrifying because it manifests both a hideous form of awakening and a dialogue between worlds that should remain disengaged” (2010: 10). In order to create a fearful space in “The Fall of the House of Usher,” Poe uses this element in Madeline Usher’s burial scene. The narrator learns that his friend lost his health after his sister Madeline’s death. Roderick asks for aid to entomb his sister’s supposedly dead body, in a coffin, to the vault under the mansion: “Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight (previously to its final interment), in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building” (Poe, 1978: 409). In fact, Madeline Usher is alive when they bury her in the vaults of the house. The coffin is an extremely claustrophobic space for the living beings and Poe places a living person (Madeline) to the place where the dead should be.

The unendurable oppression of the lungs- the stifling fumes from the damp earth- the clinging to the death garments- the rigid embrace of the narrow house- the blackness of the absolute Night- the silence like a sea

that overwhelms- the unseen but palpable presence of the Conqueror Worm these things, with the thoughts of the air and grass above, with memory of dear friends who would fly to save us if but informed of our fate, and with consciousness that of this fate they can never be informed- that our hopeless portion is that of the really dead- these considerations, I say, carry into the heart, which still palpitates, a degree of appalling and intolerable horror from which the most daring imagination must recoil. (Poe, 1978: 961)

T. K. Marshal interprets this quotation as: “These physical sensations, evoked by the constricting environment of the grave are but a supplement to the victim’s realization that to the living world he has no longer exists and that he is powerless to make any constructive movement or sound to alert those above. [...]” (1966: 14). Poe puts his characters inside a coffin –or coffin like claustrophobic spaces— “alive” to evoke the feeling of death in his character. Madeline was actually alive when they put her into the coffin and Roderick confesses this frantically at the end of the story with the words: “I dared not—I dared not speak! We have put her living in the tomb! Said I not that my senses were acute? I now tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—I dared not speak! (Poe, 1978: 416).

Poe also blurs the perception of his characters using sounds in order to create fear. High pitch sounds threaten to exceed the perception of the characters and low pitch sounds are too faint to perceive thus both sounds are beyond the limit of recognizable. For instance, in “The Fall of the House of Usher” the narrator starts to reside in the House of Usher because he wants to be by his friend’s side to help him regain his health. One night, while the narrator is sleeping in his room, an unexplainable feeling haunts him:

I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not



whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable (Poe, 1978: 411)

The narrator wakes up from his sleep to an “intense darkness” that limits his sight, knowledge, and control. He hears certain low and indefinite sounds through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, he knew not whence (Poe, 1978: 411- 412). Poe uses low indeterminate sounds that add to the growing atmosphere of dread to increase the fear effect (Perry and Sederholm, 2009: 75). The low and indeterminate sounds are also considered as an extreme in space because they are too faint to recognize. The narrator hears these “low sounds” through the pauses of the storm and they overpower him with intense horror. However, Poe also uses high pitched indeterminate sounds in the part where the narrator reads a book to Roderick. The narrator hears an excessive sound while he reads a book to Roderick. The source of the sound is unknown to him but the sound makes him leap to his feet by fear:

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips, than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic, and clangorous, yet apparently muffled, reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. (Poe, 1978: 415)

The narrator cannot find a reasonable explanation to the sound because he is inside a room and he cannot see other rooms; so, the source of the sound is unknown to him as in the low sound example. As H.P Lovecraft suggests, “[...] the area of the unknown has been steadily contracting for thousands of years, an infinite reservoir of mystery still engulfs most of the outer cosmos” (1927: 2). He also adds that, “[...] uncertainty and danger are always closely allied; thus making any kind of an unknown world a world of peril and evil possibilities.” (1927: 3) Even though the narrator is in a large space he only knows what is happening in his room. Other rooms are totally unknown to the narrator and the evil possibilities of unknown sounds scare the narrator.

The climax scene of the story is the part where the characters feel the tension and fear at its highest degree. Madeline Usher escapes from her tomb and with blood on her

white robe stands in front of Roderick and the narrator: “There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame” (Poe, 1978: 416). She saves herself from a coffin, a narrow prison of death, with a “bitter struggle.” Her appearance was unexpected for both the narrator and reader, and she changes the mood of the story like a vengeful spirit. Perry and Sederholm comments on this scene as “[...] [T]here is the coming up to the surface horrific forces usually kept below the surface, suggesting repressed, subconscious knowledge. [...] Usher and his friend are terrified by the sounds of the impending appearance of the inexplicably alive Madeline, [and they hear] the mysterious and horrifying slopping noises [...]” (2009: 75). Madeline is a fearful figure for the narrator because she was supposed to be dead but with her appearance in complete blood she is “a figure that inspires awe, even fear—a strange, inexplicable other” (Perry and Sederholm, 2009: 31). Roderick is also afraid of her appearance but his fear is more complex than the narrator’s fear. According to Perry and Sederholm, “the best explanation seems to be the uncanny one, that he has projected his own fears of psychological decay on her, making her at once akin and alien to himself” (2009: 16). The appearance of Madeline as the twin sister of Roderick creates an uncanny effect thus in his “female counterpart’s unusual condition Roderick sees his own impending downfall” (Perry and Sederholm, 2009: 32). As a mysterious and fearful figure Madeline scares the narrator and he “flees aghast” from the chamber. While he escapes he faces with excessive weather conditions which contrast the events before: “The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway” (Poe, 1978: 417). He also comes across a vision of lightning and says “Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me” (Poe, 1978: 417). The appearance of “unusual” light and storm prepares the reader and character to the climax scene: “These troubling uncertainties become the apocalyptic climax that is centered on the house coming hysterically to life with inexplicable storms and unsettling sounds” (Perry and Sederholm, 2009: 45). In the climax scene the narrator witnesses a “Blood red moon” an

unusual form of the moon that exceeds the understanding of the character and Poe connects this vision of the moon to the collapse of the House of Usher.

The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon which now shone vividly through that once barely-discernible fissure of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the ‘House of Usher’. (Poe, 1978: 417)

Collapsing of the House of Usher is an extraordinary event for both the narrator and the reader and they witness this rationally unexplainable event. The narrator also hears a shouting sound like “the voice of a thousand waters” which is an inexplicably horrid sound. This shouting sound and the collapse of the house create an unknown space and there is no explanation to these events: At the end, the point of the story seems to be the effect on readers through defying their false expectations that the narrator will, at the end, explain the various mysteries in the story. Poe’s purpose is more about mystifying perceptions than it is about revealing plot points (Perry and Sederholm, 2009: 46). Leaving the gaps through the story paves the way for more than one possibility and uncertainty.

### **1.3.2. Variations of Claustrophobia: “The Pit and the Pendulum”**

*The Pit and the Pendulum* is a thriller-horror story of Poe and “space” is in the center of this horror. Poe starts to construct his horrid space with a completely darkened cell. The cell is a crucial part of the story because the entire story takes place in it. In the beginning of the story, this darkened cell becomes a hellish nightmare for the narrator because of his lack of knowledge about his surroundings. This lack of knowledge leads

the narrator's imagination to cut loose so he starts to torture himself with dreadful imaginings. These non-existent imaginings and the darkness of the space start to draw the narrator to the brink of "nothingness" and "death" because the narrator is always trying to find a rational explanation for the happenings and things around him. The second part of the story starts with the illumination of space. In this part of the story, narrator recognizes that reality is worse than his imagination because now he knows what is in the room but he is unable to act against the reality. The reality is that, he is bound against a big blade that is coming towards him. This inability to act turns the space he is in into a torture chamber and eventually he starts to desire for death in his hellish cell. This inability to act is also an important reference for the human condition because it is impossible to act against time and space (as they are one). The time as it represents "the end" slowly comes for us and it is impossible to slow it down or stop it. The story ends with another devilish torture. The walls of the cell push the narrator toward the "infamous dark pit," that is the worst nightmare of the narrator and the reader. It is scary because Poe gives no information about the pit, so the narrator and the reader create their own horrendous pit in their imagination.

The narrator and the protagonist of the story is a convict of The Spanish Inquisition. The story begins with the trial of the convict for an unexplained crime, and his condemnation to the notorious pit. He loses his consciousness after the sentence of the judges, and then he wakes up to gather his memory of how he arrived at his cell. His memory about his arrival is very foggy and filled with terror: "tall figures that lifted and bore me in silence down—down—still down—till a hideous dizziness oppressed me at the mere idea of the interminableness of the descent (Poe, 1978: 683). His descent is "interminable" because the repetitive act of descent creates an effect of infinite space. Furthermore, this descent can be associated with the feeling of falling down, because he continuously goes down the stairs, so he starts to think the voyage as an infinite loop of descending. Descending is also an important imagery because it is closely connected to death. In Greek Mythology, god of the dead, Hades is supposed to live underworld. Hades gathers the dead in the underworld and punishes the guilty. Similarly, in many religions, guilty souls are gathered in Hell in order to be tortured and punished. After his

interminable voyage, the convict awakens to see that his nightmare just begins. He is in pitch black darkness and he cannot comprehend his whereabouts: “The blackness of eternal night encompassed me. I struggled for breath. The intensity of the darkness seemed to oppress and stifle me. The atmosphere was intolerably close” (Poe, 1978: 684). Extreme darkness in the prison creates an oppressive claustrophobic space for the narrator. Hence, darkness not only disables the ability to see but also narrows the inhabited space. Kent Ljungquist explains that “The potency of darkness is so extreme that the narrator’s horror is not amenable to explanation” (1978: 27). The narrator feels as if he is in a void because darkness forces him to think he is in a narrow space. It is in an enveloping pitch darkness that creates a sense of narrowness and a feeling that verges on suffocation. After a brief time the narrator gets up to his feet in his dark cell:

I thrust my arms wildly above and around me in all directions. I felt nothing; yet dreaded to move a step, lest I should be impeded by the walls of a *tomb*. Perspiration burst from every pore, and stood in cold big beads upon my forehead. The agony of suspense grew at length intolerable, and I cautiously moved forward, with my arms extended, and my eyes straining from their sockets in the hope of catching some faint ray of light. I proceeded for many paces; but still all was blackness and vacancy. I breathed more freely. It seemed evident that mine was not, at least, the most hideous of fates. (Poe, 1978: 685)

The narrator says “the walls of a *tomb*” because the darkness of the cell gives him the feeling of death and burial. An unending act of descending and the darkness of his cell also strengthen the feelings of premature burial and entombment. The narrator tries to identify the space he is in, but he is in a void. His vain process of identification continues with intolerable suspense as he hopes to catch a faint light. The darkness that engulfs him gives the feeling of being in a large vacuum, and it is maddening for the narrator. It is maddening because he cannot find anything out of the limitations imposed upon him.

One of the Poe critics Lundquist calls the narrator of *Pit and the Pendulum* as the sanest of Poe’s characters because he is trying to use his “reason” to find a rational

explanation or an escape. The narrator is trying to use his reason to understand his surroundings and tries to solve everything in a rational way. He tries to identify, know and pass over the limitations that are imposed upon him. James Lundquist explains the state of the narrator as follows:

He [the narrator] is among the *sanest* of Poe's characters, but his dilemma is the most terrifying, for when he attains psychic harmony under extreme physical and mental duress he finds that his unified powers of knowledge, feeling, and will reveal, to his great horror, his own hopelessness. Because of the limitations imposed upon him by an inquisitorial force, every act of balance or sanity only leads to a worsening of his situation; this paradox suggests that while Poe ordinarily remained true to his conception of the torture of the disordered personality, he did not overlook the possibility that sanity can be more terrifying than madness. (1969: 25)

All of his rational attempts end in failure and the irrationalities lead him to a maddening state. Lundquist explains the cause of this madness as: "Poe's hero endures the multi-levelled horror that arises out of the limitations imposed upon the fully functioning man" (1969: 26). First, he tries to understand his surroundings and learn about the space he is in, but the darkness of the room *limits his knowledge*. Second, he tries to save himself from the pendulum but he is unable *to act* in a claustrophobic situation. Third and last, he is *unable to choose* the pit and the hellish heat of the room (Lundquist, 1969: 26). Whenever the narrator tries to act against the punishments of the inquisition he fails. Jeanne M. Malloy comments on that "Ironically, his attempt rationally to understand and control his destiny brings him to the very edge of sanity" (1991: 92). All of these attempts end in vain result because he is against an authority that rejects rational thinking.

Spanish Inquisition is infamous for the people who try to question their authority. Helen Rawlings reveals that: "[In the time of inquisition] [...] Spain became synonymous with all forms of repression, brutality, religious and political intolerance, as well as with intellectual and artistic backwardness" (Rawlings, 2006: 5). Spanish

Inquisition is an authority that (supposedly) takes its powers from God himself and they justify their actions religiously. Furthermore, this religious authority is deaf and blind against the people who are against the inquisition because of their “religious and political intolerance.” Using rational explanations in the presence of an irrational authority leads nothing more than madness. Hence, the prison itself is a reflection of the ideology of its creators with its brutal and irrational design. Rationality of the narrator does not work against the inquisition’s punishments because the inquisition is an authority that is against the rationality. The narrator tries to reason in a place where reason fails, thus, it leads him to insanity. For example, the narrator tries to acquire knowledge about the pit to keep himself sane because *nothingness* is a threat for his existence: “It was not that I feared to look upon things horrible, but that I grew aghast lest there should be nothing to see” (Poe, 1978: 684). “Nothing” is very scary for the narrator because it is closely connected to “death.” There is no meaning, explanation or reason in death. Also, nothingness is the point where chains of rationality are broken and one enters the chaotic territory called madness, so the pit is in the center of this chaos, nothingness, madness, and darkness. Ferit Güven explains this connection and writes:

There is [...] an affinity between madness and death in the sense that they articulate one and the same experience. What is experienced in madness and death is the “nothingness of existence.” However, in madness nothingness is no longer experienced as an external intervention, but from within. [...] The nothingness of existence (that is, a certain negativity) does not belong to an outside anymore, but is interiorized. (2005: 124-125)

The nothingness that surrounds the narrator which is associated with death becomes madness when it is internalized. In other words, external reality loses all of its meanings in nothingness and this meaninglessness reflects as a maddening experience inside. The source of this madness is the imposed limitations upon the narrator: “[...] [H]orror arises out of the limitations imposed upon the narrator and he finds himself limited in his ability to know [...]” because of the darkness (Lundquist, 1969: 26). It is a maddening darkness without any source of knowledge that it leads the narrator to hopelessness:

“Was I left to perish of starvation in this subterranean world of darkness; or what fate, perhaps even more fearful, awaited me?” (Poe, 1978: 685). Lack of knowledge starts to madden the narrator, for attempt towards sanity account for his situation further worsens matters. Furthermore, lack of knowledge forces the narrator to imagine the worst about his surroundings as a place with multiple pits. He only knows horrid stories about the pit. The narrator cannot see thus know the space so he starts to think that pit might be everywhere. According to Lundquist, this is the “ultimate state of horror” because the narrator’s inability to know leads him to imagine a horrid space (1969: 26):

Shaking in every limb, I groped my way back to the wall—resolving there to perish rather than risk the terrors of the wells, of which my imagination now pictured many in various positions about the dungeon. In other conditions of mind, I might have had courage to end my misery at once, by a plunge into one of these abysses; but now I was the veriest of cowards. Neither could I forget what I had read of these pits—that the *sudden* extinction of life formed no part of their most horrible plan. (Poe, 1978: 687)

With its resistance to be known, the pit is designed to torture the narrator by letting him expand it in his imagination until finally the point of death is reached. The narrator is aware of the fact that the inquisition does not want to kill him quickly but they want him to give him “a death of more than customary bitterness” (Poe, 1978: 686) so the pit is their ultimate way of torture. There is no way out from the pit and the narrator knows that if he goes down the pit he will die but the question is *how*? The horrid probabilities are the main source that makes the pit horrifying because *he does not know* if he is going to die from starvation or get eaten by the mice day by day in the dark narrow space of the pit. The pit is not only constructed to kill people but to torture them to death in a horrible way.

The narrator wakes up from his sleep to see that the darkness is not the only way of torture of the inquisition. He sees that the prison is illuminated but this time he is bound onto a wooden bed and a large blade, with a time figure on the ceiling, swings over him. The narrator can see this time but he cannot act so he is able to know his



surroundings but it is useless. The blade slowly comes towards him while he cannot move or act: “[...] I surveyed the ceiling of my prison. It was some thirty or forty feet overhead [...] a very singular figure riveted my whole attention. It was the painted figure of Time, save that, in lieu of a scythe [...]” (Poe, 1978: 689). The ancient curse of humanity is their mortality. The figure of time painted on the ceiling and scythe are symbols of this human condition. Every living being will cease to exist but the “time” for the end is never certain. Like the sinister and inevitable approach of death, the scythe comes down towards the narrator but the narrator does not know when he will die and he cannot stop it. Similar to all human beings the narrator’s *hands are tied* against this reality and no reason is valid in this situation. He cannot act against the descending blade and its movement, comparable to the people who cannot fight against *death* or *time*. Furthermore, he ought to face this reality while he is awake (alive) and think death every second (every swing). The uncertainty of the time of death maddens the narrator:

[...] long, long hours of horror more than mortal, during which I counted the rushing oscillations of the steel! Inch by inch—line by line—with a descent only appreciable at intervals that seemed ages— down and still down it came! Days passed—it might have been that many days passed— ere it swept so closely over me as to fan me with its acrid breath. The odor of the sharp steel forced itself into my nostrils. I prayed—*I wearied heaven with my prayer for its more speedy descent*. I grew frantically mad, and struggled to force myself upward against the sweep of the fearful scimitar. And then I fell suddenly calm, and lay smiling at the glittering death, as a child at some rare bauble.” (Poe, 1978: 691)

The narrator cannot endure the swinging of the blade because on one hand it represents the certainty “death” but on the other hand an uncertainty, “time.” This dichotomy is unendurable for the narrator, and at the end, he starts to feel death (nothingness) “inch by inch” and he internalizes it “by smiling at the glittering death.” Furthermore, he cannot endure the infiniteness of the same image over and over, in the same position, slowly descending. It is not definite when will it kill him thus the swinging image of the blade (as representing death) becomes an infinite torture for the convict. He says “death

would have been a relief” (Poe, 1978: 692) about this repetitive torture and tries to kill himself by pushing himself up towards the blade. Malloy comments on that as follows:

[...] Becoming ‘frantically mad’ as he awaits death by the lethal pendulum, the narrator first struggles to end his life prematurely by pressing himself ‘upward against the sweep of the fearful scimitar’ and then, resigning himself to despair, lays calmly, ‘smiling at the glittering death, as a child at some rare bauble’ (1978: 691) (1991: 92)

The narrator tries to understand his surroundings from the beginning of the story to gain control. His attempts to gain control over his surroundings end in failure and in madness. Then, the narrator wakes up to an illuminated room so he can see and know but he is unable to act against the pendulum to escape. This inability to act against the infinite loop of death creates a maddening effect in the narrator so he tries to commit suicide by forcing himself towards the blade. Every rational struggle of the narrator is a vain attempt so he starts to stray away from the rational with resigning himself to despair and madness.

The narrator’s last vain struggle starts with the closing in the walls. Even though his hands are free in this part of the story he is not “free” from the grasp of the inquisition. Walls are closing against him and he does not have anywhere to run or hide. The closing walls start to create a claustrophobic space while forcing the narrator to jump down into the pit: “Poe places the narrator of ‘The Pit and the Pendulum’ in just such a crucible of painful sensations, which force him to grapple with an ultimate state of horror” (Ljungquist, 1978: 26). The inquisition takes the narrator’s ability to choose from his hands by closing the walls towards the pit so that the inquisition forces the narrator to confront his ultimate horror: the pit.

I shrank back— but the closing walls pressed me resistlessly onward. At length for my seared and writhing body there was no longer an inch of foothold on the firm floor of the prison. I struggled no more, but the agony of my soul found vent in one loud, long, and final scream of despair. I felt that I tottered upon the brink—I averted my eyes— (Poe, 1978: 697)

At the end, the narrator says “I struggled no more” because this is the breaking point of the narrator. He gives up on the rational struggle because the space he is in does not accept any rationality. He acknowledges irrationality because he never finds a way out by using logical solutions. As Malloy suggests: “By beginning the tale with the narrator's trial and death sentence and by couching these events in apocalyptic imagery, Poe heralds the narrator's, and hence the reader's, entrance into a *nightmare world of punishment, dissolution, and death*, an announcement amply fulfilled by the violence, pain, and horror experienced by the narrator in his prison cell (1991: 82-83 emphases added). The narrator is in a nightmare world of irrationalities that dissolves him slowly. As Lundquist suggests, sanity can be more terrifying than madness because every rational action of the narrator turns out to be a painful experience. (1969: 25)

At the end, Poe creates a space that changes shape every part of the story. In the beginning of the story, space is dark and unknown and the narrator imagines “his own” space because of his inability to know. In the second part, he starts to see his surroundings but knowledge does not help him to find a way to escape so the knowledge worsens his situation because he is in a space that knowledge is no more valid. In the last part of the story, the narrator is stripped of his ability to choose by the space. The closing walls act against the will of the narrator and push him towards the pit. With this last movement, the space turns into 3 different torture chambers.

### **1.3.3. Hideous Space of the Carnival and the Catacombs: “The Cask of Amontillado”**

“The Cask of Amontillado” is considered as a revenge story. Similar to the stories mentioned before, Poe uses space to evoke fear in his character. However, unlike the other two, this story starts in a very lively and vivid space and then, step by step, Poe leads his characters to a completely different space from this cheerful, bright one; dark, closed, claustrophobic catacombs. The gloom of the inside and the cheer of the outside space are juxtaposed throughout the story. The darkness and gloom of the catacombs are strengthened with the contrasting lively, bright and refreshing space outside. The

catacombs, the space of the dead, a Hades of sorts, are directly related to the death. They threaten the visitor with their dark and claustrophobic images of death, an inevitable end for every living individual. While the inside is thus menacing and hostile, the cheerful outside is not so bright as it seems to be. The story takes place during a traditional time of festivities at which borders are challenged. Since much of the restraint that keeps order is released behind masks and under the influence of alcohol, the apparently innocent turn into potentially destructive figures and friend and foe become fused into each other. Such uncanny mixture in which safe borders disappear can be seen as well in the family mansion above the catacombs. The house belongs to the ancient family of the Montresors who have had to live with the humiliation from another aristocratic family the Fortunatos. The narrator, the last living member of the Montresor family takes his revenge upon the last member of the Fortunato family by using his weakness for wine, an aristocratic sign of refinement and high taste. Thus just as the refined tastes and manners of aristocracy are shown to bring death, the death-filled catacombs as reminders of the price for the wealth and refinement belie the life above.

The story begins with the wrathful words of Montresor: “THE thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult I vowed revenge” (Poe, 1978: 1256). To take his revenge, Montresor plots a hideous plan to trap Fortunato inside the catacombs below his mansion. Montresor is aware of the fact that Fortunato takes pride in being a wine connoisseur. Using this weak point Montresor wants to persuade Fortunato to pay a visit to the wine cellar below the house of the Montresor family. The story takes place in the midst of a carnival setting. Just before they start their voyage to the depths of the house, the characters are in a “supreme madness” (Poe, 1978: 1257). This madness is revealed in vivid colors, costumes, loud music and laughter, all signs of life. This vivacity turns into gloom and portending death with each step of the characters towards the catacombs (Engel, 1983: 26). Characters cross a threshold when they travel from outside towards inside:

[Poe’s stories occur] in a distant part of the building, difficult of access because of extreme height or depth: the topmost room of a tower, reached by interminable stairs and intricate series of passages, or a vault far

underground. The use of long winding staircases produces an effect of uncertainty as to the exact location in the building; and to pass through an archway indicates entrance upon a particularly depressing scene. (Kane, 1932: 152)

Their descent into the depths below the house becomes increasingly depressing as the space around them gets smaller, darker and gloomier. They pass through low arches and walk through catacombs where the white bones of the dead are all the more visible in the dark. The characters are surrounded by thick walls and they are walking through the space of the dead. Furthermore, the space they travel is dark, damp and silent. All of these qualities set the interior atmosphere in stark opposition to the joyful outside space. As the characters move into the house of the Montresor family they move from the vividness of the outside space into a gloomy land of the dead with bones and tombs.

A carnivalesque atmosphere dominates the streets outside the Montresor house; its bright, colorful and lively scenery, at first sight, seems very different from the inside space. Nevertheless, it is not so different because the exterior space is as uncertain and uncanny as interior space because the spirit of carnival depends on a defiance of all hierarchical priorities and personalities, in fact, all reason. Mikhail Bakhtin, who introduces the concept of the carnivalesque, depicts it as a spectacle where social hierarchies are upset. A monk can dress as a jester and a beggar can dress as a cardinal in the carnival. People “change” into something new, something different in the carnival and this change challenges social borders and create a sense of uncanny: “In the carnival everyone is considered equal; it is the “the feast of becoming, change, and renewal” (Bakhtin, 1984: 10). Therefore, even though the surroundings of the carnival are sparkling and merry, with costumes and masks, people keep their social identities, their “first life” secret. As Bakhtin suggests, people in the carnival live their “second life” when they “enter the utopian realm of community, freedom, equality, and abundance” (1984: 9). People in the carnival can hide masks and costumes to keep not only their identity but also their intentions secret. Thus, the line between the known and the unknown is blurred in the crowd of the carnival. Underneath this obscurity and the

unknown lurk the unexpected and uncanny, so much so that one cannot know who is friend or foe.

In this uncanny setting Montresor hides all his evil intentions behind his black mask and speaks to Fortunato like a close friend while he invites him to his house: “*My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking to-day.* But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts” (Poe, 1978: 1257; emphasis added). Just as a monk can pose like a jester in the carnival time, Montresor poses like a friend to Fortunato in order to lure him to his home where he will take revenge on him. Thus the carnival provides Montresor with an opportunity to turn his fate around, to pay Fortunato back for the insult he and his family have suffered from him and his for generations on end. His evil intent can finally find an outlet in the carnival. As Andrea Popescu suggests: “It is a time of upturning of values, a moment when real values are replaced by false ones when evil comes to the surface” (2012: 5). By employing Fortunato’s major weakness for connoisseurship and hiding his face and his body behind a black mask and a large cloak, Montresor likewise masks his intent skillfully. As a barrier that keeps the reality from being seen, the mask has been associated with differing meanings:

“[In the folk culture] The mask is connected with the joy of change and reincarnation, with gay relativity and with the merry negation of uniformity and similarity; it rejects conformity to oneself. [...]

[But i]n its Romantic form the mask is torn away from the oneness of the folk carnival concept. It is stripped of its original richness and acquires other meanings alien to its primitive nature; now the mask hides something, keeps a secret, deceives. [...] The Romantic mask loses almost entirely its regenerating and renewing element and acquires a somber hue.

A terrible vacuum, a nothingness lurks behind it. (Bakhtin, 1984: 39, 40)

Poe uses the mask with its Romantic form in his story because the mask is not a symbol of joy and change but a representation of Montresor’s hideous intent. The color of the mask is also an important detail because with his black silk mask and *roquelaire*, he looks like an executioner (Baraban, 2004: 53, 54). On the contrary, Fortunato’s jester’s

outfit, with bells on top of his hat, is total opposite of Montresor's dress (Poe, 1978: 1257). The aristocratic Fortunato's playful de-classing of himself in his jester's costume ironically foreshadows Fortunato's tragedy as it will become real. Elena V. Baraban explains "Montresor's plan is to make a fool of his enemy to ensure Fortunato's engagement in 'a tragic farce'" (Baraban, 2004: 54). Montresor deceives Fortunato and buries him into the catacombs of his house "like a fool" because he injured Montresor thousand times.

What adds to the irony is that, often jesters are known for their and freedom to criticize authorities with their sharp tongues because they are considered to be half-wits, innocent creatures like children who have not learnt the rules of etiquette and diplomacy and cannot distinguish the harmful from the harmless. As such, most jesters in literature have the freedom of speech without its accompanying penalties. Yet, Fortunato cannot protect himself from punishment in his jester's outfit because Montresor knows that his jesting is *only a jest*. Fortunato seems to be caught in his own game as he is degraded by Montresor from jester to literally a fool.

Like the House of Usher, the house of Montresor stands as a symbol of an aristocrat lineage of the Montresors whose bones occupy the catacombs below. According to Baraban,

The catacombs of the Montresors are extensive and their vastness genuinely impresses Fortunato. In the catacombs, surrounded by the remains of Montresor's ancestors, Fortunato realizes how powerful this family used to be. The protagonist's name, "Mon-tresor" (my treasure) is a metaphor, for Montresor's noble ancestry is indeed his treasure. (2004: 51)

With its largeness and vastness the house and its catacombs stand for the power of the Montresor family, and at the end of the story the house becomes the tomb of Fortunato. In order to take his revenge and restore his pride, Montresor buries Fortunato alive into the catacombs. Baraban comments on that "Being a descendant of a powerful aristocratic family, Montresor could not possibly let Fortunato insult him with impunity. The Montresors' motto is 'Nemo me impune lacessit' ('No one insults me with

impunity'), and therefore, for Montresor, punishing his offender is a matter of honor, a matter of fulfilling his duty before his noble ancestry" (2004: 52). Montresor's choice of burying Fortunato instead of directly killing him arises from the former's desire to turn the latter into a trophy that will be a sign of his revenge for the insult his family suffered from the Fortunato family (Engel, 1983: 28). Fortunato is offered to the humiliated ancestors of Montresor as a payback, a trophy of the final triumph of their family name. Along with the bones of his ancestral past, he becomes the most meaningful part of Montresor's treasure.

Catacombs that lie underneath the aristocratic houses provide a direct contrast with the refinement of tastes, of which aristocracy boasts and with which it identifies itself. These dark and fearful spaces that lurk underneath the living spaces above are reminders of both the long lineages of families and the fact that death underlies all the wealth and power that one sees above. Like "The Pit and the Pendulum," there is an act of descent into the depths of the house, which can be interpreted as descending to the land of the dead both literally and metaphorically because they are literally descending to the catacombs which are full of dead bodies but as said before, descent into the darkness also is associated with death in mythologies and religions such as Hades and the idea of Hell. Furthermore, this act of descent ends in a ruthless premature burial of Fortunato, which means that Fortunato descends into a Hades-like hell of sorts. Popescu elaborates on this issue as follows:

Catacombs have always been associated with the dead, they were used for pagan worshipping and human sacrifices. There is a whole tradition of the rituals of burying someone alive. Such rituals imply that these burials are meant to give a solid basis to a construction so it would not fall to pieces. They are also used to mark the territory of the sacred space by making sacrifices to the gods and by appeasing their possible envy with a human construction. (2012: 4)

Catacombs are symbolical places that are used as memorials and sacrificial places, thus, skeletons around the catacombs deepen the connection of space to death and terror: "We



had passed through long walls of *piled skeletons*. [...] *Its walls had been lined with human remains*, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris (Poe, 1978: 1261). The characters are walking in a space similar to a graveyard with the skeletons and total darkness: “It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavoured to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see” (Poe, 1978: 1261). Darkness complies with the claustrophobic space of catacombs that is associated with the dead. Poe intentionally shapes his space dark, claustrophobic and full of dead because darkness in claustrophobic space (especially like catacombs) gives the feeling of being buried alive, following that, at the end of the story Montresor buries Fortunato prematurely to the catacombs of his family.

Premature burial is a Gothic imagery that Poe frequently employs in order to emphasize the thin boundary between life and death:

To be buried while alive is, beyond question, the most terrific of . . . extremes which has ever fallen to the lot of mere mortality. That it has frequently, very frequently, so fallen will scarcely be denied by those who think. The boundaries which divide Life from Death are at best shadowy and vague. Who shall say where the one ends, and where the other begins? (Poe, 1978: 955)

In “The Cask of Amontillado” Poe uses this imagery in catacomb setting (bones, dead bodies) in order to heighten the feeling of fear in the character. According to Mangham, “Live burial is a fate worse than death and here [...] induced most effectively through the filter of human experience. [...] Poe accessed the full horrors of being interred alive by anticipating the feelings, both physical and psychological, of the un-dead” (2010: 16). The boundary between life and death is blurred in this horrid space of darkness. Montresor builds a wall around Fortunato and leaves him to a slow death. The reality of being buried alive is horrid for Fortunato, so he does not want to believe this reality. He says what Montresor doing is a good joke (Poe, 1978: 1263) because wants to think that this is only a joke, not real. With his jester costume Fortunato thinks that Montresor jests

him but actually Montresor makes a fool<sup>3</sup> of Fortunato. Fortunato starts to comprehend what is happening and when he comes to his senses he loses his mind. The effect of alcohol starts to recede from the veins of Fortunato with the horrid sight of being buried. Terrorized with the chains, with a last attempt he tries to shout in order to stop his executioner: "For the love of God, Montresor!" (Poe, 1978: 1263). When Montresor finishes the walls of the tomb around Fortunato, there is only the sound of bells coming from his jester's costume. These bells are an important part of burial in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America and Europe because they were used as sounding devices to prevent premature burials. People placed bells on the limbs of the recently dead to see if they are still alive or not (Platizky, 1999: 207). Ironically, these bells do not save Fortunato from his predestined horrid fate of being buried into the catacombs of Montresor family.

Poe uses space masterfully in order to evoke fear in "The Cask of Amontillado." The liveliness of the outside space acts as a contrast to the darkness and gloominess of inside space. Inside space is not only dark and claustrophobic but also supported with a connection to an aristocratic past. This aristocratic past is attached to the story with catacombs, an important element of terror in space. Catacombs are space of the dead with skeletons and tombs around and Poe uses this space to prematurely bury his character into, thus, the metaphorical connection of the catacombs to death becomes a literal connection with the burial of a character.

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<sup>3</sup> Jester also called fool in many different literary sources

## CHAPTER TWO

### KAZUO ISHIGURO AND SPACE

Bynum wonders for us all, "Are we genes, bodies, brains, minds, experiences, memories, or souls?"  
(Seaman 249).

#### 2.1. POST-HUMAN PRISONERS IN POESQUE SPACE: *NEVER LET ME GO*

*Never Let Me Go* is among Kazuo Ishiguro's most successful novels. In his novel, Ishiguro tells the story of a group of children in what looks like a cross between a boarding school and an orphanage called Hailsham, which is later revealed to be a school for clones. The clone students in Hailsham are products of genetic engineering, and they are educated in Hailsham until they finally donate their organs to "real" humans who need organ transplants. The clone students have no right to choose their lives and they cannot "reject" the decisions made for them. After completing their education in Hailsham, they leave for the cottages, and when they feel ready they become carers until they are assigned to start their donations. In Hailsham, clone students live in a claustrophobic space they are not allowed to leave. Like Poe, Ishiguro uses the element of space in order to create a sense of claustrophobia. Not only Hailsham but the space surrounding Hailsham also plays an important role in creating claustrophobia and fear of the unknown. In order to prevent the young clone students from running away from Hailsham, rumors about the dangers that lurk outside circulate among students. Ishiguro hardly mentions any physical barriers that separate Hailsham from the surrounding woods, but he constantly makes his reader and characters alike aware of the outside dangers through stories, whose sources are unknown. The space in *Never Let Me Go* is not only claustrophobic as a whole but also filled with uncanny elements. Even Hailsham, the setting the clone students recognize as their home, is un-home-like when one considers its function similar to factory farms. Ishiguro manages to

associate what looks like familiar places of modern day England seem completely alien and unfamiliar especially when the narrator drives along winding country roads that seem to lead nowhere. There are hardly any connections among the particular buildings that the characters visit or live in; they simply seem to stand in a terrifying vacuum. Ishiguro's space is further bewildering because, like Poe, by means of twin images and doubles, he blurs the boundaries between the real and the copy. The existence of clones as copies of real humans becomes totally unsettling because there are no physical and visible differences that distinguish between the two. Clones are considered as disquieting for humans because they create the question of who is clone and who is original. Twin images and doubling are eventually related to the uncanny as clones are simultaneously familiar as human replicas and unfamiliar as total aliens.

The plot of the novel focuses on clone students who are alienated from society because as products of laboratory they are not considered as "human." The clone students live in a boarding school or orphanage called Hailsham, and when the time comes, they are destined to donate their organs to "real" humans who need them. There are three central characters in the story: Kathy H., Ruth and Tommy. Kathy is the narrator, whose best friends are Ruth and Tommy. The story begins in Hailsham where they all grow up with other students, so for them, Hailsham is home. Hailsham is a "special" school designed especially for raising and educating clones where teachers are called guardians. Miss Emily is the head guardian and a founding member of Hailsham. With Miss Emily, Miss Lucy and Miss Geraldine work as guardians at Hailsham. Madame (Miss Claude) is a benefactor of Hailsham who frequently visits and takes the best artworks of the students. Guardians call Hailsham and the students there special because, as the narrator realizes, there is a whole lot of difference in the quality of care and education in Hailsham compared to other such institutions. Miss Emily and the other guardians of Hailsham want to create a special shelter for the students, in order to protect them, but the shelter they create does not protect them from the ultimate reality of donating their organs. The donation system still continues and the clones who graduate from Hailsham still donate their organs to "real humans."

Furthermore, while the shield protects the students from the outside world, it also limits them. There may be no written restriction about leaving Hailsham without notice but there are stories that stand as invisible walls. The students cannot leave Hailsham because of the fearsome stories they hear about the outside world. The source of these stories is not exactly defined but there is a possibility that the guardians have originally spread the stories in order to create a fearful image of the outside space for the clones. Therefore, Hailsham not only acts as a shelter to protect the students from the outside dangers but it also works as a prison for those within. In order to highlight the protective side of Hailsham Miss Emily explains that, before Hailsham, all the students existed only to supply medical science and they were considered *less than human*. Miss Emily and Saunders Trusts together start a small but very vocal movement and they stand against the entire donation programs because, they defend that, if they educate the clones, it is possible for them to grow to be as sensitive and intelligent as any ordinary being (Ishiguro, 2005: 256). Hailsham thus has this double role for the students there; it both provides a place of protection and friendship while at the same time it is a prison of sorts protected by stories, a place that cuts them off from the outside relationships, leaving their guardians as their only connection to the outside world or humans. Furthermore, even though Hailsham is later revealed to be a whole lot better and way more humane than other clone schools, it still functions as a kind of an organ-factory. Even though Kathy H. and his friends call Hailsham home, they are, in a sense, forced to live in this “sham” and “hail” to what is given to them (Lin, 2016: 36). Likewise, according to Deborah P. Britzman, Hailsham’s name itself gives away the un-homeliness:

Its name means what it says: the children, with no parents, are greeted by a sham that they can’t quite figure but that manages to hail them. Their teacher-guardians seem to give them an education, but no assignment has any purpose. The rules of the school are secretive, leaving the students alone to interpret wildly their guardian’s utterances. (2006: 313)

For example, students notice an extreme sense of caution on matters of their health, but they have no way of knowing the actual reason behind it. The guardians call particular attention to their need for right nourishment and to keep away from risky habits such as smoking. Not only do the guardians focus the education of the clones on physical education they also keep students from smoking cigarettes by what can be interpreted as extreme measures such as banning Sherlock Holmes books just because he is smoking a pipe. Kathy H. remembers this particular strictness towards smoking though she does not know what to make of it:

I don't know how it was where you were, but at Hailsham the guardians were really strict about smoking. I'm sure they'd have preferred it if we never found out smoking even existed; but since this wasn't possible, they made sure to give us some sort of lecture each time any reference to cigarettes came along. Even if we were being shown a picture of a famous writer or world leader, and they happened to have a cigarette in their hand, then the whole lesson would grind to a halt. There was even a rumour that some classic books—like the Sherlock Holmes ones—weren't in our library because the main characters smoked too much, and when you came across a page torn out of an illustrated book or magazine, this was because there'd been a picture on it of someone smoking. And then there were the actual lessons where they showed us horrible pictures of what smoking did to the insides of your body. (Ishiguro, 2005: 67)

As such the bodies of the clones are invaded territory exposed to the control of others. In addition to banning certain harmful substances such as cigarettes, the guardians are responsible for the weekly bodily exams. Kathy H. also refers to these unpleasant experiences: “[...] at Hailsham we had to have some form of medical almost every week—usually up in Room 18 at the very top of the house—with stern Nurse Trisha, or Crow Face, as we called her” (Ishiguro, 2005: 13). The students have no control or

authority over their bodies, which is merely a site on which medical or political authorities make decisions. Even what look like acts of care are later revealed to be performed not for the benefits of the students but for the future organ receivers. Physical health check-ups are provided for the students because their vital organs are going to be transplanted to “real” humans that need them. This reality changes the meaning of Hailsham as home into a pre-transplantation center. Such care given to the well-being of the Hailsham students may at first make it seem like a humane place especially because other such institutions exist where clones are denied even the minimum humanity, but even such comparisons cannot overshadow the fact that the humanity offered in Hailsham is minimum. Kowalski interprets the function of Hailsham as follows:

Hailsham is another feeble expression of humanity that extended protection to the clones, yet only to the extent to which society could still efficiently exploit their bodies for organ production. Indeed the minimum humanity exhibited at *Hailsham functions, as the other forms of denial, to increase the manageability of the clone population*. [...] Minimum humanity [...] never allows the clones rights that would decrease their utility as organ donors. (2014: 17-18; emphasis added)

Therefore, it would not be wrong to suggest that the students in Hailsham actually live in a space of deceit. They are allowed to think that they can, in fact, choose their own future but they do not even have control over their own bodies. They learn this truth first-hand from their guardian Miss Lucy, who cannot take this duplicity any more: “You’ve been told and not told. You’ve been told, but none of you really understand. [...] You’ll become adults ... you’ll start to donate your vital organs. ... *You were brought into this world for a purpose, and your futures, all of them, have been decided*” (Ishiguro, 2005: 80). Even then, the students cannot really make complete sense of what this means for them. Yu-Min argues, “Kathy and the other students are forbidden from comprehending the truth, evident in Miss Lucy’s exploding the reality of the donating system and the deceit of life in Hailsham” (2017: 1153). Students of Hailsham are never

made aware of the fact that they are different from real humans until Miss Lucy gives them a faint light about what is their purpose. They think that they are living in a protective home but they are actually living in “a well-manicured” boarding school with invisible restrictions (Vorhaus, 2007: 99). At the end of the novel, one of the guardians explains what they have tried to do in Hailsham as sheltering the students from the cruelty of the outside world: “You see, we were able to give something, something which even now no one will ever take from you; and we were able to do that principally by *sheltering* you. Hailsham would not have been Hailsham if we hadn't. [...] But we sheltered you during those years, and we gave you your childhoods” (Ishiguro, 2005: 262). Yet this act of sheltering has a downside because Hailsham not only protects the students from the dangers and cruelty of the outside space but also jails them with its “invisible restrictions that keep clones anchored to their fate” (Query, 2015: 164). Likewise, Teo questions the seemingly humane and ethical training provided in Hailsham against the unchangeable cruelty awaiting them as fate:

One of the ethical controversies surrounding Hailsham, indeed, is whether such institutions that provide a nurturing environment for the clones are ultimately doing more harm than good by sheltering them in a bubble when they are growing up and giving them a false impression of life before releasing them into the wider world to face their harsh realities as organ donors. The guardians at Hailsham have kept the students in a protective environment and unaware of the circumstances surrounding their existence. (2014: 133)

The students thus grow up in ignorance, unaware of their future because they only know what they are told; guardians control Hailsham students by controlling knowledge and information. According to Taketomi Ria:

The people who manage Hailsham control information so as not to let the children know the truth, and maneuver nurturing the children in the Eden like place so they can obtain well-conditioned organs later on. Children



were made, protected, cultivated, and brainwashed by adults; therefore, they never suspect or fight against them, but wait to be killed. (2012: 32)

One wonders how anybody can possibly be led to their own destruction with no resistance. This is a gradual process. The students' relations with their bodies and their physical environment are constructed by providing half-truths, or, as Miss Lucy puts it, by "being told and untold." The guardians never really lie to the students, but they never tell the whole truth; they simply slip in bits and pieces of crucial information when the students' attention is focused on subjects they find more interesting. Even when Miss Lucy tells them the naked truth, they find it hard to comprehend it totally. It is familiar enough not to shock them yet strange enough to puzzle their minds. Like Poe's narrator in "The Pit and the Pendulum," they are in the dark about the totality of the plots that control them. Yet unlike what is done to him, their knowledge is pronounced so gradually and so diplomatically that even when the whole truth is revealed to them, they do not react or revolt. They, in fact, become consenting participants in their own destruction.

The clone students are living in darkness under the protection of the guardians. This darkness, as an invisible wall, prevents access to any form of information. The absence of any communication device in Hailsham reveals the case. Patrick R. Query writes:

One way in which information is unavailable to the students—in which their horizon is constricted—is a function not of the story's telling but of its setting: the absence of telephones and other communication technologies. Although it is set in something like the present, nowhere in *Never Let Me Go* does any character use a computer or make a telephone call, much less send a text message or an e-mail. (2015: 164)

The students do not have any means of communication that would give them information about the outside world. Invisible walls surround Hailsham to keep the information from the clone students. The only form of media the Hailsham students are shown to get a hold of is magazines, certain parts of which are cut out. Some of these

cut-out materials may include pictures of people with unhealthy habits such as smoking and drinking alcohol. But most of them are likely to include information that is deemed harmful for them, which would speed up the gradual seeping-in of information and create shock and even resistance among students. Furthermore, any information that would cause a dilemma in the minds of the students during their education in Hailsham can be problematic for the guardians because even though clones consider Hailsham as their home, in fact, it functions as a control station.

Kathy and her friends consider Hailsham as their home because they feel that they “belong” there. Not only has every significant event they can remember about themselves taken place there but also the place connects them to earlier generations of students by means of legends and stories circulating among students. Furthermore, they have friends and their guardians as their first significant others with whom they share their significant moments. However, after they leave for the cottages, Hailsham leaves their lives forever. In fact what Hailsham provides for them is nothing more than a semblance of home, for they have neither family that asks after them nor a really caring environment to which they can return. That means Hailsham was just a make-believe “home” for the students. Hughes suggests that, Hailsham is not their home because they do not belong to Hailsham in a familial sense:

The only place where the students truly belong is Hailsham. But Hailsham is, in essence, a facade. The absence of parents and relatives means that the students do not belong to anyone in the familial sense. Consequently, Hailsham is no place for a person to belong—the students cannot return there later in life, as if it were their home. What is important to point out is that this is not understood by Kathy, Tommy and Ruth until much later. During their time at Hailsham as children, the students are blissfully unaware of the pretence of it all. It has been manufactured solely for the benefit of the students’ upbringing, to shield them from the outside world and the grim fate that awaits them. Hailsham is a huge, fake security blanket. (2016: 7)

In the later years of the students, Hailsham remains an ever-present entity albeit embellished and reshaped in their imagination even though, or exactly because, they do not have any chance to return to their pseudo-home. It is lost because of what it represents, innocence, hope for a free future, self-determination, home, and family, are lost to the students. Like all these, Hailsham was never more than a fantasy even when they seemed to be there.

Hailsham is an un-homelike space for the students first and foremost because of the rules and limitations imposed upon them, which function as invisible walls making the space “claustrophobic” for them. The most important components of these invisible barriers around Hailsham are the stories that circulate there. Just as in the “Pit and the Pendulum” stories play an important role in defining and constructing the space for the students of Hailsham. The students hear from older ones horrible stories about the outside world, especially the woods. The first story is about a student who *runs off the Hailsham boundaries*. He ends up dead around the notorious “woods” beyond Hailsham. The second story is about a girl *who climbed over a fence* just to see what was outside. Eventually, she also ends up dead but this time she haunts the woods and outside of the Hailsham in order to get back in. Kathy H. says,

There were all kinds of horrible stories about the woods. Once, not so long before we all got to Hailsham, a boy had had a big row with his friends and run off beyond the Hailsham boundaries. His body had been found two days later, up in those woods, tied to a tree with the hands and feet chopped off. Another rumor had it that a girl’s ghost wandered those trees. She’d been a Hailsham student until one day she’d climbed over a fence just to see what it was like outside [...] She kept hanging around outside the fences, pleading to be let back in, but no one let her. Eventually, she’d gone off somewhere out there, something had happened and she’d died. But her ghost was always wandering about the woods, gazing over Hailsham, pining to be let back in. (Ishiguro, 2005: 50)

It is obvious that these stories function as cautionary tales for the students about the punishment for going beyond the set boundaries. Furthermore, these stories shape the

space in their imagination just like what he hears about the pit shapes the imagination of the narrator in “The Pit and the Pendulum.” The narrator of the “Pit and the Pendulum” tries to stay away from the pit because he has no way of knowing what it really is; the only thing he knows about the pit is the notorious stories. Just as Poe’s narrator stays away from the pit due to the stories about it, the students of Hailsham avoid “the outside world” because of the horrid stories about other students who run away from Hailsham.

Unlike the student in the first story, the girl in the second wants to see the outside world but she ends up dead. She is curious to see and know about the outside world. She wishes for freedom, to go beyond the limits designated for her. However, at the end, the freedom she wishes for leads her to death because she transgresses her limits. Such tales of caution about what is permissible and what the consequences are for disobedience have been common throughout human history. While the most well-known is the biblical story of the disobedience to God and the resulting Fall, others can be found in myths such as the myth of Icarus, who forgets his father’s warnings, and compelled by the feeling of freedom, he flies too close to the sun and dies as a result. In the story, Icarus’s father, the great architect Daedalus builds a labyrinth for the king of Crete. However, Daedalus’s treacherous action<sup>4</sup> enrages the king and he imprisons both Daedalus and his son Icarus into the labyrinth. Daedalus makes two pairs of waxen wings in order to escape from the labyrinth with his son. Before their escape, Daedalus warns Icarus not to fly low because the waves will wet his flagging plumes and not to fly so high because the sun will melt the wings. He tells Icarus to follow his guidance and not to be compelled by anything else (Ovid, 1958: 310-315). Eventually, they start to fly but with the feeling of freedom Icarus forgets his father’s warnings and flies closer to the sun and his waxen wings melt and he dies (Ovid, 1958: 335-350). Likewise, the student in this story, compelled by the idea of freedom and knowledge, goes beyond the assigned limits of Hailsham and faces the same end as Icarus. Both characters defy their authority and, going beyond their limited border, face their doom.

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<sup>4</sup> Theseus wants to save her love from the rage of the Minotaur and Daedalus helps Theseus and shows a way to find his way back to the entrance. The king considers this help as treason this is why he sentences Daedalus and his son to the labyrinth.

Horrible stories about students keep other students from similar ideas and actions. Hailsham students do not want to end up like the students in the stories, so they draw their lines of freedom within the limits of Hailsham. They believe those stories because their experience of reality is limited with the borders of Hailsham. Without any experience of the outside world, the stories they hear act as reality for them and this *artificial* reality shapes their life. It is highly possible that the guardians use these stories as control devices. The fact that the source of these stories is not exactly clear makes their effect on the students even greater. It is part of the whole project of leaving the students in some sort of semi-darkness, too dark to see the whole but light enough to make out some shapes, even though they may hardly represent the true ones. They use this double-edged strategy about the source of the stories: “The guardians always insisted these stories were non-sense. But then the older students would tell us that was exactly what the guardians had told them when they were younger [...]” (Ishiguro, 2005: 50; emphasis added). As long as they repeat these stories among themselves, as young children are apt to do, they reproduce Hailsham as the only safe haven and the exterior as the territory of terror. Each interval during which these stories are put aside ends in a stronger come-back: “But then all it took would be one little thing—someone retelling one of those stories, a scary passage in a book, even just a chance remark reminding you of the woods—and that would mean another period of *being under that shadow*.” (Ishiguro, 2005: 51; emphasis added). Even after they leave Hailsham, the students never really interact with normal humans. In that sense, the shadow of Hailsham never leaves them. Early verbal borders that separate them from the external world of the normal humans continue to do so during adulthood. It would not be wrong to suggest that the stories gradually turn into real borders that actually separate them from the real or normal humans. Since they are not physically marked, this separation has to be self-imposed. Hence, it remarks on the internalization of the borders.

Their physical resemblance to the normal humans makes the students the uncanny doubles that would unsettle the norms of human identity. The students are not considered normal human beings because they are not born from a human being’s womb but they are laboratory products. This issue raises the questions about “what is a human

being?” or “what makes us human?” These questions are problematic because they threaten to shatter everything humanity has built until now. Changing the definition of “human” eventually brings the question of “what am I?” raising questions about the human status of each and every one of the persons that call themselves human. These questions can shatter the bonds of rationality and sooner or later bring the threat of meaninglessness and nothingness. Myra J. Seaman explains this threat as follows:

The human long presumed by traditional Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment humanism is a subject (generally assumed male) who is at the center of his world (that is, the world); is defined by his supreme, utterly rational intelligence; does not depend (unlike his predecessor) upon a divine authority to make his way through the world but instead manipulates it in accord with his own wishes; and is a historically independent agent whose thought and action produce history. It is this human—who is, as Tony Davies notes, “always singular, always in the present tense, [...] inhabit[ing] not a time or a place but a condition, timeless and unrealised” (32)—that is the subject of traditional liberal humanism. His power and superiority inhere in his human essence. Yet in a posthumanist world, this human is an endangered species. (2007: 246)

This singular, rational and supreme human is considered to be at the center of the world; thus changing the center means to threaten the equilibrium. Those clones are posthumans (uncanny doubles) that threaten the center of this structure: “Posthumanism rejects the assumed universalism and exceptional being of Enlightenment humanism and in its place substitutes [as] mutation, variation, and becoming” (Seaman, 2007: 247). Posthumans are a threat to the humanist theory because they exceed the limits of being a human. They defy the definition of the human as singular and problematize that definition. Breaking the definition of a human being takes the power from the hands of the humans as defined by humanism and forces them to share it with a multitude of other posthumans. This is why the “normal” humans try to cling to their power and incarcerate

categorical non-humans, whether they be robots, animals, or clones, outside their space. This horrid space is sustained by discursive practices, laws, traditions, and habits.

In order to secure their power, humans keep posthuman clones outside of their space because they present a threat to their omnipotence. The humanistic discourse suggests that the clones do not have souls. Possession of an immortal soul has been an important marker that has divided humans from all other beings. In an attempt to broaden the definition of the borders of the human, so as to include clones, the guardians of Hailsham try to prove that the students of Hailsham have souls in them. This statement itself proves that humans normally think that they are different from clones and discriminate against them as non-human beings because a soul is only owned by a human being. From a religious aspect, the soul is the breath of life that God breathed into man to give him life: “And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 8). Clones are not created by the breath of God so they are aliens, outsiders in the world of humans. They should be kept beyond the lines that is separate, the legitimate space of humans, because any actual contact with them arouses feelings of fear and disgust in humans. For example, Kathy remembers a childhood memory when, upon Ruth’s challenge, they all swarm around Madame, her shock, disgust, and fear of them:

I can see it now, the shudder she seemed to be repressing, the real dread that one of us would accidentally brush against her. [...] Madame was afraid of us. But she was afraid of us in the same way someone might be afraid of spiders. We hadn’t been ready for that. It had never occurred to us to wonder how we would feel, being seen like that, being the spiders. (Ishiguro, 2005: 35)

Madame’s reaction to the students in this scene represents the reaction of humanity to all “other”s: because the “the other” blurs her reality, her status as a human. Whenever she looks at the clone students she is seeing her uncanny double which threatens her being as human. Clones are the doubles of the humans because they are all created from an “original” that is a “regular” human being born from a womb. Human clones look like human beings but according to definitions of humanism, they are not human beings. But

their physical likenesses serve to blur the boundaries of the definition of the human, so as the doubles of human clones threaten to exceed the limits of what human respect as reality. Evelyn Tsitas suggests “Ishiguro's clones confirm Freud's essay on ‘The Uncanny’ in many aspects: the uncanniness they represent is entirely psychological, rather than supernatural in origin. They are familiar yet foreign at the same time, which makes them uncomfortably strange to those who know they are clones” (2008: 24). Likewise, it would make humans uncomfortably strange to face a clone “double” that looks exactly like a human being and where it is nearly impossible to tell the difference. If they are not excluded by some means or discourses, legal or medical, or religious, they can always threaten to infiltrate into the human world. Such an infiltration into the human world, unintended by the students, takes place in the novel. When they visit Norfolk Ruth sees that people treat them well because they do not suspect that they are clones (Tsitas, 2008: 24): “Do you think she'd have talked to us like that if she'd known what we really were? What do you think she'd have said if we'd asked her? 'Excuse me, but do you think your friend was ever a clone model?' She'd have thrown us out” (Ishiguro, 2005: 162). They are the doubles of the human beings but they are also “the other” and “the unaccepted.” Humans would not treat them well if they knew their true identity because they are threats for their own existence.

The Morningdale scandal is an important proof for the fear of the uncanny double. Morningdale scandal is about the research of James Morningdale. He offers people the possibility of having children with enhanced characteristics, such as superior intelligence and superior athletic ability (Ishiguro, 2005: 258-259). In other words, he offers a project for reaching excellence as humanity. This research is exposed and became an important problem for the people because “it reminded people, reminded them of a fear they'd always had,” the fear that superior “humans” would replace them and make them insignificant (Ishiguro, 2005: 259). Humans have always “had” the fear of being surpassed by other beings, so they keep such threats outside their settlements. But what if they are indistinguishable in appearance and even behavior? Blurring the boundaries between humans and such “other”s, clones unsettle human superiority and singularity. James Morningdale reminds people “the fear of replacement” with his



suggestion. Yet, the clones can be kept at bay because they are never part of the human family, nobody's children or parents. Miss Emily indicates the gravity of the Morningdale project: "It is one thing to create students, such as yourselves, for the donation program. But a generation of created children who would take their place in society? Children demonstrably *superior* to the rest of us? Oh no. That frightened people. They recoiled from that" (Ishiguro, 2005: 259). This statement shows that people are alright with the idea of using the clone children as their "organ banks" because as no part of the human family, they are under control and surveillance. They are educated according to their rules and they obey their fate as donors.

Humans try to normalize the process organ transplantations from clone donors by thinking these organs are coming from "nowhere." They do not want to think about the source of the organs because it would force them to face their cruelty. Furthermore, the source is so similar and indistinguishable from humans that it is in fact, in a sense, stealing the organs of a "fellow human" being out of their will. They close their eyes and make a choice between the promises of a long and healthy life, treatment for diseases they have long suffered, a life not obstructed by physical suffering and acting ethically towards what they consider not one of their own. For the sake of their own kin they sacrifice so-called in-human clones:

[...] After the war, in the early fifties, when the great breakthroughs in science followed one after the other so rapidly, there wasn't time to take stock, to ask the sensible questions. Suddenly there were all these new possibilities laid before us, all these ways to cure so many previously incurable conditions. This was what the world noticed the most, wanted the most. And for a long time, *people preferred to believe these organs appeared from nowhere*, or at most that *they grew in a kind of vacuum*. [...] However uncomfortable people were about your existence, their overwhelming concern *was that their own* children, their spouses, their parents, their friends, did not die from cancer, motor neurone disease, heart disease. *So for a long time you were kept in the*

*shadows, and people did their best not to think about you.*

(Ishiguro, 2005: 257-258, emphasis added)

Ordinary humans feel uncomfortable with the existence of the clones because they are disturbed by the similarities and afraid that the two might be confused. Visually there is no difference between an ordinary human and a clone, so this unsettling similarity evokes in humans a feeling of seeing their doubles in the clones. However, if normal people consider clones as “human” then that means they are robbing human organs, or even worse, humans could be organ donors for yet other categories. In order to get rid of this disturbing feeling of robbery, they consider clones as “non-human” others and put them in a remote place and think those organs “appear from nowhere.” Van Jens Gheluwe comments on that as follows:

This remote location [Hailsham] fulfills several important goals. For one thing, it allows the “normal people” (Ishiguro, 2005: 69) living beyond the borders of the institute to willfully ignore any difficult questions concerning the origins of their transplant organs. By removing Kathy and her friends from ordinary life, it becomes easier for the general populace to pretend they do not exist or to deny that they have human qualities and thus deserve better treatment. In this respect, Hailsham is not so different from the prison camps in the Second World War. (2015: 18)

The clones are kept in the shadows like spare parts for humans who do their best not to think about them. They try to convince themselves to the idea that the clones are less than them. This is the only way to justify their horrible treatments. If such verbal and psychological barriers were not erected to keep humans at a safe distance from the clones and the clones beyond the range of vision, humans probably would eventually start to see the viciousness and ruthlessness of their practices. Since normal humans are scared of confronting the reality head on—that beings who differ from them only in coming into this world and capacities for reproduction—they hide behind the terminology that transforms the clones to “carers,” and “donors” who give up their organs willingly. Leona Toker and Daniel Chertoff judge this hypocrisy and state that,

Ishiguro's bend-sinister world introduces euphemistic neologisms: obligatory organ harvestings are referred to as "donations," as if they were voluntary; the individual organ banks are referred to as "donors," and, if the first three "donations" have gone well, after the fourth the donor "completes." The term "complete" in Ishiguro's novel suggests that one has accomplished one's mission in life; it also evades the notion of "death." The careful choice of new terms that take advantage of old positive connotations emphasizes the link between ideological propaganda and marketing 5—a deadly combination that makes the brute brainwash (2008: 164)

These words function to cover up facts in multiple ways. First of all, there are already some "humans" born as a result of laboratory tests and under lab conditions such as in-vitro fertilization. Next, reproduction capacity itself or lack thereof cannot be a safe separating line, for as we all know, there are infertile women all over the world. More importantly, the words such as "donors" hide the cruelty behind the practices of involuntary cutting open of the bodies of the clones and their total lack of will and say in the matter. In fact, the novel demonstrates that donations and completions are in no way clones' willed actions. When, for instance, Kathy and Tommy realize how little time they have left in their hands and how randomly their life decisions are made, they decide to apply for "deferrals," which, they hear from Ruth, allow about three extra years to couples who can prove they really love each other. But when they follow all the leads to find where Madame and Miss Emily live as old women now, they face the hard truth that in fact there has never been such a thing as deferral. All they are meant to be is walking spare organs in order to keep humans alive longer and healthier. Once they could do this, they can complete, mission accomplished.

In conclusion, Hailsham with its haunting un-house-like presence stands in the center of the story. Clone students consider Hailsham as their home but actually it is a prison that controlled by the guardians. They keep everything they learn, eat, do... etc... under control in this so-called-home. To create this space Ishiguro uses Poesque space

elements like invisible walls that are reinforced by the stories of guardians. In addition, normal people also build invisible walls because they want to close their eyes against their uncanny doubles.

“He who fights with monsters should look to it that he himself does not become a monster . . . when you gaze long into the abyss the abyss also gazes into you”

Friedrich Nietzsche

## **2.2. RECREATING THE SPACE: *WHEN WE WERE ORPHANS***

The Poesque voice in Ishiguro’s *When We Were Orphans* (WWWO)<sup>5</sup> is multifold. It adds to the already mentioned topics such as doubles, space-memory, story-space ...etc. in *Never Let Me Go*, another Poesque motif, the detective. Yet the detective here, on whom as readers we depend on for the revelation of the truth, is also an unreliable narrator. Ishiguro turns the rational detectives of Poe’s tales of ratiocination to the unreliable narrators of Poe’s horror fiction or tales of mystery and imagination. The protagonist-narrator is a traumatized detective who can help everybody but himself, Christopher Banks, who lost his parents at the outbreak of World War II. Banks is an English boy who lives in Shanghai in his childhood but he loses his family at the age of nine. At first his father and then his mother mysteriously disappear, he starts to live with his aunt in England. Banks loses not only his family but also his only friend Akira when he moves from Shanghai to England. In England, he gets a good education and becomes a renowned detective, a choice motivated by his desire to find his family. However, as an orphan, Banks is heavily traumatized by the absence of his parents and his childhood friend Akira; thus, he obsessively wants to restore his lost childhood. In order to achieve this, Banks distorts reality, which means, he denies the facts and lives in his own imaginary “reality.” He does not want to accept any reality except his own, so he distorts reality with his own imagination. This traumatic distortion is reflected onto the space

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<sup>5</sup> From Hence the name of the book may be referenced as WWWO

because Banks's desires cloud his reality. In other words, he sees what he wishes to see. Consequently, as a narrator, it is impossible to rely on his account.

The story is constructed around two spaces: London and Shanghai. On one hand, London is the space of comfort, education and, success because Banks gets his education in London and becomes a successful detective in London. On the other hand, Shanghai is the space of malevolence; where all manner of ghastly diseases, evil men and, filth lurk in (Ishiguro, 2000: 54). Besides all this ghastliness and lurking evils, Shanghai contains the reason for Banks return: His lost childhood. Banks wants to go back to this evil space years later his parents' disappearance in order to restore his lost childhood. However, Shanghai Banks returns and Shanghai that Banks "wishes" to return are not the same. Banks wants to return to his Shanghai, where he believes can find his family and return to the happy old days of his childhood but it is too late for that, so Banks creates an imaginary Shanghai where everything he believes is possible and true. However, even though he creates his own space; he is in total darkness in it, because he knows nothing about what happened to his family, only speculations, but this unknown condition of his family is one of the forces that push Banks to turn back Shanghai because there is no information about their death, so this is a case yet to be closed until the end. This lack of information turns Shanghai into an abysmal space of the unknown, which shows similarity to "The Pit and The Pendulum." The narrator's knowledge is limited about the pit; likewise, Banks's lacks enough knowledge about whereabouts of his family in Shanghai, the space where evil lurks. Additionally, both of the narrators gaze into the unknown, abysmal, space long enough, at the end, abyss gazes into them. For example, while Banks focuses on finding his family in this abysmal city, he eventually turns into a distorted delusional person disconnected from reality. In "The Pit and the Pendulum," the narrator comes to a point where he starts to lose his mind and asks for his own death in this unknown darkness. At the end, both of the narrators lack the necessary knowledge to save themselves from the abysmal space of the unknown. In the unknown space, both of the narrators walk on the thin line between sanity and insanity; thus, their states of mind and accounts about events become debatable.

Banks is an unreliable narrator similar to the most of the narrators of Poe's horror fiction. Like these narrators, he has lost touch with a part of reality because of his extremely painful memories of loss and separation. For example, his father leaves home never to turn back and everyone, Banks included, thinks that he is kidnapped. Such an ambiguity nags at him all his life and he hopes one day to become reunited with his parents or at least bring closure to his story. Years later, after he becomes a detective, Banks still believes that his family members are kidnapped by "evil people" who are against his good family. Nonetheless, at the end of the novel, he learns the painful truth: His father has left them for another woman and his mother has become a mistress to one of the leaders of the Chinese mafia in order to provide for Banks.

Because the events in the novel are seen and reflected from the perspective of Banks only, such truths are revealed to the reader as they are revealed to Banks. Brian Finney suggests:

For a long time we share Banks' obsessions and projections and do not necessarily recognize the distortions and fantasies embedded in this professional detective's attempt at an objective narrative account of his life. Only when he starts to shed his illusions after Uncle Philip has revealed to him the truth about his parents' disappearances do we come to retrospectively appreciate the extent to which the author has immersed us in the uncanny by his own narrative manipulation. (2002: 9)

Just as Poe demonstrates gradually his narrator's fragile and fragmented mental state, Ishiguro unfolds the hidden layers of Banks' self-deceit only at the end so that the author lets his narrator deceive us, readers. Complicit in the deceit, Ishiguro also plays with the detective genre: what if the detective cannot see the facts in front of him? What if a detective famous for solving mysteries pertaining to others fails to solve his own mysterious past?

Banks refuses to take rational ideas into consideration because he obsessively believes that he will find his family, and everything will turn back to normal just like

before. For example, at the end of the novel Christopher searches for his family in a house where he thinks they are kept. He cannot find them but refuses to accept the reality that he may not find them and he hysterically asks his companion “My mother, my father! Where are they? They’re not here! Where are they? Where are they?” (Ishiguro, 2000: 273). This hysterical obsession leads many critics to think that Banks lives in the past and denies the reality of “now,” and by rejecting the reality he creates an alternative reality in his imagination. Since the reader’s perspective is limited to his point of view, it is often hard to guess if he is telling the truth or not. Thus the reader has to look beyond the narrator’s words to the more objective points of view. Finney notes as follows:

Once again we are overhearing the recollections of a first person narrator. Like all his predecessors, Banks is an unreliable narrator whose memory is faulty, a fact we ascertain from his own reflections on its accuracy and from the conflicting testimony of others, such as his old school friend who remembers him as being “such an odd bird at school” (7), a very different creature from his own recollection of his regular boyish personality. (2002: 6)

As narrator, Banks is in a privileged position compared to his friend because the reader is in direct contact with Banks as opposed to the indirect contact with the friend through Banks; thus, it is more likely for the reader to believe Banks’s account. This is why when Banks denies his friend’s account, the reader sides with Banks at first: “I cannot imagine I ‘mercilessly interrogated’ him as he had claimed. It is true the subject was something I thought about a lot when I was fourteen or fifteen, but Osbourne and I had not been especially close at school [...]” (Ishiguro, 2000: 5). However, Banks starts to evoke suspicions in readers when he denies the account of another childhood friend, Morgan. In chapter fourteen, Banks’s school friend Morgan talks about the schooldays of the two and eventually says that they should have teamed up because they both felt left out and they were loners (Ishiguro, 2000: 183). Naturally, Banks refuses to accept the implication and says

[...] [H]is assertion that I had likewise been a ‘miserable loner’, one with whom he might have made a matching pair, was such an astounding one, it took me a little while to realise it was simply a piece of self-delusion on Morgan’s part—in all likelihood something he had invented years ago to make more palatable memories of an unhappy period. (Ishiguro, 2000: 183-184)

Banks constantly denies the accounts of his friends and thinks that Morgan is probably “mixing him with someone else.” Morgan considers Banks’s rejection as “extraordinary” because he is sure about his account. However, Banks thinks that his friend Morgan is being self-delusional but the reality is that he is the one who lives a lie. Morgan only stands as a mirror that reflects Banks’s true self, so it is not Morgan that tries to “make more palatable memories of an unhappy period” but himself. He denies the accounts of both his friends about his childhood but it is really hard to believe in Banks’s account because his desire to restore the lost happiness causes him to forget his traumatic past. Eske D’hoker comments on the Banks’ traumatic psychology as follows:

Banks’ delusions can be understood psychologically, for instance as the result of the all too sudden break-up of Christopher’s happy childhood and his concomitant desire to restore happiness and harmony for himself and for the world at large. Thus Banks’ belief that he will find his mother in the house where she was taken to twenty years ago shows how he has ‘mummified his childhood to cope with the trauma of parental loss’ (Sim 2005: 30). And the surreal quest in the Chinese quarter is then but a rehearsing of the rescue games he played with Akira as a child. (2008: 163)

Banks wants to restore his happy childhood but it is a vain struggle. Therefore, Banks distorts reality to match his illusory state of mind. Bank’s distortions show close similarity to the distortions of the narrator in “The Fall of the House of Usher.” At the end of the story, according to the narrator’s account, the house of Usher collapses. This collapse can also be explained as the collapse of reason. His account both reflects his state of mind and the familial corruption of the Usher family. Likewise, Ishiguro reflects



the narrator's distorted state of mind in a war zone. At the end of *WWWO* Banks goes back to Chapei, a part of Shanghai, in order to find the house his family was in. Nonetheless, Chapei is under siege of the Japanese army and has fallen into ruin. This ruin not only stands as the representation of war outside but also represents the war inside Banks's head. Thus, Silvia Caporale Bizzini argues, that personal and national pasts are interwoven:

In an eerie and frightening atmosphere where past memories mix with an improbable present, Christopher Banks' experience transforms the official records of history (the Sino-Japanese war) into a collective tragedy. The memories of loss and suffering are centred on individuals and not on historical events, and individual memories become once more pretexts to denounce violence, war and its effects on human beings. The destruction surrounding the narrator and his encounter with his past evolves into the discovery of the truth about his life and the painful redefinition of his (real) family romance. Akira's unlikely presence provides both a guide to the past and a door to the present. Through him, Banks discovers that the past he remembers is a lie that has only ever been real in his mind (2013: 73)

In short, the external space in the novel directly correlates to Banks's mindset. While Japanese and Chinese people fight against each other on the outside, Banks fights his own war in his mind against reality. First of all, he does not want to accept the possibility of failure and fights against every kind of reality in his way because he is so scared to confront the truth. Thus, he goes further and further away from reality. Wojciech Drag reveals that, "The house which is meant to be 'just over there' (Ishiguro 2001, p. 224) takes forty-six pages of anguished wanderings to reach and is located at the heart of a maze-like war-torn area resembling a symbolic landscape rather than a district of the twentieth-century Shanghai" (2013: 335). This "war-torn" area becomes a symbol for Banks's confused mind. Albeit a successful detective, Banks is blind to his own case. "Banks's unfounded certainty that his parents are being kept in a particular

house in Shanghai despite the lack of any evidence indicating that they are still alive. Even though several decades have elapsed since his parents' mysterious disappearance, Banks considers tracking them down to be a matter of weeks" (Drag, 2013: 335). The space Banks narrates turns into an imaginary space with these accounts and "the world itself becomes surreal" (Weston, 2012: 2012: 341). Furthermore, Ishiguro says in an interview that: "Banks narrates at different points in his life, and that each time he narrates, his consciousness has slid further, deeper into his head or something. So that eventually the world he portrays becomes a sort of internal world" (qtd in Weston, 2012: 341). Banks reflects the imaginary space inside his head onto the outside space so that the two overlap and cover each other; he transforms the outside space into an uncanny space.

Ishiguro uses the war zone as the space of the uncanny double. Traumatized by the loss of friendship and familial ties, Banks starts to see familiar in the unfamiliar. In the last chapter, while he is on the way to the house where his family is kept, he runs into a Japanese soldier who looks like his childhood friend Akira. Years after their separation it is nearly impossible for Banks to recognize his friend in an instant. Furthermore, it would be irrationally coincidental to find his friend in the midst of a battlefield, so Banks's delusional state becomes totally evident even to himself in the last chapter. He realizes that he is being delusional at the end of the novel and starts to see that the soldier may not actually his friend Akira: "I thought he was a friend of mine from my childhood. But now, I'm not so certain. I'm beginning to see now, many things aren't as I supposed" (Ishiguro, 2000: 277). With the words "many things aren't as I supposed" Banks admits that he has been living in his imaginary world and the world he imagines does not coincide with the real world. Finney comments on the disoriented mind of the Banks as follows:

Ishiguro immerses Banks in a dreamlike world on his return to Shanghai where, he says, he experiences a sense of "disorientation which threatened to overwhelm me" (164). Ishiguro positions Banks midway between the real and the imaginary, so that the reader can never be sure whether an

incident is located in the real (fictive) world or in Banks' imagination.  
(2002: 8)

To instantiate Finney's argument, we might suggest that it is very hard to decide if his encounter with Akira is real or if it is his imagination. Banks sees Akira when he is a captive of Chinese people. Banks says that: "I then saw in the dim red glow the figure of a Japanese soldier lying quite still on his side [...] [H]is eyes were closed [...] [H]is face and hair were covered in dust and speckled with blood" (Ishiguro, 2000: 249). Despite these obstacles Banks says that: "For all that, I recognised Akira with no difficulty." After all these years it is very unlikely that anyone could recognize a childhood friend in this condition, with blood all over his face and covered with dust. Yet Banks tries to find a familiar figure in this horrid un-homely space; thus, he forces a friend's identity on the Japanese soldier. In the beginning, the soldier refuses to accept the identity Banks imposes on him. Even so, Banks saves him from the Chinese people and helps him to escape. The Japanese soldier plays according to the role Banks gives him and answers all the questions cunningly; he only repeats the questions and he does not give any details to prove that he is Akira: "'How long has it been, Akira? It's been such a long time.' He was moving painfully by my side, but he managed to say: 'A long time, yes.' 'You know, I went back. To the old house. I suppose yours is still next door.' 'Yes. Next door'" (Ishiguro, 2000: 254). It is not very hard to decide if this Japanese soldier is Akira or not, but for Banks, there is hardly any question that he is his long-lost childhood friend because he gives Banks the answers he desires to hear. For Banks, the real and the imaginary overlie in this part of the novel as he turns the cues of the real into the past he desperately tries to evoke.

Just like in *Never Let Me Go* and Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum" in *WWWO, too*, Ishiguro uses stories which turn space into a site of horror for his characters. Ishiguro uses fantastic elements to create this space. The source of this fantastic story is little Akira who tells Banks that the old servant Ling Tien, who works in their house, collects hands of men, women, children, and apes. The old servant, whose room is at the center of their curiosity, acts as the source of fear for the kids, and Akira is the sole witness to see the severed limbs in his mysterious room:

[...] Akira had once happened to glance down the servants' corridor towards Ling Tien's room on a rare occasion when the old man had left his door ajar, and had seen heaped upon the floor the severed hands of men, women, children, apes. Another time, late at night, Akira had spotted the servant carrying a basket into the house piled with the dismembered little arms of monkeys. [...] (Ishiguro, 2000: 91)

The two children believe that Ling Tien transforms these severed hands into spiders in his room in order to set them all around the neighborhood. Also, they think that the fluids in the room can hypnotize them and draw them through the door (Ishiguro, 2000: 91). Even though Banks tries not to believe these stories, they upset him nonetheless so that the mere sight of Ling Tien set off terrors within him (Ishiguro, 2000: 92). Evoking a fearful curiosity in the duo to see the "awful" room, Akira's childish story converts Ling Tien's room into a lair of the evil that they approach with both fear and wonder:

What I recall is that we strode down the corridor with little hesitation until we were all but four or five yards from Ling Tien's door. Then something made us pause, and for a second neither of us appeared capable of continuing; if at that moment Akira had turned and run, I am sure I would have done the same. (Ishiguro, 2000: 95)

They create an imaginary space in their heads with the help of the stories. However, their parents play an important role on these stories because as John H. E Paine explains that "Akira and Christopher are forbidden by their parents to visit the Chinese areas, for 'out there, [they] were told, lay all manner of ghastly diseases, filth and evil men'" (2009: 135). Akira's family is Japanese and Banks's family British. Both of them are foreigners in Shanghai, so they are afraid of the space they do not fully know. In order to protect their children, parents make up stories about Chinese areas. Parents forbid the Chinese areas by making them scary for the children filled with ghastly diseases and evil men. As a member of the Chinese area, Ling Tien thus belongs to the space of "ghastly diseases and evil men." The Ling Tien in the boys' imagination

becomes a prototype underlying Banks's attitude towards others, which the novel criticizes. John H. E. Paine responds that as follows:

The boys' adventures resume, initiated as usual by Akira. Their most resonant adventure springs from Akira's "sense of dread" of his family's longtime Chinese servant Ling Tien. Akira imagines that the old man has acquired piles of severed hands and discovered a method to turn the hands into spiders, which he then sets out around the neighborhood. This imagined atrocity builds to such a pitch in the boys' minds that they steal Ling Tien's "magic lotion" one day while he is away. This childish "othering" of Ling Tien prefigures the far more sinister and more consequential otherings that will occur later in the novel. (2009: 136)

In fact what the boys do reflect is their families' racial and cultural prejudices and otherings. In a way, they do not make up these stories, they just enlarge them. They constantly hear stories that the Chinese areas are "supernaturally" dangerous and they apply such stories to a person they know from the Chinese quarters. This danger is of course extended to the space he dwells in because, the uncanniness of the Chinese quarters spills over to his space and makes it equally dangerous for the children.

Finally, Ishiguro embellishes his novel with Poesque elements and expressions. He uses an unreliable narrator as a conveyor of the uncanny, thus, he blurs the boundaries between the real and the imaginary, and he uses stories in order to create a horrid space for his characters. Even though Banks as a detective has to find the truth, his obsession to find his family blinds him to truths about his past. This blindness to reality is projected onto the space as uncanny where things mimic one-another and nothing seems to correspond with any concrete reality. The narrator refuses to accept any reality except his own, so he narrates the story according to his own reality.

## CONCLUSION

Poe, hailing from the nineteenth century, and Ishiguro, from the contemporary period, the former from the young American nation and Ishiguro, from the age-old empires of Japan and England, have employed similar techniques to create gothic space in their fiction. Since this space is depicted by narrators in both authors' fiction, it is through their perception that we discern the space. However, both writers create unreliable narrators who mislead us into the depths of their fantasies rather than an objective truth. The narrators' unreliability causes the space they inhabit and depict to become a subjective entity shaped by the narrators; the space thus turns into a subjective force rather than a concrete reality or form. Poe's narrator in "The Fall of The House of Usher" falls into this category because from the beginning of the story he is conditioned to see something fearful around him. The "blood red moon" over the house with "eye-like windows," "reflected in the pond" all are taken from the level of the natural to the supernatural and uncanny. Similarly, the narrator of "The Cask of Amontillado" is also an unreliable narrator because he is obsessed with an ancient humiliation his family has suffered from Fortunato's family. He claims that, Fortunato gave him a thousand injuries, so he buries Fortunato alive in the catacombs beneath his house. Nevertheless, the narrator never talks about what "those injuries" are. One can even imagine that these injuries too are figments of his overly susceptible imagination. As a result, his story, as a whole, turns into a questionable narrative. In his novel *WWWO*, Ishiguro likewise uses limited first person point of view. His traumatic past influences the narrator Banks's thinking and judgment so much so that his account about the space becomes confusing. Unreliable narrators distort the space into an uncanny plane where everything is mirrored in the other.

Poe uses uncanny in order to blur the boundaries between real and supernatural in his story "The Fall of The House of Usher." Poe introduces a house that does not look like a house with its supernatural aura. The house goes beyond the definition of a "house" because it looks like a human being and watches the narrator with its "eye-like" windows. This supernatural affinity between the house and Roderick Usher merge the house with the character into uncanny presences. In "The Cask of the Amontillado"

Poe's uncanny stems from the carnival setting. In a carnival, everyone hides behind their masks making it impossible to see their real identities. The mask symbolically both hides and reveals the evil intentions of the narrator just as his victim's happy clownishness will hide and reveal his tragedy, so the mask stands an element of uncanny that blurs the line between the real and the phony. As Fortunato becomes buried among the narrator's ancestors, he becomes part of the treasure Montresor keeps in his house and his name.

Like Poe, Ishiguro uses uncanny and doubles in order to blur the boundaries of reality. In *Never Let Me Go*, Ishiguro uses clone students as the uncanny doubles to blur the definitions between humans and clones. Clone students are physically identical to normal humans but they are not considered as humans because they were created in a laboratory. This difference justifies the students' position as organ banks existing to provide spare parts for normal humans. Although their otherness is established in their origins, because they cannot be distinguished from humans in appearance, they still challenge the definition of a "human being." Ishiguro also uses uncanny doubles in order to blur the boundaries between real and imagination in his *WWO*. Ishiguro's delusional narrator Banks's memories and perceptions of Shanghai are challenged by other characters' memories. In order to cope with his trauma of separation from his parents, he seems to have turned this city into a chaotic net which he thinks he can unravel. Yet he cannot even remember the faces of the people as in the case of the soldier who he thinks is his childhood friend Akira. The streets of Shanghai and the faces of people become interchangeable mirror images or uncanny doubles.

Claustrophobic space is an equally important imagery for Poe and Ishiguro. In "The Cask of Amontillado" Poe creates this claustrophobic space by premature burial. The narrator buries Fortunato alive in the catacombs under his house. Poe uses the imagery of premature burial in his stories in order to create a connection between life and death, thus, to evoke the feeling of fear. In "The Fall of The House of Usher," Madeline Usher is closed into a coffin and buried under the house. Similarly, the narrator of "The Pit and The Pendulum" is in a claustrophobic space with its dark and unknown atmosphere. Poe uses darkness as an invisible wall that restricts the narrator's

knowledge of space in “The Pit and the Pendulum.” Unable to see anything, he imagines he is kept by his tormentors in a tiny cell. Similar to the darkness in “The Pit and The Pendulum,” the invisible walls around the Hailsham students keep them from knowing their whereabouts. The students of Hailsham are not aware of the fact that they are in a claustrophobic space because their guardians try to thwart their curiosities from the start. The students are not aware of the fact that they are living in an extremely small space because the walls around them are imperceptible like stories about the dangers that lie ahead. They are kept like cattle in a barn or prisoners a war camp awaiting their execution. What the guardians do is to manufacture consent in the students for future organ donations and their best tool is the stories they tell them as children.

Stories as shapers of reality are also an important similarity between Poe and Ishiguro. Poe uses stories in order to fill his space with fearful images. In his story “The Pit and the Pendulum,” the narrator is in an unknown space and tries to fill these blanks with his imagination. However, the notorious pit in the middle of his cell is the most horrible thing for him because it is totally unknown to the narrator. He remembers hearing horrid stories about the pit but nobody knows if they are true or not. Those stories make the unknown space scarier and make even familiar forms of death preferable. The narrator avoids the pit as much as he can because the space, like a void, threatens to drain off rational thinking. Similarly, In *Never Let Me Go* and *When We Were Orphans* the characters use stories in order to create a horrid space. In *Never Let Me Go*, the horrid stories create a restriction for the students and draw students’ limits of living because the stories they hear lead students to create a horrible space in their mind. They cannot leave Hailsham because they constantly hear about the consequences of this act from other students who tell what happened to those who have tried it before. The space around the Hailsham, which is a forest, is a supposedly cursed space where students are dismembered. The stories shrink the space the students live in; thus, the stories draw the limits of the students’ space where they are imprisoned. Minifying the space students can live in, these stories create a sense of claustrophobia. Similar to this, in *When We Were Orphans*, stories mark the limits of space. The parents of Banks and Akira use stories in order to keep their children within the limits of the settlement



because as foreigners in China, they wish to keep their children from the uncharted territories of locals. The parents not only forbid Chinese areas by telling stories of them as scary spaces filled with the unknown, ghastly diseases and evil men. These stories lead children to imagine a native Chinese servant, as evil and his room as a lair-of-evil.

To conclude, space is not a solid container but a perceiver-dependent variable. It can change shape according to the mind of its perceiver. A crooked mind can see something evil in space while an unbent mind will see a totally different entity. However, while the perceiver shapes the space, the space also shapes the perceiver. That means space and the perceiver have a mutual relationship, which they both contribute to each other. Space can evoke certain feelings in the perceiver and make them live a nightmare. It reminds one the famous words of John Milton “The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven” (2005: 250-260). It is possible to live the heaven in hell and hell in heaven because it is the perceiver who attaches meanings to the space.

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