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North Yorkshire and Its Depiction in the Gothic novel

The Woman in Black

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Studentka se ve své bakalářské práci zaměří na analýzu literárního obrazu regionu Yorkshire díle *Woman in Black*. Nejprve bude charakterizovat regionální literaturu období viktoriánského realismu a do tohoto literárního kontextu zasadí Susan Hill, autorku zvoleného díla. Poté nabídne kulturní a historický obraz daného období, opět se zaměřením na život ve vybraném regionu. Své poznatky pak použije ve vlastní kritické analýze zvoleného gotického románu.

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TITLE

North Yorkshire and Its Depiction in the Gothic novel *The Woman in Black*

ANNOTATION

The bachelor thesis is focused on the analysis of the Gothic novel *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. The main aim of the work is to prove that the novel can be characterized as a Regional and a Gothic novel. The analysis deals with the depiction of Yorkshire and the Humber in the selected novel and aims to discover which Regional and Gothic elements are used in the novel. The thesis also draws attention to the Victorian era and its values reflected in the analysed novel.

KEYWORDS

gothic novel, Susan Hill, regional novel, Yorkshire and the Humber, North Yorkshire, Victorian era

NÁZEV PRÁCE

Zobrazení Severního Yorkshire v Gotickém románu *The Woman in Black* od Susan Hillové

ANOTACE

Bakalářská práce se zabývá analýzou Gotického románu *The Woman in Black* od Susan Hillové. Hlavním cílem je dokázat, že analyzovaný román obsahuje nejen prvky Gotického románu, ale také Regionálního románu. Dílo se zaměřuje na zobrazení regionu Yorkshire a Humber v Gotickém románu *The Woman in Black*, s cílem určit, jaké Gotické a Regionální prvky se v románu vyskytují. Práce se také zabývá Viktoriánskou érou a jejími hodnotami, které jsou reflektovány v analyzovaném románu.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

gotický román, Susan Hill, regionální román, Yorkshire a Humber, Severní Yorkshire, viktoriánská éra

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	8
1. REGIONAL LITERATURE AND REGIONAL NOVEL IN THE VICTORIAN ERA	10
2. THE MEANING OF ‘GOTHIC’ AND DEVELOPMENT OF GOTHIC NOVEL	18
3. ELEMENTS OF GOTHIC NOVEL.....	24
4. ANALYSIS OF GOTHIC AND REGIONAL ELEMENTS IN THE GOTHIC NOVEL <i>THE WOMAN IN BLACK</i>	29
CONCLUSION.....	41
RESUMÉ	43
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	46
APPENDICES	48

INTRODUCTION

The region, Yorkshire and the Humber (see Appendix 1), belongs to the most examined regions. The classical novel, which comes to mind when mentioning the region Yorkshire and the Humber, is presumably Emily Brönte's *Wuthering Heights*. However, this thesis aims to analyse the yet unresearched Gothic novel and the partly Regional novel *The Woman in Black*, which is set in this region and is written by a contemporary writer, Susan Hill.

Susan Hill originally comes from Scarborough, England, which is located in the selected region, more specifically in North Yorkshire (see Appendix 2,3). The writer frequently draws inspiration from this location in her novels. In addition, Hill's writing style often resembles Victorian writers, such as Charles Dickens. To be more specific about her style of writing, she produces overlong sentences to keep readers in suspense. This convention is particularly effective in her Gothic novels because it helps to evoke a certain emotion, such as suspense, fear or unease in a reader.

The novel is written by the main character himself called Arthur Kipps. Arthur tells the story to his family that took place when he worked as a young inexperienced solicitor, having the duty to deal with old manuscripts of the Drablow family living in the residence named Eel Marsh House during the Victorian era. But instead of sorting old papers, he is forced to uncover the mysterious story of its former inhabitants who prevent him from doing his job. The novel predominantly takes place in the family house located on an island surrounded by marshes and a river. Even though there is not much mentioned about the family in the novel, assuming by the state and appearance of the house, the family most likely came from high society. One of the last members of the family living in the house was a woman named Alice Drablow. She had a sister named Jennet Humfrye whose illegitimate son, Nathaniel, was taken away from her and raised by the Drablow family in this house. The son of Alice's sister, along with a pony and trap and its driver were accidentally drowned in the marshes. Despite this accidental death, her sister haunts the place, blames her sister for her son's death, and attempts to take revenge on anyone who takes interest in this residence and its history.

The main aim of this thesis is the analysis of the Gothic novel *The Woman in Black* that closely examines Regional and Gothic elements in the novel written by a contemporary writer, Susan Hill. The first theoretical chapter focuses on the chief elements of a Regional novel, discusses the importance of Regional literature in general and the main focus of Regional novels. Furthermore, some of the prominent Regional writers of the Victorian era are mentioned. Subsequently, the first chapter deals with Victorian realism as a period when a Victorian novel was originated and eventually, the chapter discusses achievements, inventions and values of the Victorian era.

The second theoretical part deals with various definitions of the term 'Gothic' and its associations, ranging from the first primitive tribes, Gothic architecture, Gothic subculture, Gothic music and consequently, scrutinizes the development of Gothic novels from the very beginning until modern times. At first, traditional Gothic novels are mentioned. Then, the chapter discusses the popularity of a Victorian Gothic novel and its focus in the Victorian era and lastly, the Gothic novel in popular literature.

The third theoretical part examines elements of Gothic fiction. For instance, typical haunted settings, ghosts, other paranormal activities and evocation of fear are described. Some traditional novels, such as *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* and *The Castle of Otranto* are compared with the selected novel *The Woman in Black*.

To prove that the selected novel is the Regional and Gothic novel, Regional and Gothic elements are analysed in this analytical part. The selected novel is analysed through various extracts from the book, which are further clarified.

1. REGIONAL LITERATURE AND REGIONAL NOVEL IN THE VICTORIAN ERA

Regional literature has always played an indispensable role in countries all over the world. Owing to Regional novels, culture, traditions and history of each region are preserved. Before focusing on the Regional literature and the development of a Regional novel in more detail, it is essential to define the word 'region.' Ehland defines the region as a part of one unit with its identity.¹ In other words, the selected region Yorkshire and the Humber (see Appendix 1) is a part of a unit, the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom consists of nine regions including London, South East, South West, East of England, East Midlands, West Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber, North West and North East. However, this thesis will be exclusively focused on the region Yorkshire and the Humber, specifically on the county named North Yorkshire (see Appendix 2) where the selected novel takes place and where the author of the novel was born. James mentions in his work an English writer, Pat Barker, who claims that the Regional novel aims to describe a certain region and highlight the main features because a reader must be able to recognise the differences between various regions.² In the same way, Snell mentions the Regional novelist, Phyllis Bentley, who claims that it is important to provide readers with the portrayal of a region by describing aspects of life because readers are then able to associate a region with its typical features.³ The county of North Yorkshire is situated in northeast England and the landscape of this region is known for its moors and marshes, which are spread along a large area. As a result, a vast area of this region is uninhabited and isolated. The fact that it is not the most popular area for living intensifies its bad reputation. "Unemployment, dreary living conditions, declining industries like mining, shipbuilding or steel have given the North a bad reputation for decades."⁴ So, that might be one of the reasons why the population density of this region is not so high. Nevertheless, according to Ibbotson, the region is popular among tourists. The Yorkshire region has a lot to offer ranging from moorlands, valleys, hills to two prominent national parks, the Yorkshire Dales and the North Yorkshire Moors.⁵

¹ Christoph Ehland. *Thinking Northern: Textures of Identity in the North of England* (Amsterdam - New York, NY: Editions Rodopi B.V., 2007), 36–37.

² David James, "Relocating Mimesis: New Horizons for the British Regional Novel," *Journal of Narrative Theory* 36, no. 3 (Fall, 2006): 440. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30224658>

³ K. D. M. Snell. *The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland, 1800-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.

⁴ Ehland, *Thinking Northern*, 34.

⁵ Nigel A. Ibbotson. *Exploring North Yorkshire's History* (Great Britain: JMD Media Limited, 2011), 12.

Particularly, the moorlands and marshes play a crucial role in the selected novel *The Woman in Black* as they create a mysterious atmosphere crucial for a Gothic novel.

Apart from traditions, history, and culture, each region has its own identity resonating with these Regional aspects. For example, people living in Yorkshire and the Humber are linked with a common identity. To illustrate it by an example, they are affected by unpredictable northern weather, moors, and marshes, which contribute to unfavourable agricultural and farming conditions. As afore-mentioned, Ehland defines the region as a part of one unit with its identity.⁶ The identity is, according to Ehland, closely associated with non-standard language, which is known as a dialect.⁷ Thus, the standard language spoken by citizens of the United Kingdom is English. However, each region has its distinct dialect by which each region is distinguished from other dialects in other regions. For example, the selected region is represented by the Yorkshire dialect. According to Snell, a local language, known as dialect, also functions as a representation of a certain region, moreover, distinguishes the local people.⁸ Dialect words and specific pronunciation, known as an accent, are particularly common in rural areas. Standard English, on the contrary, predominates in industrial towns.

Having explained the region and its identity, the next part will thoroughly focus on the Regional literature and Regional novel, sometimes also called a 'provincial novel'. According to Duncan, its main difference is that its primary focus is on the rural environment rather than on the urban one, which is also sometimes portrayed.⁹ The Regional novel might be concentrated on both areas. Snell mentions the most appropriate definition of the Regional novel as follows:

By 'regional novel' I mean fiction that is set in a recognisable region, and which describes features distinguishing the life, social relations, customs, language, dialect, or other aspects of the culture of that area and its people. Fiction with a strong sense of local geography, topography or landscape is also covered by this definition. In such writing a particular place or regional culture may perhaps be used to illustrate an aspect of life in general, or the effects of a particular environment upon the people living in it.¹⁰

⁶ Ehland, *Thinking Northern*, 36.

⁷ Ehland, *Thinking Northern*, 74.

⁸ Snell, *The Regional Novel*, 32.

⁹ Ian, Duncan. "The Provincial or Regional Novel," in *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*, ed. Patrick Brantlinger, William B. Thesing (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005), 322.

¹⁰ Snell, *The Regional Novel*, 1.

The above-mentioned definition of the Regional novel applies to the selected novel. The Gothic novel *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill is fiction because the location is not entirely based on fact. Even though the environment corresponds with the environment in the county of North Yorkshire, the story has fictional characters, a fictional town and narration. The landscape and surroundings depicted in the novel have an enormous impact on local people living in the fictional town Crythin Gifford. Moreover, the setting intensifies the enigmatic atmosphere in the haunted house, in the nearest town and arouses negative emotions in locals as well as in readers of the novel. Furthermore, James argues that although the Regional novel is presented by Regional elements, novelists might indeed draw inspiration from other various genres.¹¹ The author of the selected novel, for instance, is inspired by traditional Gothic novels and ghost elements, which will be thoroughly examined in the following chapter.

Apart from Regional and Gothic novels, there is a wide range of novels, such as Victorian, historical, autobiographical, and many others. Each novel developed at different time periods and under different circumstances. Snell adds the definition of the Regional novel: “The novel itself, in its earliest days, developed from non-fictional forms, from letters, journals, biographies or historical chronicles, all preoccupied with the details of social living [...]”¹² Regional novels originated in the oral narration based on true events and stories, told by people living in a particular area, aiming to preserve their traditions, customs, and most importantly, their cultural heritage. According to Strevens and his remarks that he discovered from local tales told by North Yorkshire residents, one of the creatures, which has appeared several times in this location, is the so-called ‘woman in black’ dressed in a mid-Victorian garment.¹³ Therefore, the author of the selected novel might have drawn on local tales and folklore that form Regional traditions. K.D.M. Snell further adds the characteristics of Regional novels:

Many regional novels use region or place in crucially important ways, to explain or interpret, to develop characterisation, to indicate how character grows out of certain occupied localities, how people respond to particular circumstances and environments, to evoke good and evil through landscape contrasts, or to intensify mood [...] ¹⁴

The selected novel, for instance, depicts the character’s development negatively. The main character, Arthur Kipps, is far-flung from the outside world and completely isolated, the landscape thus arouses fear in a character. In other words, the surrounding negatively affects

¹¹ James, “Mimesis,” 422.

¹² Snell, *The Regional Novel*, 18.

¹³ Summer Strevens. *Haunted Yorkshire Dales* (Great Britain: The History Press, 2011), 8.

¹⁴ Snell, *The Regional Novel*, 35.

him and he ends up suffering from mental illness. Snell argues that Regional novels might be concentrated on families and how the surroundings impact them.¹⁵ The surroundings in the selected novel negatively affected the Drablow family. Had it not been for the local marshes, the poor child would not have deceased. Similarly, characters in Emily Brönte's *Wuthering Heights* correspond with the fact that local landscapes, particularly marshes and moors contribute to negative emotions. *Wuthering Heights*, as well as *The Woman in Black*, are novels that provide the depiction of the region Yorkshire and the Humber and the environment has a profound impact on the characters.

Regional novels prevent regions and communities living in regions from their loss. A particular region, and so its cultural origin would not be remembered without traditions, history and culture. Cultural origin resonates with communities and residents who constantly struggle to protect their Regional heritage. To prevent regions from its loss, Regional writers depict the regions they originally come from and highlight how rural areas are distinguished from industrial towns. Each region is occupied by residents with unique personalities and mentalities that are closely tied up with local traditions, beliefs and religion. One of the traditions of people coming from Yorkshire might be their interest in traditional farming. Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, farming in bigger towns has been modernised. Traditional farming methods in some rural areas, however, still prevail and are embodied in Regional heritage. Foote states that Regional novelists are preoccupied with how the regions looked like before industrialization.¹⁶ Thus, their main aim is to describe the beauty of the landscape in rural areas that have not yet been affected by the Industrial Revolution. It is the Industrial Revolution that impacted the lives of many people. The mechanisation of industries and new work opportunities forced people to leave their birth, technologically unspoiled regions. Rural areas, wilderness and inaccessible countryside with unique sceneries are the areas in which Regional writers take interest. Moreover, Regional writers express a sense of nostalgia when writing about their homelands. Although a technological development has been spread into metropolitan as well as rural areas, its original portrayal and its fidelity can be found in Regional writing. Importantly, Regional novels provide future generations with traditions of their ancestors, and owing to the knowledge gained from the novels, the true Regional heritage is saved. Above all, everydayness and real lives in regions fascinated the Regional writers the most. It is important

¹⁵ Snell, *The Regional Novel*, 1.

¹⁶ Stephanie Foote. *Regional Fictions: Culture and Identity in Nineteenth-century American Literature* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 3.

to mention that although each country has its Regional literature and Regional novels, however, this thesis will solely deal with British Regional literature.

Having outlined the main focus of the Regional novel, the rest of this chapter deals with the development of British Regional literature and some of the prominent British Regional novelists. One of the first Regional novels is considered to be, according to Snell, Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* published at the beginning of the 19th century.¹⁷ As aforementioned, the Regional novelist is most likely to be interested in describing the birth region as a Regional novelist is familiar with a region's cultural heritage. There is a wide range of British regions, as mentioned previously, in which the Regional novelists took interest, primarily in the 19th century. For example, the Brönte sisters belong to one of the first pioneers of Regional novels and are well-known for the depiction of the selected region the Yorkshire and the Humber. Furthermore, Thomas Hardy was fascinated with the depiction of Wessex. Additionally, George Elliot was concerned with English Midlands and Charles Dickens with a portrayal of London. Apart from notorious marshes and moors, the region Yorkshire and the Humber is well-known for heavy industries that exacerbate the region's living conditions. James mentions that the previously mentioned novelists drew attention to the technological consequences in their novels.¹⁸ During the Victorian era, Regional writers, for instance, the above-mentioned novelists – George Elliot and Charles Dickens depicted the reality of the period, known as Victorian realism in literature flourishing in the Victorian era. Byerly points out that the novels were called 'triple-decker' novels having many pages. Notwithstanding, the popularity of its readership was immense. The more pages the novel had, the longer its readers could be absorbed in the story.¹⁹ Byerly points out that a portrayal of a specific location is an important feature of realism in novels in the 19th century.²⁰ The Regional novel is, therefore, closely tied up with the Victorian novel because both novels depict a certain place during a specific period, movement or era in history.

The Victorian novel was developed during the Victorian era in the 19th century and reflects reality and changes in society. Moreover, it is believed to be one of the most influential eras having a significant impact on a wide range of areas at the time. The impacts were both positive and negative. On the one hand, the Victorian era is known for new beneficial scientific

¹⁷ Snell, *The Regional Novel*, 6.

¹⁸ James, "Mimesis," 420.

¹⁹ Alison Byerly. *Are We There Yet? Virtual Travel and Victorian Realism*. (US: The University of Michigan Press, 2013), 1.

²⁰ Byerly, *Virtual Travel*, 5.

inventions and territorial expansion. But on the other hand, negative changes are rooted in the Industrial Revolution and the exploitation of the working class. Members of the working class were forced to work unsociable hours and do strenuous work in factories under very poor conditions. When it comes to the positive impact, England expanded its territories, for example, into many exotic lands in Asia and Africa. New scientific discoveries and inventions came into existence, mainly in a travel industry. A means of transport was extended. For example, an invention of a bicycle, motor car, or railway travel impacted the lives of people. Byerly states that railway travel was made available to all social classes including the working class.²¹ Hence, it provoked a positive reaction among all social classes. Although the invention of a new means of transport has caused positive outcomes for the Victorian as well as for nowadays society due to its speed, some Victorians were against it at the time. Swisher claims that when the motor car was first established, it did not win much favour because it was assumed to be the main cause of the pollution in cities.²² Above all, Industrial Revolution gave rise to the problems associated with pollution and poor health. Byerly compares the invention of railway travel to the internet. Mainly because of its speed and hectic way of life.²³ Byerly also adds that ignorance of reality and being absorbed in reading a novel while travelling can be comparable to using nowadays devices, such as laptops and mobile phones.²⁴ Swisher claims that authors Walter E. Houghton and Sir Henry Holland describe the era as an “age of transition.”²⁵ Consequently, both positive and negative changes profoundly affected Victorian society.

Victorian society can be characterized by its distinct values, known as Victorian values. They were dependent upon the division of the social classes. Victorian society was thus divided into the upper class, middle class, and the most exploited one, the working class. Many Victorian values represent the Victorians ranging from responsibility, family values to morality, but one of the most important for this thesis is the value that applies to the middle class, sexual morality. Swisher argues that “Victorian middle classes espoused strict standards regarding sexual morality. Sexual experiences, especially for women, were confined to marriage, and sexual pleasure was considered a sin; a sexual scandal, even a rumour of one, could destroy a woman’s reputation.”²⁶ For example, if a woman had a child while not being married, she was outcasted. It applied to Jennet Humfrye in the selected novel. She was repudiated by her

²¹ Byerly, *Virtual Travel*, 8.

²² Clarice Swisher. *Victorian England*. (California: Greenhaven Press Inc., 2000), 72.

²³ Byerly, *Virtual Travel*, 143.

²⁴ Byerly, *Virtual Travel*, 146.

²⁵ Swisher, *Victorian England*, 42.

²⁶ Swisher, *Victorian England*, 20.

relatives and her son was as a result, nurtured by them. Another key value refers to behaviour. In general, Victorians expressed their social class through behaviour and manners. For example, appropriate clothing was an everyday must. Jennet Humfrye was a typical middle-class woman expressing her social status through clothing. The huge differences between social classes could be noticed by the way of living and living conditions. It is a common fact that working-class society used to live in slums and under very poor conditions. Unlike the poor working class, the middle class lived a snobbish way of life and possessed very well-equipped houses. Additionally, extravagant and flamboyant styles of middle-class society reflect their choice of design and furniture. They expressed their welfare through living conditions and lifestyles, such as taking pride in luxurious accessories. Lastly, patriotism characterized Victorian society. Swisher mentions that “this was a society dominated by the masculine principle, entirely patriarchal.”²⁷ Women were educated by governesses, they were obliged to stay at home and nurture their children. Men, on the contrary, were the intellectuals providing for their families. So, the differences between these two genders, social classes and living conditions were distinct at the time.

During the late Victorian era, some industries, such as coal industries, were closed and many employees were made redundant. James points out that local people had to experience difficulties due to the decline of industries.²⁸ They were forced to move to towns and get a job elsewhere, so for this reason, the region Yorkshire and the Humber is not so populated. Although there are fewer job opportunities, a lot of Regional novelists come from this region. Except for the already mentioned Brönte sisters, prominent Regional novelists coming from this region include the writer of the selected Gothic novel *Woman in Black*, Susan Hill. When it comes to the readership, Snell points out that the increase in popularity of the readership of the Regional novels started in the late 19th century, which was reinforced by better literacy. Regional writers were again interested in writing provincial novels in the 1970s and 1980s.²⁹ It is also the period when the author of the selected novel *the Woman in Black* wrote this partly Regional and partly Gothic novel which is scrutinized further on in the analytical chapters.

²⁷ Swisher, *Victorian England*, 211.

²⁸ James, “Mimesis,” 421.

²⁹ Snell, *The Regional Novel*, 23, 27.

Finally, had it not been for the contributions of Regional writers, the cultural heritage by which each region is symbolized, would not have survived. Although a lot of regions and counts, such as North Yorkshire are now industrialized and have undergone significant changes, their true origin is preserved and thus, can be passed on to the next generations. Their heritage, embedded in local traditions, culture, history and tales, is preserved in Regional novels. Regional writing dates back to the 19th-century Victorian era known for its tendency to depict the reality of the society, such as child labour in factories, poor living conditions, however, progress in technology. Although one might link the Victorian era with negative aspects, such as obligatory factory work for children, poor hygiene and consequent diseases, the positive consequences for nowadays society prevail. Apart from technological development, the Victoria era contributed to the development of a means of transport, particularly travel by trains on which its passengers could enjoy reading novels. Some Regional novels seek inspiration from other literary genres, such as the selected novel *Woman in Black*, partly Regional and Gothic novel. The region and the setting of the selected novel mainly serve as a trigger of negative feelings, which are aroused in characters as well as in readers.

2. THE MEANING OF 'GOTHIC' AND DEVELOPMENT OF GOTHIC NOVEL

This chapter examines the original meaning of Gothic and the development of a Gothic novel. Before focusing on the Gothic novel as such, it is important to define the meaning of Gothic. Gothic is assumed to refer to several aspects based on people's beliefs, opinions, religion and occupation. For instance, keen readers and scholars would link the Gothic with Gothic fiction, architects with Gothic architecture and historians with Barbaric tribes, the Goths. The term 'Gothic' has long history and its meaning has many times been changed, so it is of utmost importance to clarify its development. Even though Gothic fiction is now believed to refer to ghosts and mystery, Punter states that firstly the word used to be associated with the Germanic tribes called Goths, who invaded Roman civilization and were responsible for its destruction.³⁰ These tribes lived in the fifth century and built one of the well-known stone circles representing their beliefs. Apart from a few contributions, the meaning of the Gothic carried negative connotations considering that the Goths destroyed the Roman civilization. Subsequently, the meaning was made even worse. Many authors who describe Goths in their works use negative attributes. "By the eighteenth century a Goth had come to be defined, in the terms of Dr Johnson's Dictionary of 1775, as 'one not civilised, one deficient in general knowledge, a barbarian', and the medieval or Gothic age as a cultural wasteland, primitive and superstitious."³¹ He is not the only author who mentions this definition. Likewise, Spooner classifies the Goths as primitive and barbaric tribes who destroyed the Roman civilisation.³² Not only were Goths known as destroyers, but also as uncivilized. Consequently, the aforementioned connotations did not last for long and were replaced by a much more positive meaning.

Then, there was a crucial shift in the meaning of Gothic. The term started to be used in connection with Gothic architecture. Punter describes the shift as very significant because initially the Gothic was associated with negative meaning, however, it was then represented as grandeur.³³ So, the meaning changed radically and was related to Gothic architecture, which can be described as magnificent and grandiose. In the same way, Cavallaro mentions the meaning of Gothic which referred to Gothic architecture that dates back to the Middle Ages.³⁴

³⁰ David Punter, Glennis Byron. *The Gothic*. (UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), 3.

³¹ Punter et al., *The Gothic*, 4.

³² Catherine Spooner. *Contemporary Gothic*. (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2006), 12-13.

³³ Punter, et al., *The Gothic*, 8.

³⁴ Dani Cavallaro. *The Gothic Vision: Three Centuries of Horror, Terror and Fear*. (Great Britain: MPG Books Ltd., Bodmin, Cornwall, 2002), 28.

Many buildings were reconstructed during the 18th and 19th centuries. This period is known as a Gothic revival and is also sometimes called neogothic. A typical Victorian Gothic building is, for example, the House of Parliament in London. Cavallaro states that many Gothic buildings came back in favour during the Victorian era.³⁵ For example, many architects drew inspiration from medieval Gothic buildings with distinct Gothic ornaments and used them when constructing similar Victorian architectural buildings associated with the reign of Queen Victoria in Britain. One of the typical characteristics of Gothic architecture includes stained glass windows, grotesque statues, such as devils, birds, embellished columns and arches, and many others. In addition, these buildings tend to be haunted and mysterious. Burns states that typical Victorian houses have always produced the desired effect of a haunted atmosphere.³⁶ Hence, Victorian houses, mansions, castles, and churches are so commonly used as haunted settings in Gothic novels.

Another meaning of Gothic refers to Gothic subculture and Gothic music originating at the end of the 20th century. They react to the changes in society. Eckart points out that some bands are primarily worried about technological changes.³⁷ Apart from their stance against technology, the subculture can be represented by certain fashion and styles associated with darkness. Their members commonly wear black clothes and listen to Gothic music. Eckart points out that their preoccupation with death is expressed through their type of fashion.³⁸ Similarly, Gothic music carries elements of darkness by which this genre can be distinguished from other musical genres. In other words, its lyrics is also about evil, darkness and death. Eckart explains the main meaning of Gothic music as follows: “In the lyrics of most Gothic bands words representing ugliness, mainly the repelling ugliness of the decaying human body, dominate.”³⁹ Indeed, Gothic subculture, Gothic music and writers of Gothic fiction use ghost elements in a similar way, which is an expression of death and darkness. The meaning of Gothic has already undergone several changes ranging from the first primitive tribes, Gothic architecture, Gothic subculture to Gothic fiction. Yet, the meaning of Gothic which relates to Gothic fiction and ghost elements is appropriate for this thesis and will be used throughout the whole thesis.

³⁵ Cavallaro, *The Gothic*, 7.

³⁶ Sarah Burns, “Better for Haunts”: Victorian Houses and the Modern Imagination, *American Art* 26, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 3. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/669220>

³⁷ Gabriele Eckart, “The German Gothic Subculture,” *German Studies Review* 28, no. 3 (October 2005): 557. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30038230>

³⁸ Eckart, “Gothic Subculture,” 547.

³⁹ Eckart, “Gothic Subculture,” 552.

Having outlined the meaning of Gothic and its association in general terms, it is important to illustrate the development of the Gothic novel and its origin. Gothic novels originated in England in the 18th century and one of the first Gothic novels is considered to be Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*. Authors frequently derive inspiration from romantic features employed in these Gothic novels, such as a medieval ruined castle serving as a traditional setting of Gothic novels. The above-mentioned Gothic novels laid the foundation of the genre, Gothic novel, and a subsequent Victorian Gothic novel is also based on these traditional novels. The selected novel itself is a modern version of the Victorian Gothic novel, hence, its features will be scrutinized.

The Victorian Gothic novel was developed during one of the most scientifically fundamental eras of the 19th century and many Victorian Gothic novels show the effects of the Victorian era. For example, railway travel, technological development and so, its adverse impact on society is depicted in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Byerly mentions that both Frankenstein's monster, characterized by enormous and unstoppable power, and the power of railway travel evoked fears in society at the time.⁴⁰ In other words, it was an invention that had not existed before and caused fear in society, particularly due to its power and speed. In the same way, railway travel is eminent in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Hughes and Smith state that technological progress was not superior to paranormal, but in fact, inferior.⁴¹ In other words, it is impossible to take advantage of technology to get rid of ghosts, monsters and other paranormal creatures occurring in Gothic novels. Another example of the prominent writers of this period and the Victorian Gothic novel is Charles Dickens. In addition, his novels are widely known for the depiction of Victorian society. Keech mentions Ch. Dickens whose novels depicted that the society truly faced horrors in everyday life, they were not invented, but based on facts.⁴² For instance, the working conditions in factories and compulsory time-less shifts for children must have been terrifying. As a result, people were suffering from fatal diseases due to dust and pollution in industrial cities. Moreover, there were also many deaths as a consequence. Smith and Hughes explain the occurrence of the Gothic novel in the 19th century mainly due to the frequent deaths at the time.⁴³ So, Smith and Hughes add that the Victorian

⁴⁰ Byerly, *Virtual Travel*, 152.

⁴¹ Andrew Smith, William Hughes. *The Victorian Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd., 2012), 93.

⁴² James M. Keech, "The Survival of The Gothic Response," *Studies in the Novel* 6, No. 2 (summer 1974): 138 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/29531653>

⁴³ Smith et al., *The Victorian Gothic*, 106.

Gothic novel was mixed up with the problems at the time known as social realism.⁴⁴ The selected novel, *The Woman in Black* is partly set in the middle Victorian era, but mainly in the late Victorian era. Behind the main scene, there is a tragic and fearsome story of the inhabitants of the house, the Drablow family, who lived in the middle Victorian era. One of its members haunts the solicitor dealing with documents of the Drablow family and the story of the young solicitor is being set in the late Victorian era.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, contemporary Gothic novelists often draw inspiration from the 18th and 19th century Gothic novels. The Gothic novel *The Woman in Black* by contemporary author Susan Hill is, in fact, a revival of the traditional Gothic novel. Moreover, the selected novel carries the elements of the Victorian Gothic novel. For example, both the main protagonist in the novel *Dracula* and the protagonist of the selected novel entered the haunted mysterious place cut off from the outside world, and so completely isolated. Apart from this resemblance with the traditional Gothic novel, many Gothic elements, such as a sense of isolation, fear and suspense originated in these traditional novels and are now used in contemporary Gothic fiction.

Before focusing on Gothic fiction in popular literature, it is of utmost importance to explain the terms ‘popular literature’ and ‘classical literature’. Berberich uses the terms ‘lowbrow’ and ‘highbrow’ when distinguishing them. Their readership is based on understanding, so intellectuals are more likely to read ‘highbrow’ literature.⁴⁵ In other words, a degree of knowledge is required to understand this type of literature. ‘Lowbrow’ literature, in comparison, does not require any particular knowledge. Berberich points out that the meaning partly refers to popularity: “what is popular today is not necessarily popular tomorrow, and what is popular in one culture might not translate into another. Popular fiction is thus generally rooted in a time and, more often than not, a place.”⁴⁶ According to Berberich, with the popularity of railway travel, novels started to be shortened.⁴⁷ So, short story writing won positive acclaim and due to its popularity, short story writing has been in place in many genres ever since the 19th century. If it had not been for the Victorian generation, popular fiction and an invention of new genres would not have come into existence. According to Berberich, Victorians were the

⁴⁴ Smith et al., *The Victorian Gothic*, 127.

⁴⁵ Christine Berberich. *The Bloomsbury Introduction to Popular Fiction*. (UK: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2015), 39.

⁴⁶ Berberich, *The Bloomsbury*, 3–4.

⁴⁷ Berberich, *The Bloomsbury*, 33–34.

generation who laid the foundation of new genres of popular literature.⁴⁸ The Gothic novel, which is sometimes called a ghost story, horror story or horror fiction in popular literature, consists of certain conventions, patterns and elements which represent and distinguish this genre. Keech explains common associations with the traditional Gothic novel: “unfortunately, the word will never, perhaps, divorce itself from this association with ruined castles, graveyards, skeletons, ghosts, and imperiled maidens.”⁴⁹ The idea to rename the notorious traditional Gothic novel as a ghost or horror story was valuable. The popular Gothic novel is enabled to modify its Gothic elements, particularly the locations of the setting, which can be changed. Gothic novels that are written in the following centuries no longer use a ruined castle as a haunted setting, the emphasis is rather put on the atmosphere of the setting and primarily on its response. So, it means that a Gothic novel might take place anywhere as long as the setting evokes scary feelings. “[...] behind artifices of comfort and rules, order and stability, wholeness and righteousness, lie the flip sides of these: discomfort, terror, violence, disgust.”⁵⁰ Evocation of these feelings has interchangeably occurred in Gothic fiction throughout the centuries.

Authors of popular Gothic fiction also cover some of the contemporary topics and problems causing fear and anxiety in characters and readers. Keech points out that “The Gothic in nontraditional literature has, therefore, become a means of evoking a response, both emotional and moral, to those aspects of life which we fear, or ethically should fear, most.”⁵¹ To illustrate it by an example, writers of popular literature in the 20th and the 21st century employ problems that evoke fears for modern society. Keech also adds the novel *Brave New World* where the author remarks on the new inventions causing fears in the society, pointing to the ‘skyscraper’ evoking the same emotions as the Gothic castle.⁵² For example, potential wars, ecological problems and the outbreak of the pandemic are the biggest nightmares for the nowadays society.

⁴⁸ Berberich, *The Bloomsbury*, 12.

⁴⁹ Keech, “The Survival,” 134.

⁵⁰ Berberich, *The Bloomsbury*, 130.

⁵¹ Keech, “The Survival,” 141.

⁵² Keech, “The Survival,” 142.

On the whole, it should be concluded that although the genre of the Gothic novel has been occurring in literature for almost four centuries, it has not undergone any radical changes. The meaning of the Gothic novel mainly remains. It is distinguished by a haunted setting and ghost atmosphere which have been employed ever since the 18th century. Yet, the location can be varied on the condition that it is scary. What has changed, however, is its name. The Gothic novel has been renamed many times. Gothic novels in the Victorian era started to be called Victorian Gothic novels and in contemporary literature – ghost story or horror story. Another minor difference of contemporary Gothic fiction refers to the evocation of fearsome feelings in characters as well as in readers. Every century is represented by a series of problems causing uneasiness. Although the selected novel *The Woman in Black* was written at the end of the 20th century and therefore, belongs to contemporary literature, it is transferred into the Victorian Gothic novel and expresses fears evoked by the society at the time. The novel is thus a Gothic revival with its distinct Gothic elements.

3. ELEMENTS OF GOTHIC NOVEL

Elements of the Gothic novel, sometimes also called Gothic tropes, have been reused since traditional Gothic novels came into place in the 18th and 19th centuries. Elements of Gothic fiction distinguish this genre from other genres, such as science fiction, crime or thriller. The elements include haunted setting, abuse, a monster, uncanny, an overlap of reality and past, thrilling suspense and uncertainty, darkness and fear. It is important to theoretically examine these Gothic elements in this chapter because they will be analysed in the subsequent critical analysis of the Gothic novel, *The Woman in Black*.

The first important element is an isolated haunted setting that might be in a form of a castle, a desolated cottage or a family house located on an island. For instance, the novel *Dracula* by Bram Stoker is one of the examples of traditional Gothic novels and its location, the castle of Transylvania, is widely known isolated location. The sense of isolation thus deepens the feeling of concern in a character. The main hero of the selected novel is not only isolated from any civilisation, but also his family. Likewise, the main protagonist in the novel *Dracula* suffers from being isolated from his loved ones, which makes him sad and anxious. One of the reasons for a choice of isolated locations in Gothic novels might be that in case of danger, there is no one nearby who would help its characters. In the case of the selected novel, there is no one except for the dog called Spider who was given to him by one of the locals. The sense of isolation makes the book intimidating and ghostly. So, loneliness and a sense of isolation play a key role in a Gothic novel and are closely associated with a haunted setting and evoke a feeling of fear in a character. Punter mentions the haunted castle as an example of a haunted place with typical tall black windows and locked doors, which should not be visited.⁵³ Such a castle with its distinct windows belongs to one of the representative features of previously mentioned Gothic architecture, flourishing in the Victorian era. This fact is also typical for the novel *The Woman in Black*, in which the main hero is unable to enter a certain room. Similarly, Kilgour points out that the most common setting is usually a castle with locked rooms visited by characters who tend to be sensitive and ineffectual.⁵⁴ The second adjective on no account applies to the hero of the selected novel. Even though he is partly sensitive to sounds which he keeps hearing when working in the place and organising papers, however, he is not ineffectual. Even Cavallaro mentions in his book that a haunted place has very often locked

⁵³ Punter et al., *The Gothic*, 261.

⁵⁴ Maggie Kilgour. *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*. (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), 4.

rooms, which are full of mysteries.⁵⁵ There might be either some ancient objects forbidden to be discovered or an inanimate creature unable to escape. As a result, a certain place is occupied and haunted by this creature, which either has not come into terms with the circumstances of its death yet or might still take revenge, primarily on animate characters in a story.

One of the other elements is called abuse. It is, according to Punter, connected with violence thriving in abandoned places.⁵⁶ Even if the main hero of the selected book is not physically abused, he is mentally abused by dreadful happenings, paranormal activities, and closed contact with unnatural creatures known as ghosts. Moreover, he suffers from hearing unpleasant sounds. Seeking revenge might be done on characters either physically or mentally. For example, the monster in the Gothic novel *Frankenstein* seeks revenge on Frankenstein when he finds out that he invented him. Another important element of any ghost story is thus, as above mentioned, the monster who haunts a particular place. Cavallaro uses the term ‘specter,’ ‘phantom,’ or an ‘apparition’ when defining the supernatural creature.⁵⁷ It might be either in a form of a ghost or other inanimate spirits. Not only does an unnatural creature haunt in the place, but also characters outside the place. What is, therefore, important to mention is that ghosts have the power to travel back and forth. For instance, the ghost in the selected novel can occur in any place visited by the main character. One of the typical examples of monsters is the monster created by Frankenstein. Punter defines a monster as something enormous and unnatural, who either intends to show something or warn against something.⁵⁸ Although not being gigantic, the ghost called the Woman in Black longs for communicating with the main character in the selected novel, and therefore, other unnatural things in a form of voices and sounds occur to give the main character direction that helps him to solve the mystery of the place. On the one hand, one might assume that a monster is an ugly dangerous creature. Cavallaro describes the monsters as creatures that might, on the other hand, look attractive and charming, for example, Dracula is a good example of this notion.⁵⁹ Apart from looking ill, the ghost of the Woman in Black in the novel appears like an ordinary and neat woman who unexpectedly emerge in the novel several times. The previously mentioned unnatural things associated with ghosts and known as paranormal activities could be defined as ‘uncanny.’ Cavallaro expresses that this term was firstly introduced by Sigmund Freund who explained the

⁵⁵ Cavallaro, *The Gothic Vision*, 27.

⁵⁶ Punter et al., *The Gothic*, 288.

⁵⁷ Cavallaro, *The Gothic Vision*, 75.

⁵⁸ Punter, et al., *The Gothic*, 263.

⁵⁹ Cavallaro, *The Gothic Vision*, 171–172.

term as follows: “Doubts whether an animate being is alive; or conversely, whether a lifeless object might not be animate.” For this reason, characters are constantly unable to distinguish fiction from reality, in other words, the things which are animate and which are inanimate.

The reality and the past are often overlapped in Gothic fiction. The character, according to Hogle, has to recognise what is real, what is unreal or supernatural, and very frequently comes into contact with haunted creatures.⁶⁰ They used to live as human beings in a certain place in the past or used to have any connection to it. Although not being there physically, their souls persist and haunt a place at present. Despite becoming aware of this fact, the characters do not know where a creature waits for them. They also very often fail to recognise whether the creature is a human being or something rather unreal and uncanny. For example, when the main protagonist in the Gothic novel *Dracula* entered the castle of Transylvania for the first time, he thought that Dracula is a human. However, later he reveals the truth and discovers that Dracula is a vampire. Similarly, the solicitor in the selected novel later becomes conscious of the fact that the Woman in Black no longer lives.

One of the last significant elements is the darkness, which goes hand in hand with the previously mentioned haunted setting and the monster. Darkness not only means a total absence of daylight and not only refers to black colour, such as the character the Woman in Black, but it is also associated with bad spirits and negative energy. Their presence intensifies suspense and fear in a story. For instance, Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* is an appropriate example of this element. The mysterious castle has a reputation for inexplicable happenings, such as moving pictures on the walls or the occurrence of dead soldiers walking in the castle at night. What also intensifies darkness, according to Cavallaro, is constant avoidance of becoming conscious of paranormal activities.⁶¹ Cavallaro mentions the selected ghost story itself to illustrate that the characters who are ignorant are more susceptible to the paranormal.⁶² The main character’s ignorance of the paranormal escalated into much more dreadful happenings. The more ignorant the main protagonist becomes, the more horrifying experiences he witnesses. In other words, ignorance functions as a disadvantage because darkness comes to light when characters take no notice of paranormal activities and ignore them. The main protagonist of the selected novel used to behave the same and since he revealed the truth, he has become to be frightened. Moreover, uncertainty and thrilling suspense closely relate to darkness as it gives

⁶⁰ Jerrold E. Hogle. *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2.

⁶¹ Cavallaro, *The Gothic Vision*, 24.

⁶² Cavallaro, *The Gothic Vision*, 24.

rise to feelings of uncertainty and suspense. Kilgour states that an author aims to evoke feelings of suspense and uncertainty in a reader.⁶³ The author of the selected novel, for example, achieved this aim by including overlong sentences and placing the key information at the end. Thus, readers were kept in suspense throughout the whole story forced them to keep reading until the end. After all, both the main protagonist and readers express fear in the story.

Fear is one of the main emotions evoked by human beings and should not be omitted in any ghost story. The evocation of fear and suspense is also an integral part of each ghost story. Keech also points out that the Gothic novel's main aim is to evoke fear in a character.⁶⁴ To illustrate this fact by an example, Marry Shelley's book *Frankenstein* and the well-known monster constantly evokes fear in the residents of the story. When he appears in public, everyone is frightened of him. In the same way, the residents of the fictional town in the selected novel are scared of the ghost of the Woman in Black, and therefore, avoid talking about her. Cavallaro mentions in his book that fear does not function as a disadvantage in a ghost story, but rather as an advantage. Fear works as a trigger of some action and indicates the focus on surroundings.⁶⁵ Fear prevents characters from unwanted happenings, might either function as a warning or might encourage characters to change a direction or mind. However, it is not entirely true. As mentioned above, the main aim of writers is to evoke fear in fictional characters and readers. To achieve this aim and to increase this feeling on both sides, a character and a reader must have an aspiration to solve the mystery. The character in the selected novel, for example, decides to stay overnight in the place despite the paranormal activities. It signifies that the character is ineffectual and brave. Having experienced that, the reader becomes to be worried about the character. In addition, it can be intensified by producing complex sentences, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, and placing the most important information at the end. This fact intensifies suspense and uncertainty in a reader and escalates into a feeling of fear.

⁶³ Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, 6.

⁶⁴ Keech, "The Survival", 131.

⁶⁵ Cavallaro, *The Gothic Vision*, 6.

To sum up, key elements of a typical Gothic novel consist of an isolated haunted setting occupied by a monster, usually in a form of a ghost who threatens and abuses characters entering dark places. The dark places are well famous for inexplicable activities which can be named supernatural and stand on the border between reality and fiction. Characters often suffer from being threatened by supernatural creatures and fail to recognise what is a reality and what is not. Therefore, they are left in uncertainty and become to be afraid. Lastly, fear is the strongest emotion evoked by a character in a Gothic novel. Setting, ghosts or monsters, abuse, and threat caused by paranormal activities, which ultimately lead to an expression of fear, are interrelated elements. In other words, each element is linked to another element or caused by another element. After all, these are the key elements that play an integral part in any Gothic novel and the following analytical part examines them.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE GOTHIC AND REGIONAL ELEMENTS IN THE GOTHIC NOVEL *THE WOMAN IN BLACK* BY SUSAN HILL

The analytical part aims to provide the analysis of the haunted story in the novel *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. As was mentioned in the brief plot of the novel in the introduction, the author uses elements of the Gothic novel combined with elements of the Regional novel. The analytical part focuses on both elements of the Gothic novel and elements of the Regional novel that were theoretically examined in the previous chapters. Although the novel is considered to comply with the criteria of the Gothic novel, and its elements prevail, the Regional elements accompany the Gothic novel and play a fundamental role in it. Locals acquire particular and secret knowledge referring to the history of the setting, which is crucial in the novel. The analysis of both elements is performed through a choice of extracts from the book *The Woman in Black*, which is directly analysed through commentaries. The main aim of the analytical part is to demonstrate that the selected novel *Woman in Black* by Susan Hill meets the criteria of the Regional novel as well as the Gothic novel. Similarly, Emily Brönte's *Wuthering Heights* corresponds with both types of novels.

Generally, several Gothic elements frequently and interchangeably occur in Gothic novels, however, only those which were previously described will be analysed in this analytical part. The Gothic elements used by the author include a haunted setting, abuse, a monster, uncanny, an overlap of reality and past, thrilling suspense and uncertainty, darkness and fear. The order of the Gothic elements follows the sequence used in the theoretical part.

Equally, various Regional elements occur in the selected novel. Regional elements, such as identity, customs, and dialect belong to one of the most essential elements representing the region Yorkshire and the Humber in which is the novel set. Identity is commonly represented by local customs, but primarily, by history and tales connected to the place, its inhabitants and their distinct mentality. Unlike the Gothic elements, observation of Regional elements does not follow the order used in the theoretical part. Extracts with Regional elements, along with commentaries about the historical period, are logically added and so, extend the Gothic elements.

One of the key Regional elements features the isolated and mysterious location in the selected novel. The region itself, its geographical location and a particular landscape contribute to feelings of fear in the main characters. As was mentioned in the theoretical chapter, Snell says that a place of living has an impact on its inhabitants.⁶⁶ In this case, the setting is far-flung and cut off from any civilization due to the way called Nine Lives Causeway frequently flooded:

‘Have you ever heard of the Nine Lives Causeway?’
‘No, never.’
‘Nor ever of Eel Marsh, in –shire?’
‘No, sir.’
‘Nor, I suppose, ever visited that country at all?’
‘I’m afraid not.’⁶⁷

The haunted setting, which belongs to the crucial Gothic elements, is depicted in the selected novel in a form of a house named Eel Marsh House. As mentioned in the theoretical part, the setting of Gothic novels does not have to be a castle assumed to be one of the traditional Gothic settings. Scullion describes the use of location as ‘domestic.’⁶⁸ In other words, by the term, ‘domestic’ is meant that the house used to be the home of the Drablow family and their adopted son, Nathaniel. To illustrate the domestic location by an example, Scullion states that “Jennet Humphrye, during her lifetime, refuses to be ostracized from ‘respectable’ society, often returning to her sister’s house in an attempt to reclaim her son.”⁶⁹ Eel Marsh House was home for Jennet because her son was living there. Expulsion from society was closely tied up with sexual morality that was very strict during the Victorian era. It was forbidden to raise a child outside marriage. It applied to Jennet who was as a consequence forced to leave her home and her son.

The location of Eel Marsh House is rather unknown and isolated and the way–Nine Lives Causeway is the only way to get to this place and abandon it. Before Arthur Kipps, working as a solicitor and the main character of the story, reached the house, he had to spend almost a half-day travel on a train (travelling from London). Had it not been for the invention of railway travel in the Victorian era, it would not be possible to get to the most remote countryside and landscape on the island of Great Britain within a half-day. Before Arthur got to the house, Arthur’s employer, Mr Bentley explained to him his long journey:

⁶⁶ Snell, *The Regional Novel*, 1.

⁶⁷ Susan Hill. *The Woman in Black*. (London: Penguin Random House, 2016), 27.

⁶⁸ Val Scullion. “Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*: Gothic Horror for the 1980s.” *Women: A Cultural Review*, 14, no. 3 (November 2010): 296. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0957404032000140407>

⁶⁹ Scullion, “Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*,” 296.

‘Then, my boy, go home and pack your bags, and take the afternoon train from King’s Cross, changing at Crewe and again at Homerby. From Homerby, you take the branch line to the little market town of Crythin Gifford. After that, it’s a wait for the tide!’⁷⁰

Arthur was taken to the house by a pony and trap with a driver, a local man called Mr Keckwick. Arthur expected the motor car, one of the famous inventions of the Victorian period. Instead, Keckwick came with the pony and trap and its state signified that it had been used for a great deal of time. It means that technological development has not been spread into this region much. A few local people owned cars, but especially landowners still prefer the pony and trap as the main mean of transport:

[...] I was standing on the pavement awaiting the arrival of the car, driven by a man called Keckwick. No car appeared. Instead, there drew up outside the Gifford Arms a rather worn and shabby pony and a trap. It was not at all out of place in the market square – I had noticed a number of such vehicles that morning [...].⁷¹

The Eel Marsh House stands on the island surrounded by marshes and the river and so, far away from any civilization. The closest town is the fictional town Crythin Gifford. Marshes are dangerous due to the possibility of drowning and the river due to frequent high tides:

As we drew nearer, I saw that the water was lying only shallowly over the rippling sand on either side of us, and that the line was in fact a narrow track leading directly ahead, as if into the estuary itself. As we slipped onto it, I realized that this must be the Nine Lives Causeway – this and nothing more – and saw how, when the tide came in, it would quickly be submerged and untraceable.⁷²

Mr Bentley, who seems to know all about the place, describes the peculiarity of the location about which, except him, only local people know. So, he provides the main character, Arthur Kipps, with information that can save Arthur’s life. Also, if it had not been for this information, Arthur would have been in danger. Unfortunately, the tides cannot be prevented and it signifies the fact that human beings are inferior to the powers of nature. So, if anything happened to Arthur at high tide, no one would be able to save him:

‘You can only cross the Causeway at low tide. That takes you onto Eel Marsh and the house.’ [...] ‘When the tide comes in, you’re cut off until it’s low again. Remarkable place.’⁷³

⁷⁰ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 27.

⁷¹ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 64–65

⁷² Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 68.

⁷³ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 28.

What also frightens characters are the notorious fogs and marshes, which make the place dangerous, especially if the marshes are covered by fogs. Not being able to see the marshes might lead to a high risk of accidents, such as drowning:

[...] 'I left London in the grip of an appalling fog, and up here it seems to be cold enough for snow.' [...] 'But if you think you've escaped the fogs by coming up here, you're mistaken. We get bad frets in this part of the world.' 'Frets?' 'Aye, frets. Sea-frets, sea-mists. They roll up in a minute from the sea to land across the marshes. It's the nature of the place. [...]'⁷⁴

In addition, its unexpected occurrence might harm individuals entering the location. The location, thus, puts Arthur in danger and so, he must be aware of when is the right time to leave the house. So, the information told by one of the locals, Mr Samuel Daily, is valuable.

For this reason, there is nowhere to escape when the way out is impassable and flooded. The unstable and unfavourable weather conditions intensify the ghostly and haunted atmosphere of the isolated place. Even though the house is cut off from any civilisation, completely isolated and far away from the fictional town, Crythin Gifford and its residents, it is very well-preserved and resembles typical Victorian stone houses. As was mentioned in the introduction, the last member of the family who inhabited the house was Alice Drablow coming from a middle class, left the house in very good condition. There is another example from the novel which describes the location and the state of the residence:

It stood like some lighthouse or beacon or martello tower, facing the whole, wide expanse of marsh and estuary, the most astonishingly situated house I had ever seen or could ever conceivably have imagined, isolated, uncompromising but also, I thought, handsome.⁷⁵

Apart from isolation, another aspect of setting typical for Gothic novels refers to secret chambers and rooms, which are commonly locked and in certain times suddenly unlocked:

The door of the room from which the noise came, the door which had been securely locked, so that I had not been able to break it down, the door to which there could not be a key – that door was now standing open. Wide open.⁷⁶

The aforementioned isolated house has locked rooms hiding secrets from the past and from which the main character, the solicitor, keeps hearing uncanny sounds of the pony and trap. Scullion argues in his article that unlocked rooms feature one of the frequent Gothic elements evoking concern in a reader. As the character yearns for unveiling what is hidden

⁷⁴ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 35.

⁷⁵ Hill, *The Woman in Black*, 68–69.

⁷⁶ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 144–145.

inside them without considering the danger.⁷⁷ Also, readers commonly show interest in characters and are worried about them.

The main aspects of the haunted setting in the novel include the well-known isolation of the place, locked windows and treacherous surroundings. The marches and the river, which flood the place and make the place frequently inescapable, arouse the emotion of fear and anxiety. What also evokes fear in the character is the ghost named the Woman in Black who has a close relation to the place. It is the ghost of Alice Drablow's sister, Jennet Humfrye, whose son was raised by Alice Drablow and her husband as they were unable to have children. When the child accidentally died, Jennet could not cope with her loss and although she never managed to take revenge on her relatives, she is currently haunting both the place and the nearest village, attempting to exact revenge not only on its residents but also on strangers. Similarly, Scullion states that the ghost of Jennet Humfrye keeps haunting the place as she has not overcome the loss of her son yet and has been causing troubles in society.⁷⁸ The ghost of Jennet is described in the following extract:

She was dressed in deepest black, in the style of full mourning that had rather gone out of fashion except, I imagined, in court circles on the most formal of occasions [...] although I did not stare, even the swift glance I took of the woman showed enough to recognise that she was suffering from some terrible wasting disease, for not only was she extremely pale, even more than a contrast with the blackness of her garments could account for, [...]⁷⁹

On no account should a ghost, a monster or another unnatural creature be absent in a Gothic novel. As was mentioned previously, the ghost plays an integral part in the Gothic novel and makes it scary and haunted. Here the author describes the deceased sister of Alice Drablow, Jennet whose clothing was noticeably distinguished from fashion at the time. What the character wonders about in the first place is whether the creature truly lives. As the colour and state of her face look as though she would no longer live:

Her face, in its extreme pallor, her eyes, sunken but unnaturally bright, were burning with the concentration of passionate emotion which was within her and which streamed from her.⁸⁰

The common intention of a ghost is to take revenge on others in Gothic novels. So, by 'passionate emotion' is meant that the Woman in Black intends to make the revenge happen.

⁷⁷ Scullion, "Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*," 295.

⁷⁸ Scullion, "Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*," 298.

⁷⁹ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 53.

⁸⁰ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 75.

I did not believe in ghosts. Or rather, until this day, I had not done so, and whatever stories I had heard of them I had, like most rational, sensible young men, dismissed as nothing more than stories indeed.⁸¹

Here again, the main protagonist is unsure of what is real and what is unreal. He still does not believe in what he has just seen and he rather reassures himself that ghosts do not exist. But the ghost reappears in the story several times. Scullion argues that ghosts tend to travel to and fro and have the ability to unlock rooms.⁸² Arthur came across the ghost many times in the novel and in different places.

And she had appeared and then vanished in a way that surely no real, living, fleshly human being could possibly manage to do. And yet...she had not looked in any way – as I imagined the traditional ‘ghost’ was supposed to do – transparent or vaporous, she had been real, she had been there, I had seen her quite clearly, [...] ⁸³

In a due course, he tries to become more conscious of the fact that ghosts might actually exist. The fact that he finds supernatural and uncanny is that the Woman in Black accidentally disappears. Although this is a typical feature of ghosts, the Woman in Black does not look like a ghost. He explains that she rather looks like a human being. Cavallaro claims that ghosts might look attractive,⁸⁴ as stated in the theoretical part. In other words, ghosts might deceive the character’s mind by looking ordinary.

At one of the upper windows, the only window with bars across it, the window of the nursery, I caught a glimpse of someone standing. A woman. That woman. She was looking directly towards me.⁸⁵

The Woman in Black appears again in the nursery room, which used to be locked for some time. The room belonged to her son, whom she loved. The reason why she appears there might be that she wants to communicate with the protagonist and inform him of the accident and history of the odd place because the character is unaware of it.

[...] the child’s nursery had been preserved in that house as he had left it, with his bed, his clothes, his toys, all undisturbed, and that his mother haunted the place. Moreover, that the intensity of her grief and distress together with her pent-up hatred and desire for revenge permeated the air all around.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 78.

⁸² Scullion, “Susan Hill’s *The Woman in Black*,” 296.

⁸³ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 79.

⁸⁴ Cavallaro, *The Gothic Vision*, 171.

⁸⁵ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 163.

⁸⁶ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 179.

He eventually discovers the truth and starts to believe in ghosts. Her longing for revenge is the reason why she still haunts the place.

Overlap of reality and past is closely associated with ghosts as the character is unable to identify whether the Woman in Black is actually a human being or a ghost. Not only does he fail to recognise the truth concerning the ghost, but also other paranormal and unnatural happenings. One of the happenings might be that he repeatedly hears weird noises of the pony and trap echoing from the locked room, the nursery:

I realized that the sounds had been coming not from within the room but outside it, beyond the window. I pulled it up as far as the sash would allow and looked out. There lay the marshes, silver-grey and empty, there was the water of the estuary, flat as a mirror with the full moon lying upturned upon it. Nothing. No one.⁸⁷

The character's mind is perplexed because even though he is certain that he has already heard the noises, when he goes to find where the noise is coming from, it stops and the only thing he hears is silence. The confusion of the protagonist's mind could happen as a result of suffering from mental illness. Another example shows that the noise has not passed yet:

She had gone to the locked door and even from below I could hear it again, the odd, faint, rhythmic noise—bump bump, pause, bump bump, pause, bump bump ...⁸⁸

However, even the dog keeps hearing the sounds, so it is not just happening in the character's mind. The noise and other paranormal activities occur all of a sudden and then stop or disappear. Similarly, the ghost of the Woman in Black suddenly appeared, and then, there was no sign of her. Also, moving furniture such as in the book *the Castle of Otranto*, as was mentioned in the theoretical part, is a very common Gothic element. It applies to the selected novel as well:

As I watched, stared until I could stare no harder, it rocked gently and with gradually decreasing speed, in the way any such chair will continue to rock for time after someone has just got out of it.⁸⁹

Again, the character is uncertain of the reality and tries to clarify this action, however, he is unable to explain it because there is no one in the house, except for him and the dog, Spider. The chair continues moving as though there would be someone sitting on it.

⁸⁷ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 134.

⁸⁸ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 140.

⁸⁹ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 147.

Consequently, the more the character avoids accepting the truth that there is something paranormal happening, the more the paranormal activities approach him. In other words, darkness comes closer. Once the character becomes aware of the darkness, paranormal activities, and the presence of the ghost, all of them arouse fear and suspense in the character. Scullion mentions in his article a critic and reviewer Stephen Bann who argues that “the novel’s ‘gradual development of an exquisite suspense’ that, he argues, distinguishes the ‘true ghost story’ from its ‘gross and overblown . . . bastard brother’, the horror story.”⁹⁰ Suspense escalating into fear is the frequent Gothic element in the novel. As was mentioned in the theoretical part, fear is constantly evoked by residents as well as the main protagonist in the novel. They all share the same experience with the haunted house of the Drablow family and the tales associated with it. It can be illustrated by this example:

‘Mr Jerome, what you mean is not that there is no one available, that no young person – or older person for that matter – could be found in the town or the neighbourhood able and free to do the work if a thorough search were to be made. [...] I should not find a soul willing to spend any time out at Eel Marsh House, for fear of the stories about that place proving true – for fear of encountering what I have already encountered.’⁹¹

Mr Jerome is one of the inhabitants of the nearby town who explains that he has already experienced some dreadful happenings, equally, the residents of the town:

‘I’m here to attend a funeral—Mrs Drablow, of Eel Marsh House. Perhaps you knew of here?’ His face flickered with ... what? Alarm, was it? Suspicion? I could not tell, but the name had stirred some strong emotion in him, all signs of which he endeavoured to suppress at once.⁹²

And this is the peculiarity about locals living in Crythin Gifford. Local people avoid talking about Mrs Drablow and her family because something dreadful happened to them in the past in association with the family. Even though the protagonist of the story, Arthur Kipps, wonders what did happen to the family and why local people are reluctant to talk about it, he reassures himself that there are only rumours, told by locals. His ignorance is a proper example of a superior metropolitan mentality inferior to the mentality of people in rural areas. Professor Campbell states one of the key characteristics of a Regional novel as following: “thematic tension or conflict between urban ways and old-fashioned rural values is often symbolized by the intrusion of an outsider or interloper who seeks something from the community.”⁹³ The

⁹⁰ Scullion, “Susan Hill’s *The Woman in Black*,” 294.

⁹¹ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 106.

⁹² Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 44.

⁹³ “Campbell,” Public, last modified October 10, 2017.
<https://public.wsu.edu/~campbell/amlit/lcolor.html>

intruder is the main character who interrupts the Regional values of a small community in the town Crythin Gifford:

[...] I was both curious and a little irritated by his manner, and I thought of trying to get out of him exactly what he had meant by it. But I was tired and dismissed the notion, putting his remarks down to some local tales and silliness which had grown out of all proportion, as such things will do in small, out of the way communities, which have only themselves to look to for whatever melodrama and mystery they can extract out of life.⁹⁴

Life in a small community can contribute to their beliefs because all of them share the same belief based on some experience and situation they witnessed. Strangers who come to the location of the region do not share the same belief because they have not experienced anything similar yet. The fact that Arthur Kipps is reluctant to believe in it can be also represented by the extract below:

For I must confess I had the Londoner's sense of superiority in those days, the half-formed belief that countrymen, and particularly those who inhabited the remoter corners of our islands, were more superstitious, more gullible, more slow-witted, unsophisticated and primitive, than we cosmopolitans.⁹⁵

Arthur finds himself superior because he comes from an industrial town, London. He assumes that the locals living in the isolated area are rather gullible and dull. In the same way, Scullion describes the locals as outsiders.⁹⁶ In other words, their beliefs appear to be inferior to the beliefs of the main protagonist coming from a larger community. The wilderness of the place has an enormous impact on their beliefs and they are more likely to believe in any story. Such stories are a part of Regional heritage, culture and Regional identity:

Doubtless, in such a place as this, with its eerie marshes, sudden fogs, moaning winds and lonely houses, any poor old woman might be looked at askance; once upon a time, after all, she would have been branded as a witch and local legends and tales were still abroad and some extravagant folklore still half-believed in.⁹⁷

In addition, the environment intensifies the negative thoughts and prompts the dwellers to believe in almost supernatural legends and tales. The conversation topic referring to the tales associated with Eel Marsh House and the Drablow family repeatedly evokes fear in residents of the nearby town:

⁹⁴ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 44.

⁹⁵ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 44–45.

⁹⁶ Scullion, "Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*," 295.

⁹⁷ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 45.

‘Do I take it that you are one of them?’⁹⁸ I am a solicitor looking after the affairs of the late Mrs Alice Drablow of Eel Marsh House. [...] For a moment, my companion still said nothing, only buttered a thick slice of bread and laid his chunks of cheese along with it carefully.⁹⁹

Again, there is another example of superstitious locals who are dismissive of speaking about the strange woman:

It was true that neither Mr Daily nor the landlord of the inn seemed anything but sturdy men of good commonsense, just as I had to admit that neither of them had done more than fall silent and looked at me hard and a little oddly, when the subject of Mrs Drablow had arisen.¹⁰⁰

Local beliefs belong to the Regional identity and are different from the main protagonist, who is a stranger with no understanding of the local beliefs. As mentioned in the theoretical part, locals of the selected region tend to work as farmers, which is also a part of the Regional identity and might be tightly linked with beliefs examined before.

[...] I went to have lunch with, with four dozen or so farmers. It was a convivial and noisy occasion, with everyone sitting at three trestle tables, which were covered in long white cloths, and shouting to one another in all directions about market matters, [...] ¹⁰¹

Compared to industrial towns, traditional farming is a part of the cultural identity of the market town Crythin Gifford. The pride in old-fashioned methods of farming is so rare because the farming industry is now industrialized in a wide range of towns. Although not having particularly favourable conditions for farming, the landowners do appreciate every piece of land that can be used. The poor conditions for farming are due to the marshes being widespread in the surroundings of the town Crythin Gifford.

‘And this land about here is valuable?’ ‘Some is, sir. This was. In an area where much is useless because it is all marsh and salt-flat and cannot be drained to any purpose good farming is valuable, every inch of it. There are several disappointed men here this morning.’¹⁰²

Lastly, although the dialect plays a crucial role in a Regional novel and often signifies that the novel will carry features of a Regional novel, the selected novel is predominantly written in standard English. There is one of the few remarks of the local people with a distinct accent, which the author mentions in the book:

⁹⁸ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 62.

⁹⁹ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 63.

¹⁰⁰ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 45.

¹⁰¹ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 61.

¹⁰² Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 62.

He was a big man, with a beefy face and huge, raw-looking hands, well enough spoken but with an odd accent that I took to be the local one.¹⁰³

It is the specific identity of the locals, their beliefs, and concerns that lead to the curiosity of the protagonist. Eventually, he deserves to discover more about the haunted place and its former inhabitants:

I knew there had been hauntings by the woman in black and perhaps by some other occupant of this house. I knew that the sounds I had heard out on the marsh were ghostly sounds. But although these had been terrifying, and inexplicable, I thought that if I had to I could go over them again, if only because I had been growing more and more determined to find out what restless soul it was who wanted to cause these disturbances and why, *why*.¹⁰⁴

Whereas Arthur becomes aware of local hauntings, he yearns for finding who the Woman truly was, despite feeling frightened and anxious. Although it was said in the theoretical part that fear normally functions as a warning, this fact does not apply to ghost stories. While real people would escape and would never enter a certain place again, the fictional characters in Gothic novels become to be curious about a place, often return and stay there overnight. The character aims to approach the mystery and the truth associated with the origin of the Drablow family. This fact also indicates that the character is brave and determined to do his work. Probably, his occupation and duties make him continue searching and organising documents of the Drablow family. As soon as he takes notice of any important facts in documents, he becomes to be interested in the history of the family.

The aforementioned extract from the novel is a proper example of the author's production of overlong sentences. The character's intentions are placed at the end of the sentence, which evokes fear in a reader. Had it not been for the character's intentions and constant desire to reveal the truth of the place, he would not have ended up suffering from mental illness. This can be illustrated by the following extract:

The worst of it all was not the physical illness, the aching, the tiredness, the fever, but the mental turmoil I passed through.¹⁰⁵

Previously analysed isolation goes hand in hand with the feeling of fear. Also, the character encounters a lot of inexplicable and uncanny situations while staying in the house. For instance, moving furniture, loud and repetitive noises of pony and trap, and unlocked doors, which had been locked before. These mysterious happenings confuse the character, as he is

¹⁰³ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 36.

¹⁰⁴ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 167.

¹⁰⁵ Hill, Susan. *The Woman in Black*, 189.

unable to distinguish between reality and unreality. On top of that, they arouse a sense of uncertainty, suspense, and primarily fear in the character and its readers.

On the whole, it was crucial to ascertain which Regional aspects are depicted in the selected novel *The Woman in Black*. Having analysed the selected novel, it was discovered that one of the Regional aspects includes the description of the region, its climate, environmental and living conditions, locals, their beliefs and distinct accent that is not much mentioned in the novel. All in all, these examined Regional aspects define the true identity of the fictional town set in the region Yorkshire and the Humber. Eventually, having proved that the Regional novel is partly Regional, it should be noted that the novel also carries the elements of the Gothic novel. All the Gothic elements occurring in the novel mentioned above are linked with each other. The haunted house is occupied by the ghost of Jennet Humfrye who is called the Woman in Black by locals. Despite being aware of a possible threat, the main protagonist longs for uncovering the truth of the mysterious place. Eventually, it escalates into a nervous breakdown. Since his first visit, he has started feeling the presence of darkness indeed outside the place.

CONCLUSION

The final analytical part proves that the Gothic novel *The Woman in Black* meets the criteria of a Gothic novel as well as a Regional novel. Gothic elements and Regional elements were analysed in the analytical part based upon the preceding theoretical chapters. Although the selected novel ranks among Gothic novels and more Gothic elements can be found in the analysis, the Regional elements, particularly the setting, create a positive effect crucial for a Gothic novel. The region Yorkshire and the Humber and its landscape, such as treacherous surroundings and unpredictable weather give rise to feelings of fear and suspense in the novel.

The first theoretical chapter deals with Regional literature and Regional novel. Firstly, the characteristics of the region and Regional elements are described. Although there are many Regional elements, only those which refer to the selected novel are discussed. For example, the Regional identity is represented by weather, a way of living, local tales, the mentality of locals and a dialect. After all, it is the oral narration and local tales from which the Regional novel originated. This chapter focuses more on the Regional novel itself, provides a wide range of definitions of the Regional novel and further concentrates on the main focus of the Regional writers. Apart from local tales, by which the selected novel might have been affected, the Regional writers draw attention to the preindustrial life based on the rural way of life, traditional farming and agriculture. They also describe the everydayness and real-life events known as Victorian realism. Eventually, the chapter mentions some of the Victorian Regional writers who were influenced by the Victorian era, its values and new inventions.

The second theoretical chapter discusses the change of meanings of the term 'Gothic' throughout the centuries and the development of Gothic fiction. The term 'Gothic' dates back to the fifth century, at the time, it carried negative connotations associated with primitive tribes of Goths. Later, in the 19th century, it was connected with Gothic architecture. The contemporary meaning of Gothic is either related to a Gothic subculture, Gothic music or Gothic fiction. The rest of this chapter examines the development of Gothic novels in the 18th and 19th centuries. Some traditional Gothic novels are mentioned to show the changes in the 19th century. In the 19th century, the popularity of the Victorian Gothic novel was evident as many Gothic novels were produced, drawing attention to the changes in Victorian society, particularly to the technological progress. Lastly, the chapter comments on the contemporary Gothic novel. It was discovered that although the meaning does not change, the location of the Gothic novel must no longer be a traditional ruined castle. The Gothic novel might take place

anywhere on the condition that the atmosphere causes a haunted response and fear in characters. Fears and threats that the setting evokes can vary and depend upon what the biggest threats to a particular society are.

The last theoretical chapter directs attention to the Gothic elements. The choice of them depends on the subsequent analysis and only those which can be found in the novel are theoretically described. Firstly, the haunted setting is one of the fundamental Gothic novels. The setting is commonly fearsome, isolated and with locked rooms. The haunted setting is occupied by ghosts and other unnatural creatures mentally abusing characters. Either by looking like human beings or their unpredictable occurrences force characters to panic. Another Gothic element is associated with the overlap of reality and the past. Characters are, therefore, unable to distinguish real people from ghosts and other unnatural creatures doing paranormal activities, which appear unexpectedly, such as moving furniture or pictures on walls. Another Gothic element, which this chapter describes, is the darkness which relates to previously described elements, such as ghosts and their activities. Consequently, all afore-mentioned elements cause fear and suspense in characters that belong to indispensable Gothic elements.

The final analytical part thoroughly examines not only Gothic elements, but also Regional elements. Having examined them, it was discovered that the combination of both elements results in a positive outcome. The analysis of the elements is performed by a wide range of extracts which are immediately explained. Apart from Gothic elements, the analysis provides extracts that show some aspects of Victorian society and the Victorian era in which the novel takes place. When describing the Gothic elements, some Gothic elements of traditional Gothic novels are compared with the selected novel *The Woman in Black*. The comparison shows that some of the elements apply to the selected novel which proves that the selected novel is a revival of a traditional Gothic novel. Moreover, Regional elements also play an indispensable role in the novel as setting instil fear in characters as well as readers. So, the main aim of this thesis was achieved.

RESUMÉ

Tato bakalářská práce se zejména zaměřuje na analýzu gotického románu *The Woman in Black* (*Žena v černém*) současné britské autorky Susan Hill. Hillová pochází z města Scarborough nacházející se v Severním Yorkshire (viz příloha 2,3). Autorka se řadí nejen k autorkám gotických románů, ale také z části k autorkám regionálním, neboť v jejích románech často popisuje rodný region Yorkshire a Humber (viz příloha 1). Pro její styl psaní jsou typická dlouhá souvětí zakončená klíčovou informací, jež velmi často překvapí čtenáře. Tento způsob psaní je ale právě to, co nutí čtenáře pokračovat ve čtení a zároveň vzbuzuje ve čtenáři emoce strachu, podezření a nejistoty. Autorčin styl psaní připomíná autory tradičních gotických románů, jako byl například Charles Dickens. Samotný gotický román *The Woman in Black* je napsán touto formou, což může být jeden z důvodů, proč se vybrané dílo někdy nazývá „revival tradičního gotického románu.“

Hlavní postavou díla *The Woman in Black* je právník Arthur Kipps. Ten vypráví příběh a zároveň dobrodružství z mládí, kdy byl nucen na nějakou dobu pracovně odcestovat z průmyslového Londýna do odlehlého venkova na severu Anglie, konkrétně do fiktivního města Crythin Gifford. Následně je dopraven do osamocené domy, obklopeného močály a častými přílivy. Zde je povinen najít a shromáždit všechny dokumenty, které patřily Alice Drablow, poslední obyvatelce domy. Ačkoliv v domě není nikdo jiný než Arthur, hrdina je neustále rušen nadpřirozenými jevy, například pláčem dítěte, samovolným otevíráním předtím zamčených pokojů, a nakonec i spatřením ducha Jennet Humfrye, alias ženu v černém. Jennet byla sestrou Alice, ta měla nemanželského syna Nathaniela, a z toho důvodu také společensky vyloučena. Nathaniel byl vychováván Alice Drablow a jejím manželem. Chlapec nakonec nešťastnou náhodou utonul v močálech a jeho matka vinila rodinu Drablow i obyvatele nedalekého města Crythin Gifford za smrt jejího syna. Duch Jennet má tedy špatnou reputaci, neboť se nadále zjevuje a způsobuje tím trápení obyvatelům i cizincům, kteří s ní z nějakého důvodu přijdou do kontaktu.

Jak předchozí odstavce nastiňují, vybraný gotický román obsahuje gotické a regionální prvky, kterými se zabývají teoretické kapitoly. První část se věnuje regionální literatuře a regionálnímu románu. Vysvětluje regionální prvky, například regionální identitu, která může být charakterizována určitým prostředím, krajinou, podnebím daného regionu, místní mentalitou, historií, tradicemi a zdejšími příběhy, jež společně tvoří identitu regionu. Regionální spisovatelé, spolu s jejich díly, jsou dále uvedeni v této kapitole s cílem poukázat

na to, na jaké aspekty se v dílech zaměřovali. Hlavním námětem byla každodennost a skutečný způsob života místních lidí v regionu, což úzce souvisí s viktoriánským realismem. Regionální spisovatelé totiž často psali o venkovských způsobech života před průmyslovou revolucí, poukazovali na krásu, čistotu ovzduší, neznečištěnou krajinu, dále na tradiční metody zemědělství a zároveň velkou konkurenci ze strany průmyslové revoluce a mechanizace výroby. Jelikož se vybraný gotický román odehrává ve viktoriánské době, práce zmiňuje také další změny. Například rozdělení tříd do vyšší, střední a té nejchudší – dělnické třídy, jež byla nucena pracovat v továrnách a žít v chudinských čtvrtích s dnes nepředstavitelnými životními podmínkami. Na druhou stranu, viktoriánská doba přinesla řadu objevů, inovací a technický pokrok, hlavně v dopravě. Vynález automobilů a vlaků široce ovlivnil viktoriánskou společnost a generace následující. Některé změny, které s sebou nesla viktoriánská doba jsou reflektovány v analyzovaném gotickém románu.

Druhá teoretická část se nejprve zabývá významem pojmu „gotika.“ Tento termín vznikl v pátém století v souvislosti s germánskými gótskými kmeny, které se vryly do dějin jako primitivní, pohanský a barbarský národ. V průběhu času se ale smysl slova „gotika“ začíná značně měnit. V 18. století je známý ve spojení s gotickou architekturou a novogotikou. Gotický styl je reprezentovaný lomeným obloukem, zdobenými sloupy a vitrážovými okny. Gotické stavby jsou často majestátní a velkolepé, na druhou stranu mohou vyvolávat strach, neboť jsou často zdobeny havrany nebo démony. Gotika se dále váže k současné gotické kontrakultuře a gotické hudbě. Její přívrženci se odlišují typickým černým oblečením, které vyjadřuje smutek, trápení nebo smrt a poslouchají ponurou gotickou hudbu. Poslední význam se týká tématu této bakalářské práce, a to je gotický román, jehož význam úzce souvisí s duchy, paranormálními jevy a s evokací strachu. Tato kapitola se také věnuje historickým vývojem gotického románu od 18. století až po současnost, přičemž hlavní důraz se klade na vývoj gotických prvků. Ačkoliv evokace strachu je typická pro gotické romány každé generace autorů, tradiční strašidelný rozpadlý hrad už není primárním místem děje. Gotický román se může odehrávat kdekoli, pod podmínkou, že místo vzbuzuje strach. Tato kapitola zmiňuje některé autory tradičních gotických románů, např. Horace Walpole a *Otrantský zámek*, Bram Stoker a *Dracula* nebo Marry Shelley a *Frankenstein*. Závěr se zaměřuje na gotický román v populární literatuře, jehož gotické prvky se až na místo děje nemění a důvody strachu závisí na tom, čeho se daná společnost v určité době nejvíce obává.

Poslední teoretická kapitola se věnuje již zmíněným gotickým prvkům, přičemž vysvětluje jenom ty prvky, které souvisí s analyzovaným gotickým románem *The Woman in Black*. K nejdůležitějším tropům gotického románu se řadí strašidelné místo děje. Kromě toho, že je dané místo obývané duchy, jedním z častých rysů místa děje jsou zamčené pokoje a paranormální jevy, např. hýbající se obrazy a nábytek. Postavy se také dostávají do situací, které nemohou prakticky vysvětlit, neboť jsou na hranicích mezi realitou a pouhým snem. Kladou si otázku, jestli spatření duchů bylo opravdu skutečné, neboť velmi často nevěří na duchy. Zároveň jsou zmateni, protože spatřené přízraky vypadají přesně jako živé bytosti. Hrdinové gotických románů trpí psychickými problémy, protože se velmi zřídka s danou zkušeností vyrovnají. Psychické problémy úzce souvisí s evokací strachu, která hraje nepostradatelnou roli v gotickém románu.

Praktická část se zabývá analýzou gotického románu *The Woman in Black*, která zkoumá, jaké gotické a regionální prvky se v daném románu nachází. Bylo totiž zjištěno, že právě ty regionální prvky jaksi vylepšují gotický román *The Woman in Black*. Analýza byla provedena výběrem úryvků z díla, ve kterých se dají nalézt gotické i regionální prvky. Analýza také zkoumá jisté prvky viktoriánské doby, v níž se dílo odehrává. K analyzovaným gotickým prvkům se řadí strašidelné místo děje, duchové, paranormální jevy, temnota, evokace strachu a nejistota. Regionální rysy jsou především reprezentovány lokací děje, neboť odlehlý a opuštěný dům, obklopený močály a častými přílivy, nacházející se na severu Anglie v hrabství Yorkshire, vzbuzuje v hlavním hrdinovi strach. Duch Jennet Humfrye budí strach také v místních obyvatelích blízkého města Crythin Gifford. Právě jejich plachost a zakřiknutost podněcuje v hlavním hrdinovi potřebu vysvětlení, co se ve městě v minulosti odehrálo v souvislosti s duchem Jennet. Místní obyvatelé jsou právě ti, kteří nakonec hrdinu nasměrují k vyřešení celé situace a záhadnosti rodiny Drablow. Závěrem je třeba říci, že kombinace prvků regionálních a gotických vzbuzuje v hlavním hrdinovi i čtenáři strach neboli jednu z primárních emocí vyjádřenou při čtení gotických románů.

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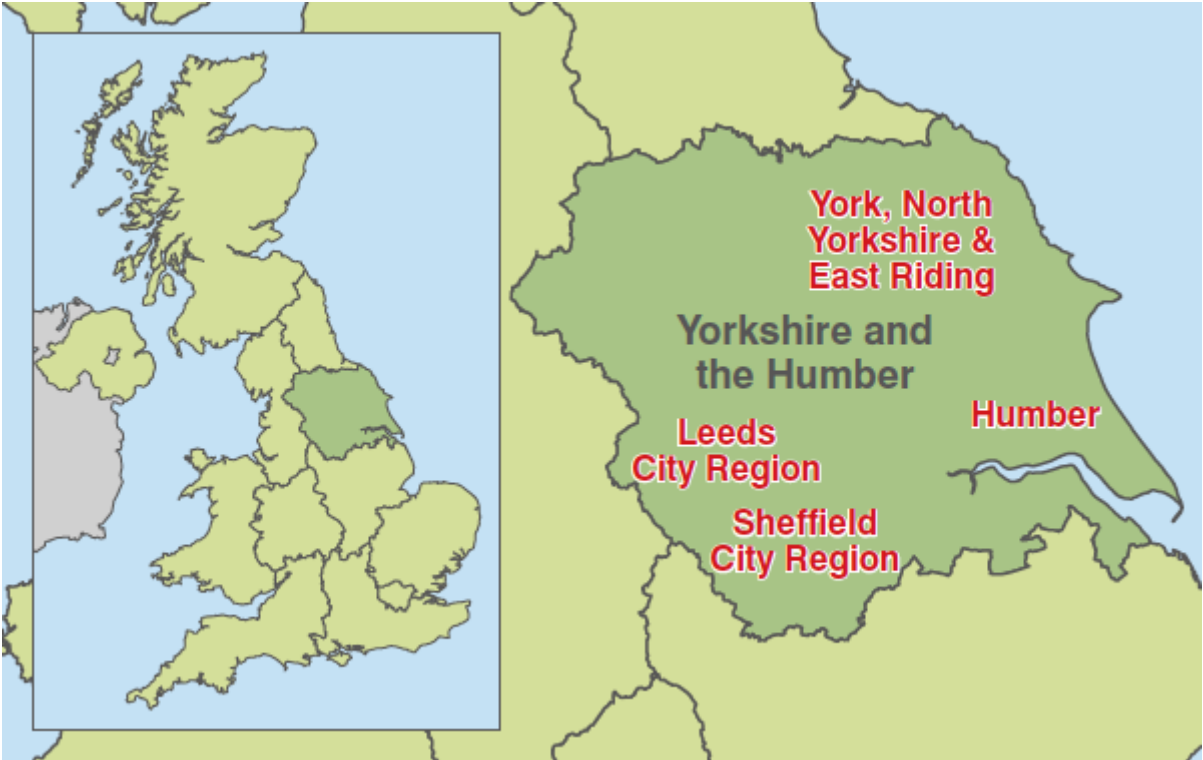
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Map of Britain and the region Yorkshire and the Humber

“British American Trade & Investment,” England & Yorkshire and Humber, Tradeinvest.babinc, accessed February 27, 2022, <http://tradeinvest.babinc.org/britam/uk-regions/england/yorkshire-and-humber/>



APPENDIX 2

Map of North Yorkshire

Scarborough



‘North Yorkshire,’ Map of North Yorkshire, World Guides, accessed February 27, 2022, <http://www.world-guides.com/europe/england/north-yorkshire/>

APPENDIX 3

Map of Scarborough



‘Scarborough Maps and Orientation,’ Map of Scarborough, World Guides, accessed February 27, 2022, http://www.world-guides.com/europe/england/north-yorkshire/scarborough/scarborough_maps.html