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**PRESENCE OF THE
DOPPELGÄNGER MOTIF IN
EDGAR ALLAN POE'S
“WILLIAM WILSON” (1839).**

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ABSTRACT.

This dissertation will examine the *doppelgänger* motif in Edgar Allan Poe's story "William Wilson" from the consideration of its being the source of horror and distress for the narrator and from its interpretation with respect to the uncanny and the Jungian shadow while simultaneously offering a contrastive examination of this motif along with the instances found in R. L. Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890). An introduction to the Gothic genre from its origin up to the XIX century in the UK and the USA will be also included to contextualize the genre and offer an account of its main stages, authors, and works.

Keywords: Gothic, *doppelgänger*, double, William Wilson, Jekyll and Hyde, Dorian Gray, uncanny, shadow.

RESUMEN.

Esta tesis examinará el motivo del *doppelgänger* en "William Wilson", de Edgar Allan Poe, desde su consideración como el origen del horror y agonía que sufre el narrador y desde su interpretación en relación al concepto de "uncanny", de Freud, y la sombra, de Jung, ofreciendo al mismo tiempo un análisis contrastivo de este motivo con las materializaciones que se encuentran en *El Extraño Caso del Doctor Jekyll y Mr. Hyde* (1886), de R. L. Stevenson, y *El Retrato de Dorian Gray* (1890), de Oscar Wilde. Se incluye también una introducción al género gótico desde su origen hasta el siglo XIX en Reino Unido y Estados Unidos a fin de contextualizar el género y ofrecer una lista de los principales períodos, autores y textos.

Palabras clave: gótico, *doppelgänger*, doble, William Wilson, Jekyll y Hyde, Dorian Gray, extraño, sombra.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

From its first manifestations in the decade of 1760s, Gothic fiction has offered and still suggests an alternative means to deal with the paramount political, historical, and social anxieties which permeated and altered society while simultaneously employing an extensive ambivalent and terrifying imagery and style to effect changes in the mind of readers. It would be during the XIX century that one of the major preoccupations both on social and psychological terms, the threats to the concept of identity posed by scientific advancements and the changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, is to find its way into collective imagination via an array of literary productions that tackled this particular issue by the employment of one motif, the *doppelgänger* or literary double. Understood as the physical or mental embodiment of the double existing within each human being, therefore deemed as either the representation of repressed desires and ideas or as the inner human conflict between the forces of good and evil, the double became one of the Gothic themes that has received extensive research in an attempt to disentangle each of the elements and features that may be suggested via its use. Among the works that cover and use this motif is Edgar Allan Poe's story "William Wilson" (1839), and it will be the selected text to carry out an examination of the double motif. Additionally, once the analysis of the *doppelgänger* from this tale is completed, a contrastive examination is to be also conducted between this instance and the ones found in R. L. Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) in order to evince some possible similarities between them while suggesting some differences in their features and implications.

Regarding the aforementioned ideas, it is possible to assert that this research is to fulfill three central objectives. First of among these, it will be to contextualize the genre labelled as Gothic fiction, covering its early stages, development, main characteristics, periods, authors and works both in Britain and in the USA, in an effort to provide the readers with a general picture of the genre as a whole up to the XIX century, period when the works mentioned above were written. The second purpose of the study is to examine the *doppelgänger* in Edgar Allan Poe's "William Wilson" both from the perspective of its being a source of mental distress for the narrator and from a psychological point of view connecting it to the ideas of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung in order to evince the possibility of its being considered as a

haunting entity that effects fear and anguish while hinting the likely connections that could be established between the double and the notions of the uncanny and the shadow. The third and final objective of the paper is to offer a comparative analysis between the *doppelgängers* from the American production, Stevenson's work, and Wilde's production to argue that certain similitudes and differences might exist among these three instances of the double.

The decision to carry out a research based on the analysis of the *doppelgänger* motif to be found in the story written by Edgar Allan Poe as well as its concordances and dissimilarities with the depictions of the double from Stevenson's and Wilde's works is based on a desire to fulfill a niche that can be identified within the array of critical examinations that have been previously conducted with respect to "William Wilson". As it can be observable when surveying the corpora of Gothic critical examinations which includes works such as David Punter's (1996) *Literature of Terror – The Gothic Tradition* and *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (2002) edited by Jerrold. E. Hogle, there exist numerous analyses and investigations about the double motif in *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* along with the ones in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) while "William Wilson" is not properly analyzed in reference to its rendition of the double since in most critical studies it is only referred to as an instance of the *doppelgänger* motif. Moreover, it is also possible to perceive a somewhat absence of critical discussion covering the similarities and variations among the doubles from these three productions since, especially in relation to Wilde's oeuvre, most of its links are restricted to what Stegner (2007) identifies as the echoes of Poe's imagery in Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Therefore, this paper aims to fulfill this critical gap in an effort to suggest further interpretations of this Gothic motif.

In this respect, the following sections are to be found within the course of this literary investigation. In the introductory section of the paper a foreword about the Gothic genre from its conception up to its state of affairs during the 19th century in the UK and the USA is to be included to characterize the main stages, authors and works from the genre during this period of time. It will be followed by the central chapter which will be devoted to the analysis of the *doppelgänger* motif in "William Wilson" as both the source of distress for the narrator and its being interpreted as an instance of the Freudian uncanny and the Jungian shadow. Then, a section including

a contrastive study between the doubles from the previously mentioned works will be incorporated to be then followed both by a chapter dealing with the conclusions obtained after the completion of the research and by the bibliographical appendix.

1.1. Theoretical framework.

For the completion of this instance of research on the *doppelgänger* motif in Edgar Allan Poe's "William Wilson" and its contrastive examination with the cases of this theme from Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* three major methodological procedures have been followed, the first one being the close reading and study of the primary sources for the paper, the three literary productions mentioned above, carrying out a selection of relevant quotations concerned with the representation of the doubles within the narrations. Secondly, this initial reading has been complemented both with the study of critical texts like David Punter's *Literature of Terror – The Gothic Tradition, Cambridge Companion to Gothic* (1996), Jerrold E. Hogle's *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (2002), Fred Botting's *Gothic – The New Critical Idiom* (2007), and Charles L. Crow's *History of the Gothic – American Gothic* (2009), which have been employed for the contextualization of the genre in the UK and the USA, and with the examination of a wide array of articles, works, dissertations, documents, and webpages concerned with Gothic fiction, analyses of the *doppelgänger* as well as discussions about this motif within the three examined works.

On the other hand, it is relevant to refer to the two main perspectives that have been adopted to examine the double motif in these productions. While the accepted approach to the *doppelgänger* as the cause of fear and agony for the characters subject to its persecution has been followed in the analysis for Poe's tale, it is important to remark that a psychological angle has been employed to properly analyze not only the example of the double in "William Wilson" but also its similarities and differences with the ones from Stevenson's and Wilde's. Thus, via the reading of Sigmund Freud's *The Uncanny* (1919), his theory about the division of the human psyche, and Carl Gustav Jung's concept of the shadow introduced in *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1968 – 1969), additional interpretations of these doubles have been suggested in an effort to elucidate the ambivalence and complexity which characterize them while hinting some links among these texts.

2. THE GOTHIC GENRE.

Since its inception, the Gothic has been rendered and approached from various perspectives by different scholars and critics due to its inherent multifarious nature. It is, with respect to this premise, that the following section will be devoted, on the one hand, to the presentation of a working definition for this complex genre and, on the other hand, to the examination of the origin, foundational aspects, and works of this mode of writing both in the UK and in the USA. However, since the three novels under analysis in this paper were produced during the XIX century it would be necessary to pay close attention to this particular period, commenting on the different elements that shaped the genre during the so-called “Gothic Revival”.

2.1. Definition of the Gothic.

“Gothic”, a term often employed to describe such widespread and paramount periods and aspects as the ones concerned with the art and architecture that flourished between the XII and XV centuries, can also assume a different nature when used to deal with the literary productions written from the second half of the XVIII century to the first decades of the XIX century and so on. As it has been observed above, the term presents a complex nature that requires the investigation of various materials in order to compose an operating definition for the “literary Gothic”.

In the first volume of *The Literature of Terror – The Gothic Tradition*, David Punter offers insightful notions that enable the proper identification of some of the central elements that define the Gothic. For him, the Gothic nurtures from “(...) an emphasis on portraying the terrifying, a common insistence on archaic settings, a prominent use of the supernatural, the presence of highly stereotyped characters and the attempt to deploy and perfect techniques of literary suspense (...)” (Punter, 1996: 1)^{1 2}. Therefore, it can be inferred that the Gothic revolves around certain essential or stock elements that should be present to arouse frightening feelings and images within the readers’ minds. Nonetheless, from this it can be also inferred that, for Punter, the Gothic has an interest for the ancient connected to medievalism and barbarism. The Gothic is, consequently, understood as a

¹ This reference and subsequent ones related to Punter’s views have been retrieved from 1996’s edition of his work *The Literature of Terror – The Gothic Tradition*. This date will be removed from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

² It is within this first page of his work where he composes a general picture of the genre, by asserting that it should include a dark setting, a distressed heroine, a complex, appalling yet interesting villain, and supernatural elements and creatures that invoke fear in the readers’ minds.

genre that opposes classical rules both for literature and art since it is related to the prevailing chaos that spread during the period known as “dark ages”. Punter goes on with this aspect since he observes that the “Gothic was the archaic, the pagan, that which was prior to, or was opposed to, or resisted the establishment of civilized values and a well-regulated society. (...)” (Punter: 5). This statement only furthers into the fact that the Gothic can be defined as a movement of opposition to the established mode of thinking during the XVIII century, when everything that was not deemed as suitable by the principles of reason and logic defined by the Enlightenment was rejected. Finally, Punter points out that “(...) exploring Gothic is also exploring fear and seeing the various ways in which terror breaks through the surfaces of literature (...)” (Punter: 18) and this particular notion helps to understand that, despite its multifarious and complex nature, the Gothic is always concerned with fear, its rendition in the minds of the readership, and the ways in which it manifests through literary productions.

On offering a proper definition for this term, Fred Botting tackles the issue from another perspective in his seminal work *Gothic – The New Critical Idiom* as he observes “Gothic signifies a writing of excess.” (Botting, 2007: 1)³. This suggests the Gothic is a genre that poses a threat to the stability of social order and the civilized world by promoting vices which defy the principles of propriety established by the Enlightenment, as Punter also observes. By means of this approach, Botting suggests that the Gothic is influenced by the subversion of established principles and boundaries. However, even though he acknowledges the Gothic to be constituted by the elements Punter introduces in his work such as a dark and archaic setting, a complex villain, the use of the supernatural and a distressed heroine, Botting focuses on the transgression implied in Gothic writing as for him “(...) Gothic terrors activate a sense of the unknown and projects an uncontrollable and overwhelming power which threatens not only the loss of sanity, honour, property or social standing but the very order which supports and is regulated by the coherence of those terms.” (Botting: 7)⁴. It is, in this regard, that the Gothic for Botting can be approached as the projection of those cultural and social fears and anxieties that, while being discarded by order, rational thinking, propriety, and civilization, existed within the consciousness of individuals posing a threat to the limits

³ This reference and the following ones concerning Botting’s thoughts come from 2007’s edition of his work *Gothic – The New Critical Idiom*. This date will not be included from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

⁴Nonetheless, it has to be acknowledged that, on subsequent pages, Botting makes reference to the hybrid nature of the genre by signaling the existence of echoes from medieval fantasies framed by the supernatural.

of society due to the ambivalence located in the way these surpassed the existing boundaries of reality and fantasy by indulging into elements not suitable for the progress of rationality and civilization.

Now, taking into account the aspects mentioned above, one can identify the unstable nature of the Gothic due to its controversial, ambivalent, and subversive character. In the chapter “Introduction: The Gothic in Western Culture” within *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (2002), Jerrold E. Hogle identifies it as “(...) an uneasy conflation of genres, styles, and conflicted cultural concerns from its outset.” (Hogle, 2002: 2)⁵. This instability is what makes the Gothic deal with both psychological and physical features that cannot be hidden from public opinion, thus implying the shift evinced by him “(...) between the earthly laws of conventional reality and the possibilities of the supernatural (...)” (Hogle: 2), again signaling the presence of the supernatural as both Punter and Botting previously manifested. Nonetheless, the unstable nature of the genre makes it susceptible to fall prey to contradiction since he remarks it “(...) helps us address and disguise some of the most important desires, quandaries, and sources of anxiety, from the most internal and mental to the widely social and cultural, throughout the history of western culture since the eighteenth century.” (Hogle: 4).

Nevertheless, the definition of the Gothic may not be fully rendered, and it is in this regard that Charles L. Crow offers in *American Gothic* some interesting elements that will complete the definition of the genre despite its being a critical work entirely devoted to the Gothic in the USA. Crow (2009: 2)⁶ observes “It is now usually seen as a tradition of oppositional literature, presenting in disturbing, usually frightening ways, a skeptical, ambiguous view of human nature and of history.”⁷ asserting the ambivalence existing within a genre constantly tintured by the presence of the terrifying that can eventually posit a subversion of the established social cultural, and historical values and principles, since for him this mode of writing proposes an approximation to the rejected and hidden, and above all, to the frightening features of individual and collective thought. Yet another

⁵ This reference and the following ones related to Hogle’s opinions come from 2002’s edition of the work *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*. This date will not be included from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

⁶ This reference and subsequent ones concerning Crow’s views come from 2009’s edition of his work *History of the Gothic – American Gothic*. This date will not be included from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

⁷ He goes on with this definition by saying “The Gothic exposes the repressed, what is hidden, unspoken, deliberately forgotten, in the lives of individuals and of cultures.” (p. 2). See pp. 2 - 3 of his work for additional insight into his view.

time, he makes reference to the oppositional nature of the Gothic towards everything defined by “Neoclassical” thinking precisely by promoting the elements concerned with “(...) individual freedom, untamed nature, disorder, emotion, dreams and innocent childhood.” (Crow: 4).

It is possible now, regarding the aspects introduced above, to attempt to compose a working definition that encapsulates the meaning of the Gothic genre. Aside from its connections with the past, the barbaric and the medieval, the Gothic can be understood as an unstable, contradictory, and ambivalent genre that deals with the representation of excess, transgressing the boundaries of social structures by focusing on the promotion of the aspects, emotions, and ideas that were rejected by the principles of logic and reason constructed by the Enlightenment. Precisely by focusing on this transgression of established limits, the Gothic displays an approach towards the psychological complexity of the individual psyche manifested through an ambivalence of settings, characters, motifs, topics and stylistic devices, thus introducing a further understanding of the emotions released from the fear that surrounds the cultural and social anxieties of its readership at the time when these texts began to be composed.

2.2. The Gothic in the UK and the USA: Origin, foundational aspects and the XIX century.

If the aforementioned complexity and ambiguity inherent to the Gothic is taken into consideration for the sake of this research, an account of the origin, fundamental aspects, authors, and works of the Gothic as well as its state of affairs during the XIX century in the UK and the USA proves to be of great significance for the objectives of this paper since it offers an approach to the development of the genre from its genesis and the changes it underwent until the last years of the XIX century while presenting some aspects that are to be relevant for the following sections.

It is well-argued by diverse scholars that the inception of the Gothic genre took place during the second half of the XVIII century in Britain, and in this respect it can be connected with the revision of prior imposed principles and the apparition of new means of literary and social expression. Thus, the origin of this new mode of writing can be associated to the ascension of the novel during the second half of this century. The importance of this particular element lies on the relevant modifications it inflicted to the readership’s tastes. Distant from the trend of the fictional writing formerly developed, the novel originated a new type of realism that implied the setting of events in realistic

environments appealing to the readers' desire of airing their current social and cultural preoccupations. Additionally, the audience of these works shifted from the upper classes to the middle ones which began to have a better access to different productions due to the spread of circulating libraries and the increase in numbers of published materials⁸. The new reading public developed a taste for realistic elements inherited from past works that was reinforced by the promotion of features like orientalism, emotional and physical experience, and passions derived from the influence of romances, a kind of writing said to "(...) exert a corrupting influence of the morals of readers." (Botting: 26)⁹. By combining these elements, the Gothic genre began to thrive as the way to deal with the changes Enlightenment brought about, establishing an appropriate means to oppose the official culture of reason, balance, truth, and scientific knowledge that this institution imposed since it was concerned the so-called "taboos", everything that remained uncontrolled and not repressed. This implied a social transgression by reason of the manifestation of an interest towards the aspects that posed a challenge to the central tenets of neoclassical taste, once again inviting readers to further cultivate their taste for sentimentalism, and a psychological experience that questioned the definition of human identity, and emotional excess.

In that context of social and literary change, a new mode of poetical expression came into view manifesting a disagreement to previous forms. The school of Graveyard poetry, in its challenge to prior poetry, became immediately associated with the Gothic since "(...) its involvement with death and suffering (...)" (Punter: 30) helped to shape some of the core aspects that were to define the Gothic. Therefore, it became a poetry of sentimental excess and emotional meditation that was to lead individuals to the acquisition of a knowledge considered as forbidden as it was contrary to the enlightened principles of reason, order, and propriety. This opposition to the established culture was enhanced by means of an interest in the previously prohibited elements that were employed by authors like Edward Young, Robert Blair, and James Hervey to invite readers to give in to an intense emotional experience with an aspiration to better

⁸ Different scholars have dealt with the connection between the rise of the novel and the origin of the Gothic. However, the chapters "The Origin of Gothic Fiction" (pp. 20 – 53) in Punter's *The Literature of Terror* (1996) and "Gothic Origins" (pp. 21 – 43) in Botting's *Gothic* (2007) evince some of the central issues of the matter. See these chapters for a thorough analysis of this phenomenon.

⁹ See the chapter "The Genesis of "Gothic" fiction" (pp. 21 – 39), by E. J. Clery, in *Cambridge Companion to the Gothic* (2002) for it offers an interesting analysis of the origin of the Gothic, and its close connection to the romance.

understand the relations between the spheres of human, natural, and divine experience while involving a re-evaluation of the uncivilized and barbaric past as it had been defined by Augustinism. Subsequently, it brought about an interest and a re-appropriation of past periods which were rendered as full of energy, crudity, primitiveness, and chaos, contrary to the principles of elegance, order, and modernity that were supposed to characterize society during the XVIII century. Moreover, if “[t]he revival of interest in antiquity and the emergence of a poetry of defiance and divine aspiration were thus two roots of Gothic fiction (...)” (Punter: 37), the “sublime” is considered by critics like Botting, Clery, and Punter as the third pillar that shaped the Gothic during its origin. Originally devised by the Latin author Longinus, this notion revolved around the consideration of literature as something not to be limited, where natural sceneries should be perceived as the source of inspiration and power directed to uplift individual emotions, encouraging readers, as Punter observes, to “(...) undertake the grand and the extreme rather than concentrating on the trivialities of technical perfection.” (Punter: 38). Therefore, the sublime conveyed the idea that “[w]onder, awe, horror and joy were the emotions believed to expand or elevate the soul and the imagination with a sense of power and infinity.” (Botting: 38), implying that these features were necessary to go beyond the boundaries of imagination, the human mind, and experience allowing human beings to get closer to divine entities and reality¹⁰.

Shaped under the influence of all these aspects, Gothic works began to be produced from the decade of 1760s onwards. The first of these productions, considered as the initial work of the Gothic fiction, is *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) by Horace Walpole. Its relevance is located in the fact that, while being the first Gothic work, it established some of the features to be replicated in subsequent productions. Other significant works followed its vogue. Consider for instance works like Clara Reeve’s *The Old English Baron* (1777), or William Beckford’s *Vathek* (1786) with its interest in orientalism, among others. However, the actual effulgence of the Gothic is located between the decade of 1790s and the first ones of the XIX century, since for Botting “[i]t was the period when

¹⁰ With respect to the sublime, it is important to make reference to Edmund Burke’s essay *A philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), which can be considered as the most relevant approach to the sublime since it observed terror and fear as the central elements to bring about an imaginative and emotional journey beyond limits. See pp. 28 – 29 from E. J. Clery’s “The genesis of “Gothic” fiction” in *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (2002) for additional details in this respect.

the greatest number of Gothic works were produced and consumed.” (Botting: 62) ¹¹. During this period, the genre witnessed the apparition of two of the most central figures of its history, Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis, authors who introduced significant changes to some of the features of Gothic writings like the supernatural while simultaneously attracting the attention of several critics with the publication, first, of Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian* (1797), and then of Lewis’s *The Monk* (1796). What makes these works particularly relevant for the Gothic is that, in Radcliffe’s case, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* conveys the supernatural threat to innocence and sensibility posed by forces of evil incarnated in vice that are not eventually explained or revealed due to her use of doubt and suspense whereas *The Italian* showcases her improvement in the creation of a complex narrative that perfectly draws the attention of readers towards the psychology of the characters. On the other hand, *The Monk* stands out for its particular and precise representation of excess, gore and vice, causing it to be an atrocity for critics. Moreover, it was during this period that the Gothic in the UK was associated to the revolutionary ideas that appeared in France at the time of its revolution, causing many writers and critics to believe that this genre would spread in Britain such radical and potentially dangerous ideas that would eventually cause the disintegration of British society¹².

As it has been manifested in the previous section, the mingling of features, genres, and themes that characterizes the Gothic exposes the fact that it originated from a combination of different and sometimes dissimilar elements borrowed from a vast array of literary modes, rendering as futile the consideration of its inception in isolation from other literary trends since it is possible to observe the presence of other sources within its works. This is where the French and German traditions stand out due to the influence they exerted over the British Gothic and their echoes in it. Beyond the distinctive nature of the *roman noir* and the *roman frénétique* from France, and the tales of thieves, chivalry and ghosts from Germany and their relevance with respect to themes, characters, and features, it is

¹¹ Robert Miles offers in “The 1790s: the effulgence of Gothic” (pp. 41 - 62) in *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (2002) an interesting approach to the features of the genre from the 1790s to the first decades of the 18th century, including references to the material causes that exemplify the increase in number of publications under the label “Gothic”, as well as the generic features that defined the genre and additional aspects that indicate the relevance of the works mentioned above.

¹² The presence of revolutionary ideas from France and politics in the Gothic is evinced in works like *The Rights of Man* (1791 – 1792) by Thomas Paine, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (1790) by Mary Wollstonecraft, or *Things as they are or The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794) by William Godwin and in the response of some conservative works like *Reflection on the Revolution in France* (1790) by Edmund Burke.

the translation of several works from these literary traditions what manifests the significance of continental writings for the British Gothic. Versions of Schiller's *Die Räuber* and *Der Geisterseher*, and Goethe's medievalist works were rendered into English by authors like Matthew Lewis while authors like Clara Reeve, Charlotte Smith, and Edward Young turned to French romances and poems seeking for inspiration as well as additional motifs and features to introduce in their works. With these in mind, it is now possible to point out that "[t]he Gothic novel, the *Schauerroman*, the *roman noir*, and the *roman frénétique* represent a complex network of borrowings, misappropriations, and innovations." (Hogle: 81), implying that, without this incessant exchange between British and continental Gothic, the genre may not have developed its particular and appealing character since it would have evolved in a complete seclusion from potential sources¹³.

Immediately after the moment of effulgence the Gothic underwent up to the first decades of the XIX century, Romanticism became the central source of influence for the Gothic since "[i]n the period dominated by Romanticism, Gothic writing began to move inside, disturbing moral limits and notions of interiority and individuality." (Botting: 91), signaling the shift of attention from external sources of distress like ruins, graveyards, and ghosts to the inner part of human beings, most of them individuals who stood at the very borders of society, prompting a transformation of elements to properly address and analyze individuality, imagination and the psyche. Remarkable authors like the poets Blake, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, and Keats appeared during the Romantic period, whose significance for the Gothic is connected to the fact that "(...) all played a part in shaping the Gothic, in articulating a set of images of terror which were to exercise a potent influence over later literary history." (Punter: 87)¹⁴, even though some of these writers, like Coleridge or Byron, attempted to dissociate themselves from this genre due to the severe critical attacks it received for its nature, despite the fact that it was considered as "(...) an attractive and potentially lucrative aesthetic, particularly for writers ambitious for popular success who sought a wide readership." (Hogle: 89). Nonetheless, Romanticism provided the Gothic with one of its most relevant and scrutinized authors of its history, Mary Shelley. She wrote *Frankenstein* (1818), work that appears to be

¹³ See "French and German Gothic: the beginnings" (pp. 63 – 84), by Terry Hale, from *Cambridge Companion of Gothic Fiction* (2002) for an overview of the influence these traditions exerted over the British Gothic.

¹⁴ A few pages later, Punter goes on with his view towards the relevance of these authors for the Gothic by saying that "(...) they simultaneously widened the scope of Gothic and made explicit certain connections which had previously been only implicit." (Punter: 100).

crafted following the same means of the eponymous monster as if it had been created by the combination of different features of the literary tradition “(...) like the unnatural, disproportionate monsters of Gothic romance.” (Botting: 102). Aside from the psychological depth of the novel with respect to the several episodes of emotional distress experienced by Victor, its importance is also located on the political connections of the Creature with French revolutionary ideas, enhancing its monstrosity, uncontrollable power, and potentially threatening nature towards society¹⁵.

Meanwhile, the XIX century saw the apparition of two additional modes of writing that shared a close connection with the Gothic, one manifested through the reawakening of historical features from past periods defined by their national historical relevance and another that related the genre to sensationalism during the 1830s and 1840s. With respect to the first of these forms, a few names can be pointed out yet it is Sir Walter Scott the author who composed works that, either in one level or another, present a combination of historical features with previous Gothic elements. His work *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) is famous for its representation of the supernatural and the treatment of individuals and how they relate to their society whereas *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft* (1830) is considered as a “(...) compendium of themes and images utilized by the Gothic writers.” (Punter: 141). On the other hand and regarding the relationship between Gothic works and sensationalism, it can be observed that the genre began to locate stories in a more domestic environment employing realistic narratives and locations, leading to the obsolescence of prior props and their replacement for industrial sites and cities where criminal characters posed a threat to both society and domesticity evincing that “[t]he apparent reality of city’s horrors evoke emotions that ask questions of social order, emotions relating to fears in the immediate present rather than displaced on to a distant past.” (Botting: 125). This idea is observed in the works of Charles Dickens, author of works like *Pickwick Papers* (1837), *Oliver Twist* (1838), *Bleak House* (1853), *Hard Times* (1854), and *Great Expectations* (1860 – 61) where, notwithstanding their Gothic elements and motifs, he introduced a great deal of social commentary by means of the representation of an underworld full of contrasts which imply that London, the central location of his stories, is a two-fold city where the façade of propriety conceals a

¹⁵ Other names emerge with relevance for the Gothic during Romanticism, in particular C. R. Maturin, whose *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), considered by Botting as “(...) the last truly Gothic text.” (Botting: 105), and James Hogg with *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), work that displays an insightful approach towards the most inner parts of human psyche and its complexity.

threatening and dark reality. Along with these two modes, another popular genre of short stories appeared in magazines, the ghost story. This mode “(...) presents a more definite idea of reality in order to evoke a specifically uncanny effect by the appearance of supernatural figures (...)” (Botting: 126) while not attempting to elucidate the mysterious elements introduced in its settings. Works like “The Signalman” (1866) by Dickens, and “The Old Nurse’s Story” (1852) by Elizabeth Gaskell stand out as two popular ghost stories from this period yet it was Sheridan LeFanu the author regarded as the leading figure of this genre. Author of stories like “The Drunkard’s Dream”, “Green Tea”, and “Carmilla”, he also published some novels being *Uncle Silas* (1864) the one which evinces “(...) the mastery of suspense and fine perception which LeFanu could achieve when relatively freed from limitations of length.” (Punter: 203).

Aside from these changes, the Gothic during the *fin de siècle* experienced the last alteration that would mark, as it has been manifested during the previous points, the nature of literary productions during this period. Botting observes that “[a]t the end of the nineteenth century familiar Gothic figures – the double and the vampire – re-emerged in new shapes with a different intensity and anxious investments as objects of terror and horror.” (Botting: 135), this being especially identifiable in R. L. Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890), two of the works to be analyzed in the fourth part of the paper for their representation of the *doppelgänger* motif, and in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897). It was through these works that the Gothic at this stage dealt with such topics like the degeneration of individuals, the threats posed by new scientific discoveries, and the repression of human desires and ideas. In this regard, Darwin’s theories about corruption, atavism, physical and moral degeneration in *The Origin of Species* (1859) and in *The Descent of Man* (1871) manifested that “[i]n disclosing threatening natural forces scientific theories gave shape to the anxieties about cultural degeneration and provided ways of disciplining and containing deviance.” (Botting: 137). Victorian society, even though it was constituted by the principles of propriety and elegance, was about to face a threat posed by psychological issues, uncanniness, and abominations as it can be noticed in the writings from this period.

Having analyzed the Gothic genre in Britain from its genesis to the XIX century, it is now important for the objectives of the dissertation to turn to the American Gothic since the central story analyzed in this research is “William Wilson” (1839), written by the

American author Edgar Allan Poe. Simply put, this mode of writing is deemed as “(...) the imaginative expression of the fears and forbidden desires of Americans.” (Crow: 1), exposing its closeness with British Gothic, even though the grandiloquent ideas and motifs employed in Britain were not appealing to the tastes and everyday concerns of American society, especially if one takes into consideration the fact that, for many American writers, the continent had almost nothing to offer for reflective purposes as it lacked the immense amount of locations from the past British Gothic had at its disposal due to the more than recent history of this newly created land. Nonetheless, American Gothic granted writers the possibility to have access to the Gothic stock of features that could be employed for literary purposes when they realized they could think “(...) of American literature as a process of learning to see American history (...)” (Crow: 10), exposing that through the Gothic they could deal with those concealed historical features with a dark and eerie potentiality¹⁶.

In its initial stages, American Gothic developed as an alternative literary movement opposed to the belief in progress that permeated society from the American Revolution onwards, analyzing the price that was paid in order to achieve this much praised advancement, while showcasing a deep interest with nature and its intrinsic power. This counter-movement can be identified from the first phase of the Colonization of the New World, when writers among the first settlers like William Bradford in *Of Plymouth Plantation* (1620 – 1647) represented nature as if it was filled with threatening elements that could ruin their Puritan beliefs and make them lose their faith. In this regard, nature would become a stock element for the Gothic from this moment onwards since it can be deemed as the locus from which many fears sprang towards the collective American consciousness¹⁷. Another menace to Puritanism was the case of witchcraft connected to Salem, and it was Cotton Mather the author who wrote about this in *Wonders of the Invisible World* (1692) to prove the existence of witchcraft, and the challenge it posed to the belief in progress.

¹⁶ However, Crow subsequently observes “[a]lthough American authors progressively moved from under the shadow of British literature, there never has been a complete separation of American literature from the rest of the world, and it would be a sadly diminished thing if there had been.” (Crow: 15), what evinces the constant influence of British Gothic over American authors, even though the former wrote a corpus of literary productions mainly concerned with the preoccupations of their people and the history of their land.

¹⁷ If Bradford represented nature as a threatening location, Hector St. Jean de Crèvecoeur in *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782) attempted to present it in a different way, even though he would eventually turn back to its horrifying and dark side as Bradford did.

After this initial period of colonization, the founding figures of American Gothic came into stage, namely Charles Brockden Brown, George Lippard, John Neal, and to a lesser extent Washington Irving. The first of these authors, Brockden Brown, wrote some of the central texts of this tradition like *Wieland* (1798), *Edgar Huntly* (1799), and *Arthur Mervyn* (1799), the first two being in which he carried out a further examination of wilderness and the last one the text where he began to evince his skill in writing an urban Gothic where ambiguity is omnipresent. On the other hand, George Lippard and *The Quaker City; Or, the Monks of Monk Hall* (1845), manifest a sexual explicitness not seen in previous productions while John Neal, author of *Logan* (1822), “(...) is remembered (...) as one of the few American men of letters of the time who understood and defended Poe.” (Crow: 29). On his behalf, Washington Irving composed works like *Rip Van Winkle* (1819), where he represented nature following European tropes, and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* (1820), text filled with the supernatural presence of ghosts and haunting entities¹⁸.

The publication of Ralph Waldo Emerson’s *Nature* (1836) signaled the period of Romanticism in American literature since it caused many writers to either support his ideas of “(...) human nature as basically good, though people are damaged by society, and by their separation from Nature.” (Crow: 36) or disagree with them, as Poe, Hawthorne and Melville did since, for them, both the world and human nature are filled with darkness, ambiguity, and forces of evil that threaten one’s sanity. Additionally, since the central section of this research is devoted to the analysis of the *doppelgänger* motif in Poe’s “William Wilson”, it is necessary to offer a brief account of his main topics and imagery to contextualize his production within the Gothic. Known as the author of such remarkable stories like “The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym” (1838), “Ligeia” (1838), “The Masque of the Red Death” (1842), “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843), “The Imp of the Perverse” (1845), “The Cask of Amontillado” (1846), and poems such as “To Helen” (1831) and “The Raven” (1845), he is considered as an author who granted American Gothic tradition a relevant place within the realm of literary productions in English¹⁹. The

¹⁸ Wilderness would return in writings before the Civil War as “(...) American writers continued to explore the potential of the wild landscape as a zone of imaginative liberation or of terror.” (Crow: 32). This is to be perceived in the works of James Fenimore Cooper, author of *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Prairie* (1827) where he evinces the inherent ambiguity that permeated the belief in progress of the dominant culture since both Indians and American people represent the degeneration that was to be found in the land of the frontier.

¹⁹ See pp. 38 – 39 from Crow’s *History of the Gothic – American Gothic* (2009) to get an extended account of Poe’s influence to the field of literature, paying especial attention to his achievements in creating a new imagery that revolved around common American preoccupations, uncanniness, misleading narrators, doubles as well as physical and psychological confinement, and the breaking of certain taboos.

acclaim he obtained is based on the different themes he displays in some of the aforementioned tales; in “The Imp of the Perverse” he deals with the representation of the division within human psyche and how the facts that should remain hidden are nonetheless revealed; in “William Wilson” and “The Cask of Amontillado” is where Poe displays his use of the *doppelgänger* in a pair of stories that have its “(...) ending in an Italian carnival season with the masked and costumed narrator killing his opposite.” (Crow: 41); in “Ligeia” he portrays his interest towards loss, illnesses, the decay of beauty and death; in “The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym” he created one of the first examples of “Sea Gothic” since this location was considered as a place where individuals were more than likely to have encounters with unknown and ambiguous figures. However, his influence not only extended to British authors since he was a widely read writer in France due to the translations Charles Baudelaire made of his works, granting the French audience access to this author of such a Romantic and “extravagant” attitude towards literature.

The two remaining authors who opposed Emerson’s ideas, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, left their own imprint in the Gothic from the New World. The first of these two authors, Hawthorne, is relevant since he proved through his writings that, despite the belief that America had nothing Gothic or sublime to offer, the continent had a wide array of elements that helped writers to uncover the concealed events and facts from the history of the USA, as it has been previously discussed. Both in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and in *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) he made use of conventional Gothic elements which allowed him to deal with notions of a highly local and regional nature whereas in *The Blithedale Romance* (1852) he proved his writing abilities by means of the employment of a non-reliable narrator, following the mode of some of Poe’s stories. Moreover, with his last novel, *The Marble Faun* (1860), he returned to the European settings employed by British authors “(...) as embodying both the threat of moral decay and the possibility of freedom and psychological enrichment.” (Crow: 55). On his behalf, Melville portrayed in his works the ambiguity of the world and the threatening side of nature, implying that “(...) the meaning of the symbols were obscure or sinister.” (Crow: 57). Mostly known for *Moby Dick* (1851), he wrote other works like *Pierre* (1852), a collection of stories entitled *The Piazza Tales* (1856) including tales like “The Bell-Tower” where he displays his interest in the trope of masks.

Having completed at this stage the historical, and stylistic account of the Gothic in the UK and the USA from its genesis to the XIX century, it is now the time to move to the section devoted to the analysis of the presence of the *doppelgänger* motif in Edgar Allan Poe's story "William Wilson" (1839) in an effort to study how the American writer employed this notion to deal with the fragmented human psyche, analyzing it from a selection of critical approaches that will attempt to provide a better understanding of this motif.

3. THE *DOPPELGÄNGER* MOTIF IN EDGAR ALLAN POE'S "WILLIAM WILSON".

In a context of scientific development and profound social changes caused by the Industrial Revolution, the Gothic during the last decades of the XIX century, as it has been observed in the previous section, developed a re-evaluation of some previously employed features which enabled authors to deal with the concerns and fears that permeated society, the *doppelgänger* being among the ones that brought about a particularly thorough critical examination due to the array of possible interpretations its employment offered²⁰. It is, with respect to this assumption, that the use of this motif in Edgar Allan Poe's "William Wilson" (1839) is to be analyzed from the perspectives of its being a source of mental distress for the narrator, from Sigmund Freud's concept of "The Uncanny" and Carl Jung's notion of the shadow, conclusively regarding if this double could be considered as a physical and separate being. Nonetheless, prior to these observations, a brief definition of the motif will be offered to emphasize some of its core features.

3.1. Definition of the *doppelgänger* motif.

Intimately associated with the tenets of duality and its consideration of the human psyche as being divided into two opposite forces that uninterruptedly battle against each other, the *doppelgänger* or "double" comes to represent, as it has been considered since its first apparitions within the Gothic imagery, the dark, negative, haunting and horrifying counterpart of a given character that tends to appear either under the guise of a physical entity or as the imaginative or mental representation the haunted character creates within the psyche to embody aspects such as their internal conflicts that are projected into a separate being or the repressed desires that come into consciousness. Additionally,

²⁰ It is also important to observe that this motif underwent an alteration during the period mentioned above since it went from being an external figure to an internal one rendered within the mind of individuals.

doubles tend to revolve around an inherent feeling of doubt and weirdness within the characters' minds that is, in most cases, portrayed by the alteration of their physical appearance, enhancing both the fear and anguish these haunted individuals endure.

3.2. Haunted narrator and the doppelgänger as the source of horror and anxiety.

As can be perceived in some of the prominent instances of the *doppelgänger* motif in works such as *Frankenstein* (1818) by Mary Shelley, *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) by R. L. Stevenson, and *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker, the double regularly becomes an entity that revolves around and, to some extent, nurtures from the emotional suffering characters are forced to endure by them, and the employment of this motif in Edgar Allan Poe's story "William Wilson" seems to follow this previously established mode from the first moment the narrator's counterpart appears within the narrative.

In the fashion, to some extent, of Poe's mad narrators, the protagonist who identifies himself with the name "William Wilson" observes in the opening lines "I would fain have them believe that I have been, in some measure, the slave of circumstances beyond human control." (Poe, 2003: 110 – 111)²¹, possibly attempting to convince readers that the sequence of events to be unfolded throughout the story is defined by an exceptionality which could make it somehow unbelievable. Yet, the fact these matters are beyond the boundaries of rationality and human command could possibly reveal a connection pointing towards the supernatural constitution of the double²², suggesting the possible inexplicability of the events that will unfold. The narrator, after these introductory lines, briefly outlines some biographical details about his background, defining himself as "[w]eak-minded, and beset with constitutional infirmities akin to my own (...)" (Poe: 111) to then begin his account of the days he passed at the academy of Dr. Bransby, where he eventually becomes a student who was superior to most of his fellow schoolmates. Despite the apparent tranquility, one particular event disintegrates the authority and self-confidence that defined his life up until this moment, this being caused by the opposition "(...) of a scholar, who, although no relation, bore the same Christian name and surname

²¹ This reference and subsequent ones from Poe's "William Wilson" (1839) come from the edition of his tale found in 2003's edition of *Edgar Allan Poe – The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings*. This date will not be included from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

²² As can be perceived, for example, in *Frankenstein's* Creature, in *Hyde*, and in *Count Dracula*.

(...)” (Poe: 114) as the narrator. This could have been a minor event but it profoundly vexes the narrator since he remarks the reason of his annoyance is that this student:

“(…) presumed to compete with me in the studies of the class – in the sports and broils of the play-ground – to refuse implicit belief in my assumptions, and submission to my will – indeed, to interfere with my arbitrary dictation in any respect whatsoever.” (Poe: 115).

The challenge to the narrator’s lifestyle at the academy is, as far as it can be argued, the first event which causes him to experience anguish and embarrassment, as the narrator acknowledges in his saying “Wilson’s rebellion was to me a source of the greatest embarrassment (...)” (Poe: 115) which is simultaneously prompted by this being the first time a student dared to oppose him and by the fact this act of defiance is carried out with almost no great effort on the second student’s behalf, who is even capable of beating him in. Furthermore and to the despair of the protagonist, it seems that none of the students are aware of the opposition between him and his namesake, as he refers to him, since he observes “(...) this superiority – even this equality – was in truth acknowledged by no one but myself (...)” (Poe: 115), which could suggest this is just something he imagines, as if it had been made up by him because he regards it as just being a private matter between them. It is relevant to point out that this approach concerning the nature of the double as either merely being a product of the narrator’s mind or an actual physical entity that is physically present in the context of the tale is to be discussed later on since it presents some aspects worth analyzing yet it seems that, in this first instance of doubt on the narrator’s behalf about the physical existence of his antagonist, readers are left wondering if this second being is really present within the narrative frame.

Going back to the narrator’s account of his first encounter with Wilson²³, he describes a singular trait of the double’s actions that makes him reflect on the fact that, despite the more than obvious desire of his counterpart to make him feel discomfort:

“(…) he mingled with his injuries, his insults, or his contradictions, a certain most inappropriate, and assuredly most unwelcome *affectionateness* of manner. I could only conceive this singular behaviour to arise from a consummate self-conceit assuming the vulgar airs of patronage and protection.” (Poe: 115)

²³ This name will be employed on certain occasions to refer to the *doppelgänger* from Poe’s story, while the narrator will be labelled as “William”.

advancing a likely counterargument to the consideration of this double as an negative entity that feeds on the suffering it brings about upon the protagonist by interfering and therefore humiliating and horrifying him since through these words readers perceive a somewhat positivity in the actions of the antagonist which decreases to some degree the horror experienced by the protagonist, although this is by no means entirely banished from the story as it will be seen in later episodes. That this particular feeling on the narrator's behalf contrasts with what he observes in the beginning of his account by saying "I would not, if I could, here or to-day, embody a record of my later years of unspeakable misery, and unpardonable crime." (Poe: 110) comes to expose the oppositional relation it can be established between both characters, the narrator being a perverse individual whose own degradation has been enhanced during the last years of his life whereas his antagonist might be seen as some kind of caring being. Aside from having the same name and surname, the discovery made by the narrator about the fact they entered the academy on the same day and that his "(...) namesake was born on the nineteenth of January, 1813 (...)" (Poe: 116), William's own birth date, only serves to enhance the belief among the students that they are strangely connected, causing him to feel, aside from agony, a mixture of sensations acknowledged by his observing "[i]t is difficult, indeed, to define, or even to describe, my real feelings towards him." (Poe: 116).

The similarity between William and Wilson increases after some episodes in which the former attempts to concentrate all his attacks upon the latter, noticeable in their equal physical attributes as well as in the latter's imitation of some of his features, his behaviour and style of dress among others. Nevertheless, William becomes well aware of the single fault in his double's imitation, his speaking by means of low whispers which his counterpart employs to repeat the words "William Wilson" at any moment to enhance the narrator's anxiety as he has always disliked his ordinary name. Readers recognize in these events the distress William feels towards the existence of a connection between them since, for him, "(...) nothing could more seriously disturb me, (although I scrupulously concealed such disturbance,) than any allusion to a similarity of mind, person, or condition existing between us." (Poe: 117), even if this is only perceived by him as well as by Wilson since "(...) this similarity had ever been made a subject of comment (...)" (Poe: 117). William, importuned by the existing connection²⁴ with this student, refers

²⁴ There is a later moment when the likely relation between the two characters is again suggested to readers. After a confrontation between them when Wilson behaved in a different way as he previously did, William feels, as it is suggested in the text, that they both have previously been acquainted in the past.

again to the aforementioned affection located behind his actions because, as Elena Otto Catón observes in “El tema del doble en *William Wilson*, de E. A. Poe”, “(...) se nos habla del afán proteccionista de H hacia WW y de los consejos que éste recibía de aquél (...)” (Otto Catón, 2005: 85)²⁵ manifested in his saying “(...) I might, to-day, have been a better, and thus a happier man, had I less frequently rejected the counsels embodied in those meaning whispers (...)” (Poe: 118 – 119). Nevertheless and despite the seemingly positive behaviour of the double, William cannot help but feel oppressed and haunted by his patronage since he remarks he “(...) daily resented more and more openly what I considered his intolerable arrogance.” (Poe: 119), taking it back to the established definition of the *doppelgänger* introduced in other works as a negative and horrifying entity that emotionally abuses narrators. It is when the protagonist decides to go during one night to Wilson’s little apartment, moved by his desire to take revenge on him for the torment he has been forced to endure since his apparition at the academy, when he finds out their similarity after closely looking at Wilson’s appearance. Horror and distress fill the narrator, seen in his observing “I looked; - and a numbness, an iciness of feeling instantly pervaded my frame. My breast heaved, my knees tottered, my whole spirit became possessed with an objectless yet intolerable horror.” (Poe: 120), thus prompting him to feel even more plagued by the extraordinary character of his discovery as he recognizes, in Wilson’s appearance, his own looks, even his own overall countenance. The supernatural nature of this revelation urges the narrator to leave the academy in his futile attempt, as it will be observed later on, to cast off the haunting the double exerted over him.

If the narrator’s account of the events which take place during his years at the academy is considered as the first part of the story, once William leaves the school the second section begins, being here where the feeling of horror and anguish on the narrator’s behalf is enhanced through the interferences of Wilson into the latter’s “(...) rooted habits of vice (...)” (Poe: 121). The first of these episodes occurs one night in which William had brought together some friends who share his own tastes, with whom he gave in to gambling and inebriation. Wilson, as Otto Catón remarks, “[a]parece de forma misteriosa,

²⁵ This reference and subsequent ones from Otto Catón’s article have been retrieved from *Espéculo – Revista de Estudios Literarios – Universidad Complutense de Madrid*, 30 (Julio – Octubre 2005). The number included after the date of publication, which will be found in following citations, refers to the line where it is possible to find the quotation in the version of the article located in: <https://goo.gl/epqooX>. Retrieved on September 16, 2017. The publication date will be excluded from following quotations since all belong to the previously mentioned source.

desapareciendo enseguida del mismo modo tras “susurrarle” su nombre el nombre que tanto odiaba al oído (...)” (Otto Catón: 107 – 108). After this extraordinary event, the narrator tries to rationalize and uncover the mystery that surrounds this haunting event asking himself “(...) who and what is this Wilson? – and whence he came? – and what were his purposes?” (Poe: 122) but in realizing the impossibility to fulfill his objective the narrator delves deeper into the earlier vices he experienced after he moves to Oxford. Nonetheless, it is quite impossible for him to escape from the spectral and oppressive persecution of Wilson since it is during a night game of cards with other students when the antagonist appears once again to spoil his scam:

“Gentlemen, I make no apology for this behaviour, because in this behaving, I am but fulfilling a duty. You are, beyond doubt, uninformed of the true character of the person who has to-night won at *écarté* a large sum of money from Lord Glendinning. I will therefore put you upon an expeditious and decisive plan of obtaining this very necessary information. Please to examine, at your leisure, the inner linings of the cuff of his left sleeve, and the several little packages which may be found in the somewhat capacious pockets of his embroidered morning wrapper.” (Poe: 125).

The others examine his clothes and discover that what the mysterious figure has said is true, causing William to feel deeply embarrassed and humiliated by his counterpart. It seems there is no other option for him than leaving this place beginning “(...) a hurried journey from Oxford to the continent, in a perfect agony of horror and of shame.” (Poe: 127) in his effort to escape the increasing oppression and horror Wilson exerts over him through his actions, eventually causing William to admit “*I fled in vain*. My evil destiny pursued me as if in exultation (...)” (Poe: 127). It would be the moment from which the narrator begins his account of the different instances, in places like Vienna or Berlin, when his counterpart appears to ruin his plans again and again, preventing him from obtaining any benefit from them. Ignoring his inability to discern the reasons Wilson may have to have turned him into the victim of his, as Otto Catón labels it, “(...) manía persecutoria (...)” (Otto Catón: 123), the narrator acknowledges a relevant fact related to the previously mentioned positivity as he discovers that, if the latter had not interrupted his wrong-doings these would have brought him a negative outcome. The claim about the positive nature of the antagonist’s actions is sensed once more in the words of William, but as it has been previously observed this trait does not imply a denial of the fear and

agony the narrator feels from the very first moment Wilson began to interfere with his immoral designs.

Deranged by alcohol and his feeling of vexation and distress, William decides he will no longer be an enslaved character, decision that prompts him to finally confront the figure who has tirelessly followed him from Dr. Bransby's academy during a masquerade in Rome when he says to Wilson "(...) you shall not – you *shall* not dog me unto death! Follow me, or I stab you where you stand!" (Poe: 129). Both leave the ball-room and enter in a small chamber where they have their final encounter, William being the winner after a brief combat in which he, fueled by his anger, stabs Wilson repeatedly in the chest. However, something happens after the former turns to the chamber-door to prevent any intrusion since he believes, still moved by confusion, he sees his own features covered with blood as if these were reflected on a mirror, even though he eventually realizes it is his antagonist, his double, Wilson, the person he sees, thus acknowledging "[n]ot a thread in all his raiment – not a line in all the marked and singular lineaments of his face which was not, even in the most absolute identity, *mine own!*" (Poe: 130). This extraordinary event, for Otto Catón, implies that "[a]mbos se han fundido en uno solo." (Otto Catón: 140), manifested in Wilson's words "'*You have conquered, and I yield. Yet, henceforward art thou also dead – dead to the World, to Heaven and to Hope! In me didst thou exist – and, in my death, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself.*'" (Poe: 130). However, this fusion will be commented on in the following section in much more depth for the purposes of the analysis of the elements introduced there.

While the story ends with the suicide of the narrator in his desperate attempt to break free from the anguish and oppression he feels under the actions of the double, it is true that, from the very first manifestation of its interferences with William's designs, a sense of uncertainty and fear permeate his feelings towards it. In this regard, incapable of completely loathing his antagonist, readers sense an evolution in the relation that is immediately established between them, going from an initial competition that embarrasses William to an inescapable sensation of despair and horror that increases as their similarities and the interferences of Wilson in the protagonist's plans follow him wherever he goes. Left with no other possible choice to escape from the agony and dread, the narrator decides to face his double, eventually both killing him and causing his own demise in a futile effort to cast his mental distress off.

Evinced, as it has been throughout the course of this section, the apparition of the double and the subsequent episodes in which he follows the narrator, haunting him whenever he attempts to carry out any evil deed, can be therefore considered as the source of horror and distress to which William is subjected to, eventually bringing about his own death as a result of the emotional oppression he is forced to endure. Nevertheless, this idea of fear and anguish as well as the possible consideration of the double as a physical and separate entity will be covered and related to the views that are to be introduced in the following section related to Freud's "The Uncanny" and Jung's "The Shadow".

3.3. Psychological readings of the doppelgänger motif in "William Wilson".

Doppelgängers, aside from their being defined by Christine M. Gamache (2012) and Holy-Mary Romero (2013) in their studies of this motif as a literary device that evokes fear and anguish in the characters' minds, can be approached from the perspective of psychology and psychoanalysis, especially from the Freudian concept of "The Uncanny" and from the Jungian term "The Shadow" since these two notions enable the analysis of the double by taking into consideration the different aspects which revolve around the concept of the self and the diverse conundrums that come into existence when its integrity is threatened. As mentioned above and with respect to this, the use of the *doppelgänger* motif in Poe's "William Wilson" is to be studied from the perspectives of these two concepts while offering additional possible interpretations that can suggest further readings of the story and the author's employment of the double motif. Moreover, it will also be concerned with a view that revolves around a certain degree of ambiguity, the possible elucidation of the consideration of the double from this story as being a real physical entity present within the story.

3.3.1. Uncanniness and "The Shadow" in the representation of the narrator's double.

Given the context of scientific developments that were taking place during the XIX century which were to introduce innovative approaches with respect to the definition and construction of the notion of the self, the theories and views from Sigmund Freud's work *The Uncanny* (1919) and Carl Gustav Jung's notion of "the shadow" from *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1968 – 69) have gained further relevance for the study of the *doppelgänger* in its diverse instances, and it is regarding this that these two concepts, the uncanny and the shadow, are to be employed in an attempt to interpret the double in E. A. Poe's "William Wilson".

Freud (2003: 123)²⁶, in his work, identifies this notion by saying “[t]here is no doubt that this belongs to the realm of the frightening, of what evokes fear and dread.”, establishing a connection with the prior view of the double as being a source of horror and agony for the narrator characterized by a power, in most instances, beyond the boundaries of human control. Holy-Mary Romero, developing a similar view, defines the uncanny as “(...) that which is “partaking of a supernatural character; mysterious, weird, uncomfortably strange or unfamiliar” (...)” (Romero, 2013: 79)²⁷, introducing, aside from the supernatural nature, a reference to unfamiliarity, to the unknown, and therefore to doubt and uncertainty. Going back to the story being analyzed, it is possible to assert that, from the beginning of the story and the first apparition of the double, a sense of uncanniness seems to revolve around him since, as observed in section 3.2., the second William Wilson comes into view under the guise of “(...) what was once well known and had long been familiar.” (Freud: 124), the image of a common student similar to those with whom the narrator spent his schooldays at the academy of Dr. Bransby. Nonetheless, there appears to be an inversion of one feature of this notion, the one that implies a double defined by the uncanny is to be “(...) repeatedly introduced in unfamiliar environments that are simultaneously dark, foreboding, mysterious, suspicious, and intriguing.” (Romero: 79) since, from the academy to the different places where the narrator is followed and haunted by the double, the dark and negative rendition of the settings is replaced by a much more positive one seen, for instance, in the narrator referring to the house where the academy is located as “(...) a palace of enchantment!” (Poe: 113), despite its Gothic features.

Relating to the supernatural, the unfamiliarity, the unknown as well as the frightening mentioned above apropos to the uncanny, it seems that the identification of the double from “William Wilson” with this notion is perceived in the similarities both readers and the narrator begin to notice between the latter and his antagonist, the student who opposed him, which are rendered as the origin for the narrator’s horror and distress. Wilson, as the narrator remarks, has an extraordinary ability to imitate not only the more trivial features which defined his appearance such as his dress but is also capable of copying other complex aspects like his walk and his voice. Additionally, when William discovers during

²⁶ This quotation and subsequent ones have been retrieved from 2003’s edition of Freud’s *The Uncanny*, translated by David McLintock. This date will not be included from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

²⁷ As happens with Freud’s work, all references from Romero’s work belong to the edition of 2013 and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

the night visit to his antagonist's apartment that the latter has his same facial features, increasing his feeling of horror, it is possible to point out a connection with one aspect that relates the *doppelgänger* to the uncanny, "(...) the constant recurrence of the same thing, the repetition of the same facial features, the same characters, the same destinies, the same misdeeds, even the same names (...)" (Freud: 142), suggesting that the reason why he experiences the frightening, the mysterious, and the unfamiliar through the supernatural character defining their similarities which can be seen, as quoted above, in the repetition of features, characters, or even names lies on the fact a student has adopted the same appearance as the narrator. On the other hand, leaving aside the supernatural nature of the resemblances between the narrator and his double and its consequent uncanniness, it is also likely to recognize the presence of Freud's concept in the somewhat mysterious persecution the narrator is forced to endure on the double's behalf, defined around "(...) the idea of the fateful and the inescapable (...)" (Freud: 144). If readers witness how the second William Wilson follows the narrator and interferes with his deeds at the academy, once he leaves it urged by the sensation of horror and anguish originated by the uncanny resemblance of his antagonist it would be him the one who acknowledges the extraordinary nature of the persecution carried out by the *doppelgänger* in its different instances in places like Eton, Oxford, Vienna, Berlin, or Rome. Yet, its exceptionality does not render this as something positive since it turns out to be an inescapable torment from which the narrator finds no moment of relief.

If "[t]he uncanny (*das Unheimliche*, 'the unhomely') is in some way a species of the familiar (*das Heimliche*, 'the homely')" (Freud: 134) as it has been observed above with respect, especially, to the mysterious and supernatural similarities existing between the narrator and its counterpart or double and the exceptional and unexplainable persecution, it is possible now to briefly comment on the consideration of the actual presence of the double in the story since it will be dealt with later on. It is Jentsch who, according to this fact, observed "[o]ne of the surest devices for producing slightly uncanny effects through story-telling is to leave the reader wondering whether a particular figure is a real person or an automaton (...)" (as cited in Freud: 135), implying that, while in this story the double is clearly not a machine, readers can sense a slight uncanniness around the consideration of the presence of the *doppelgänger* within the narrative as either being something real or something created by the narrator which only exists in his psyche. Aside from the single episode in which Wilson is seen by other people besides the narrator, the remaining

moments when it appears are surrounded by the uncertainty Jentsch refers to especially if taking into account that the readers' previous thoughts about the double as not being physically present in the story could be rejected when the incident at Oxford takes place. Nevertheless, it is important to resort at this time to the Jungian notion of "the shadow" to offer additional interpretations about the nature of this double.

In *Psychology Today*, Stephen A. Diamond defines the shadow as "(...) the unknown "dark side" of our personality (...) because it tends to consist predominantly of the primitive, negative, socially or religiously depreciated human emotions and impulses like sexual lust, power strivings, selfishness, greed, envy, anger, or rage (...)" (Diamond, 2012: 3 - 6)²⁸, exposing it is constituted by the different traits and thoughts that are to be concealed not only from one's self but also to society in general to fit in within the established set of social principles. Thus, the shadow comes to represent the combination of the negative or non-socially accepted traits that are present in the constitution of the self which have been concealed and repressed by consciousness, even though as Diamond consequently observes, these "(...) remain active in the unconscious (...)" (Diamond: 71), idea that suggests most instances of the *doppelgänger* follow the principles of the Jungian shadow as they embody the negative aspects of the narrators' selves, being for example the representation of their repressed desires and thoughts.

With respect to the idea introduced in the previous part of the double as being an entity that, to some degree, seems to be positive instead of being evil as can be recognizable in most of its appearances in Gothic productions, it could be suggested that the double in "William Wilson" possibly subverts the accepted definition of Jung's shadow as the consciously repressed mixture of the negative factors existing in the self because, at least to some extent, the double in Poe's story can be viewed as the embodiment of the positive characteristics which form the narrator's personality. This being proposed, the different instances in which the narrator refers to the caring or somehow protective nature of the interferences Wilson carries out (see p. 20 of this paper) slightly point towards the idea of the creation of the narrator's double through a defense mechanism originally coined by Freud, projection. Being considered as one of the unconscious psychological strategies individuals employ to cope with the diverse features

²⁸ This reference and subsequent ones concerning Diamond's views have been retrieved from "Essential Secrets of Psychotherapy: What is the "Shadow"?" (2012) in *Psychology Today*. The publication date will not be included from now on and the number that appears after it refers to the line where it is possible to find the original. Retrieved on September 19, 2017 from: <https://goo.gl/IPjZJZ>

they are unable to come to terms with, projection is defined by *Encyclopædia Britannica Online* as “(...) a form of defense in which unwanted feelings are displaced onto another person, where they then appear as a threat from the external world.” (Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2017: 16 - 19)²⁹. Taking into account this concept, one can argue it is possible to perceive two interpretations for the character of the *doppelgänger* in Poe’s story, one suggesting it could be considered as the representation of the better part of the narrator’s self, whereas the second may render the double as the embodiment or representation of the conscience of the protagonist.

Focusing on the first of the two possible explanations, that Wilson is seen as the good part of the story’s narrator opposed to William who identifies himself by employing negative words like “(...) my miserable profligacy (...)” (Poe: 121), this can be sensed through its possible embodiment of the positive traits the narrator concealed from his self, being the latter defined as “(...) self-willed, addicted to the wildest caprices, and a prey to the most ungovernable passions.” (Poe: 111). With respect to this and taking into account the different instances from the story when William refers to the tendency towards vice and excesses that define his being and the actions he carries out, Wilson, the *doppelgänger*, may be approached as the shadow in which the narrator hides everything he does not have or does not want as a part of his self in order to socially fit in the context of immorality he revolves around, the positive features of protection and amiability observable behind the interferences of Wilson throughout the course of the story. Therefore, it could be argued that the nature of the double might be constructed by means of the defense mechanism of projection through which the narrator transfers the positive aspects he dislikes and rejects to another entity or being, in this case his antagonist, prompting the likely interpretation of this double as the representation of the better part of the narrator’s self which comes to represent the different positive features he has possibly unconsciously concealed. Moreover and relating to this interpretation, it is also

²⁹ Definition retrieved from the entry about “defense mechanism” from *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. These number refer to the lines from the original source. Retrieved on September 21, 2017 from: <https://goo.gl/R4QScU>. To fully comprehend the meaning of this notion, it is deemed as necessary to include here an excerpt of its definition found in Echegoyen Olleta’s (n.d.) *Diccionario de Psicología Científica y Filosófica*, where it is rendered as a “(...) mecanismo de defensa por el que el sujeto atribuye a otras personas los propios motivos, deseos o emociones. Es una forma de ocultación involuntaria e inconsciente de su vida psíquica consecuencia de la presión del superyó que sanciona como incorrecto el contenido psíquico o de los temores y frustraciones del sujeto.” In this definition, it is possible to see a reference to a concept, the “superego”, whose relevance with respect to the ideas to be introduced here will be later exposed. Retrieved on September 21, 2017 from: <https://goo.gl/pdjh5Y>

relevant to point out that the creation of the double as the shadow in which the narrator projects the combination of features he discards could be caused by one idea observed by Gamache in her work, since she remarks the cause for the constitution of a double may be “(...) a dissatisfaction with one’s personal sense of identity which therefore causes a split to occur, or even a search *for* an identity that is felt to be lacking.” (Gamache, 2012: 6)³⁰. Hence, the probable dissatisfaction felt by the narrator towards his identity, shaped by his proneness towards depravity and excessive passions, suggests its consideration as the cause for the narrator’s creation, by means of projection, of a shadow that incarnates the positive traits he would have liked to have, thus evincing the conceivable explanation of the *doppelgänger* as the impersonation of the better portion of his own personality³¹.

Once the first interpretation has been alluded to, it is necessary for the time being to center the research on the second possible one which implies the consideration of the double as being a shadow that embodies not the positive features of his self but his conscience, which could be seen as acting as a kind of judge who punishes the narrator for the wrong-doings he carries out. Crow refers to this fact by saying “Poe gives an allegorical slant to this pairing, making the second Wilson a projection of the narrator’s conscience.” (Crow: 41) reinforcing the idea which suggests this double is the image of the narrator’s moral sense, while Otto Catón observes in her article that the double “(...) se comporta como una especie de ángel amonestador para W.W.” (Otto Catón: 144 - 145). From these two approaches it is likely to infer that the real nature of the double from “William Wilson” could be that of the narrator’s morality that punishes him, causing the narrator to endure feelings of horror and anguish for any transgression he carries out of the established limits of morality and decorum. Relating to this view, the concept of the “superego” comes into play if considered as being connected to the conscience of the narrator. Defined by Saul Mcleod as functioning “(...) to control de id’s impulses, especially those which society forbids, such as sex and aggression.” (Mcleod, 2016: 2)³²,

³⁰ This reference and the following ones from Gamache’s work are found in the 2012’s version. This date will not be included from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

³¹ Gamache’s idea could be complemented by one aspect from “Carl Jung and the Shadow: The Hidden Power of our Dark Side” in the website *Academy of Ideas* (2017). With respect to the concealment of positive aspects in the shadow, the webpage suggests that “When positive traits are relegated to the shadow, one is by necessity less than one could be.”. This could point towards the dissatisfaction Gamache refers to, suggesting that it is the narrator’s feeling he lacks something the reason for the creation of the double. Retrieved on September 19, 2017 from: <https://goo.gl/jfVhk2>

³² This reference and the following ones from Mcleod’s work have been retrieved from the 2016’s version. This date will not be included from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

it is considered as being the aspect which helps individuals to socially fit in by means of its sanctioning and repressing the traits and features deemed as not appropriate by social or psychological principles. This feature could be noticed, throughout the course of the story, in the different instances and moments in which Wilson interferes and spoils the deeds of the narrator by behaving as a judge who censures any type of moral transgression, constituted by the moments in which the narrator yields to his tendency towards vice and indecency such as what he describes as “(...) my revenge at Paris, my passionate love at Naples, or (...) my avarice in Egypt (...)” (Poe: 128). Apropos to this view, Stegner mentions an interesting aspect related to the use of the *doppelgänger* motif conducted by Poe as he considers that “[d]oubling is another Gothic trope that Poe adapted into a newer, more sophisticated psychological study of conscience and the inevitability of crimes and vices being exposed through a character’s double.” (Stegner, 2007: 59)³³, evincing not only a connection with the opinion that considers the double as the image of the narrator’s conscience but also inferring, at least to some extent, a subsequent relation which alludes to the themes displayed in another tale written by this author, “The Imp of the Perverse” (1845).

Crow points out that “Poe’s story ‘The Imp of the Perverse’ (1845) articulates his theory of flawed and divided human nature.” (Crow: 40), signaling the psychological load this tale offers while dealing with a similar theme as the one found in “William Wilson”, the complexity of the psyche, its division, and the problems that may arise from this partition via the manifestation of “(...) a paradoxical something, which we may call perverseness (...)” (Poe, 1845: 2)³⁴. This could establish the first possible connection between the two stories, but it is more likely to perceive their relation in two specific features, the first one concerned with the apparent tendency of this tale’s narrator towards perversity whereas the second one deals with the confession of crime in public, thus revealing “(...) what should be kept secret.” (Crow: 40). The first of these two aspects is to be seen in “William Wilson” through the narrator’s account of the propensity to passions and excesses he has always identified as a part of his identity as these could be connected to what the narrator from “The Imp of the Perverse” acknowledges by saying

³³ This reference and the following ones from Stegner’s thesis have been retrieved from the 2007’s version. This date will not be included from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

³⁴ Quotations from Poe’s “The Imp of the Perverse” (1845) have been retrieved from the .pdf file found in: <https://goo.gl/Kr7GKn>. Retrieved on September 1, 2017.

“(…) we persist in acts because we feel we should not persist in them (…)” (Poe, 1845: 3) while the second, the uncovering of the committed misdeeds, could be observed in the interferences of the double who behaves like a kind of judge who punishes the narrator for his transgressions as he may be considered as the Jungian shadow, as mentioned above, that embodies the positive aspects the narrator concealed and repressed. In relation to this idea, the revelation of the wrong-doings committed by the narrator from Poe’s “William Wilson” is conducted, following the style of what happens in “The Imp of the Perverse” when the narrator observes “[t]he long imprisoned secret burst forth from my soul.” (Poe, 1845: 6) moved by his conscience, by his *doppelgänger* since he constantly follows him in his effort to humiliate him by uncovering his evil designs to the people involved in them, consequently causing him to feel both embarrassed and haunted, seen in what William identifies as “(…) my own utter weakness and helplessness (…)” (Poe: 128), by the extraordinary persecution of a shadow created through his projection of the positive aspects he rejected or maybe repressed within his psyche. Additionally, it could be suggested that the revelation of the crimes taking place in “William Wilson” is a consequence of the proneness to vice and immorality of the narrator, which consequently originates the conception of the shadowy double through the repression of the traits he rejects that comes to embody the morality which should prevent the narrator from carrying out such wrong actions.

From the ideas introduced above it is likely to suggest that, on the one hand, psychological features permeate Poe’s story with specific attention to the constitution of the double and its character, especially defined by the Freudian “uncanny” and the Jungian “shadow”. On the other hand, the possible thematic relation with “The Imp of the Perverse” provides an interesting point which enhances the consideration of *doppelgänger* as an image of conscience while inferring additional causes for its creation by the narrator.

3.3.2. *Doubts about the doppelgänger in Poe’s “William Wilson”: Is the narrator’s double a physically separate being?*

Alluded yet not completely analyzed in the section devoted to the examination of this double as the source of horror and distress for the narrator, the presence of the second William Wilson in the story is a matter which revolves around ambiguity as readers are left suspecting whether the only moment in which the double is “seen” by other people apart from the narrator implies it should be therefore regarded as a separate entity with

respect to the protagonist. However, when the story reaches its conclusion, the doubt seems to be appropriately explained as when William stabs Wilson to death he brings forth not the demise of the double but his own as they had never been two separate characters but one, observable in the words “*In me didst thou exist – and, in my death (...) thou hast murdered thyself.*” (Poe: 130). Consequently, there are some aspects that require examination to suggest a possible interpretation of this issue, in an effort to answer the question proposed above.

Christine M. Gamache suggest in her work that a *doppelgänger* “(...) can be latent (only seen in the protagonist’s mind) or manifest (physically there in the real world) (...)” (Gamache: 5), initially alluding to a two-fold possibility, either that the counterpart of the narrator only exists within his mind because the rest of the students do not suspect of its existence or that, as happens during the episode at Oxford, it can be seen by others. Despite her interesting approach, Gamache’s view does not provide any further details for the purpose of this study as it just classifies doubles into two categories. It would be Otto Catón who would offer some aspects that could clarify this matter.

Following, as she points out, the scheme devised by Bargalló Carraté (1994) in his article “Hacia una tipología del doble: el *doble* por fusión, por fisión y por metamorfosis”³⁵, she remarks that what happens in “William Wilson” with respect to its double is the “[f]usión en un solo individuo de dos originariamente diferentes.” (Otto Catón :29) that are not separated, hinting that, within the story, there are not two different and separate beings but one that is constituted by two opposing sides which are gradually drawn near, eventually noticeable in the conclusion of the tale when the narrator kills himself in his believing he was actually murdering his double therefore demonstrating that the union which takes place when he says “(...) I could have fancied that I myself was speaking while he said: ‘*You have conquered, and I yield.*’” (Poe: 130). In relation to this idea, Bent Sørensen in his work *Love, Identity and Reason in the tales of Edgar Allan Poe* conducts an insightful examination of Poe’s use of the double motif, classifying these by their relevance with respect to the plot. He mentions that the double from “William Wilson” can be seen as an instance of “(...) Poe’s use of formal doubles (...) where what appears to be two or more characters is eventually revealed to be one and the same character, or possibly explicitly two sides of the same character.” (Sørensen, 1994: 38),

³⁵ Full reference to the work of Juan Bargalló Carraté found in El tema del doble en *William Wilson*, de E.A. Poe by Elena Otto Catón. Retrieved from: <https://goo.gl/epqooX>

therefore proving that the idea suggested by Otto Catón could be an acceptable interpretation for the nature of this double as being a part of the narrator and not a separate and autonomous being.

But, leaving aside these ideas, there remains an aspect that needs clarification, the fact that the double seems to be seen by other people during the game of cards held at Oxford. Concerning this, it could be said the text provides clues that might evince the real presence of the double in the room as William says the candles “(...) enabled us just to perceive that a stranger had entered (...)” (Poe: 125). Nonetheless, darkness fills in the room and the narrator observes “(...) we could only *feel* that he was standing in our midst.” (Poe: 125). It is important to pay attention to the verb “feel” since it could suggest that, since the chamber is completely dark, they cannot see Wilson yet they feel someone is there and to the fact that the narrator always employs “us” and “we” to refer to the group as if he speaks for the rest of the members of the party, probably inferring that there is no one actually there and that the person who reveals his strategy is himself if one aspect of Wilson’s imitation is taken into account, his ability to copy William’s voice.

As the result of the considerations introduced here, it is likely to suggest that, despite the ambiguity and uncertainty which surrounds the different instances when the double appears in the story especially with respect to its apparition at Oxford, it could be observed that, from the opening of the story, the double and the narrator conform a single entity, therefore implying that the *doppelgänger* is just a mental image conjured up by William in his psyche, as he himself hints when observing that the conflict between them was only perceivable by them two and by no one else.

4. CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE *DOPPELGÄNGERS* FROM “WILLIAM WILSON”, *THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*, AND *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*.

Having covered up to this point the introduction to the Gothic genre in section 2 and the analysis of the *doppelgänger* motif in Edgar Allan Poe’s “William Wilson” within section 3, the focus of the research in the following part is to be placed upon the establishment of a contrastive examination, suggesting similarities and differences between this aforementioned instance of the double motif and the ones that can be identified within R. L. Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

(1886) and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890). The justification for having chosen specifically these two works is that, with respect to Stevenson's oeuvre, it is possible to suggest connections between the double from this production and Poe's *doppelgänger* taking into account the psychological load that permeates both stories while Wilde's work provides an interesting rendition of this motif via the picture which suggests insightful features that could connect it with Poe's double.

4.1. Edward Hyde and William Wilson: Id vs. Superego.

Aside from its being one of the best known examples of the duality theme produced within the canon of British literary productions, a reading of R. L. Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* enables the possibility of establishing various connections with the *doppelgänger* motif in "William Wilson" while suggesting some aspects that may differentiate the double in the American tale from the one present in this work.

The initial interpretation suggested by authors as Singh and Chakrabarti (2008) and Subhavan (2015) is to regard Mr. Hyde as an instance of the "id" concept defined by Freud (1923) when he established his theory about the division of the human psyche into three parts, the id, the ego, and the superego³⁶. Thus this view implies Hyde can be considered as "(...) the primitive and instinctive component of personality." (Mcleod: 1) located within the self of Dr. Henry Jekyll, consequently enabling the possibility of establishing various interpretations revolving around the Freudian notion of the "id" that will define the character of Mr. Hyde and his contrast with the double from "William Wilson".

As a result of this approach, a difference between Hyde and the double from Poe's story seems to arise since the *doppelgänger* from the latter work has been defined there in terms of the "superego" which is seen as the third division found within the human mind that controls, or at least attempts to do so, the impulses and instinctive forces that define the "id", following the moral and social values it presents as basic constituents. The contrast originated from this opposition is exemplified by the consideration of Wilson

³⁶ Mcleod defines the first of these concepts by saying "The id is the impulsive (and unconscious) part of our psyche which responds directly and immediately to the instincts." (Mcleod: 1). He then defines the ego as "(...) the decision making component of personality." (Mcleod: 2) that is connected to the principle of reality and the superego as the element whose "(...) function is to control the id's impulses, especially those which society forbids, such as sex and aggression. (Mcleod: 2) and as the element that employs guilt to discipline the ego.

as the representation of the narrator's conscience which constantly haunts and punishes him for his tendency towards depravity and as the image of the good part of his self which embodies the positive aspects he has concealed (see pp. 28 – 31 of this paper). Hyde, on the other hand, is first characterized by an evilness acknowledged by characters like Mr. Enfield, Dr. Lanyon, Mr. Utterson, and even Dr. Jekyll who observes "(...) Edward Hyde, alone in the ranks of mankind, was pure evil." (Stevenson, 2015: 71)³⁷ to be then defined as being the means through which Jekyll seeks the immediate gratification of the pleasures he longed to satisfy. Additionally, the id-like character of Jekyll's double may be perceived in the features of degeneration and atavism which are not to be seen in the nature of the *doppelgänger* from "William Wilson". Aside from evincing the influence the theories of Charles Darwin from *The Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871)³⁸ could have had over Stevenson's conception of the work, these introduce two aspects that will characterize Hyde as the id part of Jekyll's psyche. Degeneration, on the one hand, implies Jekyll's double is shaped by a proneness towards the satisfaction of an array of pleasures which have been repressed and concealed since he refers to them as "(...) undignified (...)" (Stevenson: 73), implying their questionable essence within a context of propriety, correctness and inhibition that characterized Victorian society, where individuals lived under the control of repression. Consequently, the determination of Jekyll to indulge his concealed desires leads him to the creation of his double, exposing and bringing about the dreadful incidents in which Hyde is involved, these concluding with the murder of Sir Danvers Carew when the double was seen "(...) trampling his victim under foot and hailing down a storm of blows, under which the bones were audibly shattered (...)" (Stevenson: 25)³⁹. It is important to signal here that the fact Jekyll

³⁷ This reference and subsequent ones from Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) come from 2015's edition of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde with The Merry Men, and other tales and fables*. This date will not be included from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

³⁸ Publication dates of these works retrieved from Romero, H. M. (2013). *The Doppelganger in select 19th century British Fiction: Frankenstein, Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, and Dracula* (p. 57)

³⁹ With respect to the expression of repressed desires via Hyde it is relevant to refer to the views of Antonio Ballesteros González in his work *Narciso y el doble en la literatura fantástica Victoriana* regarding Stevenson's work. Concerning the satisfaction of inappropriate desires Jekyll conducts under the guise of Hyde, he points out that, through this fact, "*Jekyll & Hyde* supone (...) una ruptura con el control, la legalidad opresiva y la hipocresía de la sociedad Victoriana (...)" (Ballesteros González, 1998: 279). With the reference to hypocrisy, he evinces the fact that, in that context of repression and propriety, individuals were forced to live dual lives, one defined by a façade of correctness shown to the public while the second one was shaped by the elements deemed as questionable by Victorian principles. Moreover, this duplicity is acknowledged by Jekyll when he mentions his awareness of "(...) the thorough and primitive duality of man (...)" (Stevenson: 68), exposing the two parts of his self, one devoted to the public and one shaped by his repressed desires. Subsequent references from Ballesteros González's work will not include the publication date since all have been retrieved from 1998's edition.

consciously creates his double by means of a concoction in order to satisfy his repressed desires evinces a variance with respect to Poe's double since, as it has been argued in the previous section, the narrator from this story might have unconsciously engendered his double through the projection he conducts of the attributes he has thoughtlessly hidden. Regarding these notions Romero observes "Hyde's behaviour, personality, and physicality are each described in terminology that indicate Hyde's animalistic primitiveness." (Romero: 69), which may suggest the connection between Hyde, degeneration, and atavism.

Being defined by *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* as "[a] recurrence in an organism of a trait or character typical of an ancestral form and usually due to genetic recombination."⁴⁰, the concept of atavism manifests Hyde's primitiveness while suggesting the relation with Darwin's theories where the latter exposed the descent of mankind when individuals fall prey to the influence of degeneracy via the manifestation of immoral deeds. In this regard, it is possible to argue that the atavistic nature of Hyde, being defined by Stevenson as "(...) hardly human (...)" and "(...) troglodytic (...)" (Stevenson: 18), and as "(...) ape-like (...)" (Stevenson: 25), is not to be perceived in the *doppelgänger* from "William Wilson" as it is always described in civilized terms that at no time imply any kind of primitiveness. From these features, taken into consideration along with the sense of deformity that emanates from Hyde's countenance as well as his reduced stature when compared to Jekyll and other characters, it is possible to suggest that Hyde, being the id within the doctor's self, represents the devolution of man when individuals give in to the allurements of the gratification of the demands of instincts. Apropos to this approach, some dissimilarities may be evinced if the pairs William – Wilson / Jekyll – Hyde are contrasted. In Poe's story the character revolving around degeneration is William, as his actions throughout the narrative expose, whereas Wilson represents a much more civilized being since he behaves both as the embodiment of the narrator's conscience and the better part of his self that has been repressed. On the contrary, in Stevenson's work it is Jekyll who stands for the more civilized part since he, aside from being an individual from a high social class, manifests a somewhat feeling of guilt for the crimes committed by his double which might relate him to Wilson regarding this notion of morality. On the other hand, Hyde is the representative of primitiveness,

⁴⁰ Definition retrieved on September 30, 2017 from: <https://goo.gl/7DYAS5>

degeneration, criminality, and evilness, therefore connecting him to some extent with William and his deeds during the events from Poe's tale.

If it is stated that the double from "William Wilson" exemplifies an instance of an internal double inseparable from its host, the same is found in *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* since, as Ballesteros González observes, "[l]a lectura de *Jekyll y Hyde* parece reveler que no es posible desligar por completo algo que sale del propio ser, y en ese sentido el creador es siempre responsable de su criatura." (Ballesteros González: 286), implying the inseparability and dependency existing between this pair of characters. From this mutual dependence, one could argue there exists a difference between William, Wilson, Jekyll, and Hyde provided that the notion of the Jungian shadow is taken into consideration. In Poe's work, the narrator has unconsciously created a shadow that embodies, as it has been argued, his positive traits as well as his moral sense thus rendering it as some kind of judge who both haunts and disciplines him for the wicked activities in which he is involved. On the contrary, *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* seems to introduce a twist to this notion since Jekyll deliberately calls into existence Hyde based on his awareness of man's duality which makes him observe that, through the separation of the two forces that lie within the psyche, the evil side will follow his aspirations while "(...) the just could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path (...) no longer exposed to disgrace and penitence (...)" (Stevenson: 68). Consequently, Jekyll decides to prepare a concoction that is to simultaneously achieve his scientific objective of altering "(...) the very fortress of identity (...)" (Stevenson: 69), separating his wicked side from the righteous one, and to be able to enjoy the possibility of indulging the desires he was forced to conceal under the appearance of Hyde avoiding, as Subhavan remarks in her introduction to the story, his "(...) fear of social criticism." (Subhavan, 2015: 65). Thus, Jekyll's double has come into existence via the projection conducted by the doctor of the immoral and wicked features which he acknowledges as being a part of his identity, although these have been repressed by the principles of propriety which permeate society. Finally, one further contrast between Wilson and Hyde as being the shadows of their respective characters may be hinted in relation to the notion of the re-assimilation implied by Jung in order to amend a divided psyche. Gamache observes "(...) the best possible solution for a fragmented psyche is to mend it and make it whole once again. In other words, a person who is haunted by a double must first identify and confront that double; thereby taking responsibility for it, and then re-assimilate it in order to form

a coherent psychic whole.” (Gamache: 5). While in “William Wilson” the narrator does not take any kind of responsibility for the wrong-doings he carry out, in *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* guilt does appear in two moments of the narrative, suggesting an attempt on Jekyll’s behalf to assimilate back his id. The first of these episodes occurs during one conversation between Utterson and Jekyll when Jekyll says “I swear to God I will never set eyes on him again. I bind my honour to you that I am done with him in this world.” (Stevenson: 31), exposing the culpability he feels towards Hyde’s crimes, his awareness of the decrease of authority he assumes to have over the double and what Ballesteros González identifies as “(...) el deseo de Jekyll de acabar con la parte oculta que ahora ha crecido (...)” (Ballesteros González: 291). The second attempt to assimilate Hyde back is observable in Jekyll’s decision to discard his id after he realizes “(...) I was slowly losing hold of my original and better self (...)” (Stevenson: 76). Consequently, he chooses the dry life of the doctor, casting away all the pleasures he enjoyed under the guise of Hyde in an attempt to bring his impulsive side under his control once and for all. Nevertheless, as the story progresses Stevenson observes “[t]he powers of Hyde seemed to have grown with the sickness of Jekyll.” (Stevenson: 84), implying that no other possible way apart from death is left on Jekyll’s behalf to bring his double back under his control since it is an inseparable part of his self. Therefore, Jekyll exposes both the responsibility he takes for the deeds of Hyde as well as his desire to assimilate him back in a final effort to cast off his wickedness. Nevertheless, it is relevant to suggest a possible deviation between the instances of re-integration of the shadow taking place in both stories since, while in Poe’s story it takes place in a unconscious way via the murder of the double at the narrator’s hands, in *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* it may be observed this deliberately occurs in the last moment when “(...) Henry Jekyll can think his own thoughts or see his own face (now sadly altered!) in the glass.” (Stevenson: 85). Hence, it can be argued the difference here is observable in the fact that Jekyll consciously decides to commit suicide, exemplifying the re-assimilation of the id-like Hyde back into his psyche, even though it is through his own death.

4.2. The doppelgänger in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

Supposing that Oscar Wilde’s oeuvre *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is, as Stegner remarks, a work “(...) that complicates the notion of aesthetics and ethics because it offers a scenario in which a hedonist is tortured for his over-indulgence in life’s “sensations”.” (Stegner: 56), possibly distancing it from the use of the *doppelgänger* motif defining the

two previously analyzed texts since it seems to focus more on aesthetics, it does in fact introduce some interesting aspects with respect to this motif which may expose both a connection with Poe's use of this theme in "William Wilson" while hinting some aspects that may expose a deviation in its employment and treatment in Wilde's work.

Having argued that various connections may exist between the double from "William Wilson" and the one from *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, identified in the portrait of Dorian painted by Basil Hallward, the first one could be located in a notion pointed out when analyzing the nature of Poe's double from a psychological perspective (see pp. 24 – 33 of this study) since it is likely to perceive the presence of the Freudian uncanny in the "magical" attributes displayed by the portrait. As quoted in section 3.1.1, the uncanny is characterized by such features as the supernatural and unfamiliarity, establishing the strangeness that is to be found in a familiar object both within the context of the story and in the characters' mind. This being said, the unfamiliarity of a familiar entity, in Poe's double, is seen through his characterization as a student, an individual whose looks do not suggest any kind of odd features despite its more than obvious supernatural features that are hinted as the narrative progresses. Nonetheless, uncanniness in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is to be perceived in the painting, an element that even with its being well-known to all characters taking into consideration their high social class, presents some highly peculiar and unfamiliar concerning the alterations it undergoes as Dorian's corruption increases throughout the narration, this being manifested in its first change after he leaves Sybil Vane when Dorian perceives "(...) the lines of cruelty round the mouth as clearly as if he had been looking into a mirror after he had done some dreadful thing." (Wilde, 1992: 73)⁴¹, covering the subsequent transformations the portrait is to undergo until the end of the story. The uncanniness of these alterations may be seen in what Ballesteros González argues about the relation between the picture and Dorian as he defines it as being "(...) de carácter quiasmático, ya que mientras Dorian (...) permanece sorprendentemente joven, es el retrato el que envejece y representa todos los vicios de su poseedor." (Ballesteros González: 312). Moreover, another element which alludes to the strangeness of Wilde's case of the double, differentiating it from "William Wilson", is seen in its nature as it is represented via a material object, a picture, therefore evincing a

⁴¹ This quotation and the following ones from Wilde's work have been retrieved from its edition of 1992. The publication date will be excluded from now on and, in case a different edition is employed, the corresponding date will be provided.

contrast with the double from Poe's work because it is depicted as a human being, observable in how the narrator identifies the double as "(...) a scholar (...)" (Poe: 114).

If the revelation the double conducts of the crimes and vices committed by the narrator or protagonist of a story, as Stegner suggests (see pp. 30 – 31 of this research), is considered an additional connection between the doubles from these two stories might be suggested in relation to what Ballesteros González observes when he refers to "(...) la capacidad de la pintura para convertirse en doble de aquél a quien representa (...) y la función que cumple el retrato como espejo que dinámicamente refleja las transformaciones de su poseedor." (Ballesteros González: 312). Dorian acknowledges the painting will expose the sins and vices towards which he has yielded through the alterations it undergoes during the narrative, therefore suggesting a change from the active revelation of the narrator's crimes conducted by the double from "William Wilson" since the picture does not confront Dorian personally as happens in Poe's tale yet it will bear the mark of his corruption on its surface. This is what moves Dorian to place it in an isolated room "(...) that was to keep for him the curious secret of his life and hide his soul from the eyes of men." (Wilde: 97). From this attempt on Dorian's behalf to hide the portrait, preventing any exposure of his sins, one could sense a difference with Poe's tale because, in Wilde's work, the protagonist is capable of preventing the exposition of his corruption whereas in Poe's tale the narrator finds no means of stopping this from taking place.

Through this consideration of the picture as the means via which the crimes of Dorian Gray could be revealed, an additional link between these two stories might be evinced while hinting some possible deviations in the treatment of the doubles employed by the authors. If Dorian's words "[t]he picture, changed or unchanged, would be to him the visible emblem of conscience." (Wilde: 74) are analyzed along the consideration, in section 3.1.1, of the double from "William Wilson" as the representation of the narrator's morality who punishes him for his transgressions it is possible to argue that the picture in Wilde's work is given the status of superego as it fulfills the function of the element who disciplines Dorian, by means of the changes it experiences and the subsequent distress to which he is subjected for the corruption and vices to which he succumbs. The changes from Poe's double arise from the fact that Dorian, after becoming aware of the possible crime exposition through the picture, attempts to change his life for good, saying "I want to be good. I can't bear the idea of my soul being hideous." (Wilde: 79), exposing a

momentary attempt to fix his life which differentiates him from the narrator of Poe's story as he does not attempt, at any moment, to improve his life moved by the persecution of his conscience. Additionally and regarding this interpretation of the painting as the representation of Dorian's conscience, the concept of the Jungian shadow might again be evoked in order to suggest a difference between its connection with Poe's double and the one that could be applied to the portrait painted by Hallward. Defined as the part of the human psyche that integrates the negative and socially-rejected traits and emotions (see p. 27 of this paper) the shadow in relation to Wilde's work can be considered as an instance that seems to follow its normal definition, therefore hinting a rejection of the subversion of this concept found in "William Wilson" since in Wilde's work the painting comes to existence as the entity which will expose all the corruption and wickedness that should have tarnished Dorian's appearance for his immoral deeds. Nonetheless, it is important to argue that, despite the difference of the nature of the shadow, in Wilde's oeuvre it is created following the style of the one from Poe's. Dorian Gray, when he sees the portrait for the first time, says:

"How sad it is! I shall grow old, and horrible, and dreadful. But this picture will always remain young. It will never be older than this particular day of June ... If it were only the other way!" to then utter the fatal words "Oh, if it were only the other way! If the picture could change, and I could be always what I am now!" (Wilde: 24 – 25),

suggesting that, even though these words could imply some kind of consciousness shaping the supernatural alteration the picture is to undergo, it is an unconscious complaint he utters, without being aware of the fatal consequences his words will have throughout the narrative.

Having covered these possible connections and differences between the *doppelgängers* from "William Wilson" and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, one additional feature may possibly evince a similarity having to do with the way in which both the stories and the existence of the doubles are put to an end. As mentioned before in the section devoted to the psychological examination of Poe's double with respect to the idea of fusion Otto Catón refers to as the process through which two beings or entities are to be found within one single individual (see p. 34 of this study) . In this regard, the conclusion of "William Wilson" depicts the merging of the narrator and the double by means of the mirror in which the former recognizes himself as the fatally wounded double he believes to have defeated, and in this style Wilde's work introduces the notion of fusion

when Dorian decides to destroy the painting as he believes “[i]t would kill the past, and when that was dead he would be free.” (Wilde: 177). As he picks up a knife and stabs the picture, the fusion is completed since Dorian kills himself when he pierces the canvas. The merging is consequently exemplified in the last paragraph of the work:

“When they entered, they found hanging upon the wall a splendid portrait of their master as they had last seen him, in all the wonder of his exquisite youth and beauty. Lying on the floor was a dead man, in evening dress, with a knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled and loathsome of visage. It was not until they had examined the rings that they recognised who it was.” (Wilde: 177)

5. CONCLUSIONS.

5.1. Discussion of the results.

Once the analysis with respect to the *doppelgänger* motif from Edgar Allan Poe’s story “William Wilson” and its contrastive examination with the instances of this theme from R. L. Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* has been completed throughout the course of sections 3 and 4, it is time to focus on the results which can be drawn from the different aspects that have been dealt with.

Regarding the contextualization of the Gothic genre in the UK and the USA from its inception up until the 19th century carried out in section 2 it is relevant to remark that, by means of the examination of Punter’s *Literature of Terror – The Gothic Tradition*, Hogle’s *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, Botting’s *Gothic – The New Critical Idiom*, and Crow’s *History of the Gothic – American Gothic*, the characterization of the genre from its origin has been completed. By employing the first three works mentioned above, the conception of this genre has been connected to the rise of the novel during the second half of the 18th century while referring to Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) as the first work labelled as Gothic. From this initial consideration onwards, the three works have enabled the possibility of identifying the subversive nature of the genre from its origin, its connections with other literary forms such as Graveyard poetry and Augustinism as well as exposing the central periods and authors that shaped the genre from the moment it appeared in the literary stage. Names such as Walpole, Beckford, Radcliffe, and Lewis are paramount in the early period of the genre while its connections with French and German productions hint the relevance of the Gothic in the continent via its echoes in productions from these two countries and in the adaptations and translations

of works conducted by British writers. During the 18th, romantic authors like the poets Blake, Keats, and Byron were associated to the Gothic mode whereas the writer Mary Shelley produced one of the central works of the Gothic canon, *Frankenstein* (1818). Through these three critical texts the period of historical revival during the 1830s and 1840s has enabled to comprehend the relevance of Sir Walter Scott for this genre along with the publication of works from another subgenre not so well-known, the ghost story with authors like Sheridan Lefanu and *Carmilla* (1872), Charles Dickens, and Elizabeth Gaskell. Botting's *Gothic – The New Critical Idiom* has been the work mainly employed for the characterization of the Gothic genre in the last decades of the 18th century as it focuses in the seminal works from this period, Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890), and Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) while alluding to the relevance of Darwin's theories from *The Origin of Species* (1859) and in *The Descent of Man* (1871) had on the divulgation of the consideration of scientific progress as a threat to social structures since human beings were connected to . On the other hand, Crow's work has exposed that American Gothic is a literary mode that enabled American to express the preoccupations that permeated society while simultaneously capacitating a re-examination of concealed historical aspects. Despite its initial rendition following both the subversive nature of the British Gothic as well as the imitation of certain stylistic features, Crow's text exposes American Gothic is not limited to authors like Edgar Allan Poe or Henry James as, from the colonial period onwards, writers like William Bradford, Cotton Mather, Charles Brockden Brown, Washington Irving, and Herman Melville produced texts which enable the representation of the preoccupations that permeated American society while suggesting the Gothic potential of the American landscape.

As for the examination of the double motif in "William Wilson" by Edgar Allan Poe, it is possible to assert that the implications which arise from its consideration as the source of horror and agony for the narrator suggest that, despite the somewhat positivity which seems to define the double from this story, it is possible to characterize it in terms of the frightening and persecuting figure which forces the protagonist of the story to endure a constant haunting from the moment it begins to interfere with his deeds as Elena Otto Catón suggests in her article and as it has been manifested regarding the second purpose of this research. On the other hand, the interpretation of this motif in regard to both the concepts of the Freudian uncanny and the Jungian shadow and the considerations argued

by Gamache, Romero, Diamond, and Crow has demonstrated it is feasible to carry out a characterization of this instance of the *doppelgänger* motif in terms of its being, on the one hand, characterized by a certain degree of uncanniness taking into consideration its appearance under the guise of a human being and the supernatural character which surrounds its presence in the story. On the other hand and via the approach followed in this section, it is possible to argue that the variation of the Jungian shadow seemingly exposed throughout the course of the narrative with respect to the depiction of the double enables the possibility of defining it as the positive entity which embodies the morality of its host, eventually leading to its consideration as the representation of the narrator's conscience. Additionally, through the reference to the repressed morality of the narrator from "William Wilson" a likely connection with "The Imp of the Perverse", a connection between the two stories may be evinced taking into account the mutual proneness towards degeneration and immorality that characterizes both narrators as well as the revelation of their crimes through their conscience. Finally, a possible answer to the ambiguity related to the real presence of the double in the story as a separate being has been introduced, following some arguments proposed by Gamache, Otto Catón, and Sørensen in their respective works, to argue that, despite the seemingly autonomy which appears to define the double, it does not constitute a separate being since it is a part of the narrator's identity.

Conclusively, the contrastive analysis between Poe's story, Stevenson's work, and Wilde's text has suggested an array of similarities that may be identified with respect to the three instances of the double motif in these productions. Regarding the connections and variations between the *doppelgängers* from "William Wilson" and *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the studies conducted by Singh and Chakrabarti and Subhavan enable the establishment of an opposition between the id-like nature of Hyde and the superego constituent of the American double while simultaneously hinting the relations and differences between the two characters in terms of degeneration and atavism and the variation to be found if Hyde and the *doppelgänger* from Poe's text are analyzed in reference to the Jungian shadow. On the other hand, the comparative study between "William Wilson" and Wilde's oeuvre has granted the possibility of establishing the similarities and differences in their employment of the double motif around the notion of the uncanny, manifested in the changes the portrait undergoes throughout the story which allude to the relation between Poe's use of the magic portrait, and the shadow connected to the revelation of the crimes, or in Wilde's case, of the sins committed by the protagonist

as Stegner suggests in his dissertation. Consequently, it has been established that both doubles come to embody the conscience or morality of their hosts, reminding them of their transgression and corruption. Finally, through the comparison of the ways in which the stories and the doubles are put to an end the idea of fusion mentioned by Elena Otto Catón evinces that in both texts they are dissolved through the desire of their hosts to cast off the haunting and horror the doubles have forced them to endure, eventually causing their own demise since the *doppelgängers* have always been an inseparable part of their identity.

5.1. Limitations of the study and lines for future research.

Several academic and scholarly studies have been conducted on the analysis of the *doppelgänger* motif in works like Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and Stoker's *Dracula* as it can be inferred from some of the works studied for the completion of this paper such as Singh and Chakrabarti (2008), Gamache (2012), Romero (2013), and Subhavan (2015), but it has to be remarked that researches entirely devoted to the examination of the presence of this motif in the works of Edgar Allan Poe and in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* are limited since only Sørensen (1994), Otto Catón (2005), Stegner (2007), and Fernández-Santiago (2013) have commented on or alluded to this feature, briefly in some cases. As a consequence, this scarcity of critical examinations on the double motif in the tales mentioned above has prevented the possibility of interpreting them with access to a selection of interpretative stances that would have suggested additional ways of characterizing these two instances of the motif regarding the views introduced in section 3.2 and 4.2, remarking their being the source of the agony and horror which the narrators are forced to endure. Additionally, it has also to be observed that the access to a wider corpus of critical and psychological studies analyzing the doubles from "William Wilson", *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* would have been deemed as practical both for the characterization of Poe's *doppelgänger* in terms of the uncanny and the shadow and for the contrastive examination that has suggested similarities and differences between the three examples of the motif introduced in section 4.

In relation to the possible course of future research that may be conducted regarding the analysis of the *doppelgänger*, there could be suggested two possible lines that might shed light upon its presence in other literary productions. First of all, it can be argued that an in-depth examination of other instances of this motif within the Gothic literary canon

could be conducted in order to evince its presence in works such as *Wuthering Heights*, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, or Stevenson's story "Markheim" while simultaneously alluding to the connections between this story and *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Additionally and following the study of the presence and use of the double motif, a rather insightful examination could be devoted to its analysis in non-literary productions like films or TV series as *Mr. Robot* (2015) created by Sam Esmail so as to evince its presence in other means of communication aside from literature and its influence in the some of the latest and most successful means of entertainment. Finally, it could be suggested that a study devoted entirely to the examination of Poe's literary influence over Stevenson and Wilde might be carried out, complementing the work by Stegner on the presence of Edgar Allan Poe in Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in an effort to assert if the style and themes of the American author exerted some degree of influence not only in Wilde's masterpiece and literary output as a whole but also in the texts produced by R. L. Stevenson.

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