

## Thematizing the Subject from Gothicism to Late Romanticism

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**Slobodan Sucur,**  
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**Abstract:** In "Thematizing the Subject from Gothicism to Late Romanticism," Slobodan Sucur takes Habermas' suggestion that "modern art reveals its essence in Romanticism; and absolute inwardness determines the form and content of Romantic art" and offers an analysis of a spectrum of primary texts in relation to the statement. The texts analysed range from Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* to Odoyevsky's *Russian Nights*. The texts are analyzed in chronological fashion, in an attempt to see how the thematization of the subject shifts as the Early Gothic novel (Walpole, Radcliffe) develops into High Romanticism (Hoffmann, Maturin) and finally into Late Romanticism (Poe, Odoyevsky). There appears to be a gradual but perceptible shift from third- to first-person narration across this broad period. Consequently, the present study engages ideas of the sublime (Edmund Burke, Carl Grosse), the picturesque (Uvedale Price), and spatial constructs, and attempts to see the ways in which such ideas reconfigure the subject and are themselves reconfigured as the subject is further thematized during these significant years in which the Gothic novel is transformed into other Romantic and Late Romantic forms.

## Slobodan SUCUR

### Thematizing the Subject from Gothicism to Late Romanticism

Keeping in mind that the thematization of the subject is for Jürgen Habermas a legacy of the Enlightenment, I would like to speculate on his statement, that "Modern Art reveals its essence in Romanticism; and absolute inwardness determines the form and content of Romantic art" (The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity 18). Such a comment may shed new light on the process through which the picturesque, the sublime, the garden, the labyrinth, and other spatial constructs, have been conceptualized in the movement from Gothic to Romantic literature. What should also be kept in mind is the nature of the relationship between the thematization of the subject (via Romanticism) and the conceptualization of the above mentioned literary features. Since this topic occurs in multi-layered ways, I shall split this paper into two parts. In the first section, I will comment more generally on Habermas' idea that Romantic art thematizes the subject, and will play this idea against certain, relevant texts, to see how such thematization of the subject shifts, or does not shift, as Gothic literature develops into High Romanticism and then into Late, "Biedermeier" Romanticism (Nemoianu). In the second part of the paper, in order to go beyond the speculative nature of the first part, I will attempt to offer more concrete proof for a possible shift in the thematization of the subject as Gothic literature developed and transformed itself, by directly engaging ideas of the picturesque, the sublime, the garden, and the labyrinth. Specifically, by examining spatial/landscape constructs, thereby seeing how such ideas reconfigure the subject and are perhaps themselves reconfigured as the subject is further thematized. Texts looked at will include Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, Radcliffe's *The Italian*, Lewis's *The Monk*, Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, Hoffmann's *Die Serapionsbrüder*, Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher," and Odoyevsky's *Russian Nights*. A variety of texts that span the period from 1764 to 1844 -- a period that can generally be described as the "Romantic Century" (Galperin and Wolfson; see at

<<http://www.rc.umd.edu/features/crisis/crisisa.html>>) -- have been chosen for two reasons: a) primarily to emphasize the comparative nature of this study, a comparison founded on the idea that Romanticism can be thought of as a roughly unified movement in European literature and b) to emphasize the diachronic, historical aspect of the texts being looked at, an aspect which allows for the possibility that Romanticism developed in phases, and under various names, namely, the Gothic novel, High Romanticism, and Late (Biedermeier) Romanticism, a final stage of "withdrawal" (Nemoianu 36).

#### A Possible Thematization of the Subject?

It is my opinion that the subject is fully thematized (if such things can be done after Derrida) only within a first-person narrative, requiring a participatory narrator, and needless to say, part of the reason why this is so is because first-person narration creates a sense of closure, framing the text within one paradigm, that obviously and consciously emanates from the narrative voice. This does not mean that first-person narratives cannot be found in other periods, apart from the Romantic era. They were quite prominent in the Rococo epistolary form: "the first-person narration is narcissistic and [...] first-person (fictional) narration is specifically characteristic of the rococo [...] not felt in the preceding Baroque and Classical movements [...] When the ego later comes back into its own, with the rise of the bourgeoisie and the advent of Romanticism, first-person narration dwindles almost to the point of disappearance -- no doubt because such subordinate outlets [of emotion] are no longer necessary" (Brady 217-8). Nonetheless, it seems to me that a general equation can still be established, with reference to the development of Gothic literature, that, as it developed, and was later transformed or bonded with Romanticism proper, particularly its last phase, the Biedermeier, a greater preference was once again given to the first-person mode, as in Odoyevsky's *Russian Nights*, and particularly in Poe's short stories. Habermas, in one of his articles on the Enlightenment and the problem of relativism, "The Unity of Reason in the Diversity of Its Voices," begins by saying the following: "The One and the Many," unity and plurality, designates the theme that has governed metaphysics from its inception.... One side bemoans the loss of the unitary thinking of metaphysics and is working either on a rehabilitation of pre-Kantian figures of

thought or on a return to metaphysics that goes beyond Kant. Conversely, the other side attributes responsibility for the crises of the present to the metaphysical legacy left by unitary thinking within the philosophy of the subject and the philosophy of history. This side invokes plural histories and forms of life in opposition to a singular world history and lifeworld, the alterity of language games and discourses in opposition to the identity of language and dialogue, and scintillating contexts in opposition to univocally fixed meanings" (399).

This problematic distinction which Habermas is trying to draw between unitary and multiple voices is significant when we view it alongside the possible thematization of the subject which is occurring in Gothic fiction, and within the historical development of that fiction. If the subject is thematized more thoroughly in the later fiction, of Hoffmann, Poe, Odoyevsky, etc., it has become more thematic via a perceptible, even though not complete and totalized, shift from third-person to first-person narration. In this context, and to bring Habermas' thoughts back into the argument, I will say that the "plural histories" which he mentions are more obviously felt in a third-person narrative, where characters (and the individual traits and histories of characters) are handed out to the reader through a larger, rather detached narrative voice, thereby maintaining a type of textual chaos. The "unitary thinking of metaphysics," which Habermas mentions, and of post-metaphysical inquiries, I will add, is most obviously seen in the first-person narrative, that subsumes textual chaos (a result of multiple characters and characterization) within an obvious, self-advertising single voice. It is important to mention that this unity (which I have spoken of as being found in the first-person mode) is not necessarily a pre-Kantian idea of unity, one founded, as Habermas says, on a "transcendental concept of the world," but rather, it is a new unity founded in "the temporal, social, and spatial dimensions," dimensions which I will come back to in the second part of this paper (409). This new unity was of course largely developed in Romanticism proper, as Habermas implies when he says that while Kant was "unable to overcome this dualism of worlds [unified and multiple]," Hegel attempted to do so:

In demolishing Platonic idealism, he [Hegel] adds the last imposing link to the chain of tradition that extended through Plotinus and Augustine, Thomas, Cusanus and Pico, Spinoza and Leibniz; but he does this only by revitalizing the concept of universal unity in a distinctive way. Hegel sees his philosophy of reconciliation as an answer to the historical need for overcoming the diremptions [separations] of modernity in modernity's own spirit. The same idealism that had denied any philosophical interest to the merely historical qua nonbeing is thereby placed under the historical conditions of the new era. That explains first why Hegel conceives of the one as absolute subject, thereby annexing the metaphysical figures of thought to that concept of autonomously acting subjectivity from which modernity draws its consciousness of freedom and, indeed, the whole of its characteristic normative content consisting of self-consciousness, self-determination, and self-realization. And it explains second why he lays claim to history as the only medium for the mediation of the one and the many, the infinite and the finite (409-10).

Marshall Brown's argument, in his article, "A Philosophical View of the Gothic Novel," tends to overlap with Habermas's own thoughts because while Brown does not speak of Hegel, he does mention Kantian ideas quite often, and even says the following: "Kant's imagination, like that of a gothic novelist, is haunted at its edges by a mysterious world beyond the limitations of understanding; as has been written in the only comprehensive study of Kant from this perspective, "The Kantian construction of the enlightened subject contains an opaque etiology, a history of terror, of anxiety and deprivation." This domain is inhabited, for instance, by that shadowy 'something = X' repeatedly invoked by the *Critique of Pure Reason*; this ghost of Kant's system is a presence somewhere in the mind, yet outside the bounds of experience "[and this] shows us how closely the transcendental imagination can approximate a Gothic vision" (281). It is Brown's idea of the "something = X" in Kant's system that works as a fairly accurate analogy to the sense of mystery, tension, foreboding, and so on, which we find in the earlier phase of the Gothic novel, from Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* to Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*, while Habermas's idea, that "Hegel conceives of the one as absolute subject, thereby annexing the metaphysical figures of thought to that concept of autonomously acting subjectivity from which modernity draws its consciousness of freedom" is certainly more applicable to Poe's mode of composition, which mostly consists of first-person narratives that emphasize an immediate participation, on the narrator's part, with the events of the story, however ironic or detached the narrator may appear to be (and

Poe is often considered a forerunner of modernity/modernism). To get back to my earlier point, I believe that this shift from earlier Gothic narratives to later, Romantic ones, which foreshadow "Modern Art," as Habermas says, and also thematize the subject, is at least in part tied to the shift from third-person to first-person narration (however incomplete that shift may be). This shift is of course gradual, and there are moments when the third-person and first-person forms exist together, within a convoluted and layered structure, as in Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, but nonetheless, the argument is worth making.

Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* is not only considered the first of the Gothic novels, it is also most easily described as a third-person narrative and even begins in a fairy-tale fashion: "Manfred, prince of Otranto, had one son and one daughter: the latter, a most beautiful virgin, aged eighteen, was called Matilda. Conrad, the son, was three years younger, a homely youth, sickly, and of no promising disposition; yet he was the darling of his father, who never showed any symptoms of affection to Matilda" (15). I have mentioned that in order for the subject to be fully thematized, a first-person form is required that through its very "personalization" brings in the question of the subject. This personalization is not present in the case of Walpole's novel. Walpole even added a further layer of distance between the narrative and the reading public by introducing the following statement into the preface to the first edition of the book, which came out in December of 1764: "The following work was found in the library of an ancient catholic family in the north of England. It was printed at Naples, in the black letter, in the year 1529. How much sooner it was written does not appear. The principle incidents are such as were believed in the darkest ages of christianity; but the language and conduct have nothing that savours of barbarism. The style is the purest Italian. If the story was written near the time it was supposed to have happened, it must have been between 1095, the æra of the first crusade, and 1243, the date of the last, or not long afterwards" (3). Thus, the work is not only a third-person narrative but was displayed as being a translation from an original.

In the case of Radcliffe's *The Italian*, it begins when an English traveller arrives in Naples, in 1764, and wishing to know more history about a mysterious confession which took place at the Santa Maria del Pianto, he is offered a lengthy "volume" by an Italian, a volume written by a "young student of Padua, who happened to be at Naples soon after this horrible confession became public," and it is later that evening that the Englishman, after arriving at his hotel and receiving the volume, begins reading from it (3-4). If this Englishman knows Italian, it is never mentioned, but neither is it clarified whether or not the manuscript that he reads was written in English. Either way, we have a double-framing occurring within the novel, similar to the double-framing that occurred in Walpole's work as well. Why do I call it a double-framing? The Italian begins a few pages before Chapter I, and in these filler pages the narrator indicates that the Englishman will be reading a manuscript. This manuscript then begins Chapter I, and is also in the third-person, like Walpole's text: "It was in the church of San Lorenzo at Naples, in the year 1758, that Vincentio di Vivaldi first saw Ellena Rosalba. The sweetness and fine expression of her voice attracted his attention to her figure, which had a distinguished air of delicacy and grace; but her face was concealed in her veil. So much indeed was he fascinated by the voice, that a most painful curiosity was excited as to her countenance, which he fancied must express all the sensibility of character that the modulation of her tones indicated" (5). Put simply, an external narrative frame, which is brief, but in the third-person, frames the inner narrative which makes up the novel, but that is also in the third-person, and this is what happens in Walpole's case as well, because the preface, which can be considered the external narrative, and that is in the third-person, frames the actual narrative (which is literally described as being a document), and is itself in the third-person. In both cases, then, we have an obvious framing of a narrative that is not only detached from the idea of self-conscious and reflexive, unitary subjects/subjectivities (being in the third-person), but is also a step removed in temporal and historical space, because these internal frames, that essentially form the novel, are being narrated after the fact; someone is reading these texts to us, and we cannot entertain the sense that they are occurring within a real-time context, as in the case when the narrator rides up to the House of Usher in Poe's story, and then directly speaks to us. Robert Miles, in his study of Radcliffe's *Italian*, speaks of how, by moving the narrative from an

external to an internal frame through a double structure, Radcliffe takes both the idea of "sensibility" and historical questions regarding the validity or lack-of-validity of this idea, which characterized her own age, and interweaves such doubt at a more obviously extreme and "sub-textual" level than in her previous works (169-72). My main point has been that this double, third-person structure characterizes both Walpole's *Otranto* and Radcliffe's *Italian*.

Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*, apart from marking the change from "terror" to "horror" Gothic (which is a common observation of the work), does something that I consider more significant in relation to Habermas' idea that Romanticism thematizes the subject. It actually does two things. First of all, it drops the external, third-person frame which contains the inner narrative that forms the novel, and in that way, we no longer have the earlier feeling of being told a story after it has occurred. We are now within a real-time context, to use a term I mentioned earlier. Nonetheless, *The Monk* retains some of the tradition of the earlier Gothic novel format because it does begin in the third-person mode: "Scarcely had the Abbey-Bell tolled for five minutes, and already was the Church of the Capuchins thronged with Auditors. Do not encourage the idea that the Crowd was assembled either from motives of piety or thirst of information. But very few were influenced by those reasons; and in a city where superstition reigns with such despotic sway as in Madrid, to seek for true devotion would be a fruitless attempt. The Audience now assembled in the Capuchin Church was collected by various causes, but all of them were foreign to the ostensible motive" (7).

Secondly, and more importantly in my opinion, even though the novel retains an essentially third-person structure, there is a moment when the first-person emerges, in something resembling a Hoffmannesque inner tale, but not exactly, because it is stretched over a couple of chapters, and thereby, I would argue, it is not unified enough to be called a proper tale within a larger narrative. The section begins in Chapter III of Volume I, is entitled "History of Don Raymond, Marquis de Las Cisternas," is narrated by the Marquis to the character Lorenzo, and ends with the beginning of Chapter II of Volume II, when it shifts back into the third-person: "Long experience, my dear Lorenzo, has convinced me, how generous is your nature: I waited not for your declaration of ignorance respecting your Sister's adventures, to suppose that they had been purposely concealed from you. Had they reached your knowledge, from what misfortunes should both Agnes and myself have escaped! Fate had ordained it otherwise! [...] [and at the end of the story] Here the Marquis concluded his adventures. Lorenzo, before He could determine on his reply, past some moments in reflection" (95-192). I consider this section quite significant, a section that can even be read as a rough prototype of the later, more personalized short story or story-inset of Romanticism. If I refer back to Habermas's idea, that Romanticism thematizes the subject, then this section of Lewis's novel can be considered an important historical point in the thematization of that subject because even though the novel, in its entirety, is a third-person structure, the story of Don Raymond is interwoven into the novel in such a way that the novel internally frames the first-person within its larger structure. Put simply, the novel, while not necessarily thematizing the subject in the way that Poe and Odoyevsky do, does frame the idea of subject and subjectivity quite consciously within its own structure, because the first-person becomes an "internal frame" of the third-person. I do admit that this is rather confusing because it implies that subjective structures can be framed within "objective," third-person frames, or, to use Habermas's own terminology when he spoke of unity and plurality, "scintillating contexts" can contain "univocally fixed meanings" ("The Unity of Reason in the Diversity of Its Voices" 399). While Lewis's *The Monk* does not thematize the subject in the full sense of the term, it does, via the Don Raymond story, encapsulate the grain and/or idea of subject and subjectivity, which will later be more fully thematized.

It is in Hoffmann's *Die Serapionsbrüder* and Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* that we see an even greater confusion between the first-person and third-person narrative, which may indicate that a greater struggle is occurring for the thematization of the subject by this time, the end of High Romanticism. In Hoffmann's case, there seems to be a variation between narrative modes. In the case of "Councillor Krespel," the introduction begins in the kind of first-person mode that we might expect from Poe: "Councillor Krespel was one of the most eccentric men I ever met in my life. When I went to H---, where I was to live for a time, the whole town was talking about him

because one of his craziest schemes was then in full bloom. Krespel was renowned as both an accomplished jurist and a skilled diplomat" (168). "The Mines of Falun," on the other hand, begins in the third-person form: "All the people of Göteborg had gathered at the harbor one cheerful sunny day in July. A rich East Indiaman, which had happily returned from distant lands, lay at anchor in Klippa Harbor; the Swedish flags waved gaily in the azure sky while hundreds of boats of all kinds, overflowing with jubilant seamen, drifted back and forth on the crystal waves of the Götaelf, and the cannon on the Masthuggetorg thundered forth resounding greetings toward the sea" (189). The third-person once again opens up "Mademoiselle de Scudéri": "Thanks to the favor of Louis XIV and the Marquis de Maintenon, Madeleine de Scudéri, known for her charming poems, inhabited a small house in the rue Saint Honoré" (213). The first-person mode did surface, as I said earlier, in Lewis's *The Monk*, but there it was still tied to the larger narrative itself, and the story of Don Raymond could only loosely be called a story, or story-inset, or tale within a tale, because it is too closely a part of the larger structure. In Hoffmann's case, even though he does not maintain the first-person mode in every tale, there is a sense that when it is used, as in "Councillor Krespel," it plays a more important, or rather, autonomous role than it does in *The Monk*, precisely because "Krespel" is structured as a full tale. It is not being thrown, without clear boundaries, into a larger third-person narrative. Part of the reason why Hoffmann more fully ingrains the notion of subject/subjectivity within the Krespel tale than Lewis does in his novel is because, as András Imre Sándor says in his study, *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Concept of Art and the Artist* (1967), Hoffmann considered the artist a "self-endangering superman" who is "his own hypnotizer," and the "Serapionistic principle is based on magnetism," in the sense that "art and hypnosis are related phenomena for Hoffmann, and without understanding magnetism we cannot understand his world of men or the world of the artist" (233). If we consider that first-person narratives thematize the subject fully we must also realize that they do have a certain hypnotic power, and "magnetism" seems an interesting analogy to this (Poe's "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar" is an even clearer example of this union of hypnosis, magnetism, "subject" thematization, and first-person narration).

Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* is perhaps one of the most profound examples of how the thematization of the subject is a gradual process, but also a process that is full of jumps and struggles, and temporary failures. It is a difficult novel to discuss, because it is several things. Devendra Varma, in *The Gothic Flame*, implies the importance of this work by saying that "eventually the two Gothic streams of 'terror' and 'horror' met in the genius of Charles Robert Maturin" (206). More specifically, I believe the work is important, particularly in relation to Habermas' idea of the thematization of the subject, because it is both a later Gothic novel and an example of the High Romantic aesthetic, or should I say High Romantic "titanism" (via the figure of Melmoth who is a wanderer, a Satanic figure, but also capable of being human, and thereby, he evokes images of the Renaissance man and of the Faustian thirst for knowledge and/or power). In this way, the novel goes beyond the aesthetics of Walpole, Radcliffe, and even Lewis. In the context of this High Romantic titanism that marks *Melmoth the Wanderer*, we also find that the idea of subject and subjectivity, and the notion of unified identity, is also at a crisis point. I am tempted to say that Maturin emphasizes this crisis of identity through the Baroque, polyphonic structure of the novel where we hear a variety of voices, but more importantly, the nature of the voices is not unified because some are fed to us through the third-person while others "introduce" themselves to us in the first-person, and some of the voices are given to us in real-time while others are literally contained in manuscripts. This struggle for subjectivity in the novel also appears rather Hegelian, especially because the events described are given a historical flavor and we jump back and forth between the late seventeenth century (when Melmoth was given prolonged life) and the early nineteenth century (when Melmoth must finally give up his extended life), and Habermas himself said, as I quoted earlier, that Hegel "lays claim to history as the only medium for the mediation of the one and the many, the infinite and the finite" ("The Unity of Reason in the Diversity of Its Voices" 410).

In this way, Maturin's novel, by struggling to thematize the subject in a grandiose way, also becomes dialectical through that struggle, as David Punter points out in his *The Literature of*

*Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions*: "The code of Gothic is thus not a simple one in which past is encoded in present or vice versa, but dialectical, past and present intertwined, each distorting each other with the sheer effort of coming to grips" (418-19). This dialectical deliberation on the idea of subject in Melmoth is also pointed out by Marshall Brown in his own article on the Gothic novel because of the reflexive nature of such a narrative, in which the idea of unified subjects is juxtaposed with the idea of disembodied subjects (which are no longer subjects): "Melmoth is typical of Gothic villains in that his real target is disembodied. Living an existence in which, as one of his minions says, 'emotions are my events,' he wants his victims to 'writhe with all the impotent agony of an incarcerated mind' and to suffer 'the agony of consciousness.' [...] In Melmoth [...] madness is neither sin nor punishment. Instead it is [...] the purest state of consciousness, thought without any definable object of thought" (285). This thought without the "object of thought" is one clear sign of a struggle that is occurring in the narrative, with regard to the thematization of the subject. And the convoluted, reflexive structure of the novel is largely responsible for creating this state of pure consciousness, a consciousness which not only emphasizes the presence of the subject but further questions the unity of the subject by shifting back and forth from third-person to first-person narrative.

Melmoth begins in the third-person, which is reminiscent of Walpole, Radcliffe, and Lewis: "In the autumn of 1816, John Melmoth, a student in Trinity College, Dublin, quitted it to attend a dying uncle on whom his hopes for independence chiefly rested" (7). John Melmoth (who is a descendant of the Wanderer) soon finds a manuscript in his uncle's closet which relates the tale of the Englishman Stanton (who came in contact with the Wanderer), and that tale is fed to us in the third-person: "Stanton, about the year 1676, was in Spain; he was, like most of the travellers of that age, a man of literature, intelligence, and curiosity, but ignorant of the language of the country, and fighting his way at times from convent to convent, in quest of what was called 'Hospitality,'" (28). Stanton's tale begins and ends in Chapter III of Volume I. In Chapter V of the same volume, the "Tale of the Spaniard" is related directly to John Melmoth, in the first-person, by a Spaniard: "I am, Senhor, a native of Spain, but you are yet to learn I am a descendant of one of its noblest houses, -- a house of which she might have been proud in her proudest day, -- the house of Monçada" (73). Within the frame of this first-person narrative of the Spaniard (which is occurring in real-time, by the way, since it is not read from a manuscript) there is embedded a brief first-person tale in Chapter IX of Volume II, usually known as "Tale of the Parricide," which is narrated by a monk to Monçada of events that occurred in 1796 (again in real-time), and then, starting in Chapter XIV of Volume III, a third-person narrative known as "Tale of the Indians" (set in 1676), which is actually a manuscript belonging to Adonijah the Jew, is "told" to us as Monçada copies out the manuscript: "There is an island in the Indian sea, not many leagues from the mouth of the Hoogly, which, from the peculiarity of its situation and internal circumstances, long remained unknown to Europeans, and unvisited by the natives of the contiguous islands, except on remarkable occasions" (272). Then, in Chapter XXVI of Volume IV, "The Tale of Guzman's Family" (set in the pre-1676 period) is introduced into the larger double-frame (which already includes the Spaniard tale in the first-person, framing the Indian tale that is in the third-person, and is a document). The Guzman tale is related by Adonijah the Jew to the character Don Francisco, but from a manuscript, which, in this case, peculiarly begins in the first-person but then drops into the third-person: "'In the city of Seville, where I lived many years, I knew a wealthy merchant, far advanced in years, who was known by the name of Guzman the rich.' [...] [and later we read how] Guzman had neither wife or child, -- relative or friend. An old female domestic constituted his whole household, and his personal expences were calculated on a scale of the most pinching frugality" (399).

The Guzman tale ends in Chapter XXVIII of the same volume, and then we are placed back within the larger frame of the Indian tale, or perhaps directly thrown into the even larger frame of the Spaniard's tale, and it is nearly impossible to figure out from where the narrative voice is emanating by this point in the book. Already in Chapter XXIX, Don Francisco is interrupted in his travel by a stranger (possibly the Jew Adonijah again) who relates another story to him, this time set in the 1660s, dealing with the Puritan Wars and the Restoration, and entitled "The Lover's

Tale" (and it is related directly, not from a manuscript, but still in the third-person): "In a part of that heretic country lies a portion of land they call Shropshire, [...] -- there stood Mortimer Castle, the seat of a family who boasted of their descent from the age of the Norman Conqueror, and had never mortgaged an acre, or cut down a tree, or lowered a banner on their towers at the approach of a foe, for five hundred years" (444). "The Lover's Tale" ends with the conclusion of Chapter XXXII, and we are then either thrown back into the Indian tale or perhaps the Spaniard's tale, but once again, we cannot be sure. We can only be certain that both the Spaniard's tale and the embedded tale of the Indian (which has further embedded tales within it) are concluded at the end of Chapter XXXVII, when the character of Isidora (formerly known as Immalee the Indian but now reverted to her Spanish heritage) dies. Finally, soon after this, the Wanderer does show up within the actual narrative (not merely in embedded manuscripts) and we are briefly told of his mysterious, Faust-like destruction at the hand of devils.

I mention the general structure of *Melmoth* because of its complexity and because of the dialectical way in which a third-person narrative (the novel itself) frames a first-person narrative (the Spaniard's tale) which in turn frames a third-person narrative (the Indian's tale), and so on. Robert D. Hume speaks of how in "its highest forms romantic writing claims the existence of higher answers where Gothic can find only unresolvable moral and emotional ambiguity" (290). Such unresolved ambiguity, which Hume believes to be the mark of a properly Gothic work, is of course found in *Melmoth* in the very structure of the narrative, that fluctuates between different voices and modes of narration, but I would still argue that such fluctuation is also the sign of Romantic, dialectical thought (as Habermas points out when mentioning how Hegel goes further than Kant in attempting to reconcile the division between unity and plurality). It appears that Robert L. Platzner is closer in argument to my own thoughts and also to Habermas's statement that Romanticism thematizes the subject, particularly through Hegel's "annexing of metaphysical figures of thought" to an "autonomously acting subjectivity." Platzner, arguing against Hume's distinction between "terror" and "horror" Gothic, and also against his distinction between Gothicism (which fails to transcend boundaries) and Romanticism (which does transcend boundaries), implies that *Melmoth* is a case where the division between Gothic and Romantic is blurred because of the transcendental qualities of that novel as a representative of the Gothic form. This transcendence occurs primarily through the character of *Melmoth*, who is a Faust-like figure, but, as I have argued, the transcendence also occurs through the structure of the novel which is rather Baroque, polyphonic, many-voiced, however we wish to call it.

This polyphony, while being a sign of the destabilization of the subject in the novel, is also a sign that a near-epic struggle is occurring to thematize the idea of a unified subject, precisely because within that polyphonic structure we find deeper levels of first-person narratives, much more consistently and consciously thematized than the single, loose intra-narrative of Don Lorenzo that we come across in Lewis's *The Monk*. Platzner argues that *Melmoth* is not "a papier-mâché villain" and that "if the category of Gothicism is to have any critical incisiveness it will have to exclude ... its 'emanations' [possibly *Melmoth*, certainly Poe's *Eureka* and Melville's *Moby Dick*] ... This kind of philosophical self-consciousness is as foreign to Gothic Romance as it is necessary to the 'metaphysical' novel, i.e., to that work of fiction which consciously chooses to explore the dimensions of reality or the ontological character of human existence" (271-72). With this in mind, we can see why Habermas would imply that Romanticism thematizes the subject and that it is an art of "absolute inwardness." In Maturin's *Melmoth*, we see this need for inwardness represented directly in the structure of the novel, which frames and intra-frames narratives (several of which are in the first-person) in order to give us a sense of process, that such literature is the point at which the subject is being thematized, so that while the narrative voice is not yet fully closed, fully in the first-person, a journey toward inner structures is still being mimicked by the narrative form. In this way, High Romanticism appears to be the period in which modern and pre-modern literature exists in a peculiar synthesis. *Melmoth* demonstrates this because the struggle between first- and third-person narration basically defines the novel and explains the difficulty in fully understanding the novel's implications.

I would say that it is in Poe's work, as representative of later, Biedermeier Romanticism, that we find Habermas's "absolute inwardness" and thematization of the subject fully realized: "Literatures without a core-romantic production tend to evolve a final phase [the Biedermeier] between Romanticism and Victorianism or Symbolism (hence Mácha, Krasinski and Norwid, Eminescu, Nerval, Poe)" (Nemoianu 238). We remember that in all of the Gothic novels mentioned the opening is always in the third-person, even if several first-person narratives may be framed within the later novels, as in Melmoth, and to a lesser extent in *The Monk*. Poe's *Narrative of A. Gordon Pym*, his only novel, opens in the first-person (as does Melville's *Moby Dick*, by the way): "My name is Arthur Gordon Pym. My father was a respectable trader in sea-stores at Nantucket, where I was born. My maternal grandfather was an attorney in good practice. He was fortunate in every thing, and had speculated very successfully in stocks of the Edgerton New Bank, as it was formerly called" (*The Collected Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* 1: 750). The first-person mode is of course felt even more strongly in Poe's short stories. His most famous work, "The Fall of the House of Usher," while recycling images from the earlier Gothic novels (*Otranto*, *The Italian*, etc.), creates a sense of closure and intensity not present in the earlier works: "During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher" (*Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe* 2 397).

Another one of Poe's important, but later stories, "The Cask of Amontillado," also begins in the first-person, and has the same intensity and closure (even though the second sentence would be considered to be in the second-person, if intended for the reader): "The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could; but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. At length I would be avenged; this was a point definitively settled -- but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity" (3 1256). One of the reasons why such a work as the Amontillado tale is more intense than perhaps the earlier Gothic novel is because Poe has taken the "confession," which appears frequently in such works (Radcliffe's *The Italian*, Lewis's *The Monk*, etc.), and has extracted it, molding it into a self-sufficient short story. But one expects this kind of modulation and elaboration on earlier literary themes and ideas to be one of the marks of Late Romanticism: One "large avenue of retreat from the regenerative and totalizing vision of [high] romanticism is separation of the parts, loosening up of the integrative unit" (Nemoianu 31). The fragmentation of previous literary trends, which Poe is so fond of, would thus be one of the reasons why Habermas' idea of Romantic "absolute inwardness" can so easily be seen in his work. This fragmentation of earlier Gothic trends, rather than making impossible the thematization of the unified subject (the "I" figure), exaggerates the presence of the subject by making it acutely aware of the fragmentary and reduced, literary universes it inhabits (which may foreshadow the existentialist paradigm); this exaggeration of the thematization of the subject is one of the reasons Poe's work is considered a forerunner of Symbolism, and simultaneously, because of that, it stands as a historical example of later, more extreme forms of Romanticism. One of the other reasons why tales like "The House of Usher" and "The Cask of Amontillado" display an extreme thematization of the subject is because of the artistically reflexive nature of these short narratives, partly owing to Poe's fondness for Romantic Irony via August Wilhelm Schlegel. G.R. Thompson speaks of how there is evidence that Poe read Schlegel's *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*, which was first translated into English in 1815, and that from "A.W. Schlegel alone [...] Poe could have gotten a sense of Friedrich Schlegel's more extreme concepts of 'higher' irony, 'self-parody,' and 'transcendental buffoonery,' tempered by August Wilhelm's wistful melancholy and more practical turn of mind" (26-30). As Platzner implied when arguing against Hume's "terror" and "horror" distinctions, there is a dialectical and metaphysical interaction between individual and environment in the later works which is not exactly what is happening in, let us say, Walpole's *Otranto*. This closer bond between individual and environment in Poe's work in part explains, or rather, is the reason why the subject is more fully thematized (but this will be discussed in the second part of my article).

Initially, we may be tempted to place Odoyevsky's *Russian Nights* closer to the Hoffmann-Maturin camp, not only because Odoyevsky was called "Hoffmann II" by Countess Rostopchina, but also because his novel is loosely based on the frame-tale format of *Die Serapionsbrüder* (Passage 91). However, because it is loosely based on it, we might also think of the bizarre frame-tale cluster of Maturin's *Melmoth* as being the forerunner of Odoyevsky's own project. As with *Melmoth*, *Russian Nights* also begins in the third-person mode: "The mazurka ended. Rostislav had gazed his fill at his partner's white, sumptuous shoulders and had counted all the violet little veins on them" (35). Without getting into too detailed an argument, I will say that the novel then proceeds to frame, in irregular intervals, eleven short stories (a few of which cannot be defined as stories, because they are half-a-page in length). Of these eleven tales, the first-person is the dominant mode in six of them, "Opere del Cavaliere Giambattista Piranesi," "The Brigadier," "The Ball," "The Avenger," "A City Without a Name," and "Sebastian Bach," while the third-person is the dominant mode in five of them, "The Mockery of a Corpse," "The Last Suicide," "Cecilia," "Beethoven's Last Quartet," and "The Improvvisatore." This near balance between first- and third-person narration, within a larger narrative that is in the third-person, might be considered even more consciously Hegelian than what is occurring in *Melmoth the Wanderer*, with its unusually polyphonic structure. And in that way, we might say that there is a struggle for thematizing the subject occurring in Odoyevsky's work that is of equal proportion with the epic struggle of Maturin's work, and this would then be a sign of High Romantic titanism that the two works have in common. Nonetheless, I believe that Habermas' idea of how Romanticism thematizes the subject via "absolute inwardness" is more clearly displayed in Odoyevsky's later Romantic work than in *Melmoth*, where the thematization is only occurring at a structural and not yet fully thematic level. Subject thematization would have been felt even more strongly in Odoyevsky's novel had he kept his original plan in mind: The author's manuscript Notebook No. 24, page 79, lists five proposed frame-tale speakers together with the aspect of life which each was to embody: Faust-Knowledge, Viktor-Art, Vjaceslav-Love, Vladimir (the author's own given name)-Faith, and "I"-Russian skepticism." The completed *Russian Nights* omits the "I" and makes the four remaining characters embody somewhat different concepts: Faust is a "mystic"; Viktor, his most frequent challenger, is a rationalist ("Condillacist"); Rostislav (formerly named Vladimir) is a Schellingian (as Odoyevskij himself had been); and Vjaceslav is a genial Voltairean (Passage 104).

But even without this character of the "I"-narrator, standing in for Russian skepticism, I still have my suspicions that *Russian Nights* (even though it is made up of varying modes of narrative, like *Melmoth*) is thematizing the subject in a more extreme, perhaps even post-Hegelian fashion, than the merely structural dialectic that is operating in the earlier work: "The theoretical writing of [...] V.F. Odoyevsky was merely organicist -- it shied away from the absolute claims of high-romantic titanism" (Nemoianu 150). I am willing to view Odoyevsky's novel as being typically Late Romantic, in the sense that it is already exaggerating the presence of subjectivity (whenever it chances to be in the narrative), and in that way, Odoyevsky's aesthetic is closer to Poe's than to Maturin's or even Hoffmann's. The "absolute inwardness" which Habermas believes to be present in Romanticism is, if we look at Poe's and Odoyevsky's work, only really absolute in this later phase of Romanticism (the Biedermeier), while High Romanticism, if we use Maturin's *Melmoth* but also Hoffmann's *Serapionsbrüder* as examples, is more properly dialectic, being obviously concerned, as Sándor implied in his study of Hoffmann, with the relationship between artist and society, which is, among other things, unstable: "This core of the [high] romantic model and purest form -- the possible-impossible expansion of the self to a seamless identification with the universe -- is unstable and explosive. Harold Bloom says that 'the man prophesied by the Romantics is a central man,' who seems always in the process of being begotten and who has not 'fleshed out his prophecy'" (qtd. in Nemoianu 27). I have dared to describe Odoyevsky's novel as post-Hegelian because even though the structure loosely mimics that of *Melmoth*, the theme goes further than its structure will allow, so to speak (which is a particularly existentialist exercise, as in Poe's work), especially because the final story which Faust reads to his friends (and which I did not mention because it is more of a list) is untitled, consisting of a series of questions posed by an imaginary court to the protagonists or antagonists of each of the tales that Faust had previously

found and read within the novel, and here, irrespective of the fact that half of the stories were in the third-person, everyone answers in the first-person, including Piranesi, including the student-economist who wrote such tales as "The Mockery of a Corpse," including Beethoven and Bach, and even the evil Dr. Segeliel from "The Improvvisatore," who, being evil, mocks the court and says, "Whatever you may say, however you may call things, whatever guise you may appear in, the I always remains the I and everything is done for that I. Gentlemen, do not trust this court; it doesn't know itself what it wants from us," and when the court attacks Segeliel for concealing himself, a disembodied voice answers with the following: "I cannot be expressed fully" (*Russian Nights* 200)! The post-Hegelian attitude of Odoevsky's novel is felt even more clearly in the earlier part of the book, when Faust, attempting to reason with one of the other characters, Rostislav, says the following: "Despite all my respect for Hegel, I can't help noticing that, either because of the obscurity of human language or because of our inability to understand the secret bond of reasonings of the famous German thinker, in his work one often encounters statements on the same page which are obviously in complete contradiction to one another" (68). As if this was not an obvious enough example of a non-Hegelian comment, Faust, at the beginning of the novel's epilogue, when accused by Vyacheslav that his favorite idea is "that we can't express our thoughts and that we do not understand one another when speaking," responds by saying that indeed this is his favorite idea because he "must use the same instrument to prove that this instrument is of no use" (201). In this way, Odoevsky's novel can be said to thematize the subject so extremely that the idea of subject and subjectivity eventually begins to lose its unity, because while the beginning was merely post-Hegelian, the dénouement has become Derridian, or at least proto-Derridian.

#### **The Role of Spatial Constructs in the Thematization of the Subject**

In the latter portion of the introduction I said that I would discuss how the picturesque, the sublime, the garden, the labyrinth, and so on, are conceptualized within this larger movement from Gothic to Romantic, and then post-Romantic literature. The implication behind such a comment is that somehow, if we keep in mind Habermas's idea of "inwardness" and subject thematization, these landscape, or more specifically, spatial constructs, such as gardens and labyrinths, are in some way acting as the vehicle through which the subject is thematized, but also, simultaneously, these constructs may be refashioned or remolded as the idea of subjectivity is further embedded as one of the main concerns in a narrative. One would assume that because Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* is a product of the mid-eighteenth-century milieu, then its structure, or rather, attitude, should be different than that of the Gothic novel of the 1790s. In the first part of the article, I spoke of how this novel is framed in the third-person, and doubly so, because the preface attempts to pass it off as a translation. The use of spatial constructs (i.e., landscape, architecture, facade, labyrinth) by Walpole is also peculiarly detached, particularly if we assume that such constructs should be thematizing the subject, or the idea of subject. J.R. Watson touches upon this topic when he speaks of how the walking skeleton, the statue with a nosebleed, the big helmet and sword, etc., which we find in *Otranto*, are signs that Walpole's Gothicism "is only the surface decoration of a stable [Augustan] neo-classical mind; the same mind that feared lest his description of the Grande Chartreuse would be thought 'too bombast and romantic' to one who had not seen the place," and that, as Sir Kenneth Clark pointed out, Walpole's villa, Strawberry Hill, and his novel were "more closely related to 'Rococo Gothic' than to the sentimental Gothic of ruins in a picturesque landscape" (60-61). In this way, Walpole is the exception in Gothic literature rather than the norm.

Needless to say, these spatial constructs like landscapes, labyrinths, gardens, etc., were eventually tied together with less obviously spatial ideas, like that of the "sublime," and this fusion of image with effect did not really enter the Gothic novel until its heyday of the 1790s, in the work of Radcliffe and Lewis. The idea of landscape, which was originally reserved for landscape gardening, gradually became fused with the idea of the picturesque, which now tied landscapes (spatial and practical things) with certain, more personal effects or emotions. The idea of the sublime played an even more powerful role in this development than the picturesque, and it might even be said that the sublime accommodated for or subsumed both the picturesque and

landscapes. There were several trends in this gradual development, and I give the general idea here by referring to Raymond Immerwahr, who writes about how Reverend William Gilpin played an important role in defining the picturesque and did so by touring England in the 1770s, and viewing the scenery from his carriage window through specially tinted "Claude Lorrain" glasses that were intended to cast a soft glow over the entire scene which was characteristic of that artist (35). As far as the more important term "sublime" is concerned, Immerwahr points out that it "has a much longer history than the other [...] concepts and has been enriched by a long association with philosophy, religion, ethics, and rhetoric" (36). The main source for such associations was the late Greek antique work, *On the Sublime*, which had grown in popularity since the Renaissance and was being attributed to Longinus in the eighteenth century; the other, equally important text was of course Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757, 1759; see at <<http://www.english.upenn.edu/~mgamer/Etexts/burkesublime.html>>), a work in which Burke defined the sublime as arising when "terror" and "pain" were close enough to a person to evoke an effect, but far enough so as not to do direct damage, "distance" being the key term (36). Immerwahr admits that other terms, like picturesque and romantic, are in a convoluted relationship with the sublime, and that the terms had "a tendency to merge in popular literature" (37). Nonetheless, these subtleties in terminology were being looked at by three English writers of the period who were concerned with the picturesque in both painting and landscape gardening: Humphrey Repton, Sir Uvedale Price, and Richard Payne Knight (37). In a way, there was an ideological battle occurring between Repton and Price regarding the precise meaning of picturesque and its significance for landscapes; Repton was following the traditional standard of landscape gardening (based on the work of Capability Brown) while Price, being strongly influenced by Burke's thoughts on the sublime, argued that landscaping should emulate painting more closely than was Repton's practice, and that gardens, parks, and paintings should share a common goal, the expression of the picturesque as an autonomous aesthetic tribute (37-38). Repton quickly pointed out something which is significant for the topic of my study, namely that "the deliberate neglect or decay" which Price was advocating in landscaping was not suitable for houses that were to be lived in or the estate over which they had to be approached (39). However, such principles were perfectly suited to the portrayal of houses and gardens in "romantic literature," more specifically in the Radcliffean Gothic novel (39). And Price's work, *An Essay on the Picturesque as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful* (see at <<http://www.english.upenn.edu/~mgamer/Etexts/price.html>>), was even published for the first time in 1794, the year that Radcliffe's most famous novel came out, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*.

Before I give an example of Radcliffe's method of portraying landscapes, which is similar to what Uvedale Price had in mind, I should also mention Carl Grosse's theory of the sublime that has been somewhat forgotten because of the importance placed on Burke's theory. Grosse contributed substantially to the definition of the sublime in his first book, *Über das Erhabene* (1783), and even more so in the sequel to his disquisition, "Über Größe und Erhabenheit" (1790) (Le Tellier 270). Grosse's work shows evidence that he was aware of the false Longinus's work on the sublime, aware of Burke's work, also of Moses Mendelssohn's study, *Betrachtungen über das Erhabene und Naive in den schönen Wissenschaften* (from 1758), aware of Joseph Addison's *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (from *The Spectator*, No. 412), and also aware of James Beattie's *Dissertations Moral and Critical* (from 1783) (271-73). Grosse's theory of the sublime is significant in relation to the Gothic novel for three reasons, I believe. First of all, Grosse believed that there was too large a gap between the beautiful and the sublime and that an intermediary stage was needed which "rendered beauty more captivating and the sublime less awful," so what he achieved was a "definition of the picturesque without knowing it" (279). Secondly, Grosse argued against Burke's fundamental idea that terror evoked the sublime; Grosse argued that terror only drains the strength which is required for the sublime to emerge, and that if terror is related to the sublime, then only so in the sense that after terror is withdrawn a person's energies are once again elevated, and if terror and the sublime seem to co-exist, it is possibly a coincidence (284). With such a modification of the sublime, Grosse comes rather close to Radcliffe's distinction between

terror and horror in her "On the Supernatural in Poetry" (1826) because he still allows for terror to be a possible signal of the approaching sublime, and his concern for the "deadening physical consequences of fear is a movement towards the definition of horror also provided by Mrs. Radcliffe" (285).

The third reason why I consider Grosse's theory of the sublime relevant to the Radcliffean Gothic novel (of the 1790s), but also to the general topic of this article, is because of a very subtle point that he makes when trying to look for evidence of the sublime in nature: He finds that every "wide, open space, every sweeping perspective of land, sea and sky inculcates sublimity," but more significantly, the effect is never "as powerful as that elicited by depth and height. The view from a tower into a chasm has greater effects on the mind than over a wide landscape" (290). By focusing on height and depth, Grosse thereby implies that if a thematization of the subject is to occur, it will come through spatial constructs, which is what I have been arguing so far in the second part of this paper. But there is something more significant here, the fact that Grosse conceptualizes space and depth in a purely literal fashion, in the sense that views from the top of a tower are more sublime than views from a flat plain. I am willing to say at this point, in the context of Grosse's definition of the sublime (and Radcliffe's novels as representative of such a definition), and also in the context of Habermas's idea of the "absolute inwardness" and subject thematization we see in Romanticism (particularly the later, Biedermeier kind), that the thematization of the subject not only occurs because of a shift in preference from third- to first-person narration, but also because literal depth is gradually replaced by metaphoric depth. The lengthy passage I now quote from Radcliffe's *The Italian*, when Ellena is abducted and taken to the monastery of San Stefano through wild scenery, gives one a clear sense of how Grosse's literal idea of space, height, and depth would work to evoke the sublime: "It was when the heat and the light were declining that the carriage entered a rocky defile, which shewed, as through a telescope reversed, distant plains, and mountains opening beyond, lighted up with all the purple splendor of the setting sun. Along this deep and shadowy perspective a river, which was seen descending among the cliffs of a mountain, rolled with impetuous force, fretting and foaming amidst the dark rocks in its descent, and then flowing in a limpid lapse to the brink of other precipices, whence again it fell with thundering strength to the abyss, throwing its misty clouds of spray high in the air, and seeming to claim the sole empire of this solitary wild. Its bed took up the whole breadth of the chasm, which some strong convulsion of the earth seemed to have formed, not leaving space even for a road along its margin. The road, therefore, was carried high among the cliffs, that impended over the river, and seemed as if suspended in air; while the gloom and vastness of the precipices, which towered above and sunk below it, together with the amazing force and uproar of the falling waters, combined to render the pass more terrific than the pencil could describe, or language could express. Ellena ascended it, not with indifference but with calmness; she experienced somewhat of a dreadful pleasure in looking down upon the irresistible flood; but this emotion was heightened into awe, when she perceived that the road led to a slight bridge, which, thrown across the chasm at an immense height, united two opposite cliffs, between which the whole cataract of the river descended. The bridge, which was defended only by a slender railing, appeared as if hung amidst the clouds. Ellena, as she was crossing it, almost forgot her misfortunes" (63).

Already in Lewis's *The Monk*, which is said to break with the Radcliffean tradition, even though the literalization of space and depth is still prevalent, there is a perceptible tendency away from such obviously external and wild scenery as in *The Italian* and a subtle movement towards interior space (which is still more literal than metaphoric, but is nonetheless a movement). Joseph Irwin, in his study of *The Monk*, seems to catch onto this subtle shift in landscape/spatial construct that is occurring here because he says that it "is difficult to see any real country or real city or real countryside in the novel, or even difficult to see inside any particular dwelling place unless it be the apartment of Elvira and Antonia" (49). As I argued in the first part of my study, using the example of the story-inset of Don Lorenzo (done in the first-person), Lewis's novel may be the seminal point at which the idea of subject has now consciously entered (via structural and other devices) into the narrative; the very subtle shift in spatial construct may be proof of this at the

thematic and visual level, especially because most of the later action in the novel occurs in underground vaults, when Ambrosio commits murder and incest, or in the earlier example when Matilda enters the vaults in order to participate in magic rituals: "She opened the wicket, and sought for the door leading to the subterraneous Vaults, where reposed the mouldering Bodies of the Votaries of St. Clare [...] the Friar bore his Lamp in full security: By the assistance of its beams, the door of the Sepulchre was soon discovered. It was sunk within the hollow of a wall, and almost concealed by the thick festoons of ivy hanging over it [...] [and later, during the ritual] He saw a bright column of light flash along the Caverns beneath. It was seen but for an instant [...] Profound Darkness again surrounded him, and the silence of the night was only broken by the whirring Bat, as She flitted slowly by him" (229-33).

When we come to Hoffmann's *Die Serapionsbrüder* and Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, we are already in a milieu in which the thematization of the subject is taking place, and the spatial constructs in this case are also engaged in a fine dialectical balance, which, if anything, should be a sign of High Romanticism. In this case, by "dialectical balance," I mean to say that both literal examples of space and depth can be found and examples which seem to be moving toward a metaphoric representation of subjectivity. In the case of Hoffmann's "The Mines of Falun," we have a rather obviously literal representation of depth, not only through the emphasis on the mines themselves but also through the description Elis Fröbom offers to Ulla, about their wedding gift, and even more so through the description which surrounds the discovery of Elis' body: "'Down in the shaft the cherry red sparkling almadine lies enclosed in chlorite and mica, on which is inscribed the chart of our life. You must receive it from me as a wedding present.' [...] [and] Then one day miners who were investigating an opening between two shafts found the corpse of a young miner lying in sulfuric acid in a bore nine hundred feet deep. When they brought the body to the surface, it appeared petrified" (210-01). Whether or not these representations should be taken only literally or also metaphorically is perhaps subject to debate, but there is certainly a more "internalized" feel to them, then, let us say, in the example which I offered from Radcliffe's novel (where there is no doubt that space and depth are conveyed literally). In "Mademoiselle de Scudéri," there is the example where Cardillac takes Olivier "into his secret vault" and shows him "his jewel cabinet" (257). There is certainly more closure in such a description than in the Radcliffe example. It is difficult to say just how far such descriptions go away from the merely literal, and this hesitancy in part could be a result of the position the High Romantic text takes. As I said in the first part of the discussion, if subject thematization is occurring here, which I believe it is, then it is more obviously occurring at a structural level than a fully thematic level.

Maturin's *Melmoth* is an even better example of this convoluted style. Here, the landscape descriptions, the labyrinthine passages, in general, the spatial constructs, are varied, or more specifically, polyphonic in nature, like the narrative structure. The more I think of the descriptions in *Melmoth*, the more I convince myself that there is a Baroque structure and theme operating in it. *Melmoth* is for literature what Rembrandt is for painting, or more specifically, what Goya is for painting (with Rembrandt-like characteristics). Dale Kramer, in his study of the novel, seems to catch onto this Rembrandt-like quality: He speaks of how "Gothicism is of only peripheral importance. Each tale is accompanied by descriptions of the setting -- invariably gloomy, with a flickering fire, dim candles, strong gusty winds outside, and dark wainscotting. The tellers are always intense, and they fearfully shoot glances into dark corners where the light either does not reach or creates impressions of lurking forms" (99). And it is because of this quality that Kramer summarizes as follows: "The one inescapable conclusion of noting the [novel's] progression is that Gothicism declines while social realism increases ... but how to account for the shifting emphases is not so easy" (125).

The Rembrandt-like quality of *Melmoth* is seen in several descriptions which are much different than those found in Radcliffe's *The Italian*, or even Lewis's *The Monk*. There is the description of the Wanderer's portrait: "John's eyes were in a moment, and as if by magic, rivetted on a portrait that hung on the wall, and appeared, even to his untaught eye, far superior to the tribe of family pictures that are left to moulder on the walls of the family mansion. It represented a man of middle age. There was nothing remarkable in the costume, or in the countenance, but the eyes,

John felt, were such as one feels they wish they had never seen, and feels they can never forget" (17-18). The Baroque flavor of the novel is, in my opinion, best represented when Monçada crawls into an underground passage directly beneath the home of Don Fernan di Nunez, as the Inquisition knocks on the door, and he then discovers the hidden room of Adonijah the Jew and goes on to describe its interior: "In the centre of the room stood a table covered with black cloth; it supported an iron lamp of an antique and singular form, by whose light I had been directed, and was now enabled to descry furniture that appeared sufficiently extraordinary. There were, amid maps and globes, several instruments, of which my ignorance did not permit me then to know the use, -- some, I have since learned, were anatomical; there was an electrifying machine, and a curious model of a rack in ivory; there were few books, but several scrolls of parchment, inscribed with large characters in red and ochre coloured ink; and around the room were placed four skeletons, not in cases, but in a kind of upright coffin, that gave their bony emptiness a kind of ghastly and imperative prominence, as if they were the real and frightful tenants of that singular apartment. Interspersed between them were the stuffed figures of animals I knew not then the names of, -- an alligator, -- some gigantic bones, which I mistook for those of Sampson, but which turned out to be fragments of those of the Mammoth, -- and antlers, which in my terror I believed to be those of the devil, but afterwards learned to be those of an Elk" (262-63).

As I spoke in the first part of the paper, it is when we move to the later, Biedermeier phase of Romanticism, and to Poe's work as representative of it, that we see Habermas's idea of "absolute inwardness" being fully attained. This achievement, apart from being seen through the obvious preference for first-person narration, is basically a product of the change which has occurred in spatial constructs. In the example I gave from Radcliffe's *The Italian*, we could clearly see Grosse's literal definition of height and depth at work. In Maturin's *Melmoth*, as I argued by mentioning Rembrandt and Goya and emphasizing the Baroque flavor, there is a partial, or rather, duplicitous thematization of the subject occurring because spatial descriptions are still rather literal but are nonetheless smaller in scope and more internalized, as in the case of Adonijah the Jew's secret apartment. In Poe's case, the spatial constructs, or rather, the portrayal of space and depth, seems more completely metaphoric than in Radcliffe's work, but also more clearly metaphoric than in Maturin's work (where there is a peculiar doubling of the literal and metaphoric). These new, metaphoric constructs of space and depth (i.e., internal landscapes) can be seen in Poe's key tale, "The Fall of the House of Usher." One of the characteristics of such metaphoric and complete thematization of the subject is a "psychologizing" feel to it all. Near the beginning of the tale, the narrator already hints at the personal connection between the house's fragile structure and Usher's fragile nerves by mentioning that "the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn" (*Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe* 2, 400). Such descriptions, which are reminiscent of Habermas's phrase, "absolute inwardness," are continued throughout the narrative, and become even more obviously metaphoric, internal, and hence, psychological. The narrator describes the main room Usher inhabits: "Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene" (2, 401). The narrator then speaks directly of Usher's hobbies, music and painting: "His long improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of von Weber ... [and] If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher ... there arose out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvass, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli" (2, 405). Near the end of the tale, the house, the tarn surrounding it, the narrator, and Usher, seem to come together as one thematic subject during a storm and the descriptions of that episode seem fully internalized, particularly through the emphasis on the "gaseous exhalation" and the unusual light that surrounds everything in the vicinity, and we find that the narrator is helplessly trying to comfort Usher: "These appearances,

which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon -- or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn" (2, 413).

Leo Spitzer emphasizes the importance of such descriptions which are found in the tale by speaking of how Roderick cannot resist his environment, because, according to scientific and sociological theories which were present in the year of the story's composition, 1839, Roderick was the "poetic embodiment of determinism," and Spitzer argues that the tale reflects "le réalisme des romantiques" [which is a Biedermeier characteristic] (63). More interestingly, my own comment, on how the thematization of the subject in Poe's tale is in part proven through the presence of a psychologizing feel, appears to overlap with Spitzer's own emphasis on how Poe draws together the significant strands of this story through "atmosphere": Spitzer compares Poe to Balzac and Kafka, and says that "environmentalism is portrayed 1) with empirical (factual) realism by Balzac, 2) with deductive realism by Kafka ('as-if realism'), and 3) with deductive irrationalism by Poe ('only atmospheric realism')" (65). And Barton Levi St. Armand implies that "The House of Usher" thematizes the subject more fully, ingrains it deeper within the narrative than most Romantic works, because Poe fulfilled the Romantic quest for a monomyth at two levels: the most avant-garde of the Romantic revivals when he was writing the tale in 1839 was the Egyptian mode, and it is my contention that, in experimenting with a daring mixture of the Gothic and the Egyptian, Poe managed to create a work of art which fulfilled the search of the Romantics for a monomyth which functions at two distinct levels: the surface level of the picturesque, or the decorative, and the subterranean level of the subliminal and archetypal. For, in resurrecting the Egyptian mode as part of the dramatic stage setting of his tale, Poe also revived the pattern of initiation ritual which underlaid the symbols of the Egyptian Mysteries, the Mysteries of Isis and Osiris, as they were understood in his own age ... The haunted castles and mansions of such tales as Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" are, I believe, eclectic structures in which a Gothic frame is supported by a basically Egyptian foundation (69-71).

As St. Armand says, Poe's story is certainly eclectic, but I will once again add, this is a characteristic of late Romanticism. The thematization of subject and subjectivity which is taking place mostly succeeds, I would argue, not through the double structure which Armand believes to be there, but through Usher's hypochondriacal nature and the narrator's natural curiosity that keep driving the question of subject further into the narrative, a process that reaches a climax when the "electrical phenomena" and "gaseous exhalations" begin to envelop the house, and then attains a resolution when the house, and Usher, sink into the tarn, rather appropriately, it might be added. As Virgil Nemoianu suggests, not only was the Biedermeier "an age of hypochondria" but in "1826 at Grafenberg, Vincenz Pressnitz initiated the cold water cure" (11). On a more serious note, the inward thrust of Poe's work, that corresponds to Habermas's idea of "absolute inwardness," can perhaps be seen more obviously in the continuous descent that is occurring in the later tale, "The Cask of Amontillado," when Montresor cautions Fortunato of the perils of such a journey: "'The nitre! ... see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late.' [...] [and later] We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame" (*Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe* 3, 1260-61).

Odoyevsky's *Russian Nights*, as I mentioned earlier, is closer in subject thematization to Poe's work than to Maturin's novel although it continues the narrative duplicity between third- and first-person modes that is present in the latter work. The shift in spatial construct (i.e., landscapes, labyrinths, gardens) from a literal to a more metaphoric level has in Odoyevsky's novel been fully completed, certainly at the visual and thematic level, if not at the structural (that is reminiscent of *Melmoth*, but more so of *Die Serapionsbrüder*). Odoyevsky's treatment of spatial constructs does two important things: a) it is in a way prototypical of "impressionist" tendencies because he plays with light and color in metaphoric ways and b) but it is also typical of the post-Hegelian attitude that pervades the novel because of the destabilizing nature of some of the spatial descriptions, which seem to be caricatural of lofty endeavors (a Biedermeier quality). This latter, post-Hegelian, or non-Hegelian tendency in spatial constructs, is partly the result of the fact that Schelling had a

stronger influence on Odoyevsky than Hegel, although such things are always subject to debate. Neil Cornwell argues as follows: "Schelling's designation of architecture as 'frozen music,' 'music in space' and 'music perceived with the eye' could not but have struck a chord with Odoyevsky; Schelling looked for rhythm, harmony and melody in architecture (Doric, Ionian and Corinthian respectively). Analogous to this, and to the foregoing in this section, is Shevryov's statement that 'the anatomy of the soul is the science of the time.' Not that such ideas were original to Schelling; they are to be found in the writings of his German romantic contemporaries (in the works of Wackenroder and Novalis and in the theorizing of the Schlegels). As Isaiah Berlin has pointed out, in the tradition of Spinoza 'musical images are frequent in the metaphysics of this time.' Earlier Giordano Bruno, a figure who meant much to Odoyevsky, had emphasized the affinity between philosophers, painters and poets; Renaissance theories of poetry and painting were based on Horace's dictum of *ut pictura poesis* (related by Bruno to Aristotle's dictum 'to think is to speculate with images'); while, Frances Yates also reminds us, according to Plutarch, Simonides of Ceos (ca. 556 to 468 BC) 'called painting silent poetry and poetry painting that speaks'" (92).

Odoyevsky's technique of getting to a metaphoric as opposed to a literal thematization of the subject is nonetheless, irrespective of earlier influence, similar to Poe's method, I would argue, because, to use the example of "The House of Usher," the descriptions of Usher's home are impressionistic at times, but more specifically, such descriptions can be read as internal narratives of a mood or idea in a character's mind (and Poe does mention how Usher paints "ideas," and the zigzag fracture on the house's facade is emblematic of Usher's mood, etc.). Such a quality is seen at the beginning of the Ninth Night of Odoyevsky's novel when Faust's meditative abilities are evoked through his immediate surroundings: "Faust sat by the window, now turning the pages of an old book, now looking at the crimson reflection from the waves on the river spreading on the walls of his room and imparting quivering life to paintings, statues, and every inanimate thing" (*Russian Nights* 190). This would be an example of the first tendency of Odoyevsky's spatial constructs, a tendency that is metaphoric and proto-impressionist. The following example, which is a part of the tale, "The Improvvisatore," outlines a magic ritual that Dr. Segeliel must go through in order to give Cypriano the ability to write/recite poetry, and it illustrates the second tendency which is present in Odoyevsky's descriptions, a tendency to caricature the synthesizing endeavors of a Hegel or any other High Romanticist for that matter. The caricature can be seen in the comic collapse of boundaries between the idea of subject, text, context, and so on, but more seriously, such a tendency can also be read as pointing to a new crisis which arises once the subject is fully thematized and once Habermas's "absolute inwardness" is fully attained -- the crisis of trying to be aware of total subjectivity when there are no longer boundaries to measure one's subjectivity against. I give the example in its entirety: "When Cypriano left Segeliel, the doctor shouted with laughter: 'Pepe! the flannel coat!' 'Oohoo!' resounded from all the shelves of the doctor's library, as in the second act of *Der Freischütz*. Cypriano took Segeliel's words for an order to his valet, but was somewhat surprised that a dandyish and elegant doctor would need such odd clothing. He peeped through a chink and saw that all the books on the shelves were moving; the number 8 jumped out of one of the manuscripts, the Arabic alif out of another, then the Greek delta, then many others, until finally the entire room was filled with living numbers and letters; they twisted, they stretched feverishly, they swelled, they interlaced their clumsy legs, they jumped and fell; numerous dots whirled among them, like infusoria beneath a microscope; and all the while an old Chaldean polygraph was beating time with a force that made the window frames tremble" (140).

Fred Botting attempts to distinguish between earlier and later examples of Gothic literature by giving us what look like two points, however vague they appear, and these points once again bring up Habermas' idea of how Romanticism holds the essence of "Modern Art." First, regarding Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, Botting speaks of how the "internalisation of grand Gothic devices is ambivalently externalised, diffused throughout an everyday world itself composed of fictions" (109). And secondly, focusing on Poe's work, he says that "the outward trappings of eighteenth-century Gothic, the gloom, decay and extravagance, are, in chilling and terrific evocations, turned inward to present psychodrama" (119). I will attempt to clarify these two remarks by laying out my own thoughts here. Briefly, and to conclude my study here, it appears

that the transition from Gothicism proper to High Romanticism, and then to late, Biedermeier romanticism (as defined by Nemoianu), a transition through which the subject is thematized and Habermas's "absolute inwardness" fully achieved, occurs in a two-step process: first of all, there is a shift from the literally external (wild landscape) to the literally internal (vaults, buildings, etc.) in the passage from Radcliffe to Maturin, and secondly, there is a shift from the literally internal (dark, Spanish monasteries, etc.) to the metaphorically internal (the narrative "I" with all of its manifestations) in the passage from Maturin to Poe. The metaphorically external, which I have not mentioned explicitly, and which Botting appears to touch upon through his phrase, "ambivalently externalised," already begins to take shape and is well under way in the literally internal phase marked by *Melmoth*, and it continues into the last phase of Romanticism, marked by Poe, because of the paradoxical nature of metaphor. The metaphorically internal phase, which has fully thematized the subject, implies that the metaphorically external phase (where buildings may represent people, like Usher's manor) has also been internalized, or rather, "collapsed" (where buildings representing people fall, like Usher's manor). The metaphorically external phase, exemplified in *Melmoth the Wanderer*, is also a bridge between the literally internal phase (that is also in *Melmoth*, via the Baroque structure) and the metaphorically internal phase, a bridge that has had its paradox (its high Romantic, "Hegelian contradictions," as Odoyevsky's Faust says) used against it, post-structurally and otherwise. And now, in our own time, a time that comes after the crisis of Enlightenment thought, one end of the bridge, the one which can be thought of as leading to the metaphorically internal, connecting with land, substance, the self, personality, and other such concepts, may also be seen as launching into space, emptiness, and fragmentation. But Odoyevsky's Faust puts this more elegantly near the end of the epilogue to *Russian Nights* than I can, when he gives some final advice to his frame-tale friends, quite possibly poking fun at Reverend Gilpin's "Claude Lorrain" spectacles, and many other things: "I recommend to you, gentlemen, first to provide yourselves good, clean, achromatic glasses, which do not mar objects by earthy, cheerful, fantastic colors, and, second, to read two books: one of them is called Nature -- it is well printed and its language is quite comprehensible; the other one is Man -- a manuscript written in a little-known language and the more difficult because there is neither a dictionary nor a grammar compiled for it yet. These books are related to each other, and one explains the other. However, if you are unable to read the second book, do without the first one too, although the first one will help you to read the other one. For your entertainment you may read other books, supposedly written about the first two; but take care: don't read the lines, but rather between the lines; you'll find there much of interest if you use the glasses, upon which I insist" (249).

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