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Gothic Elements in The New World: *Wieland* by Charles Brockden Brown

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Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Charles Brockden Brown si v románu *Wieland; or the Transformation*, jenž také nese podnázev *An American Tale*, předsevzal úkol přenést gotický román na druhý břeh Atlantiku. Příběh začíná v Evropě, ale vzápětí se přesouvá na americký kontinent, kde tváří v tvář nepokořenému, nezakotvenému přírodě ztrácejí osvědčené mravní zájmy svou platnost. Práce se zaměří na tuto dualitu Starého a Nového světa, klasicismu a romantismu, rozumu a citu.

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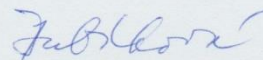
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TITLE

Gothic elements in the New World: *Wieland* by Charles Brockden Brown

ANNOTATION

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to analyze the distinctive features of American Gothic literature, which stems from the adaptation of the genre to the New World, and to illustrate them on Ch. B. Brown's novel *Wieland; or, the Transformation: An American Tale*. The theoretical parts focus on the emergence of the Gothic genre and of the novel, its development and features. Marginal space is also dedicated to the life of Ch. B. Brown, since some of its parts are important for the further analysis of his novel. The practical parts analyze *Wieland* on the basis of the theoretical chapters with close focus on the Gothic elements.

KEYWORDS

American Gothic, Romanticism, *Wieland*, Ch. B. Brown, New World literature

NÁZEV

Gotika na druhém břehu Atlantiku: Charles Brockden Brown a jeho *Wieland*

ANOTACE

Cílem této práce je analyzovat posuny, ke kterým dochází při adaptaci gotického žánru na nové prostředí Amerického kontinentu, a ilustrovat je na příkladu románu *Wieland; or, the Transformation: An American Tale*. Teoretické části jsou zaměřené na vznik gotického žánru a románu, jeho vývoj a znaky. Okrajově též uvádí poznatky ze života Ch. B. Browna, které jsou významné pro následnou analýzu jeho díla. Praktická část analyzuje *Wieland* na základně teoretických poznatků se zaměřením na gotické znaky.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

americká gotika, romantismus, *Wieland*, Ch. B. Brown, literatura Nového světa

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Introduction

This bachelor thesis deals with the adaptation of the European gothic features to the American continent. The aim of this paper is to analyze the distinctive features of American Gothic fiction and thus to illustrate the duality of the Old and New World. The American adaptation of the Gothic genre will be analyzed on the novel *Wieland; or, the Transformation: an American Tale* by Charles Brockden Brown. The thesis consists of six chapters, three of which are mainly theoretical and provide background for the following three chapters which are practical.

The first chapter is dedicated to the explanation of literary and philosophical events that consequently led to the emergence of the Gothic novel. It explores the leading literary streams, starting with the Classicism, Enlightenment, continuing with Romanticism and ending with the rise of Gothic novel. Concerning the philosophical background, the thesis mentions the Enlightenment, Deism and also Empiricism. Moreover, the historical background is briefly introduced where it is required for the understanding of the literary culture. Furthermore, the chapter focuses in detail on the exploration of Romanticism, differentiates between its different kinds and briefly introduces two main American literary Romanticism: the Transcendentalism and Poe's dark Gothic. The examples of authors are provided where suitable.

The second chapter devoted to the definition of the genre of the Gothic novel and also to the emergence of the genre of novel in general. Moreover, it focuses on the distinctive features of European and American Gothic fiction, which are rooted mainly in the different history, environment and inhabitants of the two continents. Furthermore, the division of Gothic novels into four subtypes is provided. This chapter aims to provide a theoretical background for the further analysis of *Wieland*, so that we can either prove or refute the success of Brown's attempt to transfer the Gothic to the other shore of the Atlantic Ocean.

The last theoretical chapter deals with the life and work of the author Charles Brockden Brown. The intention is to define the events of his life that influenced his work, rather than to describe his life in detail. The illustrations of specific examples of such influence are included. Also, the importance of the author for the development of the genre is mentioned. This chapter strives to search for a connection between author's life and writing, in order to examine the Romantic nature of his texts.

The first of the practical chapters serves as an introduction of the pivotal novel. It gives a brief introduction of the plot of the story and then it is divided into two sections. The first focuses on the form of narration of *Wieland*, since it is an important feature that influences the whole novel. The second is dedicated to the analysis of the characters as their personality traits significantly contribute to the classification of the novel as gothic. The aim is to provide a solid background for the following chapters, and therefore the characters of Clara Wieland, Theodore Wieland (from now on mostly referred to as “Wieland”), Carwin, and Henry Pleyel (from now on mostly referred to as “Pleyel”) are analyzed in detail.

The following chapter is devoted to the main aspect of this paper and that is the analysis of the Gothic features that are present within *Wieland*. The features are located and examined in order to distinguish between European and American Gothic. This chapter derives from the theoretical chapter “Gothic novel” and it aims to prove the presence of Gothic elements within *Wieland* and their adaptation for the American continent.

The final chapter is divided into two sections, the first being the analysis of symbols and themes within *Wieland*, while the other being an examination of the critical reception of the novel and its possible readings. The purpose is to show the depth of thematic scope in the novel and to present the opinions of experts to this text and its meaning.

1. From Classicism towards Romanticism

It is crucial to describe the circumstances that led to the emergence of the Gothic novel. The roots of its birth can be found throughout the centuries in many various cultural streams, but for the purpose of this paper we shall start our analysis in Classicist period, continue to Enlightenment and finally we will end with Romanticism, which was the period in which Gothic literature was born. The dating of individual periods differs in various sources, and therefore the paper will mainly use dates in form of centuries for illustration and will not resort in usage of specific years.

The roots of Gothic can be found in the Classicist literature of the seventeenth century. The Classicist period began in absolutistic France as a reaction to the magnificence of Baroque period. Contrary to Baroque mysticism, it leaned on truth and nature as the source of beauty. It also stressed the subordination of one's personal interest over the public interest.¹ Classicism highlights strictness, simplicity, rationality, reason and restraint.² A model for classicist authors was the literature of antique Rome and Greece. In accordance with that, the literature was divided into high and low genres.³

In England, the literature of this time is often called "neoclassical" or "Augustan", since it is strongly influenced by the literature of the times of the Augustus Caesar. This link was formed due to the similar historical situation of post-war development of the Roman Empire and England, after which in Roman Empire followed peace and stability. There was the idea that under the new rule of King Charles II. in 1660, which followed the end of the Civil War, England would also enter an era without violence of military conflicts.⁴

The timeline of the birth of Classicism corresponds with the century that was significant due to the migration of Europeans to the New World. Consequently, the new inhabitants of the North America brought with them Classicist tendencies, visible for example in the choice of the Ancient Greek authors such as Plato, Aristotle or Virgil as their inspiration in Puritan religious sermons, courtesy manuals and educational ideals. According to Caroline Winterer, "British colonists placed the ancient authors at the core of their ideals civility,

¹ Vladimír Forst, *Literatura pro první ročník středních škol: přehled vývoje a směrů* (Praha: SPN, 1989), 110.

² Samuel Holt Monk, Lawrence Lipking, "The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century," in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Major Authors (6th edition)*, ed. M. H. Abrams (USA: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996), 826.

³ Forst, *Literatura pro první ročník středních škol*, 110.

⁴ Holt et al., "The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century", 826.

learning and piety”.⁵ This shows a precedent typical for American literature, which lies in usage of European frames and their adaptation on purely American topics.

Besides Classicism, the seventeenth but mainly the eighteenth century was also the time when philosophic and metaphysical texts emerged, which led to the rise of the Enlightenment.⁶ It comes as a resistance against the absolutistic rule and its main principle is the belief that reason and progress shall lead to the change of society.⁷ According to the Glossary of Literature, Enlightenment believed that after overcoming the existing superstitions and prejudice through reason, it will be possible to establish a world of peace and happiness.⁸

In England it was mainly authors such as Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679) and later John Locke (1632 – 1704), whose texts led to the new way of thinking about the world. Their ideas led to the emergence of Deism. Standing on the grounds of physicians such as Isaac Newton (1643 – 1727), the theory advocated empiricism, meaning that everything should be rationally judged through our senses and reason. Therefore, Deism also rationally judged religion and saw God as a creator, but did not accept the miracles described in the Scripture.⁹ Deism was sometimes called “a religion without revelation” and due to its roots in physics, admired nature and its laws that serve as a frame for thinking while rejecting celestial actions.¹⁰ Hence, also ones moral life was influenced by such principles, declaring that one has the power to influence his afterlife.¹¹

Of course, Newton’s innovative scientific approach towards religion attracted also American philosophers. The best known of them was Cotton Mather (1663 – 1728), who was educated Puritan preacher and during his life wrote over four hundred works. He advocated “the old order of church authority against the encroachment of an increasingly secular world” and the typical Puritan beliefs such as that the land of New England is a land given by God destined to be occupied by Puritans.¹² Additionally, he rejected the Newton’s idea of a purely

⁵ Caroline Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life 1780 – 1910* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 10.

⁶ Philip F. Gura, “American Literature 1700 – 1820,” in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature (Shorter 8th edition)*, ed. Nina Baym, Robert S. Levine (USA: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012), 157.

⁷ Forst, *Literatura pro první ročník středních škol*, 113–114.

⁸ Meyer Howard Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (USA: Heinle & Heinle, 1999), 75–76.

⁹ Darren Staloff, “Deism and the Founding of the United States,” National Humanities Center, accessed March 3, 2018, <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/eighteen/ekeyinfo/deism.htm>.

¹⁰ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 62.

¹¹ Gura, “American Literature 1700 – 1820,” 157.

¹² Wayne Franklin, “Beginnings to 1700,” in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature (Shorter 8th edition)*, ed. Nina Baym, Robert S. Levine (USA: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012), 149–151.

mechanical world created by higher Being, but he followed his work and created the so called “natural religion” in his book *The Christian Philosopher*.¹³

According to Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804), one of the greatest German philosophers of the Age of Reason, “Enlightenment is mankind's exit from its self-incurred immaturity.”¹⁴ This suggests that one should be brave enough to rely on his own reason and logical thinking, which is the main idea of this era.¹⁵ The main features of the Enlightenment are therefore logic, education and knowledge. The understanding to man and his knowledge is in the center of the interest, and maybe even due to this fact, the colonists realized that they have more in common as Americans than they did as Europeans.¹⁶ This idea is furthermore supported by contemplation *What is an American* by J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur (1735 – 1813). He defines an American as a man who left his past behind, loves his new country and acts upon new democratic principles which he accepts, such as self-interest, due to which he pursues his own happiness¹⁷. Enlightenment also advocated democratic principles such as liberty and tolerance, which is why it is often seen as the cradle of modern democracies.¹⁸

The eighteenth century in America was the time of great change and progress. One of the greatest events of this era was the American War of Independence, which was accompanied by many important literary works. One of them were the pamphlets by Thomas Paine (1737 – 1809), who was interested in civil rights, rejected slavery and advocated knowledge for the sake of progress of the whole nation. In 1776 he published the *Common Sense*, which served as an appeal to independence from the Great Britain and became the key document of the revolution.¹⁹ Paine’s other important works are pamphlets *The American Crisis*, in which he supported American soldiers: “These are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it Now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.”²⁰

¹³ Cotton Mather, *The Christian Philosopher*, ed. Winton U. Solberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 71–76.

¹⁴ James Schmidt, *What is Enlightenment?* (USA: University of California Press, 1996), 58, http://blogs.iac.gatech.edu/romanticsocialmedia/files/2014/12/Kant_Enlightenment_Schmidt.pdf.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Gura, “American Literature 1700 – 1820,” 159.

¹⁷ Hector St. Jean de Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer, Letter III*, Digital History, accessed March 2, 2018, http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtid=3&psid=3644.

¹⁸ Daniel Brewer, *The Enlightenment Past: Reconstructing Eighteenth-Century French Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1.

¹⁹ Richard Ruland, Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature* (USA: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1991), 56.

²⁰ Ruland et al., *From Puritanism to Postmodernism*, 57.

The Federalist Paper by the Federalists was another important work of its time which influenced the political situation. James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay together anonymously explained the proposed new form of government and Constitution so that people would understand it and accept it.²¹ Of course, the best known document of this era is *The Declaration of Independence* (1776) written mainly by Thomas Jefferson (1743 – 1826), who was a typical representative of the age of Enlightenment. The Declaration granted the basic building blocks of the American society: the equality and the right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness for all citizens of America.²²

This brings us to the close of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century, which again changed the stream of literature and brought Romanticism to life. After the Revolution in France, which took place between 1789 and 1799 and was justified by Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*, and the Industrial Revolution, there was a need of fresh air in the literary art.²³ It was produced by English writers such as William Wordsworth or Samuel Taylor Coleridge and served as a new beginning of literature. Their poetry was centered on feelings, author's mind and individuality, and therefore it was in conflict with the preceding type of literature, which focused on precise imitation of nature and perception of the external world by one's senses. Romantic literature also focuses on spontaneity, and hence is against the restriction of Classicism. The following statement of another romantic poet John Keats (1795 – 1821) illustrates, that Romanticism opposes to the preceding literary principle, which believed that poetry should be written according to certain rules: "If poetry comes not as naturally as the leaves to a tree it had better not come at all."²⁴

To illustrate the beginnings of English Romanticism, it is best to briefly introduce the works of so called Lake District Poets William Wordsworth (1170 – 1850) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772 – 1834). They were close friends and together they brought the new literary era to life by their joint work *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), which sold out in two years and therefore Wordsworth published a new edition enriched by more poems and a Preface, which deserves our attention.²⁵ In the Preface Wordsworth explains the manner in which he aspires to write. He states that he avoids personifications, as he tries to use ordinary language so that

²¹ Ruland et al., *From Puritanism to Postmodernism*, 56–57.

²² Thomas Jefferson, *The United States Declaration of Independence (Original and Modernized Capitalization Versions)* (USA: Wildside Press LLC, 2009), 7.

²³ M. H. Abrams, Jack Stillinger, "The Romantic Period (1785–1830)," in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Major Authors (6th edition)*, ed. M. H. Abrams (USA: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996), 1261.

²⁴ Abrams et al., "The Romantic Period (1785–1830), 1264–1267.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 1330.

people can easily understand it. Secondly, Wordsworth believes that language of poetry should not differ from the language of prose and therefore he does not use the so called poetic diction (words, phrases, and figures of speech that are used mainly in poetry)²⁶ very often. The aim is again to produce a poetry using natural language so that it can be enjoyed by an ordinary man.²⁷ He also claims that the usage of poetic diction does not say anything about the quality of the poetry by saying: "...many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower."²⁸ Wordsworth further analyses the issue of his poetics in his work *What is a Poet* and concludes, that poet is only "a man speaking to men" and for that purpose he must use language that is used by the people.²⁹

However, our introduction of Romanticism would not be complete without saying, that it is a complex literary stream and it is impossible to define it universally. Usually, the main aspects of Romanticism are that it places emotions above reason and it is the end of revolutionary thoughts of the Enlightenment.³⁰ But there are also claims that contradict it. For example, a nineteenth century German philosopher Arnold Ruge wrote, that: "The basis of all romanticism is the restless, rebellious spirit."³¹ A French author Victor Hugo supported this claim by stating, that Romanticism is a literary liberalism. The purpose of these examples was to prove, that it is not an easy task to define Romanticism. This belief is further supported by Étienne Delécluze, an early nineteenth century French artist and critic, who believed that there is so many different definitions of Romanticism that it would be enough to write an entire book.³²

Therefore, the modern romantic researchers declare, that there is not a single romanticism but there are more romanticisms.³³ Often, romanticism is to be found not in its pure form, but in combination with either classicism or realism.³⁴ Romanticism is classified as one of the most influential streams of literature and from Europe, it also spread to the other shore of the

²⁶ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 228.

²⁷ Abrams et al., "The Romantic Period (1785–1830), 1345.

²⁸ Ibid, 1346.

²⁹ Ibid, 1347–1351.

³⁰ Ernst Fischer, *Původ a podstata romantismu* (Praha: Nakladatelství politické literatury, 1966), 112.

³¹ Carl Schmitt, *Political Romanticism*, trans. Guy Oakes (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2010), 24.

³² Roy Porter, Mikuláš Teich, *Romanticism in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 240.

³³ Zdeněk Hrbata, Martin Procházka, *Romantismus a romantismy* (Praha: Karolinum, 2005), 10.

³⁴ Forst, *Literatura*, 123.

Atlantic Ocean.³⁵ Although America, being a young country with almost no history, tended to borrow literature templates from England, it realized its need for national literature supporting the new national identity.³⁶ Undoubtedly, America had to build its literature and identity on its vast landscape since there were no cathedrals, historical sites and no artistic background as in Europe.³⁷ After its declaration of independence in 1776, American writers were enthusiastic and aspired to authentically express the reality of the newly acquired American life; therefore their literature focused on typically American topics, such as the fight with Indians as seen in Brockden's other novel *Edgar Huntly, Or, Memoirs of a Sleepwalker*.³⁸

Although the Romantic Period in America is often dated from 1828 – 1865, which is after Ch. B. Brown's death, but since his works are classified as Gothic novels, which emerged during the period of Romanticism in England (1785 – 1830), we shall see that some features of early Romanticism are present in his novels.³⁹ The typical element of American Romantic literature is the romantic hero, often representing the author himself, who is unable or unwilling to adapt and therefore he is in conflict with the external world and social conventions. This hero typically experiences a love story, but usually there is no happy ending, since he is in love with an ideal of a woman he thinks he loves. Romanticism highlights subjectivity and therefore frequently explores the bound between reality and a dream.⁴⁰ Furthermore, another feature is the fascination with nature, as mentioned in connection with English Romantic authors, natural religion and the character of so called noble savage. Additionally, it places emphasis on spontaneity in both the sphere of thought and action, individuality and the power of imagination.⁴¹

Concerning the Romanticism development in America, it is fair to say that it continued the English tradition of fascination by and admiration of the nature. The Transcendentalist movement emerged and flourished during the nineteenth century, starting by Ralph Waldo Emerson. He and his followers produced literature preoccupied with the idealized nature as a place of unity of one's soul with God, and thus the merge of the nature and humanity.⁴²

³⁵ Hrbata et al., *Romantismus a romantismy*, 12.

³⁶ Eliška Morkešová, *British and American Literature* (Ostrava: Impex, 1992), 98.

³⁷ David Morse, *American Romanticism: From Cooper to Hawthorne – Excessive America* (UK: The Macmillan Press, 1987), 3.

³⁸ Štefan Baštin, Josef Olexa, Zora Studená, *Dejiny anglickej a americkej literatúry* (Bratislava: Obzor, 1993), 242–243.

³⁹ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 206–210.

⁴⁰ Forst, *Literatura*, 121–122.

⁴¹ J. A. Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, Fifth Edition (UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 621–622.

⁴² Hrbata et al., *Romantismus a romantismy*, 19–20.

I believe, that Emerson's famous line: "Insist on yourself; never imitate," can serve as a source of many information about this literary movement as a whole.⁴³ Firstly, it means that his aim is to produce subjective and original literature, suggesting the formation of a truly American literature. Secondly, it indicates the inherited Puritan feeling of exceptionality and lastly, it also proves that Transcendentalism has its roots in Romanticism, as it also focuses on man, his individuality and subjective perception. On the other hand, transcendentalists denied the ideals of the eighteenth century such as rationality and empirical philosophy, but also the growing social trends of their time: commercialism, conformity and materialism.⁴⁴

Parallel to transcendentalism, there was also a dark Romanticism by Edgar Alan Poe, who can be marked as a successor of Ch. B. Brown.⁴⁵ The principal disagreement between his and Emerson's philosophy was Poe's conviction, that the truth and beauty exclude each other. Also, Poe did not see nature as a haven, but rather he took it as estranged from human nature.⁴⁶ In his essay *Philosophy of Composition*, Poe states that stories and poems should be short so that they can be read at one sitting and therefore have the proper effect on the reader. Furthermore, he advocates that the aim of his work is beauty, which is best achieved by sadness and melancholy and therefore his frequent topic is death, or more specifically the death of a beautiful woman.⁴⁷ This truly darker shade of romanticism illustrates the diversity within Romanticism itself, proving that it cannot be defined universally, and also showing that Poe managed to place the Gothic fiction on the center of the American Romanticism.⁴⁸

To sum up, this chapter has presented the various literature streams and movements that led to the emergence of the Romanticism, from which the Gothic was derived, which will be further analyzed in the following chapter. We have also outlined the historical and social context leading to the rise of Classicism, Enlightenment and Romanticism and therefore set a background for our further exploration of the Gothic.

⁴³ Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays* (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1841), 68.

⁴⁴ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 326.

⁴⁵ Ruland et al., *From Puritanism to Postmodernism*, 77–86.

⁴⁶ Ruland et al., *From Puritanism to Postmodernism*, 131–132.

⁴⁷ Edgar Alan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," *Graham's Magazine* 28, no. 4 (April 1846): 163-167. <https://www.eapoe.org/works/essays/philcomp.htm>.

⁴⁸ Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, *The Cambridge Companion to American Gothic* (USA: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 34.

2. Gothic Novel

In this chapter, we will explore the phenomenon of Gothic novel, emergence of novel as a literary genre and define the typical features of the gothic novel in European and American continent. According to the Glossary of Literary Terms, the Gothic novel is a prose fiction whose literary father is Horace Walpole with his *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story* (1764).⁴⁹ However, the first truly successful Gothic writer is considered Ann Radcliffe, who mastered the theme of a girl that is scared by alleged ghosts and haunted by a villain, caught and later rescued by hero whom she marries.⁵⁰ The term “gothic” refers to literature which is inspired by medieval times and often uses medieval setting. Other gothic novels were set in different settings, but they all had many common features. These were often castles, dungeons, secret passages and also typical plot, in which usually an innocent woman suffers in the hands of an evil villain. “The principal aim of such novels was to evoke chilling terror by exploiting mystery and a variety of horrors,” and that is why such novels became so popular. Later, these gothic novels left the original medieval setting behind, and concentrated on the depressing, dark atmosphere filled with passions, fear, mystery and often also mental state of madness. Mary Shelly’s *Frankenstein* (1817) and also Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights* (1847) can be considered as examples of such pieces.⁵¹ According to Marquis de Sade, the Gothic novel was a reaction to the social unrest in the time of revolutions, industrialization and decay of the modern world, and the purpose of Gothic novelists was “to call hell to the rescue.”⁵²

A novel as a literary genre in general came into being in the early eighteenth century and its rise corresponded with the emergence of educated reading public, which was a direct consequence of the Enlightenment. The important requirement for the rise of the novel was the fact that middle and higher class women read as a leisure activity, because intellect became an important feature of a good wife. As a proof of the interest in reading serves also the growing interest in journalism, which gave birth to magazines such as *The Spectator* and *The Tatler*, which described the ways of living of various social classes. The important part of a novel was also its usefulness, meaning that it should not only give information but also a moral lesson. The fondness of literature in this century resulted in the establishment

⁴⁹ Peter Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown’s Revolution and the Birth of American Gothic* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2004), xi.

⁵⁰ Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (USA: Dalkey Archive Press, 2003), 127.

⁵¹ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 110–111.

⁵² Cathy N. Davidson, *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 219.

of public libraries, since only the richest people could afford buying books.⁵³ One of the first novels ever written was *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe (1660 – 1731), which showed a person according to period Puritan image: skillful, practical, economical, almost without emotions. Robinson Crusoe, as well as another Defoe's novel *Molly Flanders*, tries to pass fiction off as real story, in order to satisfy the period literature demands.⁵⁴ Generally, there were many types of novel, such as epistolary, historical, domestic, Bildungsroman and of course gothic novel.⁵⁵

The genre of novel also developed in America, however there were several books that were at a time regarded as the first American novel. The issue is in definition of the American novel, which at last was accepted as the following: "written in America, by an author born in America, published first in America, set in America, concerned with issues that are specifically grounded in the new country and not simply transplanted from England..."⁵⁶ According to these criteria, the first purely American novel was *The Power of Sympathy: or, The Triumph of Nature* by William Hill Brown,⁵⁷ however this book was not well received by the contemporary readers.⁵⁸ The emergence of original American literature is connected with the rise of Gothic novel in the United States.⁵⁹

The Gothic has its roots in the Romanticism literature, as it evolves as a counter-tendency to the eighteenth century British Romanticism and consequently, Gothic novel also appears under the term Gothic Romance.⁶⁰ According to Wordsworth, gothic fiction is a reaction to the industrialization and brutality of the world, trying to push people into realizing the dangers of it and into correction of the current state.⁶¹ Initially, the term "gothic" was connected with the idea of high gothic cathedrals, which due to their height and magnificence have an impact on people's emotions. Therefore, the gothic architecture also took part in creation of gothic fiction, since gothic buildings are places that provide space for the embodiment of terrifying imaginations.⁶²

⁵³ Robert Barnard, *Stručné dějiny anglické literatury*, trans. Zdeněk Beran (Praha: BRÁNA, spol. s.r.o., 1997), 84–86.

⁵⁴ Barnard, *Stručné dějiny anglické literatury*, 87.

⁵⁵ Michael McKeon, *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach* (USA: JHU Press, 2000), 851.

⁵⁶ Davidson, *Revolution and the Word*, 85.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Davidson, *Revolution and the Word*, 91.

⁵⁹ Weinstock, *The Cambridge Companion to American Gothic*, 31.

⁶⁰ Marie Mulvey-Roberts, *The Handbook to Gothic Literature* (USA: NYU Press, 1998), 196.

⁶¹ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 135.

⁶² Hrbata et al., *Romantismus a romantismy*, 135–136.

The interest in gothic literature can be explained by people's tendency to escape from the reality depicted in realistic novels. The gothic leaves the enlightenment behind and goes deeper into the inexplicable and unnatural.⁶³ It depicts darkness as a source of one's inner consciousness, religious awareness, but also of fear and savagery.⁶⁴ The Gothic novel also explores the psychology of the characters and their inclination to evil based on their actions. Often, the reader does not know the motivation of character's actions, there are inexplicable situations, twists and the clarification comes at the very end of the novel.⁶⁵ The frequent themes of Gothic fiction are the dark desires such as homosexuality or incest in the patriarchal society.⁶⁶ This usage of taboo themes can be explained by Fiedler's claim, that: "Through the pages of the gothic romance, the soul of Europe flees its own darker impulses."⁶⁷

A crucial feature of gothic is the villain-hero, whose "temptation and suffering, the beauty and terror of his bondage to evil are amongst its major themes."⁶⁸ This figure is typically a male, which might be seen as a consequence of the patriarchal society.⁶⁹ Hence, the villain-hero jeopardizes the sexual purity of the female heroine, who is traditionally an ideal virtuous woman.⁷⁰ This suggests a typical feature of the villain-hero and that is his disrespect for social rules, and therefore transgresses not only social rules, but even laws.⁷¹ However, the role of the villain-hero is not always so straightforward. Ann Radcliffe in her novels introduces a different type of the villain, making him a charismatic person that attracts both genders, does not manifest his wicked intentions directly or his evil potential is only suggested but not explicitly performed.⁷² She also establishes the so called explained supernatural, in which a seemingly unnatural event is later explained as either a misinterpreted or as a part of the villain's deceit. Later, this model is adopted by the author that is the subject of our examination, Charles Brockden Brown.⁷³

⁶³ Baštín et al., *Dejiny anglickej a americkej literatúry*, 86.

⁶⁴ Hrbata et al., *Romantismus a romantismy*, 136.

⁶⁵ Hrbata et al., *Romantismus a romantismy*, 142.

⁶⁶ William Baker, Kenneth Womack, *A Companion to the Victorian Novel* (USA: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 165.

⁶⁷ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 129.

⁶⁸ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 128.

⁶⁹ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 132.

⁷⁰ Joseph M. Flora, Lucinda H. MacKethan, *The Companion to Southern Literature: Themes, Genres, Places, People, Movements, and Motifs* (USA: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 312.

⁷¹ Juliet John, *Dickens's Villains: Melodrama, Character, Popular Culture* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2003), 51.

⁷² Jan Delasara, *PopLit, PopCult and The X-Files: A Critical Exploration* (USA: McFarland, 2013), 146.

⁷³ S. T. Joshi, Guillermo Del Toro, *American Supernatural Tales* (USA: Penguin, 2013), Introduction.

According to Jan Delasara, there are four different subtypes of Gothic novels, which do not exclude each other. These are: supernaturalist, historical, explained and ambiguous (also called psychological or philosophical). As the adjective suggest, the supernaturalist type deals with truly unnatural events, the historical is set in past, the explained have the abnormal events explained rationally and the ambiguous remains without explanation whether the supernatural really happened or not.⁷⁴ If we were to define the type of *Wieland*, it would be the combination of explained and ambiguous, as the voices are explained as Carwin's creation, but for example the death of old Wieland remains without clear explanation.

America adopted Gothic Novel from Europe and transformed it for its needs. In European Gothic, the models of villains were to be found for example in historical figures corrupted by aristocracy and policy, which was something that America at that time did not know, since it had only a short history and Protestant morale was generally accepted. In *Love and Death in the American Novel* Leslie A. Fiedler says:

The gothic, after all, had been invented to deal with the past and with history from a typically Protestant and enlightened point of view; but what could one do with the form in a country which, however Protestant and enlightened, had (certainly at the end of the eighteenth century!) neither a proper past nor a history?⁷⁵

Since the importance of past is connected with the attitudes towards it, it became clear that the American Gothic shall dismiss the historical component and choose a different setting.⁷⁶ Therefore, the stories are usually set in America and given local names.⁷⁷ Also, they often substitute the Aristocratic villains for Indians and their savagery and see the wild, untamed wilderness as the source of evil.⁷⁸

Additionally, American Gothic had to look elsewhere also for the main characters.⁷⁹ Instead of a heroine surrounded by evil and dark forces, the American Gothic focuses on male heroes and on the evils that lurk inside themselves rather than in their surroundings. By that, it explores the rationality and casts doubts upon the claims of reason.⁸⁰ The instability of rationality becomes one of the most distinctive features of American Gothic. Furthermore, American Gothic focuses on the disintegration of the utopia as a result of the irrationality

⁷⁴ Delasara, *PopLit, PopCult and The X-Files* 137.

⁷⁵ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 144.

⁷⁶ Hrbata et al., *Romantismus a romantismy*, 151.

⁷⁷ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 155.

⁷⁸ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 160.

⁷⁹ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution*, xv.

⁸⁰ Davidson, *Revolution and the Word*, 220–224.

caused by mysticism and fanaticism.⁸¹ The example of such text is *Wieland*, in which Carwin's actions are believed to be supernatural and in combination with Wieland's tendencies to religious fanaticism, the ideal life of Wielands and Pleyels tragically collapses.

American Gothic is also strongly connected with the question of identity and its loss.⁸² This is certainly related to the youth of the nation, its revolution and independence and consequential formation of its democratic society. Correspondingly, this feature is also present in *Wieland* and the collision of identity is obvious in the character of Wieland, who is split into a loving father and a deeply religious man seeking to prove his faith at all costs.

According to Allan Lloyd-Smith, there are four significant features of American Gothic: "the frontier, the Puritan legacy, race, and political utopianism."⁸³ The frontier was influential in the early years of Gothic fiction formation, as the settlers were well aware of the dangers that the wilderness and the Indigenous people around them provided. Also, American nation was strongly Puritan and this faith provided a strong black and white notion of good and evil. The race is influenced by America's tradition of slavery, as well as the Native American tribes, which resulted in a conflict between "the others" and the white majority. The last feature, political utopianism, is anchored in the building block of American society, *the Declaration of Independence*, and democratic principles such as freedom and vision of the ideal society.⁸⁴ Considering Brown, his novel *Edgar Huntley* deals with the topic of the frontier and race, while *Wieland* employs the subject of Puritan legacy and questions the justice of the American utopia.

The pioneer of American Gothic was Charles Brockden Brown, who initiated the creation of the new American literature and launched the generation of Gothic writers: "In a sense, Brown invented Edgar Allan Poe..."⁸⁵ Other authors of American Gothic were for example Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville and James Fenimore Cooper.⁸⁶ This chapter outlined the development of the Gothic genre and defined the differences between European and American gothic fiction. This will serve as a background for the analysis of *Wieland* and its gothic features.

⁸¹ Hrbata et al., *Romantismus a romantismy*, 150–151.

⁸² Weinstock, *The Cambridge Companion to American Gothic*, 40.

⁸³ Allan Lloyd-Smith, *American Gothic Fiction: An Introduction* (USA: Continuum, 2005), 37.

⁸⁴ Lloyd-Smith, *American Gothic Fiction*, 37–39.

⁸⁵ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 145.

⁸⁶ Lloyd-Smith, *American Gothic Fiction*, 37.

3. Historical Context of Brown's Life and his Work

This chapter is dedicated to the persona of Charles Brockden Brown (1771 – 1810). The purpose is not to give a detailed biography, but to present mainly the events that significantly influenced his writing and to illustrate it. Additionally, the Romantic nature of his writing is addressed; lying in the similarities between Brown himself and his life, and the literary characters in his novels.

Brown is often called “the father of the American novel”⁸⁷ and his book *Wieland* is considered to be the the first American Gothic novel.⁸⁸ He is also considered to be the first American professional writer, although this label is rather misleading.⁸⁹ “Brown did not enjoy the kind of success available to his immediate successors, Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper, primarily because the technological infrastructure for the rapid printing and widespread distribution of such work was not yet fully developed,” and therefore had also a daily job as a teacher in Quaker grammar school.⁹⁰ Later he worked as an editor of *Monthly Magazine* in Philadelphia to earn a living.⁹¹

He grew up in a family of Philadelphian Quakers, whose roots can be traced back to the seventeenth century England, and due to their religious belief, the family had a history of persecution. That is why the family left England and set for better future in American continent.⁹² Thanks to his father Elijah, Brown spent his life in Philadelphia, at that time “North America’s largest and wealthiest metropolis.”⁹³ This was one of the aspects that influenced his life, since Pennsylvania was a state which suffered from Indian attacks in French and Indian wars, giving Brown a theme for his later books. His childhood was also influenced by the arrest of his father in 1777, which was not as much due to his religion, but rather because he continued with his merchant business even in the times when the goods were to be requisitioned for army use.⁹⁴

The similarities between Brown and the *Wieland* family in the novel are noticeable. Brown’s family belonged to a religious group that was historically persecuted, as well as the old

⁸⁷ Ruland et al., *From Puritanism to Postmodernism*, 63.

⁸⁸ Weinstock, *The Cambridge Companion to American Gothic*, 225.

⁸⁹ Gura, “American Literature 1700 – 1820,” 413., 413.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown’s Revolution*, 48, 74.

⁹² William Dunlap, *The Life of Charles Brockden Brown: Together with Selections from the Rarest of His Printed Works, from His Original Letters, and from His Manuscripts Before Unpublished* (Philadelphia: Published by James P. Parke, 1815), 11.

⁹³ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown’s Revolution*, 26.

⁹⁴ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown’s Revolution*, 27, 36.

Wieland was massively influenced by a religious sect that was also persecuted. Brown grew up in Philadelphia and therefore his story also takes place in that area. His experiences reflect in his stories, and in *Wieland* he uses the fact that his father for a time disappeared from his life at the age of six, which is also the age of Clara Wieland when she lost her father. This shows that his family story and childhood inspired him during his writing.

Brown was obliged to attend Quaker services of Philadelphia Meeting as part of his schooling. Nevertheless, Brown's education in Quaker Friend's Latin School made him acquaint not only with the Quaker classics, the Bible and Latin, but also with mathematics, geography and English literature.⁹⁵ These may be the first steps that led him to the creation of literature rooted in European art, but adapted to his homeland. Specifically, as the author himself states in Preface to his work *Edgar Huntley; Or, Memoir of a Sleep Walker*, he drew inspiration from his homeland and used new motifs based on themes and events that were unknown to the European authors: the condition of the country, wilderness of the west and also the Indian hostility. Brown also highlights that American morality is yet to be explored and that it should be distinctive from the morality of Europe.⁹⁶

In 1787 Brown diverted from a Quaker direction of life and instead of being a minister, he aspired to become a lawyer and therefore started as an apprentice in a law office. According to Kafer, the fact that he was accepted there in the age of sixteen is a proof of his intellect.⁹⁷ The career in law definitely influenced his writing style, which can be seen on the character of Clara Wieland and her reasoning skills when explaining of events and contemplating about them. Although he had a chance in law, he was determined to pursue his passion and became a writer.⁹⁸ One of the reasons why he left the carrier in law was his conviction, that "a man must, in the practice of the law, not only deviate from morality, but become the champion of injustice," which was something his high moral principles would not allow him.⁹⁹ Therefore, the theme of justice, crime and punishment that is present within *Wieland* corresponds with his life choices and moral compass.

⁹⁵ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution*, 46–48.

⁹⁶ Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntley; Or Memoir of a Sleep-Walker* (Philadelphia: Published by M. Pollock, 1857), 3–4.

⁹⁷ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution*, 48–49.

⁹⁸ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution*, 58.

⁹⁹ Dunlap, *The Life of Charles Brockden Brown*, 41.

An important part of Brown's writing were *Henrietta Letters*, which set him on a journey of exploring the possibilities of fiction.¹⁰⁰ This epistolary work resembles *Eloisa* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who was his novelist model, due to his approach to literature as writing free minded, about issues that are on one's mind, without any obstructions. Brown was not alone in his determination to become a visionary of literature, and shared fascination with Romantic literature of British-European culture with his Lake-District poet contemporaries William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.¹⁰¹ All three authors were influenced by the theme of revolution, but unlike Wordsworth and Coleridge, who were according to Wordsworth's words "divided" from it and it never touched them specifically, Brown had a rich personal experience with it. From anti-Quaker approach to his family in England, later riots in Philadelphia in 1770s leading to arrest of his father, to the influences of Wordsworth's and Coleridge's French revolution, Brown was involved in the topic of revolution more than the poets. Possibly, his life-long observation of violence produced by people therefore led to his fascination with Gothic literature, while his two contemporaries were occupied by pastoral, exotic or sublime literature.¹⁰² Hereby again, Brown uses his experience to create a novel that reflects the reality and draws attention to its flaws.

The controversial topic of women rights had been also of interest to Brown and he projected this issue in his novels. On this topic he wrote an *Alcuin: A Dialogue* (1798). As he had shown on his previous work in *Henrietta Letters*, Brown respected intellect of females and equal education for both men and women. Specifically, in *Alcuin* Brown argues that even though the two sexes differ biologically, they are equal in the area of intellect and morale. In this work he thus introduces a visionary world in which there exists a true equality between men and women and it therefore spreads ideas based on reason, utility, equality and justice, which might suggest connection with the ideas of Enlightenment.¹⁰³ This conviction is also present within *Wieland* and embodied by the character of Clara.

The last proof of Brown's inspiration with his life is his friendship with a highly educated doctor Elihu Hubbard Smith. Dunlap in his biography of Brown states the following: "No two men were ever more sincerely attached to each other, than Charles Brockden Brown and Elihu

¹⁰⁰ Philip Barnard, Mark Kamrath, and Stephen Shapiro, *Revising Charles Brockden Brown: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality in the Early Republic* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2004), 93.

¹⁰¹ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution*, 56–59.

¹⁰² Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution*, 62–63.

¹⁰³ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution*, 94–99.

Hubbard Smith, yet in many particulars no two men were ever more different.”¹⁰⁴ In his book, *Wieland* and Pleyel seem to have similar friendship as Brown and Elihu had and also their personalities differ severely, which does not prevent them from being true friends.

Other life events that greatly influenced him were the outbreaks of yellow fever which smote Philadelphia in 1793 and New York in 1798. His friend Smith did not survive the second epidemic. This enabled him to observe people and their behavior when confronted with a catastrophe. He realized that he wanted to study individuals, their appearance, language and opinions within the background of the domestic history. However, this experience came into use later on the close of the century, when he published his novel *Arthur Mervyn; or, Memoirs of the Year 1793* (1799).¹⁰⁵

A person that significantly influenced Brown’s literary work and thinking is William Godwin. He admired Godwin as well as Godwin admired him, as he was his contemporary. Brown advocated the “Godwinian politics” which argued, that injustice does not stem from the nature of men, but rather from the institutions that should practice it.¹⁰⁶ In *Wieland*, this is reflected by fact, that the institutions cannot punish Carwin for his errors of morale, as morale is not anchored in the law and therefore he remains unpunished for his deceit.

Concerning Brown’s novels, *Wieland* was written within a month and it was published in 1798. It was the first novel Brown published and usually it is the most highly regarded one.¹⁰⁷ The novels *Ormond*, *Arthur Mervyn* (Part 1) and *Edgar Huntly* followed shortly within two years. According to Dunlap, the plot of *Wieland* is considerably more complete than the plots of the other novels.¹⁰⁸ Brown also aspired to write a story about the *Wieland*’s character Carwin, which was called *Memoirs of Carwin, the Biloquist* but remained unfinished.¹⁰⁹

This chapter has supported Peter Kafer’s claim that: “Brown’s basic resources are his own experiences and memories and emotions, and his tribe’s history.”¹¹⁰ From the wide range of themes, starting with women rights, continuing to injustice of institutions and ending with the examinations of people’s minds and the evils inside, we can see that Brown was an intelligent man who in my opinion remains underrated.

¹⁰⁴ Dunlap, *The Life of Charles Brockden Brown*, 55–56.

¹⁰⁵ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown’s Revolution*, 75.

¹⁰⁶ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 15.

¹⁰⁷ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 148.

¹⁰⁸ Dunlap, *The Life of Charles Brockden Brown*, 259.

¹⁰⁹ Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 149.

¹¹⁰ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown’s Revolution*, 82.

4. *Wieland; or, the Transformation: An American Tale*

This chapter serves as a background for the following analysis of the chosen book. For the understanding of the discussed issues, giving an insight into the story, the way it is written and its characters is necessary. Firstly we briefly introduce the storyline of *Wieland; or, the Transformation: an American Tale*, the form of the narration and subsequently we will explore the characters and their importance for the story.

Wieland takes place in America, in the times after the unrests of French and Indian War and beginning of the War of Independence.¹¹¹ It follows the family story of Wielands, starting with the father of the main characters Theodore and Clara, who moved to America from Germany, settled there and started a family. He built a temple, in which he worshiped his deity regularly. This place happened to be his doom; an inexplicable event occurred and consequentially. His wife followed a few months later, leaving two orphans behind. The siblings inherited the property and were extremely well educated at home, without being forced into any specific kind of religion, and therefore their religious beliefs were “the product of lively feelings, excited by reflection on our own happiness.”¹¹² During their studying sessions, they formed a close friendship with Pleyel siblings Catherine and Henry. The former became the wife of Wieland. Clara lived in Mettingen on the property of their family not even a mile away from the house of her brother, which allowed them daily visits.

Their peaceful life was distorted by a series of strange accidents, involving hearing strange voices (some of them being the imitations of voices of real people) saying the strangest things. The voices appear multiple times to more members of the group, but most frequently to Clara. The appearance of voices corresponds with the new character of Carwin interrupting the small community, who is later revealed to be the author of them with his ability to imitate voices. Thanks to these, Pleyel, who is in love with Clara and she requites his feelings, believes that Clara is involved with Carwin and therefore is disappointed with her sinfulness.

The climax of the story comes in an unexpected form: Wieland suddenly kills his wife Catherine, children and intends to kill Clara and Pleyel too. He justified his deeds as doing what the Maker wanted him to do in order to prove his loyalty and devotion. But was it the Maker, Carwin, or a simple fit of madness, who made Wieland slaughter his family in cold blood? We shall discuss the cause of his actions in the following sections.

¹¹¹ Charles Brockden Brown, *Wieland; or, the Transformation: An American Tale* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2010), 2.

¹¹² Brown, *Wieland*, 19.

4.1. Narration

The story is told in a specific way, which is essential for its understanding. The narration is mostly in the first person singular, written in a form of letters, as is explained in Ch. B. Brown's Advertisement to the novel.¹¹³ It is as a confession of a life story of Clara Wieland, which means that it is purely personal and subjective. Therefore, the reader must take into consideration the reliability, or rather unreliability of her perspective. Even the narrator herself states, that her narrative "may be invaded by inaccuracy and confusion," and the reader should take that into account.¹¹⁴ In the introductory chapter, Clara states the reasons why she wrote down her story and that it was not because she wanted people to pity her, but that she wanted to give her testimony of evils that can happen in order to warn other people:

I feel little reluctance in complying with your request. You know not fully the cause of my sorrows. You are a stranger to the depth of my distress. Hence your efforts at consolation must necessarily fail. Yet the tale I am going to tell is not intended as a claim upon your sympathy. In the midst of my despair, I do not disdain to contribute what little I can to benefit of mankind. I acknowledge your right to be informed of the events that have lately happened in my family.¹¹⁵

The form of the narration has also another consequence, and that is the fact that the reader knows what happens only to the extent of Clara's knowledge, which produces suspense. The anticipation of the reader and his continuance in reading is further supported by the fact, that the narrator gives her opinions on people, and sometimes even foreshadows the events that are about to happen by her commentary, as can be seen on this example: "Let me tear myself from contemplations of the evils of which it is but too certain that thou wast the author, and limit my view to those harmless appearances which attended thy entrance on the stage."¹¹⁶

An interesting fact is that on many occasions the narrator uses language very similar to the legal English. Undoubtedly, it is because Clara was very well educated and literate, but I would even say it is also because the author of this text studied laws, as stated in the theoretical part, and therefore he used his knowledge of legal language also in his book, in combination with religious thoughts. This claim can be clearly illustrated on many examples, one of which is: "I might die, and no crime, surpassing the reach of mercy, would

¹¹³ Brown, *Wieland*, 1.

¹¹⁴ Brown, *Wieland*, 136.

¹¹⁵ Brown, *Wieland*, 3.

¹¹⁶ Brown, *Wieland*, 45.

pursue me to the presence of my Judge; but my assassin would survive to contemplate his deed, and that assassin was Wieland!”¹¹⁷

Apart from Clara as the narrator, there are also present monologues from different narrators, which are separated by quotation marks and often are quite extensive. These are typically the narration of Pleyel, Wieland and Carwin and they provide the explanation of those parts of the story, in which Clara is not present and therefore she acquired her knowledge about them through their narration, logically influenced by their personal perspectives. This offers the insight into the way of thinking of those characters, which is exceptionally interesting particularly in Wieland’s testimony at court, in which he provides explanation for his horrible actions.

It is worth mentioning, that the plot is based on real events. The author adds a note to his story, that the way the old Wieland died (today we can call it a spontaneous human combustion) has its basis in cases published in the Journals of Florence and Journal de Medicine from 1783.¹¹⁸ Similarly, Brown notes that ventriloquism (he calls it “Biloquium”) truly exists; in a footnote he explains how it probably works and refers to work by Abbe de la Chappelle for further information about this special skill. Furthermore, in his Advertisement to the novel, Brown comments the behavior of Theodore Wieland as follows: “most readers will probably recollect an authentic case, remarkably similar to that of Wieland.”¹¹⁹ This refers to a case of a James Yates from 1781, who brutally murdered his family due to a vision of two heavenly beings who ordered him to do it.¹²⁰

The similarities between Yates and Wieland are so striking, that this real story surely served as an inspiration for Brown. Yates, as well as Wieland, confessed his crime at the court but denied any criminal intent, claiming that the homicides had been inspired by a holy apparition.” Although the Yates’ murders happened in 1781, they were not published until 1796, when The New York Weekly Magazine printed the horrible story.¹²¹ Since *Wieland* was published in 1798, it is highly possible that Brown read the article and used the story as a basis of his novel. Thus, *Wieland* is not only a product of Brown’s imagination, but it is a combination of imagination, real events and scientific discoveries.

¹¹⁷ Brown, *Wieland*, 211.

¹¹⁸ Brown, *Wieland*, 16.

¹¹⁹ Brown, *Wieland*, 2.

¹²⁰ Brown, *Wieland*, vi.

¹²¹ Brown, *Wieland*, vii.

4.2. Characters

Now we shall proceed to the analysis of the main characters. The most important of them is its fictional narrator Clara Wieland, who is admired by other characters and therefore described by Carwin as follows: “I had seen much of the world, but your character exhibited a specimen of human powers that was wholly new to me.”¹²² Her main feature is her intellect and the ability to critically discuss many topics. Clara was home-schooled and since she comes from rich family, she had an access to many study books from which she drew knowledge which shaped her mind. The proof of her intellectual abilities lies in the book itself, as it supposed to be written by her and therefore it shows her literary skills. By many, she is thought to be the ideal woman, which is proven by another Carwin’s description of Clara, which he got from her servant Judith: “According to my companion’s report, your perfections were little less than divine. Her uncourth but copious narratives converted you into an object of worship,”¹²³ and also by Pleyel’s opinion on her: “I thought you accomplished and wise beyond the rest of women.”¹²⁴ Furthermore, her literacy is strongly supported by the high quality of the language she uses.

Another characteristics mentioned with connection to Clara’s character is her courage. Carwin states, what Clara’s servant Judith said about her: “She chiefly dwelt upon your courage, because she herself was deficient in that quality... You took no precautions against robbers. You were just as tranquil and secure in this lonely dwelling, as if you were in the midst of a crowd.”¹²⁵ Her supposed courage stands behind Carwin’s attempts to scare her and in this way test this character trait. However, her courage is debatable, since facing a real threat in her own closet Clara flees to her brother’s house. This suggests that her alleged character features stated by other characters are to be critically approached. It seems that her bravery comes only from the fact that she is viewed as a perfect person by others and also from the fact that before the events that are depicted in the novel, she has never before been in a dangerous situation and due to her confidence, she felt perfectly safe walking and living on her own on the grounds that were owned by her family. Yet, Clara proves herself brave on a different occasion, when Carwin is again hidden in her closet and this time, instead

¹²² Brown, *Wieland*, 191.

¹²³ Brown, *Wieland*, 187.

¹²⁴ Brown, *Wieland*, 107.

¹²⁵ Brown, *Wieland*, 187–188.

of rushing out of the house, she shouts: “I know you well. Come forth, but harm me not. I beseech you come forth.”¹²⁶

In this book, Clara clearly represents an ideal woman. Not only because character traits mentioned, but also because of her virtuous and morally right behavior. As was already mentioned, not only her servant Judith, but also the man of her hearth Pleyel believes that she is “the first of women.”¹²⁷ As the following excerpt demonstrates, her perfection is significantly shaped by her purity: “...and atrocious character of the wretch to whom thou hast sold thy honor. But what is this? Is it not thy effrontery impenetrable, and thy heart thoroughly cankered? O most specious, and most profligate of women!”¹²⁸ Once people believe her virginity has been taken away, she loses their respect and it seems like her intelligence that was highly appreciated before, suddenly does not matter at all.

This also means that Clara represents not only perfection, but also a woman that is restricted by peoples’ expectations. In contrast with her sister in law Catherine (who is often seen as a fragile mother of four who takes care of household under the protection of her husband Wieland), she obviously tries to break these restrictions and wants to be seen as equal to any men. She lives alone in her own household, she walks alone, and as said before she is literate and capable of intellectual debates. She obviously wants to be independent, but in a world that is run by men she has no chance to fully achieve that goal. Therefore, when she hears voices in her closet, she automatically runs to her brother’s house in search of protection. There are also other situations which shows, that despite her efforts to dispose herself of the gender role the world has assigned to her, men will always be there to guide her through her life, be it Wieland, Pleyel, Carwin or her uncle Thomas Cambridge.

Lastly, Clara describes herself as a highly rational being. But is she? Her family history of mental illness surely casts doubts on the credibility of this claim, but her ability to critically assess information is undeniably proven by her frequent ruminations about her life, people involved in it and also events that happen to them all. However, I believe, it does not mean that she is absolutely sane, since an insane person logically does not realize his insanity and therefore cannot acknowledge his own unreliability. Based on multiple situations, in which Clara was unsure what is a dream and what is the reality, I believe that her narration is influenced by the state of her mind, which might not be fully alright and the reader should

¹²⁶ Brown, *Wieland*, 81.

¹²⁷ Brown, *Wieland*, 112.

¹²⁸ Brown, *Wieland*, 96.

take that into consideration. I believe that the following extract expresses the reasons that lead me to question her rationality well. There is a part in which Clara has dreams depicting Wieland as her enemy, which may be foreshadowing in the light of events we know will happen, but at that time it made no sense. Consequently, there is Carwin hiding in her closet, but Clara, who does not know that it's him, has her own idea of the identity of the intruder: "The frantic conception that my brother was within,... had rooted itself in my mind."¹²⁹ Apart from that, also another point shows that she is not fully rational; that is the fact that she believes that some of the voices the group of friends hear, are caused by a supernatural being: "Some divine voice warned me of danger, that at this moment awaited me."¹³⁰

Another main character is Theodore Wieland, who is the author of the abominable carnage of Wieland's family. Although he is Clara's brother and therefore was raised in the same conditions, their personalities differ significantly. It seems like he had inherited the character of his father with his inclination to the religious obsession and also grave, considerate and thoughtful mien.¹³¹ In spite of that, he is extremely intelligent, which is something he and Clara have in common, because his life was enriched by science and literature. This claim is supported by the fact, that he enjoyed his leisure by studying various literature, and also by Clara's description: "My brother was an indefatigable student."¹³² He also possesses her ability of rational thinking, though his mind is more open to supernatural explanations, which might be the result of his study of religion.

Wieland's weakness is his tendency to subject his life to religion, or even to a fanaticism, which is apparent from his study of history of various religious opinions and also from his claims at the court, which showed that he was searching for the God's will for a long time. However, can we blame his religious inclinations for his madness? His family history suggests a hereditary mental illness and therefore he would probably go insane even without having such strong beliefs. Nonetheless, the combination of insanity and fanaticism resulted in a dreadful disaster. If we take into account the belief about the predestination, which is suggested by his father's study of Camisard doctrine, we could say that Wieland was destined to kill his family with or without religious obsessions.¹³³ His state of mind would most

¹²⁹ Brown, *Wieland*, 81.

¹³⁰ Brown, *Wieland*, 81.

¹³¹ Brown, *Wieland*, 19.

¹³² Brown, *Wieland*, 21.

¹³³ Brown, *Wieland*, 6.

certainly decline anyway, so I believe it is fair to say that his killing spree was mainly caused by his insanity, but to justify his deeds he attributed them to his religious belief.

Wieland is the executor of evil in this novel, which is the outcome of the conflict within himself. On one hand, he wants to be a perfect father and husband and to take care of his family, but on the other hand he indulges himself with thoughts similar to his fathers: is there any higher purpose? Eventually, the alleged higher purpose becomes superior to the happiness and even lives of his family. I believe that this illustrates that Wieland is a romantic tragic hero, who is torn inside. To illustrate his love for his family, the following excerpt will serve well: “I love to be their protector and friend, and not their tyrant and foe. If my wife shall deem her happiness, and that of her children, most consulted by remaining where she is, here she shall remain.”¹³⁴ Contrary to that, on the account of murdering them, Wieland states:

I thank thee, my father, for thy bounty; that thou didst not ask a less sacrifice than this; that thou placedst me in a condition to testify my submission to thy will! ...Now may I, with dauntless and erect eye, claim my reward, since I have given thee the treasure of my soul.¹³⁵

The phrase “treasure of my soul” most surely refers to his wife and children, showing that Wieland truly loved his family, and therefore his deeds serve as an indisputable proof of his faith and devotion.

Another important character is Carwin, as he is in Clara’s eyes the source of all evil. But is he? Carwin is a character filled with mystery from the point he comes to the scene, but at the end he partly clarifies everything he does. From the point of view of other characters, he is an absolutely indecipherable character: “The inscrutableness of his character, and the uncertainty whether his fellowship tended to good or to evil, were seldom absent from our minds.”¹³⁶ His leading character trait is certainly mischievousness and in combination with his intellect, it makes him a powerful person. He even admits to using his power of ventriloquism for personal gain and other selfish reasons, which makes him a person who is fully aware of his negative character traits, but still it does not prevent him from using them. He also concedes to be the source of the voice that Pleyel, Wieland and Catherine heard. However, he swears

¹³⁴ Brown, *Wieland*, 39.

¹³⁵ Brown, *Wieland*, 153.

¹³⁶ Brown, *Wieland*, 69.

that he did not encourage Wieland to kill his family: “I have prompted none to slay...” and the reader does not have a reason to question his confession.¹³⁷

Carwin’s persistency to meet Clara to explain himself and to confess what he really did, makes me believe that he truly is not responsible for Wieland’s conduct. However, by manipulations he divided Clara and Pleyel for several years and although they eventually had a relationship, Carwin took away a few happy years the two lovers could have spent together. He is also capable of admitting his mistakes and showing remorse:

Great heaven! what have I done? ...I have acted, but my actions have possibly effected more than I designed. This fear has brought me back from my retreat. I come to repair the evil of which my rashness was the cause, and to prevent more evil. I come to confess my errors.¹³⁸

In light of all that, I believe that Carwin is not an evil person. He is without doubts malicious and curious, but he surely did not intend any harm.

Interestingly, Clara believes that Carwin is associated with the devil, which supports the claim that she is prone to believe in supernatural when confronted with seemingly unfathomable occurrence. She literally states: “Who was it that blasted the intellects of Wieland? Who was it that urged him to fury, and guided him to murder? Who, but thou and the devil, with whom thou art confederated?”¹³⁹ The reasons behind this are probably as follows: firstly, Carwin’s skill is something completely new to her, hence she tends to explain it by supernatural causes. Secondly, Clara is a woman whose life has been peaceful and without drama, apart from her father’s death, until Carwin appeared and her brother got insane. Therefore it is understandable, that it is easier for her to explain Carwin as an accomplice of the devil, as the maliciously manipulated her and her friends, which is a kind of behavior she never encountered before. Also, for her it means that Wieland was tricked by the devil’s associate into murdering his family and believing it was the wish of the heavens, which in her eyes alleviates his wrongdoing.

Additionally, when Carwin appeared, he instantly became the object of Clara’s curiosity. He stopped by her house as a wanderer who wanted a cup of water and Clara was fascinated by the tone of his voice: “...it seemed as if an heart of stone could not fail of being moved by

¹³⁷ Brown, *Wieland*, 184.

¹³⁸ Brown, *Wieland*, 182.

¹³⁹ Brown, *Wieland*, 182.

it. It imparted to me an emotion altogether involuntary and incontrollable.”¹⁴⁰ Clara devotes several paragraphs to describe the effects his voice had on her, and an observant reader can take that as another clue to guess the author of the strange voices. Not only Carwin’s voice, but also his visage engages Clara’s interest and subsequently she even draws sketches of him. These later serve as a proof for Pleyel’s claims about Clara’s and Carwin’s romantic involvement.

Another character deserving our attention is Pleyel, as he is a close friend of Wieland’s, brother of Wieland’s wife Catherine and also the object of Clara’s affection. Unlike Wieland, he is described as an exceptionally cheerful person, but these two men shared a passion for Latin writers and although having different life philosophes, as is illustrated below, Wieland and Pleyel were in many aspects alike. Pleyel was equally educated and had perhaps the same knowledge about religion as Wieland, however he differed in his explanations and arguments, and so the main difference between these two was that: “Pleyel was the champion of intellectual liberty, and rejected all guidance but that of his reason.”¹⁴¹ This means, that Pleyel is the only person who was truly rational and strongly rejected religious and supernatural explanations of the peculiar events.

No matter how rational and free-minded Pleyel is, he also tends to be hasty in jumping to conclusions without having enough information. Pleyel shows his impetuosity when judging Clara, without hearing her version of the story. We have to admit, that he had enough reasons to believe that Clara had a relationship with Carwin, but considering their friendship, he ought to let her explain herself before telling her all sorts of insults, for example that her heart is “incurably diseased.”¹⁴² His accusations result in several scenes, which make Clara cry and even faint, and although she tries, he does not believe her that there is no relationship between her and Carwin. I suspect the source of the rashness in judgment and stubbornness of his belief in his version of the truth to be the jealousy of Carwin, which is indicated earlier in the novel by Pleyel’s allusions to Clara having feelings for Carwin.

For the analysis of characters to be complete, I shall briefly introduce the father of Clara and Wieland, the old Wieland. His distinct character feature is surely his religious obsession, which as mentioned in the plot section, led him to America in order to turn the Natives on the right faith. His religiousness is further supported by his regular sessions of contemplations in

¹⁴⁰ Brown, *Wieland*, 46–47.

¹⁴¹ Brown, *Wieland*, 22.

¹⁴² Brown, *Wieland*, 107.

the temple of his Deity, which he built on a cliff near the farm he bought: “The cheapness of land, and the service of African slaves, which were then in general use, gave him who was poor in Europe all the advantages of wealth.”¹⁴³. Additionally, he for a time really tried to convert the Natives and for his duty he was willing to suffer: “fatigues, hunger, sickness and solitude.”¹⁴⁴ He thus exhibits the same obsessive urge to fulfill his duty as does the younger Wieland, but in addition he is inclined to melancholy together with predictions of his own death, which later proved to be justified. Overall, he was a good man who tried to help others, but unfortunately suffered from misfortune.

There are of course other characters in the novel, such as Catherine, Judith or Louisa Conway, but we shall not analyze their characters in detail, as I believe they have no substantial impact on the story. It suffices to say, that Catherine represents the model of fragile women that takes care of children and household and is absolutely devoted to Wieland. That is the reason why he is able to persuade her to go with him in the middle of the night to Clara’s empty house, where he eventually murders her. Judith is a servant of Clara and she has an affair with Carwin, enabling him to test Clara’s bravery. Louisa is a ward of the Wieland family and she ends up as another victim of Wieland’s rampage. I believe these brief descriptions are sufficient for further analysis of the novel.

¹⁴³ Brown, *Wieland*, 8.

¹⁴⁴ Brown, *Wieland*, 8.

5. *Wieland* as a Gothic Novel

This chapter is the core of the thesis, exploring the Gothic elements of *Wieland* as it is its purpose and therefore proving that *Wieland* truly is a Gothic novel. Firstly, we shall discuss the typical Gothic features of the novel and consequently we will explore Brown's innovation of the genre, illustrating that American Gothic was not a direct imitation of European art, but it adjusted the genre for the purposes of the new continent and different people with different mentalities and historical experience. The background for the following analysis of *Wieland* is provided in the theoretical chapter "Gothic Novel".

To begin with, the obvious Gothic element is the supernatural, or rather alleged supernatural level of the story that creates a tension. Starting with the mysterious circumstances surrounding old Wieland's death and continuing inexplicable voices, the author establishes a mysterious atmosphere that is further intensified. Since the reader's knowledge reach as far as Clara's knowledge at given moment of the story, the voices, although later explained as caused by ventriloquism, seem to be supernatural throughout most of the novel. There are several occasions during which the voices appear, and to illustrate we shall remind the moment, when Pleyel tries to persuade Wieland to go to Saxony in order to claim Wieland's hereditary land there, because he wants to meet the Baroness de Stolberg whom he loves. A voice of Catherine, who is present at a completely different place, suddenly exclaims: "You shall not go. The seal of death is on her lips. Her silence is the silence of the tomb."¹⁴⁵ The characters try to unravel the mystery of how is it possible that they heard her voice where she surely was somewhere else, but it is not until one hundred and fifty pages later, that we learn that Carwin is author of it. Hereby, Brown uses the so called explained supernatural, which will be further illustrated later on in this section. Overall, the mysterious atmosphere serves as a striking proof of the Gothic nature of the text, which is further developed.

However, there is a difference between European and American supernatural in terms of circumstances. The former seems to stem from localities surrounded by superstition such as ghosts, but the later does not use such environment. Instead, it creates horror on a place that would be expected to be perfectly safe and peaceful. However, the seemingly pastoral setting later proves to be a place of horror. Therefore, the source of European Gothic is mostly determined by external forces, such as the environment, while the fear and horror of American texts springs from within its characters. In *Wieland*, the horrifying atmosphere is

¹⁴⁵ Brown, *Wieland*, 40.

initially caused by voices that were produced by Carwin and by narrator's demonization of Carwin, which contributes to the tension and expectation of the reader. Later on, the horror derives from Wieland's mind and consequentially his actions, which is rather surprising. This feature will be further analyzed later in this section. Overall, both American and European supernatural forces naturally create a dreadful atmosphere and a sense of mystery.

In connection with supernatural, we have mentioned Brown's usage of the explained supernatural. He uses the scientific knowledge of his time to explain the seemingly inexplicable. Specifically, Brown uses ventriloquism, an explained phenomenon, and in his story he employs it to create an alleged supernatural mystery. Thanks to the narration style, Brown makes the reader believe in supernatural origin of the voices, in the end he reveals the truth. Thus, he deceives the readers as well as Carwin deceives Clara and others. I believe that this adds credibility to the story, makes it more realistic in the eyes of the readers and manipulates them into being sympathetic with Clara's naivety and irrational thinking.

Additionally, when considering the Wieland's carnage, one can argue whether the source of voices prodding Wieland to the slaughter is explained or supernatural. The answer depends only on the reader, which is caused by the nature of the narration. As was mentioned, the narration is subjectively influenced by Clara's perspective and there are also monologues by other characters, in this case Wieland's and uncle Thomas Cambridge's. Therefore, each reader can decide which version of the truth is the right one: Did the Maker really command Wieland to do such a horrible deed? Was Carwin responsible for the alleged God's voice? Or is Wieland simply mad? I believe, that the right answer is the explained supernatural theory, and that is that Wieland is insane. This claim is supported by information about the history of mental illness in Wieland family, which provided Cambridge and which led him to the conclusion that: "There could be no doubt as to the cause of these excesses. They originated in sudden madness."¹⁴⁶ However, only Brown knows what actually happened and we can only speculate. Overall, Brown's usage of explained supernatural elements is very complex and most likely carefully designed in order to make the reader reflect about the many faces of reality.

However, Brown also shows that the boundary between the supernatural and explained supernatural is not always that clear. Concerning the old Wieland's death, Brown inserts a footnote that "A case, in its symptoms exactly parallel to this, is published in one of the

¹⁴⁶ Brown, *Wieland*, 165.

Journals of Florence.”¹⁴⁷ He thus creates a notion that what he describes is real, as well as ventriloquism. Yet, the phenomenon described by him (and later used for example by Charles Dickens) is called the spontaneous human combustion and even today it is not perfectly clear whether it exists or not, although the scientists ruled out many of the outdated theories about it and mostly agree it is impossible for human body to flare up without any external source of fire.¹⁴⁸ This is an illustration of the way Brown employs the Gothic feature of absurdity versus rationalism and combines them in such a way that it is difficult for the reader to distinguish between them. Overall, we can safely claim, that Browns innovation of Gothic, apart from the environment, includes the scientific approach and clarification of the events that were believed to be supernatural.

Although there are not castles, hidden corridors and such medieval features as could be expected, we can still characterize the setting as Gothic. The setting is typically American, as the story takes place near Philadelphia, mostly on the estates owned by Wieland family. Their farm is rather isolated, which is helpful in creating the atmosphere of fear. Although it does not seem as problem at the beginning of the novel, it provides the perfect opportunity for mysterious events to take place. Be the setting different, many things would be too complicated, unbelievable or even impossible. For example, if the events had taken place in the center of the city, it would have been very unlikely for Carwin to get inside Clara’s house unnoticed, and we can even argue that he would not have been brave enough to hide in her closet in order to test her courage, as she could have screamed and easily called help. Thus, the isolation of the Wieland’s properties provides foundation for an atmosphere full of tension and fear due to its distance from the city and other people. That means, that the characters are dependent only on themselves, their own abilities and skills, similarly as a beautiful lady in an abandoned castle can rely only on her own powers.

Additionally, the temple built by old Wieland is another location that can be classified as a Gothic feature. The temple bears resemblance to the European gothic cathedrals, but the similarity lies not in the appearance but rather in the original purpose of the building. The temple is located “on the top of a rock whose sides were steep, rugged, and encumbered with dwarf cedars and stony asperities... sixty feet above the river,” which suggests number of motives. Firstly, it is again a remote building, easily used as a place for supernatural events

¹⁴⁷ Brown, *Wieland*, 16.

¹⁴⁸“Is Spontaneous Human Combustion Real?” Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed June 1, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/story/is-spontaneous-human-combustion-real>.

such as old Wieland's death and unidentifiable voice occurrences. Secondly, it is the place where in a way the earthly and supposedly heavenly affairs meet and merge. The old Wieland uses it as a spot for prayers, the young Wielands use it as a place for leisure time activities: "Here we sung, and talked, and read, and occasionally banqueted. Every joyous and tender scene most dear to my memory, is connected with this edifice."¹⁴⁹ Thus, the temple provides an isolated setting for the mysteries to happen, which is in contrast with all the happy memories Clara describes in the preceding excerpt. Overall, the temple is a space fitting for mystery and supernatural phenomena, be it genuine or not.

Another distinguishable feature which derives from European Gothic is the origin of the family in the center of the story. While in for example Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, there is a noble and aristocratic family, in *Wieland* we simply cannot find it since America does not have the same aristocratic tradition as does Europe. Instead, Brown chooses a family that is rooted in Europe and its nobility lies not in their family history, but in their intelligence, wealth and, as far as the reader can tell, in their good manners. As stated in the book by Clara, she and her family were well-liked: "There was no face which lowered at my approach, and no lips which uttered imprecations in my hearing."¹⁵⁰ Therefore the question about the identity of the people jeopardizing her life is a complete mystery, as she has no enemies. Additionally, Brown shows that no matter how rich, popular and literate you are bad things may befall on you.

There is also the woman figure in danger, which is also a noticeable European Gothic element. Clara, the virtuous lady in distress, relies on her brother's protection, which makes the discovery that Wieland is the murderer even more shocking. It is common feature of Gothic that Clara tends to be caught in dangerous and even life-threatening situations. However, it is less common that Carwin terrorizes in her own environment, and thus fills a formerly safe place with anxiety and a sense of danger. When he hides in Clara's closet, he admits that he wanted to rape her but he claims that he will not do it: "Be this chimera still worshipped; I will do nothing to pollute it."¹⁵¹ Later, when he explains his role in this story to Clara, he reveals that his true purpose there was to read a book about the history of Wieland family. When Clara finds him there, he realizes that in order to tell the truth, he would have to reveal the whole story of him being the ventriloquist and admit every occasion on which he

¹⁴⁹ Brown, *Wieland*, 20.

¹⁵⁰ Brown, *Wieland*, 59.

¹⁵¹ Brown, *Wieland*, 83.

used his skill, including the conversation between two murderers in her closet. Therefore, he decides to lie in order to avoid his confession: “I shall do no injury, but merely talk of evil that was designed, but is now past.”¹⁵² Additionally, he tells Clara that she is under a celestial protection and that she will be safe from now on. Brown thus creates an alleged danger to the chastity of Clara, where there is no danger at all. Hereby again, we shall state that Brown plays with the European Gothic in an exceptional manner, stemming from the distinct feature of his fiction: evil, which comes from within people and not from their surroundings.

The evil and horror arising from within the people is definitely an interesting feature deserving our attention. Brown’s technique is not as straightforward and simple as creating an evil person and introducing it as such, as seen in European Gothic fiction. In the case of *Wieland*, the author presents an enlightened, rational and honest person, the perfect father, husband and brother, coming from the rich and educated upper class family. His later change to a villain capable of slaughtering his own family subsequently comes as a tremendous shock not only to the fictional characters, but mainly to the readers.

When considering the character of Carwin, the situation is different, as was suggested in the analysis of characters. He is presented as a negative character from the very moment he appears and the narrator thoroughly fosters a growing feeling of disfavor towards him. However, when he confesses his story it becomes clear, that although he is a selfish mischief-maker with passion for creating mystery, he does not intend anyone to get hurt. Carwin’s inner evil is his curiosity: “I cannot justify my conduct, yet my only crime was curiosity.”¹⁵³ He is aware of the disastrous consequences of his actions, for example the fact that due to his imitation of love dialogue between himself and Clara, Pleyel loses his interest in her. He shows remorse and has the need to justify himself, which means that he is not the devil the narrator makes us believe he is. Here again, the author foists us misleading information, in order to show that the reality is complex and that one cannot judge based on only one point of the view, without the awareness of the context.

Another Gothic feature mentioned in the theoretical part is the clarification of the events at the end of the novel. *Wieland* is a perfect example of such fiction, as from the beginning of the novel, the narrator forces the reader to believe that Carwin is responsible for every evil that happens within the book. Since the novel is written in such a manner that the reader cannot be

¹⁵² Brown, *Wieland*, 194.

¹⁵³ Brown, *Wieland*, 191.

sure whether to trust the narrator or not, it is up to reader to decide about the extent of Carwin's guilt. Based on the nature of his imitations throughout the story, which were mainly used for selfish reasons (either because he did not want to be found, or because he was curious whether Clara is truly as brave as her maid believes), there is no logical motive that would lead him to urge Wieland into killing his family. As was illustrated in the preceding paragraph, Carwin is most likely not responsible for the carnage done by Wieland and it is clarified at his final confession. However, the death of the old Wieland remains ambiguous.

Wieland also fulfills another requirement for a story to be Gothic, and that is the fact, that it is designed to affect reader's emotions, causing fear, confusion and anxiety. The tense atmosphere of the story is set at the beginning by recounting the events that befell young Clara and Wieland. The manner of the narration, described in the preceding chapter, contributes to the cliff-hanging atmosphere that is further intensified by the mysterious events that happen to Wielands. The reader is compelled to feel sympathy towards Wielands and hostility towards Carwin, but suddenly he is shocked by the carnage Wieland does. Of course, each reader experiences the book differently, but I dare to say that the horrible events must provoke emotional reaction, as they are controversial: a man, depicted as a perfect father figure, kills his wife and also his children. The taboo topic of intended sexual assault, which was analyzed in the paragraph about the lady in danger, also contributes to the emotional impact on the reader and to the classification of the novel as Gothic.

Finally, there is the disintegration of utopia typical for American Gothic. The small community of Wielands and Pleyels lives a perfectly happy life, spending their time discussing various topics, distant from any troubles. Their world of literacy and logic crumbles, when they are confronted with an unprecedented situation, in which they fail to think reasonably and logically, and instead they resort into believing that the voices are truly supernatural. Specifically, Wieland is the person who causes the total decline of reason and logic, and replaces it with strong religious fanaticism, which in combination with his hereditary inclination to madness ends catastrophically.

This chapter thoroughly analyzed the gothic features of the *Wieland*. It proved that although its features are undoubtedly inspired by European Gothic, Brown innovated the genre and enriched it by using his experience of the newly born America. By that, he made the genre more relatable for the American readers, and also initiated the tradition of authentic American literature as more than just an imitation of European authors.

6. Symbolism, Themes and Reading of *Wieland*

This chapter aims to identify the major themes of the *Wieland*, which are not mentioned in the preceding chapter as they are not classified as Gothic. The purpose is to examine the meaning of the title of the novel and to discuss the transformation of the characters, and additionally, to highlight the strong connection with the Old World that is present within the novel. Furthermore, it will address the critical reception of the novel and thus explore the expert's response to this text, providing many possible readings of *Wieland*.

6.1. Symbolism and Themes

This section focuses on the non-gothic themes and symbols present within *Wieland*. It leans on the events that happened within the novel and aims to show that *Wieland* has many topics and thus provides a lot of space for discussion.

Firstly, there is the title of the book itself. Transformation, being defined as “a complete change in somebody or something” is the fundamental element of *Wieland*.¹⁵⁴ This implies the question who or what is transformed within *Wieland*. The most striking transformation is the shift within the character of Theodore Wieland, which was partially hinted at in the preceding chapters. His sudden change from loving father to a murderer was sudden and unexpected. He fully sank into his fanatic belief that his purpose is to kill his family, in order to prove his loyalty to God. This illustrates the change of a man, whose deeds are rational, into a man who acts irrationally. He never for a second questioned the demand of the alleged God, and never asked “Why would he want me to kill my loved ones?” Instead, he acted completely irrationally, not thinking about the logic of his actions. Thus, Theodore Wieland's transformation can be also understood as a symbol of transformation of rational thinking into a web of supernatural speculations and consequential madness.

Clara also undergoes a radical transformation. As stated above, initially she lives by herself and acts as an independent woman, satisfied with her life as it is. Later, her life is influenced and turned upside down by three men: Carwin, Wieland and Pleyel. She learns, that there is no such thing as a total independence and that she cannot survive by herself in a world ruled by men. By the end of the novel, there is another man that gives direction to her life and that is her uncle Thomas Cambridge. Her change is not so much in character, but rather in her experience and view of life. Clara witnesses the harshness of life and realizes, that in a life of

¹⁵⁴ Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, s. v. “transformation,” accessed May 3, 2018, <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/transformation?q=transformation>.

man there is many difficult and unpleasant situations and although her initial reaction is to give up her pursuit of happiness, thinking that nothing good can ever happen, write the story of her family and die, there are always other ways to reach one's happiness. In her case, it was the voyage to Europe with her uncle, where she met Pleyel and finally they got married, which was something she wanted before the horrible events happened.

Although *Wieland* is an American novel, the connection with Europe is pervading though the whole novel. Within several initial pages, introducing the situation of Wieland family and its members, there are several cues symbolizing the link between American and European continent. The story about how the old Wieland left Europe suggests the abandoning the Old World, its tradition and history, but it turns out it is not that easy.

Firstly, old Wieland's mission to spread his religion amongst the Natives, connected with his feeling of having a certain religious purpose, is undoubtedly rooted in Europe and its religious traditions. Specifically, he was influenced by a Protestant sect, although he did not become part of it "because he perfectly agreed with none."¹⁵⁵ The religious topic is further developed by Wieland and his hearing of allegedly celestial voices. Stemming from Europe, the religious theme is an element that works as a natural link between the two continents.

Secondly, there are multiple references to Cicero, an outstanding Roman orator and a politician.¹⁵⁶ Young Wieland admires him and even buys his bust, which he places in the temple. It works as a symbol of European teaching, which is thus present at every debate the group of friends have there. The presence of Cicero might also be seen as a reference to Classical art, since it saw the ancient Rome as a model. Additionally, since Wieland was obsessed with the art of rhetoric, it may serve as a prediction of the plot of the novel – imitation of one's language. However, this is clear only after its reading and it is arguable whether Brown intended this or not.

Lastly, the key symbol of connection with the Old World is in my opinion Pleyel. The initial clue is his sojourn in Europe where he departed at an early age and therefore is logically enriched by the European culture and knowledge, as showed in the novel: "His conversation abounded with novelty."¹⁵⁷ He is also the one, who urges Wieland to go to Europe to claim the hereditary estates Wieland's have there, since his loved is a Baroness de Stolberg. Lastly,

¹⁵⁵ Brown, *Wieland*, 9.

¹⁵⁶ Torsten Petersson, *Cicero: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1920), 1.

¹⁵⁷ Brown, *Wieland*, 21.

his intended hasty departure to Europe, after finding out that Clara was allegedly Carwin's lover, signalizes that for him, Europe is a refuge. Overall, I believe he is a clear symbol of the permanent link that ties America and Europe together, whether Americans want it or not.

Another major theme of *Wieland* is the crime and punishment. At first sight, it seems like the criminal has been justly punished, since Wieland got arrested and later committed a suicide, but is it so? It depends on one's perception of who was the criminal. I believe that Carwin, who ended up unpunished, living in America with no consequences, should have been punished for his transgresses of morality. Although I do not think he urged Wieland to kill his family, he did harm Clara. This injury was not of physical, but of mental and social character. He harmed her in terms of inducing a sense of fear in her by being hidden in her closet and saying that he wanted to rape her, confusing her by imitation of voices and lastly, he damaged her good name by imitating a love dialogue between them. By doing so, he nearly took away her chance of marrying her loved one Pleyel and surely pushed her one step closer to the abyss of madness, which is thought to be hereditary in her family. I believe that by letting Carwin go without punishment, Brown intends to show that the legal system is not always fair and that sometimes the villains escape the just punishment.

Lastly, a huge theme in *Wieland* is whether one can rely on their own senses or not. Contrary to Locke's empiricism, Brown shows that even the senses can be easily deceived and without being fully aware of the context of the situation, one can make a fatal mistake in his judgment of the situation. Specifically, when Pleyel hears the alleged conversation between Clara and Carwin, he immediately jumps to conclusion that Clara is not a virtuous woman he thought her to be. He does not take into account his knowledge of her character and even does not want her to explain the situation to him, but instead he is confident that she is guilty, because he heard the conversation with his own ears. Thus, Brown questions the theory of empiricism and suggests, that there are multiple factors that need to be taken into consideration, before making any decisions.

This section summarized the major themes of *Wieland*. We have proved that the themes of identity, justice of law system and connection with Europe are present within the novel and that they are richly developed. To sum up, it is clear that *Wieland* examines many topics and that it suggests many issues that were current in Brown's time.

6.2. Critical Reception

In this section, the critical reception of *Wieland* is to be analyzed and perhaps even confronted. This should serve as an illustration of plurality of opinions. Many of the critic's observations are in agreement with the analysis of themes provided in the preceding section of this chapter. In his Advertisement to *Wieland*, Brown states that: "Whether this tale will be classed with the ordinary or frivolous sources of amusement, or be ranked with the few productions whose usefulness secures to them a lasting reputation, the reader must be permitted to decide."¹⁵⁸ Thus, we shall see what other readers decided.

It is an interesting fact, that Brown sent a copy of *Wieland* to Thomas Jefferson, who was at that time the vice president of the United States. In its accompanying letter he wrote that he was hoping that *Wieland* "is capable of affording your pleasure." Although Kafer claims that Jefferson certainly never read any Gothic fiction before, including Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, as its ideas were anti-Jeffersonian, Brown hoped that he will read his novel and consequentially recommend its reading to the public.¹⁵⁹ Surprisingly, Jefferson answered that he will read *Wieland* with pleasure, but sadly there is no further evidence of further correspondence or commentary on account of Brown's novel.¹⁶⁰ However, this shows Brown's eagerness to have his novel read by a politician, suggesting a presence of political motives within the book.

Edwin Sill Fussell, an American university professor, in his essay writes that: "Wieland is a furious contest between villainous confused Carwin and our doughty daughter of the American Revolution, Clara Wieland, Brown's narrator."¹⁶¹ This implies that the principal theme of the novel is the conflict between Clara and Carwin. Additionally, Fussell suggests that Wieland family symbolizes the young American nation.¹⁶² Wielands are young, rich, literate but also all alone; although they can look back to the history of their family, they have no real guidance and they live in accordance with their moral sense. Similarly, the newly formed American nation after the American revolution can look back to Europe and learn from its mistakes, but mostly it needs to stand on its own feet and to do its best to live with

¹⁵⁸ Brown, *Wieland*, 1.

¹⁵⁹ Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution*, xi.

¹⁶⁰ Charles Brockden Brown, *Collected Writings of Charles Brockden Brown: Letters and Early Epistolary Writings*, ed. Philip Barnard, Elizabeth Hewitt, Mark L. Kamrath (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2013), 447–448.

¹⁶¹ Edwin Sill Fussell, "Wieland: A Literary and Historical Reading," *Early American Literature* 18, no. 2 (Fall, 1983): 172–173.

¹⁶² Fussell, "Wieland," 183.

clear conscience. This parallel is reasonable and therefore can be considered to be valid. Overall, Fussell reads *Wieland* as a work with many allusions to politics and to the events that happened on the close of the eighteenth century, mainly the American Revolution. This reading is defended and further developed by many other professors.

Carne Manuel Cuenca reads the novel in a similar way, but unlike Fussell, he does not believe it to be a simply a political text, but he understands it as a post-revolutionary jeremiad, meaning a complaint about a misfortune being a punishment for secular corruption, with a hope for a correction and therefore a better future.¹⁶³ As such, he regards *Wieland* as a warning against excessive optimism flowing from the outcome of the American Revolution.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, he believes that *Wieland* shows that the absolute separation from Europe is impossible, which corresponds with our analysis of connection with Europe. Lastly, Cuenca claims that by sending his book to Jefferson, Brown intended to make the politician aware of the real condition of the country, so that he could perhaps make changes.¹⁶⁵

Another university professor Renata Wasserman generally agrees with Cuenca's reading of the novel and adds that *Wieland*'s discussion of national (and personal) identity includes also the matters of morality, rationality, religious belief and science.¹⁶⁶ Additionally, she recognizes the Gothic elements of the story (such as its setting, patriarchal power and attraction to science) are used for the illustration of national identity.¹⁶⁷ She also agrees in terms of the impossibility of real detachment from the Old World.¹⁶⁸ Her opinions are with accordance with the analysis of *Wieland* which is provided within this paper.

Marcia Nichols wrote in her article the following characterization of *Wieland*:

“By writing a novel in which sensory evidence cannot be relied upon and truth is obscured by a quest for motive, Brown was able to criticize legal practices that sanctioned sophistry and moral relativity by demonstrating how easily the average reader-juror could be manipulated and confused by an eloquent and unreliable speaker.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 138.

¹⁶⁴ Carne Manuel Cuenca, “Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* or, Fiction as an Instrument of Salvation in Post-Revolutionary America,” *Revista alicantina de estudios ingleses*, no. 12 (Nov. 1999): 92.

¹⁶⁵ Cuenca, “Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland*,” 94–97.

¹⁶⁶ Renata R. Mautner Wasserman, “Gothic roots: Brockden Brown's *Wieland*, American Identity, and American Culture,” *Ilha do Desterro: A Journal of English Language, Literatures in English & Cultural Studies*, 62 (January/June 2012): 198.

¹⁶⁷ Wasserman, “Gothic Roots,” 199.

¹⁶⁸ Wasserman, “Gothic Roots,” 210.

¹⁶⁹ Marcia Nichols, “Cicero's Pro Cluentio and the “Mazy” Rhetorical Strategies of *Wieland*,” *Law and Literature* 20, no. 3 (Fall 2008): 459.

This claim agrees with the unreliability of the narrator, as was discussed earlier in the paper. Nichols advocates the legal reading of the novel, which she believes to have been ignored for a long time. Her claim is strongly based on the presence of the orator Cicero as an idol of Wieland and proves it on the examples of Clara's manipulation with the readers into believing that Carwin is the murderer, instead of telling the truth without any other distractions. This is aimed to be a parallel criticism of lawyers that manipulate the jury at the court for the advantage of their clients, without searching the real justice.¹⁷⁰ The legal reading of *Wieland* is further supported by Peter Schneck, an author of the *Rhetoric and Evidence*, which focuses on the relations between literature and law and specifically between language and truth.¹⁷¹ In the light of our analysis of the reliability of the narrator and also with our observance of the legal language in mind, Nichols's and Schneck's opinion seems very reasonable and in accordance with our analysis.

Lastly, William M. Manly claims, that the reading of *Wieland* lies in the matter of point-of-view. For him, the novel is a psychological journey, showing a clash between facts and speculations, reality and dreams. He builds his conviction on the grounds of the first person narrator, which illustrates the imbalance of conflict between logic and subjectivity by being unreliable. This reading is further supported by Jeffrey Weinstock, who believes *Wieland* to be a psychological Gothic drama, claiming that: "In Brown's fiction, it is the mind, rather than external world, that as a haunted place."¹⁷² This statement is in agreement with our analysis of Gothic within the story as well as with Brown's intention to show morale values.

To sum up, this section proves that there are several possibilities how to read *Wieland*. Some of these have been implied in either the analysis of character or in the analysis of Gothic elements. This shows that *Wieland* is far more than a mere source of amusement, which is supported also by a long lasting interest from the readers and scholars. In my opinion, the theme of morality is far more significant and obvious than the political, national and legal topics. Also, according to Brown's own words the purpose of *Wieland* is the "illustration of some important branches of the moral constitution of man," which encapsulates my reading of the story.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Nichols, "Cicero's Pro Cluentio," 461.

¹⁷¹ Peter Schneck, *Rhetoric and Evidence: Legal Conflict and Literary Representation in U.S. American Culture* (Germany: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG, 2011), 77.

¹⁷² Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, "Gothic and the New American Republic 1770 – 1800," in *The Gothic World*, ed. Glennis Byron, Dale Townshend (USA: Routledge, 2013), 32.

¹⁷³ Brown, *Wieland*, 1.

Conclusion

The principal objective of this thesis was to examine the transformation of the Gothic genre by its transfer from the Europe to the American continent. The modification of the Gothic was illustrated on the novel *Wieland; Or the Transformation, an American Tale* by Charles Brockden Brown in order to examine the beginnings of American Gothic literature and to specify its characteristic features.

The theoretical parts were dedicated to the examination of the Gothic genre, describing the literary tendencies that led to its emergence and consequently exploring the typical features of Gothic. A close attention was paid to the Romanticism, its features and development on the American continent, showing that Gothic fiction is a variety of Romantic literature. The difference between European and American Gothic was defined to provide a suitable background for the analysis of the novel. Furthermore, the Gothic was examined from the point of view of the nature of its supernatural features, dividing the genre into four subtypes. Additionally, the connection between Brown's life and his writing is examined, confirming the Romantic nature of his texts.

The practical chapters are focused on the analysis of *Wieland* as a representative of American attempt to produce Gothic literature, taking into account factors such as the form of narration, the analysis of characters, the identification of the Gothic elements and American Gothic elements, the non-Gothic themes present within the novel and lastly the critical reception of the novel. The aim was to employ the information given in the theoretical parts in order to assess Brown's mission to adapt the Gothic genre for the American readers and hereby create a distinctive American literature.

The thorough analysis of *Wieland* proves that Brown's attempt to adapt the Gothic genre for a different environment was successful indeed. The difference between European and American Gothic stems from the need to produce a realistic horrifying literature and therefore the environment of the story, the characters, and the supernatural level of the story had to be adapted as was illustrated in the extensive analysis of the novel. The thesis was successful in terms of proving that the American Gothic has its distinctive features which make the literature unique. However, the link between European and American literature is obvious, as illustrated not only in the theoretical background showing the development of the American Gothic, but also within the *Wieland* itself as stated in the practical part, and cannot be broken.

Additionally, based on the analysis of various readings of the story and on the examination of Brown's life, we can claim that there is a hidden agenda behind Brown's writing. Taking into account Brown's conviction that the system has flaws that need to be fixed, his end of carrier in laws due to belief that one has to be unjust in order to practice it, the fact that he sent a copy of *Wieland* to Jefferson, and the themes that are present within *Wieland*, it leaves us with a feeling that his writing was supposed to draw attention to the flaws in system which he saw and refused.

Overall, the thesis achieved its goal by illustrating the elements that distinguish the Gothic of the two continents. It showed that the American Gothic writer Charles Brockden Brown enriched the genre with his experience of newly born American society and pointed out its imperfection. Therefore, it proved that the American literature, although stemming from the European tradition and models, innovated the genres and aspired to transform them into original American models.

Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se věnuje přenosu gotického románu a jeho adaptaci na americký kontinent. Cílem práce je analyzovat prvky typické pro americký gotický román, podložit je odbornou literaturou a dokázat jejich přítomnost v díle Charlese Brockdena Browna *Wieland; or, the Transformation: An American Tale*. Práce poskytuje porovnání a rozdíly mezi evropskou a americkou gotickou literaturou a ilustruje tak dualitu dvou kontinentů.

První teoretická kapitola se zabývá kulturním a literárním pozadím, které vedlo ke vzniku gotické literatury a z něhož tato literatura čerpá. Ukazuje, že kořeny gotického románu sahají až do období klasicismu, který adoroval antické vzory. Právě ty se posléze staly také modelem puritánské etiky, která silně ovlivnila literární klima nově utvářené americké společnosti. Dále je zmíněno osvícenství a s ním spojený vznik deismu, který staví na empirickém chápání prožívání reality. Dle této filosofie by vše mělo být racionálně zvažováno a autenticky prožíváno vlastními smysly a rozumem. Právě téma možnosti oklamání smyslů a logického uvažování se objevuje v románu *Wieland*.

Významnou částí této kapitoly je rozbor vzniku a vývoje romantismu. Z něj vyplývá, že existuje mnoho verzí romantismu a díky tomu je takřka nemožné tento literární směr všeobecně definovat. Pro účely této práce byl porovnán romantismus evropský a americký, jejichž společným znakem je pozadí revoluce. Romantické hnutí v Evropě odstartovala Velká Francouzská revoluce, na kterou pružně reagovali William Wordsworth a Samuel Taylor Coleridge, kteří společnými silami vytvořili stěžejní dílo britského romantismu, a to sbírku *Lyrické balady* (1798). V jejím úvodu Wordsworth vysvětluje, že usiluje o literaturu psanou přirozeným jazykem, aby byla přístupná pro co nejširší čtenářskou obec. Dalšími romantickými znaky, které tito autoři obhajují, jsou individualita, city a subjektivita spisovatele. Romantická literatura dále boří klasicistní vzory, které kladou důraz na řád, a soustředí se na spontaneitu. Časté jsou též autobiografické prvky, a tudíž vtělení autora do postavy romantického hrdiny, který bývá v konfliktu s vnějším světem.

Američtí spisovatelé byli po revoluci v situaci, kdy usilovali o tvorbu vlastní literatury. Americký romantismus je tak podstatně odlišný od evropského a vyvíjí se dvěma různými směry. Prvním z nich je americký transcendentalismus, který se soustředil okolo spisovatele *Ralpha Walda Emersona*. Toto hnutí idealizovalo přírodu a myšlenku, že v přírodě člověk splývá s Bohem. Druhým směrem je temný romantismus *Edgara Allana Poea*, kterého můžeme označit za pokračovatele *Charlese Brockdena Browna*. Cílem jeho literatury je krása,

kteřou Poe často nalézá v tématu smrti krásné ženy. Americká romantická literatura tak zahrnuje nejen adoraci přírody, ale též pocity smutku a strachu, které byly často cílem gotického románu.

Druhá kapitola se soustředí na sumarizaci vzniku, vývoje a znaků gotického románu, zejména pak na odlišnosti tohoto žánru v Evropě a Americe. Dochází k závěru, že základním kamenem obou literatur je psaní za účelem vyvolání emocí, nejčastěji strachu a děsu, k čemuž evropští gotičtí autoři využívali zejména prostředí starých hradů, ve kterých se dějí nevysvětlitelné věci a například zde straší (údajně) duchové. Američtí spisovatelé však hledali zdroje strachu ve svém prostředí, tedy bez středověkých hradů, a tak jejich texty originálně využívaly nejen americkou divokou přírodu, ale též například téma rozkolu s domorodým obyvatelstvem. V souvislosti s gotickou literaturou se objevuje termín „explained supernatural,“ který lze volně přeložit jako objasněné, logicky vysvětlené nadpřirozeno. Tento model, kdy údajně nadpřirozené jevy jsou později logicky vysvětleny, začala užívat britská gotická autorka Ann Radcliffe a později ho využil Charles Brockden Brown. Tato kapitola také definuje čtyři druhy gotických románů, z pohledu vysvětlení nadpřirozenosti událostí a doby, ve které se odehrávají: nadpřirozený, historický, vysvětlený a nejednoznačný.

Americká gotika má několik významných znaků, mezi které patří například důraz na nestabilitu racionálního přemýšlení a následný rozpad utopického života, a to právě díky náhlé iracionalitě či fanatismu a mysticismu. Podle Allana Lloyda-Smitha má čtyři hlavní pilíře: hranice a pohraničí (v souvislosti s rozšiřováním území kolonií a bojem s okolní divokou přírodou), puritánský odkaz (který národ významně ovlivnil a zanechal v něm dosti černo-bílý pohled na dobro a zlo), rasu (díky otroctví a přítomnosti původního obyvatelstva, díky kterému v Americe byl dlouho svár mezi bílou většinou a „těmi druhými“) a v poslední řadě politický utopismus (který má kořeny v Deklaraci nezávislosti a jejich demokratických principech). V rámci Brownova díla lze ilustrovat, že jeho *Edgar Huntley* se zabývá právě pohraničím a rasou, zatímco *Wieland* se soustředí na puritánský odkaz a rozpad utopie.

Třetí kapitola ve stručnosti sleduje život Charlese Brockdena Browna a události, které se promítají v jeho dílech. Je patrné, že Brown je vskutku autorem romantickým, přestože americký romantismus vzkvétal až v období po jeho smrti. Jedním ze znaků romantismu je totiž přítomnost autobiografických prvků, které jsou v případě Browna velice časté. V této kapitole odhalujeme podobnost mezi osudem mladých Wielandů a autorem.

Jádrem praktické části je analýza gotických prvků v románu *Wieland*. Pro porozumění analýzy jí předchází kapitola čtvrtá, která obsahuje rozbor hlavních postav a způsobu vyprávění. Analýza dokazuje přítomnost gotických prvků, a též specifické znaky americké gotiky, která se tak stává literaturou originální a není pouze kopií evropského žánru. Ústředním tématem románu je tzv. vysvětlené nadpřirozeno, které Brown objasňuje vědecky. Dále autor využívá rozpad utopie, který je způsoben šílenstvím a náhlým fanatickým vzplanutím Wielanda. Je tak zřejmé, že zdrojem děsu jsou zde mentální stavy postav a ne jen prostředí.

Brownovu inovaci žánru dokazuje také prostředí románu, které je čistě americké. Jedinou připomínkou evropské gotiky je chrám na vrcholku kopce, který sloužil k modlitbám otce Wielandů a později k jejich zábavě. Rodina v centru příběhu také není vybrána náhodně a s hrdiny evropského gotického románu ji pojí jistá vznešenost. V jejich případě však nepramení z typicky evropského aristokratického původu, ale z jejich inteligence, bohatství a dobrých způsobů. V neposlední řadě *Wieland* využívá motivu dámy v nesnázích, která je zde však soběstačná a emancipovaná žena a je ohrožena opět díky mentálnímu stavu postav. Brown však nepředstavuje své postavy černobíle a jednoznačně jako dobré a zlé. Namísto toho nechává Carwina, který se tváří spíše jako zloduch, zachránit Claru před jejím bratrem Wielandem, který celý život byl perfektní bratr, manžel a otec. Na příkladu *Wielandu* tak dokládáme, že byť je americký gotický román inspirovaný tím evropským, obsahuje mnoho inovativních prvků a je literaturou originální.

Poslední kapitola se soustředí na ostatní témata *Wielandu* a na jeho kritické čtení. První sekce tak rozebírá téma transformace, která postihuje několik postav. Dále si všímá pouta s Evropou, které je přítomno v celé knize a naznačuje sepjatost dvou kontinentů. Rozebírá též témata viny a trestu, spravedlnosti a zpochybnění Lockova empiricismu. Kritické čtení předkládá několik teorií, jak k textu přistupovat, mezi kterými převažuje čtení politické. Dle něj symbolizuje Wieland a jeho rodina mladý americký národ. Dílo tak slouží jako varováním před přílišným porevolučním optimismem a jako důkaz nezlomitelného pouta s Evropou. Většina předložených čtení souhlasí s analýzou textu, které je věnovaná praktické část práce.

Wieland je dílem, které ilustruje americkou snahu o originální literaturu. Pro tento účel americká gotika využívá nové prostředí, hlavní hrdiny a také nové zdroje strachu. Brown do své tvorby promítá zkušenosti, kterých nabývá jakožto příslušník mladého národa, který se teprve vyvíjí. Kritickým okem pak naznačuje, že systém není neomylný a Amerika má prostor pro zlepšení.

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