

## **Grotesque, Shadow and Individuation: A Jungian Reading of Selected Short Stories by Tunku Halim and Edgar Allan Poe**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In examining Malaysian literature in light of the global canon, one cannot miss the numerous parallelisms between literary works by Tunku Halim bin Tunku Abdullah and Edgar Allan Poe. Both writers are preoccupied with grotesque realities of mentally deranged individuals, and similarly visualize the darkness and animality of human consciousness. This article aims at conducting a comparative analysis of the dynamics of personality and of the psyche of fictional characters in selected short stories by the two writers. To this end, the study draws upon Jung's notions of the Shadow and the Individuation to explore the key psychological motives behind the characters' behaviour patterns, as well as to examine their level of subjectivity and agency in harnessing the same motives. Notwithstanding the seemingly different ways of presenting the narrative patterns of the characters' journey towards Individuation, the selected stories are marked with similar examples of characters' failures in the process of self-realization. While some characters remain trapped in the obscure and perplexing world of the Shadow, others achieve a minimal level of maturity as they begin to realize their own being. In the case of Halim's stories, however, the characters are additionally held back by cultural and structural forces that constantly affect their realities. It is concluded that this particular difference accounts for Halim's uniquely hybrid style of writing that merges Western horror genre with more local folklore.

*Keywords:* Edgar Allan Poe, grotesque, individuation, shadow, Tunku Halim

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In examining Malaysian literature in light of the global canon, one cannot miss the numerous parallelisms between literary works by Tunku Halim bin Tunku Abdullah

(b. 1964) and Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849). A remarkable prolific writer of dark fantasy and horror genre, Halim is regarded as one of the canonical writers of South East Asian gothic and a talented writer who has both benefited from the rhetoric and conventions of Western gothic and embellished his narratives with Malay folklore. As a former lawyer who has also published books on weight loss and cooking, Halim's personal life has been fairly different from Poe's dejected time on earth which was adversely affected by alcohol addiction, loneliness, and destitution. Regardless, there are certain themes and motifs that are constantly repeated throughout both writers' writings: monstrosity, madness, and loss of the self (Lee, 2007). Both writers defy the literary and narrative styles of their contemporary era and explore grotesque realities of mentally deranged individuals. According to Connelly (2003), grotesque is an "aberration from ideal form or from accepted convention, to create the misshapen, ugly, exaggerated or even formless" which, in the world of fiction, suggests the celebration of the "confused and excessive" (pp. 2-7). The various elements of grotesque as used by both writers underline the similar strategies that they have adopted to contest and disrupt the established norms of society.

The generic designation of grotesque has already been applied by a few scholars on the works of both writers. Poe is generally believed to be "the point of origin for the American grotesque" (Balkun, 2009, p. 828), and hence the abundance of critical examinations of his oeuvre in relation

to this element (Bryant, 2017; Burwick, 1998; Renzi, 2013; Roas, 2009). Within the existing body of scholarship on Halim's works (Akam & Yahya, 2018; Eng, 2015; Jafni & Yahya, 2015; Jafni et al., 2016; Toh, 2020), however, it is mainly his major novels that have attracted critical attention, leaving his short stories as a fertile ground to be explored. Drawing upon a diverse array of theoretical and conceptual frameworks, each critic attempts to shed light on a particular aspect (for example: settings, themes, and imageries) by taking one element in the novels and extrapolating it to a total explanation. Yet, what is noticeable in these individual ventures into giving a rational explanation of the texts is the lack of an analytical focus on the original causes and psychological traits of characters, in particular those of Halim's short stories. This study seeks to fill the lacuna by employing Jungian psychoanalytic theory to conduct a comparative investigation of a number of short stories by both writers. The selected narratives are Halim's "Haunted Apartment," "The Rape of Martha Teoh," "A Labor Day Weekend," and "Night of the Pontianak" from his collection of short stories titled *Horror Stories* (2014), and Poe's "The Premature Burial," "The Black Cat," "The Tell-Tale Heart," and "Berenice" from his *Complete Tales and Poems* (2013). More specifically, Jung's notions of Shadow and Individuation will be applied to fathom the hidden motives and complexities of the portrayed characters' behavioural and personality traits.

Two notable points need to be clarified here. First, the comparative approach in this study does not by any means intend to hold Halim's writings against a perceived Western "norm" of excellence, but rather to underline the complex nuances of character development through a cross-cultural understanding. Therefore, the comparative investigation in this study is a practice that Childs and Fowler (2006) succinctly described as one where "a work of literature yields a richer significance when placed alongside another, each serving as a way of talking about the other" (p. 29). Second, the underlying incentive in this study to analyse Halim and Poe's works comes from the former's honest appreciation of Poe's influence on his literary endeavours. In an interview, Halim reveals to us that he prefers his works to be described with "Poe-like phrases such as 'tales of darkness and imagination' or the more concise but less precise 'dark fantasy'" (Lee, 2007, para. 13). Furthermore, in an interview with Elaine Chiew, he names Poe as one the Western writers that influenced his works (Chiew, 2019). That said, two remarkable advantages can be gained from this study. First, it will highlight literary and cultural commonalities by unravelling the ways in which Halim's characters are formulated and influenced by those of Poe's. And most significantly, it will underscore the culturally specific and individual traits of both writers' characters.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Literary scholars have employed a wide array of theoretical and conceptual

frameworks to analyse Poe and Halim's fictional writings individually. Noting the scarcity of research that evaluates the similarities between the two writers' literary works as well as the sporadic research pertaining to the characters' inner traits in Halim's short stories, in this section we limit the review of literature to the critical studies that specifically examine the element of grotesque as well as the Jungian notions of Individuation and Shadow in both writers' works.

That Poe has used the element of grotesque in nearly all his creative writings is a matter of unanimous agreement among his scholars. Critics like Roas (2009) has pointed to the various functionings of grotesque such as parody and satire to maintain that with their carnivalesque incarnation, Poe's stories also reflect the changes insinuated in the modern grotesque. The grotesque world of perversity, as Lippit (1977) explains, is graphically illustrated in Poe's crime stories such as "The Black Cat" and "The Tell-Tale Heart". In both narratives, the protagonists commit sadistic, unjustified crimes which are usually accompanied with self-annihilating confessions. A similar pattern occurs in "The Premature Burial," in which the hero generates feelings of the utmost horror and pain of death (Poe, 2013). Y. J. Jung (2010) examines Poe's "Berenice" with a Lacanian perspective and argues that the story is "one of his most morbid and grotesque tales" in which the monomaniacal narrator becomes interested in fatally afflicted Berenice (p. 227). It is the insatiable desire

of the narrator that makes the story to be gruesome and repulsive. In a similar study, Conner (2019) points to the re-emergence of the dead bodies from “graves, walls, and other forms of entombment” to argue that Poe’s characters in these tales “hover between sanity and insanity, reality and fantasy, childhood innocence and adulthood sexuality, or life and death while attempting to navigate their own changing identities” (p. 77).

Critics of Halim generally agree that, like other gothic writers, he began his writing career under the spell of Poe, whose influence is seen in most of his stories (Byron, 2012). The major themes of Halim’s stories are the fear of death, the realization of perversity or savagery as inherent human traits, and the sado-masochistic quest for elegance. Even though Halim’s works are similarly infused with the element of the grotesque, the way it is depicted throughout his oeuvre is believed to be distinctive (Wagner, 2006). Due to the lack of critical studies on his short stories, the following review looks into the element of grotesque as depicted in Halim’s other writings. In his novel *Juriah’s Song* (2008), for example, Halim uses the grotesque in relation to nature (Jafni et al., 2016). Here, grotesque is exploited to demonstrate how the main characters’ relationship contests and breaks down the rules of nature as one character is a human and the other a demon. This element of grotesque is further reinforced by their unmarried relationship that challenges cultural norms and religious principles. In this manner, the fictional characters

and the grotesque appear to have a strong relationship because the latter “helps to shed light on the social and psychological difficulties and maladjustments” (Turnbull, 2018, p. 3).

Eng’s (2015) analysis of Halim’s novel *Last Breath* (2014) through the lens of Individuation offers unique insights into the characters’ psyche and presents them as humans worthy of our understanding and sympathy regardless of their unpleasant actions and behaviours. The characters complete the journey towards Individuation in such a way that we see them becoming humans through experiences that break down the social, economic, and ethnic barriers separating them from others. According to Akam and Yahya (2018), heroic effort is required for one to go through the journey towards Individuation as it is often a strenuous and dangerous task. In their analysis of the character Jessica of “A Sister’s Tale” (2014) in one of Halim’s works, they observe that her journey towards Individuation fails because the Shadow has been too dense for Jessica to be able to overcome. Thus, Individuation is deemed as the positive outcome that is expected to come out from a character’s journey. What remains unattended, therefore, is the notion that the journey towards Individuation can have its own challenges and difficulties. In this regard, Wakeman (2012) affirms that the process of Individuation will often bring the characters to “confrontations with archetypes, especially the Shadow, a part of the Self that is denied by the ego” (p. 66).

The concept of the Shadow, according to Ladkin et al. (2016), offers further depth to an understanding of how mature personality might be realised. This standpoint confirms the line of argument that Jung's notion of Shadow plays a decisive role in comprehending the characters' personality. Moores (2006) claims that the characters in Poe's works are linked to the notion of Shadow by showing the usual attributes that makes Shadow material as part of the character's value system. Instead of taking Shadow as an outside element, detached from the characters, his research understands Shadow as inhabited in them. As for the main characters of Halim's novels, according to Akam and Yahya (2018), the Shadow proves to be having a leading role. Yet the exploration and manifestation of it in Halim's short stories remain untouched. In the following sections, the study seeks to employ the notions of Shadow and Individuation to analyse the elements of grotesque in Halim and Poe's short stories. But before we begin, a brief review of the three terms is beneficial.

According to C. G. Jung (1943/1991), the Shadow represents anything subliminal that a person does not want to recognise about himself, and yet it is consistently "thrusting itself upon him directly or indirectly" (p. 285). It is understood as the active part of the personality that "cannot be argued out of existence or rationalized into harmlessness" (p. 20). From this perspective, all the aspects of the self which the subject usually avoids remembering—such as the way it feels inferior, immoral, infantile, or in other ways unwanted—are represented by the Shadow

(Fordham, 1960). In other words, the Jungian Shadow possesses and represents emotional qualities that an individual wishes to bury and prevent from resurfacing into the conscious world (Butchart, 2019). Although the Shadow is typically considered as a negative figure, sometimes it contains certain positive attributes and connections. For example, the Shadow can be one's repressed emotions towards a love object that cannot be attained. In this case, even though the desire is repressed, it is not necessarily adverse and dark. Furthermore, the Shadow finds expression by means of projections, whereby as an alternative of looking at the displeasing Shadow elements as present inside the personal unconscious, the individual projects these traits onto others. The act of projection may include both negative and positive traits, though there is a higher possibility of projecting the negative ones, depending on the individual and the kind of repressed thought stored in the personal unconscious. Notwithstanding, Jung was convinced that the way to a person's psychological health and meaning is through this mysterious aspect of the psyche (Young-Eisendrath & Dawson, 2008). According to him, the Shadow that is not given attention will in time become unsafe to the psychological health of an individual and may eventually steer towards neurosis (C. G. Jung, 1940/1958). The process of maintaining balance between the positive and negative, or the conscious and the unconscious mind, leads us to the act of Individuation; and hence, the second concept that this study utilizes.

The objective of the Individuation process is therefore the synthesis of the Self, which is made up of both the conscious and the unconscious. The two parts of the psyche do not make a whole piece when either of them is repressed or concealed by the other. The conscious is ruled by the ego and conceals one's true desires while "the unconscious produces dreams, visions, fantasies, emotions, grotesque ideas, and so forth" to re-enact and realize the same wishes (C. G. Jung, 1936/1969, p. 283). The unconscious is represented by the Shadow as the storehouse of one's repressed memories. To achieve Individuation, not only one must identify and overcome the assertive and annihilating forces of the Shadow in a continuous process throughout their life but they also must create balance between the two opposing realities. Hence, Individuation refers to the process wherein a person acknowledges their own individuality and becomes a subject that is entirely unified (C. G. Jung, 1936/1969). It is a process of self-understanding and wholeness that takes place when a person understands "himself for what he naturally is" rather than of what he desires "to be" (Jacobi, 1973, p. 132). From Jung's perspective, the individual's ultimate goal must be the attainment of psychic harmony which is the result of the Individuation process (Pridgen, 2001). This, however, does not mean that the journey towards subjectivity is without interventions from the Shadow and conscious mistakes made by the subject. Besides, the process of achieving Individuation, in general, is not a process that can be finished in a given

time frame. Rather, as Tricarico (2016) affirms, Individuation should be pursued through dialogue with the contents of the unconscious, in particular with those stemming from the collective unconscious.

Both the Shadow and the Individuation form the analytical bedrock of the present study. Yet, unless one understands the element of grotesque, one would not be able to appreciate the application of the two terms. Kayser (1957/1963) defines grotesque as "the expression of a strange and alienated world that is familiar from a perspective which suddenly renders strange (presumably, this strangeness may be either comic or terrifying, or both" (p. 18). Over the years, grotesque has found its place in arts and literature. Connelly (2003) argues that even though grotesque has numerous meanings from one state of affairs to another state of affairs, these meanings are not mutually exclusive, and "their range of expression runs from the wondrous to the monstrous to the ridiculous" (p. 2). Grotesque can cross religion, culture, and class boundaries by showing and appealing to a mixture of spectators from different beliefs, social classes and areas of living (Hadi & Asl, 2021; Sumali & Asl, 2019). Even being rebellious, blasphemous, and not following the moral conduct, religious faith, and beliefs of one's own religion can be considered as grotesque. Therefore, we can conclude that grotesque is considered as something extreme and distorted from the usual reality that surrounds us. The Shadow has a close connection to the elements of grotesque as it is strange and goes



against the norms of the society through the repressed desires that the characters have.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Research Objectives**

The aim of this research work is to conduct a comparative study to examine the patterns of usage and the functioning of the element of grotesque in Tunku Halim and Edgar Allan Poe's fictional writings. To achieve this focal aim, two pivotal objectives are to be pursued: First, to analyse the key psychological motives behind the portrayed characters' behaviour patterns; second, to examine the character's level of subjectivity and agency in negotiating the same motives.

### **Methods**

The study uses a Jungian psychoanalytical approach to perform a textual analysis of selected short stories of Tunku Halim and Edgar Allan Poe. Pertinent to the central objectives of this study is Jung's theories of the Shadow and Individuation that shed light on the enigmas of human mind and the mysterious and unknown depths of its personality. A Jungian approach is adopted as it comprehends "the idea of the unknown self" as being autonomous and independent from the controlling force of the ego. In other words, the unknown self "is itself the ultimate, controlling power within (or around) the psyche" (Cox, 1964, p. 166). Besides, Jung also acknowledges the self as a relative thing, not as totally directed by the hidden psychic forces but somewhat in control of the ego. Both these angles

are reflected in his notions of the Shadow and Individuation, respectively, which are manifested in turn through the element of grotesque. The study entails only a close reading of the narratives to interpret the fictional representations of the characters' psychic motives as well as their agency. This means that the principal method of data collection will be a textual analysis of the selected works. The advantage of this approach is that it bases the interpretations on evidence from the text (Asl, 2019, Ying et al., 2021), leaving the context aside as a secondary matter of importance (Asl, 2018, 2020). Hence, the reading will be limited to identifying and analysing examples of behaviour patterns of major characters to make sense of the underlying motives in ways that lead for likely interpretations. Finally, the examples will be compared to identify the similar ways of representation.

### **Materials**

The underlying rationales behind the selection of the short stories are as follows. First, as the central focus of this study is on the element of grotesque, the material under scrutiny has to be directly preoccupied with this topic. Of all the works of the two writers, the selected stories are the ones that fully revolve around the notion of grotesque. They also have a thematic commonality in that the menace of death, the recognition of barbarity as human nature, and the sado-masochistic desire for beauty form the underlying message of the stories. Second, previous studies have explored this element only in some of the major works of

the two writers—in particular, a few of the stories by Poe (Bloom, 2009; Hayes, 2002; Lawson, 1966; Ravvin, 1992; Rico, 2011), and some of the novels of Halim (Akam & Yahya, 2018; Eng, 2015; Jafni & Yahya, 2015; Jafni et al., 2016; Toh, 2020). Hence, the criteria for the selection of the material is the fictional works that have remained under-researched.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Earlier, it was mentioned that monstrosity is one of the focal preoccupations of both writers. Monsters and beast-like figures, according to Byron (2008), “police the boundaries of the human and consequently allow us to define the politics of the normal” (p. 32). Throughout their creative writings, one of the salient ways that both Halim and Poe have utilized the monstrous is in the service of revealing and evolving the mysteries and the unknown of the Shadow and of leading to the discovery of the self. Within the selected narratives, the monstrous is situated in a fiendish past or positioned in a diabolical Other in the present. In either case, the dark and the bestial pave the ground for the characters to complete an internal journey. The ways in which this pattern is established and portrayed in Halim’s stories are replete with cross-cultural resonances. In particular, the imagery of trapped spirit in a jar, or the fear of the number four as associated with death, are rooted in Chinese traditions.

In this regard, what gives Halim’s “Haunted Apartment” much of its significance is locating monstrosity in a

cultural structure. The Shadow archetype in this story is depicted through the female character Pamela who feels constantly threatened by strange voices at 4:00 a.m. everyday. Her paralyzing fear of this particular hour is further aggravated by her own mother who frequently tells her of the negative connotations of the number four in the Chinese belief system. As she tells us,

And then it dawned on me. The Chinese superstition. 4 o’clock. Four was the numerologist’s nightmare. Four was death to the Chinese. My mother, being Chinese, always warned me of that number. She avoided that number whenever possible. ... Four was death and death was four (Halim, 2014, p. 57).

Pamela’s personal unconscious is further shaped by ample words of warning from Mrs. Razak, who recounts to her the fatal incidents that happened to the previous occupants. Despite Pamela’s attempts to forget about the incidents as she “didn’t want to be afraid for no reason” (Halim, 2014, p. 54), Mrs. Razak’s horrifying stories kept resurfacing in her thoughts “...you might be in danger. ... It has something to do with the apartment” (p. 56). In both cases, the grotesque is formed in a present-day alien other. For Pamela, the Shadow is also presented in a few grotesque imageries. For instance, an animal that is mad and angry, a “crazy menacing laugh” that sounds like a demon riding the animal and the pool water that turns deep red and bloody (p.



58). Here, the Shadow is portrayed as something that appears disturbing towards the main character. The dark threatening wind, sense of the evil thing, and something that is whispering and calling her down are the interferences which can be associated with the Shadow permeating through her conscious mind. All of these grotesque imageries are seen as forceful elements that are coming to her fast and wildly. This shows that the Shadow is trying to lure her further away from achieving her goal in the journey towards self-realization, or Individuation. In addition to all the grotesque imageries that are portrayed, the voice that says “no” also comes from Pamela’s Shadow. However, it does not inflict any harm to her since it is the voice of her own father. As she tells us, “It was my father! It was my father’s voice!” (Halim, 2014, p. 61). In Jungian psychology, the Shadow does not necessarily impact negatively. The Shadow can be one’s repressed emotions towards others that they love and adore but cannot acknowledge. In Pamela’s case, her father’s voice cautions her not to fall into the Shadow. Hence, Individuation appears to be a successful process in her case because Pamela manages to overcome her Shadow by not jumping into the water when something welcoming and inviting calls her down to the pool. After this progressive incident, she even believes that the apartment “felt different”. Her journey towards Individuation is completed when she begins to believe that what Mrs. Razak said about the ghost is not true, and that she will never wake up at 4 a.m. again.

As she explains, “I somehow knew that I would not be waking up at 4 o’clock ever again” (Halim, 2014, p. 62).

Unlike Pamela whose Shadow is affected by her culture, Martha’s Shadow in Halim’s “The Rape of Martha Teoh” has a rather personal cause and emanates from her implacable and deeply-rooted hatred towards her dead husband. We come to know that Heng Wan raped Martha 35 years ago and kept cheating on her throughout his life. After his death, his ghost continues to haunt her and threatens to hurt both Martha and their maid Emma. Heng Wan’s apparition keeps Martha’s traumatic memories alive insofar as she begins to project on him a multitude of grotesque images. The most distinctive image is of a “lanky and slightly hunched” figure sitting at the dark corner in the house (Halim, 2014, p. 88). Martha develops an irrational fear of him and feels entrapped. This is reflected in her behaviour when she “screamed and ran into the bathroom” and began “shaking and trembling” because of her fear and trepidation. The overwhelming feeling of terror strikes her further as she finds Heng Wan’s voice projected onto her which repeats, “you are mine, you cannot leave here, ever” (Halim, 2014, p. 89). These projections of grotesque images work as alternatives to seeing the unpleasant elements of the Shadow that grow darker as time passes by. All these emanate from her personal unconscious, which is unique to her and unknown to others. These are the obstacles that she faces in her journey to achieve individuation. It is noteworthy

that the apparition in the form of the Shadow reappears partially because Martha keeps thinking about it inasmuch as “her thoughts of him swam in the humid air” (Halim, 2014, p. 87). In other words, the Shadow is projected because she refuses to fight for her own Individuation. Of her passivity, the narrator tells us that “she did nothing about it then and did nothing about it now” (p. 87). In her journey towards Individuation, therefore, Martha refuses to admit that she hates her husband. From a Jungian perspective, the Shadow is a problem of morality that challenges the whole ego-personality, because one cannot become conscious of the Shadow without a moral effort that is significant (C. G. Jung, 1943/1991). Hence, by not acknowledging the Shadow in the past and the present, Martha prevents herself from achieving individuation.

Two other stories of Halim, “A Labor Day Weekend” and “Night of the Pontianak,” follow a rather conventional and similar pattern of the portrayal of the Shadow and the Individuation. Both narratives recount corresponding tales of a journey that ends in the emergence of a bestial figure that causes horror, misfortune and death. In the first story, the Shadow archetype is presented through the male character Hong, who predictably fails to achieve Individuation. Despite his wife’s attempt to dissuade him, Hong goes on a trip with his friend Arul who is famous for his hobby, ghost hunting. His Shadow manifest itself throughout the journey to Melaka as he feels the road is getting darker and they are being watched

by “evil things” (Halim, 2014, p. 71). Hong returns home with an empty bottle which happens to carry an evil being. Unaware of that, as soon as Hong opens the bottle, the evil creature gets out and kills Belinda. In this incident, the Shadow is represented by the grotesque imagery of a “beetle that came out from the jar,” turns into a black cloud and attacks Belinda (p. 79). Hong’s projection of this particular Shadow is rooted in his dissatisfied and hostile feelings about Belinda’s domineering attitude that he has tried to hide and repress. In this regard, Hong’s failure to achieve Individuation is discernible from his inability to find the answer to his wife’s death as well as from the fact that he continues to project the Shadow as grotesque images of the misty figure in a white gown hunching up by the curtains at night (Halim, 2014).

“Night of the Pontianak” relates a similar journey in which the pattern of a demonic figure slaying the human characters is repeated. Three friends namely Fauziah, Julian and Azman set out on a journey to find the ancient creature Pontianak which is finally revealed to have been incarnated in Fauziah the whole time. It is noteworthy that his fiendish creature is firmly rooted in Malay folklore and is, according to Halim, “no Frankenstein monster, Dracula or werewolf of the western horror genre but rather a *hantu jahat* or evil spirit that comes in the form of a Pontianak or vampire—one of the most feared creatures in Malay folklore” (as cited in Byron, 2008, p. 34). Thus, the grotesque is represented though Fauziah, who is at first mysterious but then

becomes a “dark silhouette” (Halim, 2014, p. 35). This gruesome image is further built up negatively through Azman who imagines Fauziah’s body turning rotten and her flesh decaying. The Shadow archetype is thus depicted in Azman on whom the grotesque imageries are projected. This is supported both by the fact that Fauziah keeps haunting him as the Pontianak and by the way the dark school field and the shophouses whisper and stare at him. Yet like Hong of “A Labor Day Weekend,” Azman does not succeed to achieve Individuation as he fails to overcome the Shadows and his personal unconscious and is finally slain by Fauziah.

When we turn to Poe’s stories, we encounter a similar underlying pattern of the depiction of the Shadow and the Individuation. Notwithstanding, the monstrosity in Poe’s selected narratives tends to be more like an “apprehension of the demonic as mere absence, rather than as essentially diabolic” (Jackson, 1981, p, 112). Poe’s “The Premature Burial” is a tell-tale example in which the narrator develops an irrational fear of death. As the story begins, the narrator recounts numerous cases of people dying of natural disasters and hence being buried alive. The growing fear has deranged the character insofar as he transforms their family’s vault into a tomb which he often uses to go into a death-like trance. Hence, both the Shadow and the grotesque are reflected in the narrator who is also afflicted with a mysterious illness that is described as “absolute death” which makes him develop death-like symptoms (Poe, 2013, p. 251).

The more the disease progresses, the more his paralyzing fear grows which finds its ways to constantly resurface in his conscious mind. Consequently, countless “images of gloom” overwhelm him in his dreams (Poe, 2013, p. 251). As an active participation to successfully complete the journey towards Individuation and escape the Shadow, the narrator renovates the family’s vault into a tomb. Though the trance continues to strike him, the narrator finds a creative way to step out of his fear of death and premature burials, and hence overcome the obstacle in the process of achieving Individuation.

In both “The Black Cat” and “The Tell-Tale Heart,” the Shadow and the grotesque are reflected through the unnamed narrators. Both stories are murder tales in which the murdered returns to haunt the murderer and overwhelm them with dreadful feelings of guilt and remorse, which poses insurmountable obstacles in their path of achieving Individuation. In the first story, the vision of the slain black cat plagues the murderer narrator as the Shadow archetype insofar as he “experience[s] a sentiment half of horror, half of remorse, for the crime of which I had been guilty” (Poe, 2013, p. 188). This narrative is replete with grotesque imageries. The most horrendous example is illustrated on one occasion when after being provoked by the cat, the narrator “grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket!” (Poe, 2013, p. 188). The loathsome image of the grotesque becomes further appalling when he thinks of the ways to hide his wife’s corpse. As we are told, “at one period I

thought of cutting the corpse into minute fragments, and destroying them by fire” (p. 190). Later, when he is haunted by the figure of a gigantic cat with a rope around its neck, the narrator begins to blame it on someone else. The growing fears as well as the futile attempts to repress the gripping emotions are illustrative examples of the Shadow archetype that he fails to overcome. In other words, the narrator fails to achieve Individuation as he fails to acknowledge that it is him who is afraid of the cat and not the other way around.

This particular pattern is repeated in “The Tell-Tale Heart” in which the narrator perpetrates a similar evil deed by killing an old man and hiding his body. After the incident, strange sounds that look like the old man’s heartbeat torment him mentally. Here, the narrator’s Shadow returns in the form of a load of guilt about the old man’s death that he struggles to repress. Furthermore, the ghastly image of the grotesque in this story is represented in his horrifyingly remorseless way of murdering the old man. As the narrator tells us, “I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs” (Poe, 2013, p. 287). It is the insanity of the crime, however, that the narrator seeks to be described as. His unsuccessful journey towards Individuation begins as he tries to prove that he is not mad. In the process, he even asks for readers’ support by raising the question, “would a madman have been so wise as this” (Poe, 2013, p. 286), and confesses to the crime, “I admit the deed!—tear up the planks! here, here!” (p. 288), only to demonstrate

his sanity. Hence, instead of realizing his Individuation, the narrator finds himself falling into a deeper Shadow. As we are told, “I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone” (p. 288). The momentary feeling of being at ease and the fleeting sense of achieving Individuation thus gives its way to a greater feeling of misery and wretchedness.

The deranged psyche, the loss of self and the grotesque that are associated with the Shadow archetype are most notably embodied in Egaeus, the narrator of Poe’s “Berenice”. A demented eccentric man who is afflicted with a mental illness called “monomania,” which is described as “muse for long unwearied hours” on ordinary objects like “the embers of a fire” or “perfume of a flower” (Poe, 2013, p. 291). This abnormality is vividly demonstrated through its difference and by its juxtaposition to Berenice’s normal and healthy state of mind. Egaeus is aware of this dissimilitude as he tells us, “[y]et differently we grew—I, ill of health, and buried in gloom—she, agile, graceful, and overflowing with energy” (p. 291). Due to this consciousness, Egaeus does his best to conceal his affliction from others; a practice that indicates his illness serves as the representation of the Shadow archetype that he seeks to overcome. Egaeus is depicted as the epitome of the nefarious aspect of the grotesque. Mentally ill, his obsession with certain objects drives him to extract Berenice’s teeth from her grave. While digging the grave, he gets heavily

smearred “muddy and clotted with gore” and his hands are “indented with the impress of human nails” (Poe, 2013, p. 294). Besides, though Poe does not describe how the teeth got in the box, it is eerily implied that Egaeus took them out using “instruments of dental surgery” that fell out from the box (p. 294). What these deeds indicate is not a progressive movement on the part of the subject towards Individuation but is his failure to overcome the obstacles posed by the negative side of the Shadow. His personal unconscious thus takes over his conscious life inasmuch as we find him wondering what he has done. As he confesses, “I had done a deed—what was it?” (Poe, 2013, p. 294). Since he fails to achieve Individuation, Egaeus eventually finds himself in a state much worse than before.

## CONCLUSION

This study applied the Jungian notions of the Shadow and Individuation on selected short stories by Tunku Halim and Edgar Allan Poe to examine the hidden motives for the characters’ grotesque behaviour and their level of subjectivity in negotiating such motives. The comparison reveals that the shadow poses a similar moral problem in the works of both writers in such a way that it contests the ego-personality of the main characters. To overcome the challenge, the characters need to obtain self-knowledge and acknowledge the vile and immoral features of their human nature as present and real. The analyses also indicate that monstrosity is one of the primary motives

in behaviour patterns as both writers employ demonic figures to expose the enigmatic forces of the Shadow and shed light on the difficult path towards self-discovery. Among the difficulties encountered is also the character’s lack of autonomy or impotent agency in mastering both their shadows and their light simultaneously in such a way that they see themselves from two sides and hence get in the middle. Despite the seemingly different ways of presenting the narrative patterns of the characters’ journey towards Individuation, the selected stories are marked with similar examples of character’s failures in self-realization. While some remain trapped in the obscure and perplexing world of the Shadow, others achieve a minimal level of maturity as they begin to realize their own being. In the case of Halim’s stories, however, the characters are additionally held back by cultural and structural forces that constantly affect their individual subjectivities and social realities. This particular point accounts for his unique hybrid style of writing which merges Western horror genre with more local gothic tradition. Therefore, in both groups of works, the dark characteristics of the Shadow and the ensuing futile attempts to confront them in the process of Individuation produce strange and alienated worlds that can be best described as grotesque.

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