

## **A Critical Exploration of Fear and Loathing in Selected Romantic Fiction**

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### **Abstract**

*Gothic is a twisting lens, an amplifying mirror; however, the pictures it shows to us have authenticity, and cannot be grasped in ordinary forms. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, this genre was the only truthful alternative for psychology and the historical sciences, the only method to reach and understand those fierce territories where penetration of knowledge was restricted or late. Romantic writers broadened the range of gothic positively whilst providing a greater understanding of the connections between terror and other aspects, violence, spectatorship, the body, imagination, and cultural politics of emotions. Including Graveyard Poetry, the subtle and the sublime, and sentimentalism, the origin of the Gothic goes parallel to the origins of the novel. Furthermore, the research also unveils that my selected writers, by using the elements of fear and loathing have manifested people's double standards, who want to rule the world by not giving space to other creatures; nonetheless, want to use other creatures for their benefit and ease. Keeping in a trial the scholarship on gothic theory given by David Punter and Aristotle's view of tragedy this qualitative study critically examines the selected Romantic texts to trace the elements of fear and loathing bringing horror for some and tragedy for others.*

**Keywords:** *French Revolution, Fear, Gothic, Loathing, Romanticism*

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### **Introduction**

Primarily, Romanticism is with two referents. Generally, it embodies a perpetual faculty of mind, personality, and art that can be seen over the ages, in all cultures, and in all periods; while, secondly, it is a historical movement in ideas and art that transpired in England, Germany, France, and America in late 18th and

at the beginning of 19th centuries.

This document contextualizes some historical details to establish bases for my project, and probes into Romantic texts to find the least exhausted and least researched dimension of fear and loathing along with the element of tragedy. Moreover, my selected texts have been discussed vastly, but in the West. Additionally, the angles that have been chosen to analyze

them are most often mysticism, love of nature, and the concept of the sublime; nevertheless, the concept of fear and loathing and post humanism are new angles that can be applied to these classic texts. Fear and loathing, moreover, make the study significant because it allows a space to discuss societal issues that are usually censored or considered harmful to societal norms; thereby, these angles, take the shape of art. Hence, this study adds a new angle to the academic field by unveiling characters from this new angle.

Romanticism, which spanned between 1790 and 1830, was an umbrella term and a historical movement that covered a variety of expansions in literature, art, philosophy, and music. It was a period of transition in society due to artists' and intellectuals' challenges to the establishment. Moreover, according to Smith (1973), the roots of Romanticism can be traced back to Rousseau's slogan, "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains". This slogan further led the Romantics towards individual liberty and expressing authentic personal

feelings, so they denounced the foregoing enlightenment and other prevalent evils, i.e., exploitation of the poor, strictly following the imposed conventions and rules, and came towards informing and inspiring other people for a revolutionary change. Consequently, Greenblatt (1962) states that physical hostility and stark mutiny were other markers of this period.

Furthermore, Romanticism has been summed up quite comprehensively in Jacques Barzun's (1975) words, as, "a shift back towards Middle Ages, a love for the mysterious and unusual, revolt from reason, a justification for the individual, freedom of the unconscious, a response against science, and scientific methods, a revival of idealism, a love for pantheism, restoration of Catholicism, a negation of artistic harmonies, an arrival and accepting the emotionalism, and going back to nature- etc". In this way, it can be added that Romanticism broadened the understanding and scope of gothic while providing a larger understanding of the connections

between horror and other aspects, spectatorship, the body, violence, and cultural politics of sentiments.

### **French Romanticism**

France underwent bitter events under the monarch and dictator King Louis XVI. There was no freedom of speech. Society was limited to those practices defined by the government with unequal dissemination of resources and bigoted laws. One's mind was determined by the economic resources which he enjoyed at that time. It was a divided society. Literature of that time exhibited a lively picture only, and the working class remained ignored. There was stress and anxiety everywhere. The situation was changed only when the revolutionary essence united the complete nation and there came a political uprising. Newly gained freedom brought justice and better living for the poor, and they were free to add their voice to literature. However, writers of this time were much more creative than Vigny and Victor Hugo. In addition, McEvoy (2008) presents that Germaine de Staël is of the view that her

motherland Germany's and France's culture was not classic, but grotesque and creepy, and hence, valued spirituality, emotion, and naturalness.

### **Revolution, Fear, Terror, and Literature as an Equanimity**

The period was 1789, and it was summer in France, which beheld a wave of immense fright, and was known as 'The Great Fear'. The Great Fear was clear evidence of that stark angst and dread which was pervasive and became the cause of the fall of the Bastille, in England and France, even then the time when the revolution was started, it brought a variety of viewpoints of the people who were traumatized by the happenings of this revolution. Crawford (2013) traces that it was due to brutal activities that the Period was commonly called the 'reign of Robespierre' until January 1795 when it was called the "Reign of Terror". The argument goes that the British literary society rushed toward literature that could pacify their phobic minds. In *The Gothic Quest*, one of the first critical books on Gothic fiction, Montague Summers (1938) noted:

Both at home and abroad dark shadows were dropping; the times were difficult, full of nervousness and unrest; there was a sense of discontent today and of worry for the morrow; there were wars and rumors of wars. Readers sought some counter-excitement, and to many, the novel became a precious anodyne.

The early Romantics were supporters of the French Revolution, anticipating that the political situation will change, but terror turned into the 'order of the day in radical and turbulent France. It was due to public fright, escalating violence, shortage of food, and inflation. This terror was the most severe when people were opposing the civil war and were counter-revolutionary. Seventy percent of death sentences were afflicted in five major departments and almost two thousand were executed in Lyon. It is quite appropriate to say that Romanticism was the rebirth of terror, fear, and loathing as a genre to escape from harsh and unacceptable cultural realities. Industrialization grew to

bring an extremely cruel culture, a societal division into elite and poor, lengthy working hours, unsatisfactory pay, and unkind discipline. As a result, Abrams (1971) highlights that there was a lingering danger of depression and inflation because the English government preferred funding France and America in their revolutionary wars instead of entertaining public cries for social, political, and economic reforms. There was a revival of the Gothic genre of medieval Europe for mirroring the insensitivity experienced by the English people. These writers incorporated creepy plots, ghosts, demons, enigmatic deaths, monsters, and bloodshed.

### **Revolution as a shift toward consciousness**

It was the period when not only writers' and intellectuals' approaches transformed but the common populace was also becoming conscious. In its outer manifestation, revolution fetched more freedom and novel techniques in thinking patterns, perceiving the surroundings, and subsequently in the expression of writing also or what Isaiah Berlin

(2012) calls “a shift of consciousness” that ruined the spine of European assumptions. Crawford (2013) brings forth a thought-provoking note discussing how Romantic literature shares cosmopolitan propensities due to sharing common features among the literature of numerous countries.

### **From Romanticism to Negative Romanticism**

While discussing the faculty of imagination during the period of Romanticism, and a transition in human beings’ journey towards emotive and intellectual complexities it is said, if the universe is practicing creating itself on regular basis, the human mind and its power of imagination are thoroughly creative then. Man, in his journey established the meaning of the universe from inert to dynamic while experiencing the phases of distrust, despair, religious seclusion, and communal isolation. Moreover, it was the time when the cosmos was not only missing goodness and beauty, rationality and importance but any order as well. This period of Sturm and Drang (storm and stress) or

negative romanticism was filled with individuals who experienced, despair, guilt, and social seclusion, or they are mentioned as the culprits of unmentionable crimes. They are outcasts over and over again from society and God and act as wanderers on the surface of this planet. Peckham (1951) pinpoints them as the Cains, Manfreds, and Harolds. In this way, writers sought different ways of manifestation of fear and loathing in their writings.

### **Towards the Context of Fear and Loathing**

It is frequently documented in history that the Gothic genre was introduced one night in 1764 when Horace Walpole wrote *The Castle of Otranto* after getting inspired by his nightmare. As he gives the account: The Castle of Otranto was written in the historical period of Gothic writings. Other Gothic fiction and romances further paved the way deeper and the deepest into the shared imagination of the English community, which was once established by Walpole. Crawford (2013) recalls that the beginning of the 19th century harmful villains, dire

supernatural castles, and mountains with ashes had become taken as default mode to imagine 'fear' and 'evil' and how they can be represented in writings. Byron rests very close to Punter while defining the genre in his poem *Lara, A Tale*, Punter (1991) emphasizes the line: "Gothic is to do with a kind of expressionism; what we see in the past is in part an exaggerated part of reality". Further, Punter (1991/1998) defines terror as "not a nightmare but a freezing touch of reality".

Redinn in his book, *Forms of Evil in the Gothic Novel*, is of the view that novelists in the early 18th century- Fielding, Smollett, Richardson, and Defoe presented evil in a violently secular way. This manifestation of evil is outward-looking and limited to a particular space and time- the social life of the 18th century, while the Gothic writers are passionate to write about chaos and manifesting a rigorously inward, metaphysical, and psychological vision of evil. Though the scope of manifestation of evil was limited, these writers did not deny the possible control of evil. They also

knew well that when human evil is encouraged by superstition and extremism, they could create trouble on an immense scale, and Britain's current history was the same. In the eyes of Peckham (1951), Johnson and Addison assumed that the existence of spirits was true, while Defoe was inspired by supernatural ghosts. However, gothic as a twisting lens explains that on one side, it indicates a Christian and progressive architecture with its bases in primitive ethics, whilst, contrarily, this architecture becomes the setting for danger, supernaturalism, suspense, and horror.

### **Research Methodology**

The present study has taken into consideration David Punter's Scholarship on Gothic Theory and the Aristotelian view of Tragedy. The gothic theory was written before Gothic literature came into existence. It was the year 1746-7: years which concluded the last battle on the land of Britain, the last death with the help of an ax as a punishment of high treason was given on Tower Hill, and the fiercest fight for the Austrian success was over. Writers were

youngsters, and they were always revolutionary. William Collins was a poet of age twenty-six, while Edmund Burk was a brilliant student of age eighteen. So, their works were not recognized easily, and it took decades later on to get recognition. But these writers helped to establish the air and culture of growth of Gothic fiction in England. There were graveyard poets who reacted when faced with death, ghosts, and tombs, but more than their reaction was William Collins, another 18<sup>th</sup>-century British poet, who in his 'Ode to Fear', introduces fear in "Monsters in fear's Train'- Danger, Vengeance, and the 'thousand Phantoms'" Collins through this writing introduces the supernatural genre and the invention of terror to the readers in such a way that he/she feels fear with an immediate response that such an involuntary reaction is immediate and inevitable. Walpole, while accentuating the significance of terror puts forward its effects as well, which are pretty pertinent to the Aristotelian view of tragedy where Faflak (2015) quotes

Terror, the author's principal engine, prevents the story

from ever languishing; and it is so often contrasted by pity, that the mind is kept up in a constant vicissitude of interesting passions.

This possibly happens to the believers of Classic Calvinists as Percy Bysshe Shelley thinks about the sailor's killing of the bird, the Albatross, and the ocean's omnipresent and overwhelming power. They believe in tragic fate and metaphysical horror (e.g., when an unknown creature fills the surface of the ocean) bringing a horrible verdict of destiny.

On the other hand, David Punter's work *Gothic Pathologies: The Text, the Body and the Law* analyses the Gothic's working with a political agenda of bringing social change which is aptly relevant to my selected texts. Punter (1998) puts as:

the perfect field for considering the relationship between textuality and loss, a "textuality as loss" where "loss" is meant both historically and psychoanalytically. " In the context of the modern," Punter

writes, "Gothic is the archetype of all fiction, all textuality" in that the Gothic focuses on the loss of history (through its fictional evoking, which is also a fictional replacement) and the loss of the readerly self since the same signifying laws that displace history displace the centrality of the reader's being. To this Punter links his second project, a politics of Gothic that would utilize its paradoxes for some sort of social change.

Gothic themes, Punter (1998) writes, invite the readers to accept the deviation, rebellious behaviors, or souls (different from Christian humanist souls) as roots or souls of society. The idea takes us to the nuanced and complex theory of otherness to address the ontological change for the sake of political change (which Romantic writings convey). Another relevant view of Punter is intersecting the Gothic with the body where the body is the site to work and power operates on the body, as the dark places and the wilderness

work. Chaos can be stabilized only if the body is stable. The study also shows the working of the power on the bodies of different characters.

Moreover, the main focus of the analysis is through, Punter's theoretical markers, yet the study is informed by Aristotle's views on tragedy as well, where these texts, as Myers posits (1949), "in the medium of poetic language and with a dramatic presentation incorporate incidents which bring fear and pity, where they temper each other to create a balance. As Aristotle (2006) defines tragedy that the work is tragic if it brings the element of pity and fear in the readers, or in the spectators. In other words, it arouses the emotion of catharsis in the readers. The purgative power of tragedy is what functions in the case of my studies contrary to Plato who says that it is moral ambiguity that becomes the spirit of tragedy. Aristotle (2006) in his *Poetics* claims, that poetry is universally appealing, and if poetry tends to be appealing to the universe, the tragic hero would represent truly the whole of mankind, and his fate may be applicable to all



men of the universe. These markers act as a lens to analyze my selected works.

### **Results and Discussion**

Texts are the production of time and space. They are the direct reflection of some ideology, some agenda to bring change or to document some social or political history. Texts produced during the period of the French revolution also dealt with the convention of fear and terror which was practiced and observed during that period. As every writer has his/her style of writing and uses a different approach to deal with matters, the same was the case with Romantic writers. They approached the socio-political circumstances in various ways, and hence, contributed to manifesting the public grief and supporting their angst.

#### ***Faust by Goethe***

I discuss Goethe, first of all, with his masterpiece '*Faust*' written during the period of anxiety of the French Revolution. His Faust is based on the medieval times fake person named Faust, who wandered in Germany and accomplished himself

as a fortune teller, healer, and expert in necromancy. After a violent death in 1540, he became a pivotal figure and many diabolical tales met him. These tales had their roots in the depressing atmosphere of German Protestantism and became part of the *Historia von D. Johann Faustus* in 1587. It is commonly believed that Goethe came towards the literary expression of this subject when he felt Faust in himself. Faust, in a manner, Goethe deals with, treats the subject of man, of consciences, destiny, and the mystical world, and hence it becomes his testament.

Faust, the son of a peasant, achieves prodigious success as an alchemist, and a scholar at the University of Wittenberg, Germany, where he falls under the shadow of what is called a "foolish and arrogant mind" legend; and pursues magic to excavate his knowledge. The play opens when Faust is sitting in his study room. His study of almost every profession has left him to understand man's mind with a limited scope. Dissatisfied Faust always thinks about suicide or magic, or calling the spirits who refuse to help. One Easter

morning he gets his mind healthier while going on a walk with Wagner. He talks about his long list of wishes. They meet a dog on the way, which Faust considers his study but later on, he exposes himself as a satanic spirit, Mephistopheles with the elements of destruction, sin, and evil, and that he is a Nihilist. Faust signs the devilish treaty with him and begins his work by presenting his master to the wild party of students in the crypt.

The devil makes Faust happy with high-class living, sexual pleasures, and a quest for an unseen world. He visits stars and hell as well. During the journey, he plays various magical tricks and makes students happy and, after taking a potion from Witches' Cave, summons Gretchen Helen into action to act as a mistress and with whom he has a child who is a clairvoyant. Here, Schulte (2011) emphasizes that Mephistopheles flirts with Martha, whose garden he is using for Faust and Gretchen's meeting. The devil plays a game to seduce Martha as well.

While going beyond his limits, he argues with Gretchen's brother, Valentine, and shoots him

dead. Moreover, he leaves Gretchen alone to attend Walpurgis Night, celebrated once every year where all the evil witches and magical powers of the whole world gather on Broken Mountain. It is significant to mention that Gretchen after murdering her son is jailed and later on, gets insane. When this gathering of the evil creature end, there is a show on the top of the mountain with the name of Walpurgis Night Dream, and Faust acts as an emperor, where he wishes to clear the land for settlement who is assisted by Mephistopheles, who though knows that it is a futile war. That's why, when Lust, Guilt, Need, and Care reach his palace, only Care can enter. It is the moment, that Faust gets blind, and at the same moment, he refuses to take the aid of any magic. They all go back and death comes. He is unable to see but wishes to take an unselfish task. He must have done something which was against encroachment and feasible for man's dwellings. (Damrosch, 2012) elaborates that he listens to the voice of busy spades which he considers his men working, but it is the voice of digging his grave.

So, Faust's story manifests the fear of the public against the political leaders, who lust for absolute power, and take politics as business to make all the capital and assets for themselves and do not work for the redemption of people. Man cannot share the values of God. On the other hand, it shows the limits of man that he is a mortal being with certain limits. He cannot be tyrannical and wants to act with absolute power. On the other hand, entire knowledge and total power belong to God, and interference in this is unfair and ruinous. These are the flaws in Faust as well when he acts like a tyrannical figure; he wants to control the whole universe and wants to have limitless knowledge, things which leave him helpless and with a worse downfall, and his acts of tyranny bring fear and terror to the readers or in Aristotle's term, catharsis, and tragedy to the character with purgatory affects to the readers. Hence, reading according to the scholarship of Punter suggests social change where people are within certain set boundaries for human beings.

### **William Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell***

Similarly, Blake wrote this book of religious fear and terror at the beginning of the French Revolution. It provides a worldview of this schizophrenic universe, which is also a place of perpetual agony and torment. Book's title page opens up the argument that the 'disease of civilization' incarnated by the material conditions of the Industrial Revolution and Swedenborg's spiritual Heaven of bareness and negation of feelings and passions, is faced with "Rintrahe roars and shakes his fires in the burdened air; Hungary clouds swag on the deep". (Record, 1976) analyzes that the voice of the Degenerate prophet is with a clear message that bodies with sins and flaws must be put in the blazing fire so that the tormented bodies can get rid of the pain and restore health.

The technique of presenting himself as "a mighty devil" and writing with "corroding fires" is apocalyptic, hence fulfilling Blake's notion of the apocalypse, where he prints with corrosives, which are medicinal and melt the superficial

layer away. Then he follows tradition and comes toward Dante's Inferno, where the narrator takes a route to Hell. He blends the tradition of Dante and Milton with his mental approach of being revolutionary and shows institutional religion with the nature of exploitation and orthodox morality. He substitutes the proverbs of the Biblical book with the title, "Proverbs of Hell" to energize the mind and thinking. His proverb, "He who desires but acts not, breeds pestilence," is ostensibly revolutionary. Like other romantics, he was also in favor of revolution though he knew that revolution would be apocalyptic with certain causalities. Another proverb "The cut worm forgives the plow" implies that people will sacrifice for the greater good. Revolution was needed for social health and progress, which the writer presented through the horror and terror of religious mysteries as the "blazing fire of hell" putting the book what Punter suggests as gothic writings for social change, and on the other hand, it highlights the purgatory effects in the readers.

### ***The Monk* by Mathew Lewis**

Formal and informal positions in Christianity like clergymen, monks, Friar, bishops, Priests, and Popes have been a frequent part of literature. Stockwell (2013) mentions that it was ordinary that Gothic novelists found immense potential in the character of Monk and benefitted from his potential, as William Draper writes that the Church was accountable for the humiliation and appalling state of the people of Europe. Lewis's *The Monk* presents an escape from those realities observed in those days' churches, where religious corruption was lofty. The novel does so by thrilling the readers through a remote experience into the dominions of the horrible in the form of mob violence, murder, witchcraft, bleeding nuns, and incest, and meanwhile indicates a moral by manifesting the subsequent victory of virtue over evil but brings a tragic vision in the readers. The reader is challenged with an attack of fear and horror when Sacred comes to crises in its moral relation and when the definition of guilt becomes problematic. Brooks (1973) notes that it is asked in strict manners when

Matilda asks diabolical forces for help to seduce Antonia, so fervently sought after by Ambrosio.

According to David (2002), through the narrative of Raymond and Agnes, the writer is altering the universe by mobilizing all the characters. Bleeding Nuns' entry begins a wild ride demonstrating the stuff related to diabolism: "Uttering a loud shriek, the drivers were hurled upon the ground. Immediately clouds obscured the sky: the winds howled around us, the lightning flashed, and the thunder roared tremendously". The natural world has borne something supernatural and Raymond's ventures- the night visits of the Nun, demonstration of the bloody history of the Nun, and catharsis of the Wandering Jew are with perfect horror. Adding to this, when the reader comes back to the main narrative, to Ambrosio, Antonia and Matilda, the reader again comes to the clue of demonic agents. Fairly, it can be said that support for morals and ethics in this cosmos is gone, and there is no surety that man's fight with his inner spirits will win in

proclaiming his innocence bringing tragedy to overall humanity.

### ***Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

Another text, Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, though written while imitating the form, diction, and style of the old ballads, embodies romantic features by adding supernatural imagery. It is a narrative about offense, retribution, and redemption. Religion acts as a major theme to signify the morality of the Mariner. Moreover, it also shows the author's troublesome connection with Christianity. Though religion shows man's tie with God and morality talks about man's concerns with man, Coleridge believed that religion is morality. Before conversion, Mariner does not know about brotherhood. He kills the bird, Albatross while not knowing he is killing a Christian body. As soon as he kills, nature goes against him. He faces horror in different forms- seven days' gaze of the 200 dead bodies of the crew, snakes in water, slimy water creatures, and St. Almo's fire. It was the defilement done within the limits of an obscure world. Moreover, it was

an act of enslavement. After admitting to the Hermit, he avenges himself, which is to take a voyage to various parts of the world to narrate his experience to all others.

Text is explored with the common themes of Estrangement and Sacramental vision, both related to religion. Estrangement is Mariner's departure from the supernatural, while in a sacramental vision he is back to the supernatural as David Punter adds that it is metaphysical horror that the strange creature present on the surface of the sea brings. Estrangement is uneasiness informing about something erroneous, it is the evidence of man's unsteady existence before the gigantic unknown, or what Coleridge (1871) himself in his other poem calls the 'Unfathomable Hell Within', and the solution comes while connecting to the supernatural powers. This wrongness, like killing the bird is moral character and redemption is a mystical stage, when God and creation are in accord, and Mariner's exile is the inner exile in which mankind cries. Pafford (2011) discusses that the Mariner due to his

unjustifiable offense is left alone by God and is destined to wander the world as an incarnate example of God's retribution. He carries the dead Albatross around his neck, which shows his guilt. It is a conversion that brings relief to the Mariner. But these two themes, to my mind, are not ample to pen down Mariner's total experience. Isolation is terrifying and to come out of it, man attempts to unite with the Absolute power, which is possible through religion. So, estrangement has its connection with religion as well. Through universal supernatural images, Grow (1973) states that Coleridge converts the Mariner from conceptualism to dualism which is primary to every human's experience of the gothic and supernatural. His obsessive treatment of the Wedding- Guest and his mania to share his horrifying experience shows a clear and everlasting impact of the Mariner's practice and experience on his mind. It shows that sins are punished, and a sinner has to pay them back again highlighting the concept of fear and tragedy.

However, Shelley is the most deeply absorbed writer of the present-

day Gothic writers. He not only strengthens the argument of graveyard poets that skeletons, phantoms, and hoary anatomies mock the entities of this soil, but also adds that they are fascinated by those in power. Punter (1998) elucidates that the monarchs and bishops of Rome have deputized power that would be taken away by death and secondly, they exercise the power of repression, tyranny, and death. Priests and kings exercise their power through terror, identical to the threat. Shelley develops the connection between this type of Gothic, related to power, and the conformist ideas of horror in his poem *Queen Mab*:

“A thousand mourners deck the  
pomp of death

Today the breathing marble  
glows above

To decorate its memory and  
tongues

A busy of its life: tomorrow,  
worms

In silence and darkness seize  
their prey. (130)

To Shelley, Gothic is to  
access history; castle ruins and

cathedral takes us to the domain of slavery and faith and guarantees us the brevity of these forms of power. In this way, *Queen Mab* deals with the misery, injustices, and oppression of the present and past caused by commerce, religion, and monarchies. Within the futuristic vision, it is thought that conditions will get better and a utopia will arise. Mary Shelley is of the view that Shelley is in love with what was delightful and wild in literature. Hawkins (2019) traces that Shelley acclaimed German works for having these qualities- depiction of extreme, violent scenes, wild atmosphere, and political content, and a factual depiction of the socio-political circumstances of the day.

Ianthe, after taking her sublime journey is dejected by the universal miseries and adds that winter brings a stormy day and later on a night of war where soldiers are dead and the city burned. Revolution, bloodshed, and terror of the day have disillusioned people about the presence of God due to immense destruction. Mab, like Shelley himself, considers not the evil in human beings as the cause of war, but

rather monarchs, corrupt politicians, clergymen, and commanders. Though it is horrific, Shelley himself does the same but in the end, while replacing these terrible evils celebrates the arrival of Republicanism, Atheism, Vegetarianism, and Free Love through Mab's hope, she gives to Ianthe declaring that virtuous people still exist. Hence, again, gothic is conveying the underlined meanings of the importance of bodies, and social growth, a revolutionary stride.

### ***Manfred by Byron***

One of the Romantics, Byron also stood against senseless cruelty and social hypocrisy. He battled for individual and national freedom. He was a revolutionary towards the vices and evils of the contemporary period, and mercilessly exposed the barbarism of aristocracy and monarchs. In his works, Marchand (1957) dissects that he most dynamically defended the cause of political and social freedom and fought for Greek Independence as well. Byron's relationship with his wife before the divorce was in limelight, because of conflicting feelings of love and hate repulsion

and repentance. Harsh intimidation followed by malicious self-remorse.

His *Manfred* is a story of inner angsts and fears. Byron's hero battles to understand the route of his downfall, on both, literal and figurative levels. Envisaging a jump from the abyss to his death, he also thinks satanically in the direction of his ethical deterioration and even moral death. He tells the Witch living in the Alps that his isolation is "peopled with the furies" (I.ii. 131). Hero has something to overcome, which is his conscience, and his quest is flamboyantly self-centered and yet, later on, he negates the self completely with the help of catharsis.

For *Manfred* self-justification is the only option for coming back to grace. So, he expresses a verdict on himself. He wants to overlook, which otherwise means that he remembers. He will implore Astarte for mercy, which shows his feelings of regret and guilt. He lurks between good and evil, a tragedy to him, and fear and horror for others.

### ***Frankenstein by Mary Shelley***

Victor Frankenstein in Mary Shelley's novel, *Frankenstein* acts as



an ambitious and knowledgeable character. Victorian males characterized themselves as intelligent and ambitious, so they associated themselves with this character. Furthermore, reading Frankenstein depicts the language and diction of a schizophrenic person (Lepore webpage). The monster which Dr. Frankenstein creates is the personification of his desire as we see that Mr. Hyde is Dr. Jekyll's desire to separate his evil self or as Rotwang, a paranoid scientist, while living in an old ruined house, in Metropolis novel creates a robot named Maria, and considers her his beloved Hel. This creature turns against his creator and becomes a rebel to bring destruction to workers and citizens. Curran (2010) describes that the monster Frankenstein's creation becomes dangerous when he gets odd with his creator. He is left helpless after creation. He is a piece of disgust for being too tall and ugly face. He turns against his creator because he fails to create his companion, and the monster kills his brother, which later on becomes guilty and conscious of the scientist. What was the possible

solution to acculturate that creature, but what is done? He is banished.

When reading keenly and minutely, Frankenstein shows itself as a book of rejection, rejection of an unknown and strange, at both psychological and social levels. One of the critics, Karl Mannheim is of the view that romantics who tried to liberate 'repressed irrational powers' advocated their reason in the fight, but failed to reckon that mere alert attention can be the source of expected justification. In Frankenstein, these reasons are marked, because Mary took her political and moral purposes more earnestly, even more than Lewis or Radcliff. She is ready all the time to dissect her narrative for moral inspection. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* manifests the contradictions explicitly as compared to other contemporary texts.

It is commonly known that most of the texts dealing with fear and loathing are about injustices, whether it can be divine justice, or done by an individual to his fellow human beings. Frankenstein's monster and the Wanderer are

dominant representatives of the same injustice. It is also clear that the society that created Gothic and was interested in Gothic literature was getting responsive to the wrongs and injustices in several areas. Mary Shelley through the creation of this monster demonstrates the standards and morals of society. Monster is fear and loathing, and it is treated in the same way as society treated, or still treats the disabled and disfigured. Moreover, this oversize creature's acts of sympathy and appeal for love are also responded to with fear and loathing.

Mary Shelley also highlights the animation on dead matter and ethical liability of scientists to not go beyond certain limits and play with nature, which, otherwise, gets harsh and vindictive. Victor, Walton, and the monster, the three men of the text try for greatness but all fail. So, Victor's scientific experimentation breaches the conventions of both life and the phenomenon of death, and hence, shows Victor as an actual monster having a corrupt soul, because he is not ready to help his creature. He wants to destroy him just

like in the case of Dorian Gray, where Dorian wants to do away with his painting. The text brings tragedy for the monster who in actuality is not the monster and needs acceptance as Punter's (2008) scholarship suggests, while, fear and terror for the readers who can overpower the terror only if they understand the intricacies of the scientist's work and then sympathize with the creature.

### ***The Vampyre; A Tale* by John William Polidori**

Agostino Ansano Polidori, a physician, and poet has not established a prominent name in history. Though he has been reckoned in several films and novels, there has been not a single detailed work written about his life till today. His life, though short and failed, is filled with an opportunity to see the Romantic Period from a new angle. He was engaged, during much of his time in politics, law, medicine, philosophy, literature, and religion. Along with Shelley and Byron, he spent summer in Geneva, which is prominently known as a ghost story project, the same which inspired Mary Shelley for writing

Frankenstein. It was the time when the group started reading a collection of ghost short stories named Phantasmagoria, which was translated from German to French by Eyries. On July 21, 1816, Mary, Shelley, and Clairmont went on a day trip to Chamonix to visit Mont Blanc, inspirational mountain scenery, a trip which provided the foundation for both Shelley's Mont Blanc and Mary's Frankenstein as well. Gerard (1885) labels *The Vampyre; A Tale* as a compilation of invisible dynamics, and humiliations, which Polidori suffered at Byron's hands.

It was easily believable for Polidori that Byron was extracting the life from him, was sucking his blood, just as the rest of the others accused Byron of owing a magnetic power to seduce women and to eclipse their identities. In the words of Amelia Opie, "Byron has such a voice as of devil to tempt Eve". A vampire or Lord Ruthven is considered one of the foremost Vampyres which manifest characteristics that modern readers and audiences see or are familiar with mysteriously seductive, urbane, aristocratic, unscrupulous,

cunning, chasing people to make body dead, and searching for blood to survive. He is a millionaire and sophisticated in the opening and last of the book, and due to these individualities, he captivates an upper fraction of society or the elite audience. One of the critics Halberstam remarks that the monsters in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were balancing the opposite poles/binary- female/male, inside/ outside, foreign/native, proletarian/aristocrat. This type of analysis is also applicable to Polidori's *The Vampyre*, with the Aubrey/Ruthven force Polidori blends aristocrat and proletarian, and, something more, and his landscape switches between foreign and native. The subject matter of vampires threatened the air, and so did Byron. Polidori combined the two and the result was dangerous in fact. Bainbridge (2006) states that strangely, the story became the highest success in Europe.

One more issue which was bringing fear and horror to society was of snatching bodies-stealing newly buried dead bodies out of the graves for the work of anatomists. As

medical students were learning about these corpses to pass the subject of Anatomy, and Polidori also experienced as a medical student in England, the corpses and the practical fell short as the digging of graves was declared illegal except for those of some criminals. Radcliff, while differentiating between horror and terror writes that terror “stimulates and wakes one’s senses”, while, “horror freezes, contracts or annihilates one’s senses”. When Mary Shelley brings a monster out of corpses, it becomes an act of terror, while, the act of body-snatching was taken as horror.

In Polidori’s *The Vampyre* setting is Greece. While discussing the reasons Du Boulay delineates “the symbolic cyclist of Greek vampire belief” which he takes as sacred movements and relates with the drive of blood. This movement is supposed to be spiral, and any setback would be harmful to the mystic voyage of the departed soul, leading to the soul coming back in the form of a vampire. This cycle goes in such a way that it brings the soul back to its family, but not in a positive way.

Thus, it takes the one, it was a loved one to it. This cyclic model was famous within other countries as well, as in Eastern Europe, where dead souls when came back to their families carried sickness, disease, and sometimes, death of the family.

Polidori underwent the notion by taking these tales and developing a vampire that transported a disease into central England with it. The vampire itself is a plague in Polidori’s narrative. If it was a long narrative, it may have been understood by more victims afar from the victims of Miss Aubrey and Ianthe. In Polidori’s narrative, Ruthven and Aubrey take a voyage from London to Greece, where Ruthven passes away. Following the Greek theme of vampires coming back, this vampire comes back to the close ones and ruins them, in this matter Aubrey’s sister. Polidori, himself furnishes some information in the introduction of his narrative, which shows he was aware of the Greek folklore beliefs. Through Aubrey, we come to know that Ruthven committed the act of vampirism, bringing awareness that Ruthven was a vampire already

before taking this journey to Greece. But according to Switzer (1955), Polidori relates it with the death rituals and creates a connection between his Ruthven vampire and his intended victim, Aubrey's sister which relates to the Greek symbolic cyclist.

Moreover, set in London, Greece and Italy's many gatherings of elite society, Polidori fetches the real danger, an original horror into the English public directly. Baker (2012) explains that to bring horror he depicts Ruthven's eyes as dead grey, the shade of his face is also deadly, and his glance was, as piercing the inner heart. He puts his interest within the tale as is the phenomenon- of somnambulism, which he was an expert at. It is the phenomenon of sleepwalking or walking in sleep. His vampire does not prey who are young always, or beautiful women, incidents that are common in later texts. Instead, the case here is the opposite one. Young and beautiful are attracted to him. He has the power to seduce. This power of seduction brings tragedy to those who are attracted, while fear and terror to those who see

and read. this vampire exploits Aubrey several times throughout the text by pledging not to reveal it to others, which results in Aubrey's death also later on. Moreover, Gerard (1885) examines that Polidori's vampire is with the capacity of preying on the weak, so, he plays with the male characters of the story and preys on female characters to bring total devastation to female characters; a feature which makes him a sadist but with superhuman power, who drains the blood from the neck.

### ***The Hunchback of Notre Dame* by Victor Hugo**

Hugo wrote *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* not only to expose Louis XI, a cold-blooded monarch but to depict a beneficial truth as well in a motivating story. Hugo contributed to renewing the interest and praising the medieval representation, especially Gothic and supernatural architecture. Using the technique of visionary imagination, he was the foremost to show big gatherings in motion, the group character which was also used by Tolstoy, a Russian novelist, and Zola,

a French novelist. His technique of using imagination also established a suggestion to depict authenticity in his works. Taylor (2007) discusses that in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, he rationalized the existence of evil in all God's creatures by ascribing it to human helplessness before impermanence.

The novel opens in the historic rebuilding of the 15th century at the juncture of the annual Feast of Fools in France. The central idea of this feast was similar to a fake revolution, in which self-esteem, power, and exemption are concisely bestowed on the subservient position. In the whole book, and mainly in the opening scenes, a scornful mob, consisting of students mainly, yells, and insults church and university personnel, which reflects the revolutionary connotations of this introductory scene. This tragic narrative speaks about the social struggle and the revolution on the one hand while loving and the loss on the other hand.

This feast starts with the election where Quasimodo is elected as a king and the further play unfolds

gradually. Quasimodo hovers over the top of the Gothic cathedral, where he can see the entire city. The two ill-starred social castaways meet after some days when the generous Esmeralda provides water to Quasimodo at the pillory- a place for public retribution, where Quasimodo was unfairly convicted. Taylor (2005) traces that the protagonist is without any background which is very much relevant to discuss. Quasimodo lived in the church and was brought up there by Frollo, (a compassionate man on one hand but an evil traitor) as he was left there at the church door alone by his parents due to his hunchback, and in a similar manner; Esmeralda was brought up as an orphan child, who comes to know about her mother later on in the narrative (113).

This 1482, as well as in the concluding attack of the church by the gathering of people develops a sharp reference to the societal cataclysms of 1789, and then in the 1830s (which shakes France). Moreover, this narrative again establishes the socio-political circumstances of the periods in France, when these children were outcasts and society did not accept

them as members of the same community. Hence, it showcases not only the tragedy of those characters but fear and horror also for the people of that time and overall readers, along with a bitter criticism of the society that shuns and humiliates deformed children- like a hunchback bell ringer in this narrative. It also highlights Hugo's kind-heartedness for distressed humanity.

### Conclusion

It has been concluded through the analysis of the texts that Romantics have broadened the scope of their writings by bringing the elements of fear and loathing, horror and terror, spectatorship, and violence. The study has informed that Gothic, through history, cathedrals, and ruins castles take to the domain of slavery while guaranteeing the brevity of the power of these dark places. These powers ultimately affect the bodies and souls of the people. They, powerfully have unveiled the social standards of the people, who do not allow intermixing of others (society marks them as others); but rather want to use them for their ease. This fear and loathing

of the people for others, bring horror for some and tragedy for others. Moreover, it has been noted that these writers have discussed the injustices, and oppression of the present and past caused by religion, commerce, and monarchies through their artistic space of gothic for the possible social change where society accepts the difference and laments over the misuse of power; including political (pointing towards the French Revolution), intellectual (pointing towards scientists or other intellectuals), and social power (indicating the power of the people of social institutions or people generally). Hence, while manifesting anguish and fear of the public the research through selected texts has suggested ethical liabilities of the intellectuals and an overall transformed attitude towards humanity.

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